

Hope Leslie, volume 1

Catharine Maria Sedgwick

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HOPE LESLIE; OR EARLY TIMES IN THE MASSACHUSETTS. BY THE AUTHOR OF REDWOOD.

Here stood the Indian chieftain, rejoicing in his glory!

How deep the shade of sadness that rests upon his story:

For the white man came with power—like brethren they met—

But the Indian fires went out, and the Indian sun has set!

And the chieftain has departed—gone is his hunting ground,

And the twanging of his bow-string is a forgotten sound:—

Where dwelleth yesterday? and where is Echo's cell?

Where has the rainbow vanished?—there does the Indian dwell.

— E. IN TWO VOLUMES. VOL. I.

THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE Dedicated, AS A TESTIMONY OF RESPECT AND AFFECTION, TO
THE AUTHOR'S FRIENDS IN BOSTON.

PREFACE.

The following volumes are not offered to the public as being in any degree an historical narrative, or a relation of real events. Real characters and real events are, however, alluded to; and this course, if not strictly necessary, was found very convenient in the execution of the author's design, which was to illustrate not the history, but the character of the times.

The antiquarian reader will perceive that some liberties have been taken with the received accounts of Sir Philip (or Sir Christopher) Gardiner; and a slight variation has been allowed in the chronology of the Pequod war.

The first settlers of New-England were not illiterate, but learned and industrious men. They seem to have understood the importance of their station. The Massachusetts colony, and some of the other establishments sparsely scattered on the coast, were illuminated spots, clear and bright lights, set on the borders of a dark and turbulent wilderness. Those who have not paid much attention to the history or character of these early settlements, if they choose to turn their attention to this interesting subject, will be surprised to find how clear, copious, and authentic are the accounts which our ancestors left behind them. The only merit claimed by the present writer, is that of a patient investigation of all the materials that could be obtained. A full delineation of these times was not even attempted; but the main solicitude has been, to exclude every thing decidedly inconsistent with them.

The Indians of North America are, perhaps, the only race of men of whom it may be said, that though conquered, they were never enslaved. They could not submit, and live. When made captives, they courted death, and exulted in torture. These traits of their character will be viewed by an impartial observer, in a light very different from that in which they were regarded by our ancestors. In our histories, it was perhaps natural that they should be represented as "surly dogs," who preferred to die rather than live, from no other motives than a stupid or malignant obstinacy. Their own historians or poets, if they had such, would as naturally, and with more justice, have extolled their high-souled courage and patriotism.

The writer is aware that it may be thought that the character of Magawisca has no prototype among the aborigines of this country. Without citing Pocohontas, or any other individual, as authority, it may be sufficient to remark, that in such delineations, we are confined not to the actual, but the possible.

The liberal philanthropist will not be offended by a representation which supposes that the elements of virtue and intellect are not withheld from any branch of the human family; and the enlightened and accurate observer of human nature, will admit that the difference of character among the various races of the earth, arises mainly from difference of condition.

These volumes are so far from being intended as a substitute for genuine history, that the ambition of the writer would be fully gratified if, by this work, any of our young countrymen should be stimulated to investigate the early history of their native land.

CHAPTER I.

"Virtue may be assail'd, but never hurt,
Surpris'd by unjust force, but not inthrall'd;
Yea, even that which mischief meant most harm
Shall in the happy trial prove most glory."

— Comus

William Fletcher was the son of a respectable country gentleman of Suffolk, in England; and the destined heir of his uncle Sir William Fletcher, an eminent lawyer, who had employed his talents with such effective zeal and pliant principle, that he had won his way to courtly favour and secured a courtly fortune.

Sir William had only one child—a daughter; and possessing the common ambition of transmitting his name with his wealth, he selected his nephew as the future husband of his daughter Alice.

"Take good heed," Sir William thus expressed himself in a letter to his brother, "take goodheed that the boy be taught unquestioning and unqualified loyalty to his sovereign—the Alpha and Omega of political duty. These are times when every true subject has his price. Divers of the leaders of the Commons are secret friends of the seditious mischief—brewing puritans; and Buckingham himself is suspected of favouring their cabals—but this sub rosa—I burn not my fingers with these matters. 'He who meddleth with another man's strifes, taketh a dog by the ear,' said the wisest man that ever lived; and he— thank God—was a king. Caution Will against all vain speculation and idle inquiries—there are those that are for ever inquiring and inquiring, and never coming to the truth. One inquiry should suffice for a loyal subject. 'What is established?' and that being well ascertained, the line of duty is so plain, that he who runs may read.

"I would that all our youths had inscribed on their hearts that golden rule of political religion, framed and well maintained by our good Queen Elizabeth. 'No man should be suffered to decline either on the left or on the right hand, from the drawn line limited by authority, and by the sovereign's laws and injunctions.'

"Instead of such healthy maxims, our lads' heads are crammed with the philosophy and rhetoric and history of those liberty-loving Greeks and Romans. This is the pernicious lore that has poisoned our academical fountains. Liberty, what is it! Daughter of disloyalty and mother of allmisrule—who, from the hour that she tempted our first parents to forfeit paradise, hath ever worked mischief to our race.

"But above all, brother, as you value the temporal salvation of your boy, restrain him from all confederacy, association, or even acquaintance with the puritans. If my master took counsel of me, he would ship these mad canting fools to our New-England colonies, where their tender consciences would be no more offended because, forsooth, a prelate saith his prayers in white vestments, and where they might enjoy with the savages that primitive equality, about which they make such a pother. God forefend that our good lad William should company with these misdoers! He must be narrowly watched; for, as I hear, there is a neighbour of yours, one Winthrop, (a notable gentleman too, as they say, but he doth grievously scandalize his birth and breeding) who hath embraced these scurvy principles, and doth magnify them with the authority of his birth and condition, and hath much weight with the country. There is in Suffolk too, as I am told, one Eliot, a young zealot—a fanatical incendiary, who doth find ample combustibles in the gossiping matrons, idle maidens, and lawless youth who flock about him.

"These are dangerous neighbours—rouse yourself, brother—give over your idle sporting with hawk and hound, and watch over this goodly scion of ours—ours, I say, but I forewarn you, no daughteror guinea of mine shall ever go to one who is infected with this spreading plague."

This letter was too explicit to be misunderstood; but so far from having the intended effect of awakening the caution of the expectant of fortune, it rather stimulated the pride of the independent country gentleman. He permitted his son to follow the bent of accident, or the natural course of a serious, reflecting, and enthusiastic temper. Winthrop, the future governor of Massachusetts, was the counsellor of young Fletcher; and Eliot, the "apostle of New-England," his most intimate friend. These were men selected of Heaven to achieve a great work. In the quaint language of the time, "the Lord sifted three nations for precious seed to sow the wilderness."

There were interested persons who were not slow in conveying to Sir William unfavourable reports of his

nephew, and the young man received a summons from his uncle, who hoped, by removing him from the infected region, to rescue him from danger.

Sir William's pride was gratified by the elegant appearance and graceful deportment of his nephew, whom he had expected to see with the "slovenly and lawyerlike carriage" that marked the scholars of the times. The pliant courtier was struck with the lofty independence of the youth who, from the first, shewed that neither frowns nor favour would induce him to bow the knee to the idols Sir William had served. There was something in this independence that awed the inferior mind of the uncle. To him it was an unknown mysterious power, which he knew not how to approach, and almost despaired of subduing. However, he was experienced in life, and had observed enough of human infirmity to convince him, that there was no human virtue that had not some weak—some assailable point. Time and circumstances were not long in developing the vulnerability of the nephew. Alice Fletcher had been the companion of his childhood. They now met without any of the reserve that often prevents an intimate intercourse between young persons, and proceeds from the consciousness of a susceptibility which it would seem to deny.

The intercourse of the cousins was renewed with all the frankness and artlessness of the sunny season of childish love and confidence. Alice had been educated in retirement, by her mother, whom she had recently attended through a long and fatal illness. She had been almost the exclusive object of her love, for there was little congeniality between the father and daughter. The ties of nature may command all dutiful observances, but they cannot control the affections. Alice was deeply afflicted by her bereavement. Her cousin's serious temper harmonized with her sorrow, and nature and opportunity soon indissolubly linked their hearts together.

Sir William perceived their growing attachment and exulted in it; for, as he fancied, it reduced his nephew to dependence on his will and whims. He had never himself experienced the full strength of any generous sentiment; but he had learned from observation, that love was a controlling passion, and he now most anxiously watched and promoted the kindling of the flame, in the expectation that the fire would subdue the principles of civil and religious liberty, with which he had but too well ascertained the mind of his nephew to be imbued.

He silently favoured the constant and exclusive intercourse of the young people: he secretly contrived various modes of increasing their mutual dependence; and, when he was certain their happiness was staked, he cast the die. He told his nephew that he perceived and rejoiced in the mutual affection that had so naturally sprung up between him and his daughter, and he confessed their union had been the favourite object of his life; and said, that he now heartily accorded his consent to it, prescribing one condition only—but that condition was unalterable. "You must abjure, William, in the presence of witnesses," he said, "the fanatical notions of liberty and religion with which you have been infected—you must pledge yourself, by a solemn oath, to unqualified obedience to the king, and adherence to the established church: you shall have time enough for the effervescence of your young blood. God send this fermentation may work off all impurities. Nay, answer me not now. Take a day—a week—a month for consideration; for on your decision depends fortune and love—or the alternative, beggary and exile."

If a pit had yawned beneath his feet, and swallowed Alice from his view, William Fletcher could not have been more shocked. He was soul-stricken, as one who listens to a sentence of death. To his eye the earth was shrouded in darkness; not an object of hope or pursuit remained.

He had believed his uncle was aware of what he must deem his political and religious delinquency; but he had never spoken to him on the subject: he had treated him with marked favour, and he had so evidently encouraged his attachment to his cousin, that he had already plighted his love to her, and received her vows without fearing that he had passed even the limit of strict prudence.

There was no accommodating flexibility in his principles; his fidelity to what he deemed his duty could not have been subdued by the fires of martyrdom, and he did not hesitate to sacrifice what was dearer than life to it. He took the resolution at once to fly from the temptation that, present, he dared not trust himself to resist.

"I shall not again see my Alice," he said. "I have not courage to meet her smiles; I have not strength to endure her tears."

In aid of his resolution there came, most opportunely, a messenger from his father, requiring his immediate presence. This afforded him a pretext for his sudden departure from London. He left a few brief lines for Alice, that expressed without explaining the sadness of his heart.

His father died a few hours before he arrived at the paternal mansion. He was thus released from his strongest natural tie. His mother had been long dead; and he had neither brother nor sister. He inherited a decent patrimony,

sufficient at least to secure the independence of a gentleman. He immediately repaired to Groton, to his friend Winthrop; not that he should dictate his duty to him, but as one leans on the arm of a friend when he finds his own strength scarcely sufficient to support him.

Mr. Winthrop is well known to have been a man of the most tender domestic affections and sympathies; but he had then been long married—and twice married—and probably a little dimness had come over his recollection of the enthusiasm of a first passion. When Fletcher spoke of Alice's unequalled loveliness, and of his own unconquerable love, his friend listened as one listens to a tale he has heard a hundred times, and seemed to regard the cruel circumstances in which the ardent lover was placed only in the light of a fit and fine opportunity of making a sacrifice to the great and good cause to which this future statesman had even then begun to devote himself, as the sole object of his life. He treated his friend's sufferings as in their nature transient and curable; and concluded by saying, "the Lord hath prepared this fire, my friend, to temper your faith, and you will come out of it the better prepared for your spiritual warfare."

Fletcher listened to him with stern resolution, like him who permits a surgeon to probe a wound which he is himself certain is incurable.

Mr. Winthrop knew that a ship was appointed to sail from Southampton in a few days for New-England. With that characteristic zeal which then made all the intentions of Providence so obvious to the eye of faith, and the interpretation of all the events of life so easy, Mr. Winthrop assured his friend that the designs of Heaven, in relation to him, were plain. He said, "there was a great call for such services as he could render in the expedition just about to sail, and which was like to fail for the want of them; and that now, like a faithful servant to the cause he had confessed, he must not look behind, but press on to the things that were before."

Fletcher obeyed the voice of Heaven. This is no romantic fiction. Hundreds in that day resisted all that solicits earthly passions, and sacrificed all that gratifies them, to the cause of God and of man—the cause of liberty and religion. This cause was not to their eyes invested with any romantic attractions. It was not assisted by the illusions of chivalry, nor magnified by the spiritual power and renown of crusades. Our fathers neither had, nor expected their reward on earth.

One severe duty remained to be performed. Fletcher must announce their fate to Alice. He honoured her too much to believe she would have permitted the sacrifice of his integrity, if he would have made it. He, therefore, had nothing to excuse; nothing but to tell the terrible truth—to try to reconcile her to her father—to express, for the last time, his love, and to pray that he might receive, at Southampton, one farewell line from her. Accompanying his letter to Alice was one to Sir William, announcing the decision to resign his favour and exile himself for ever from England.

He arranged his affairs, and in a few days received notice that the vessel was ready to sail. He repaired to Southampton, and as he was quitting the inn to embark in the small boat that was to convey him to the vessel, already in the offing, a voice from an inner apartment pronounced his name—and at the next moment Alice was in his arms. She gently reproved him for having estimated her affection at so low a rate as not to have anticipated that she should follow him, and share his destiny. It was more than could have been expected from man, that Fletcher should have opposed such a resolution. He had but a moment for deliberation. Most of the passengers had already embarked; some still lingered on the strand protracting their last farewell to their country and their friends. In the language of one of the most honoured of these pilgrims—"truly doleful was the sight of that sad and mournful parting, to hear what sighs, and sobs, and prayers, did sound amongst them; what tears did gush from every eye, and pithy speeches pierced each other's hearts."

With the weeping groupe Fletcher left Alice and her attendants, while he went to the vessel to prepare for her suitable reception. He there found a clergyman, and bespoke his holy offices to unite him to his cousin immediately after their embarkation.

All the necessary arrangements were made, and he was returning to the shore, his eye fixed on the lovely being whom he believed Heaven had interposed to give to him, when he descried Sir William's carriage guarded by a cavalcade of armed men, in the uniform of the King's guards, approaching the spot where she stood.

He comprehended at once their cruel purpose. He exhorted the boatmen to put forth all their strength; he seized the oars himself—despair gave him supernatural power—the boat shot forward with the velocity of light; but all in vain!—he only approached near enough to the shore to hear Alice's last impotent cries to him—to see her beautiful face convulsed with agony, and her arms outstretched towards him—when she was forced to the

carriage by her father, and driven from his sight.

He leaped on the strand; he followed the troop with cries and entreaties; but he was only answered by the coarse jeering and profane jests of the soldiery.

Notice was soon given that the boat was ready to return to the ship for the last time, and Fletcher in a state of agitation and despair, almost amounting to insanity, permitted it to return without him.

He went to London and requested an interview with his uncle. The request was granted, and a long and secret conference ensued. It was known by the servants of the household, that their mistress, Alice, had been summoned by her father to this meeting; but what was said or done, did not transpire. Immediately after, Fletcher returned to Mr. Winthrop's in Suffolk. The fixedness of despair was on his countenance; but he said nothing, even to this confidential friend, of the interview with his uncle. The particulars of the affair at Southampton, which had already reached Suffolk, seemed sufficiently to explain his misery.

In less than a fortnight he there received despatches from his uncle, informing him that he had taken effectual measures to save himself from a second conspiracy against the honour of his family—that his daughter, Alice, had that day been led to the altar by Charles Leslie; and concluding with a polite hope, that though his voyage had been interrupted, it might not be long deferred.

Alice had, indeed, in the imbecility of utter despair, submitted to her father's commands. It was intimated at the time, and reported for many years after, that she had suffered a total alienation of mind. To the world this was never contradicted, for she lived in absolute retirement; but those who best knew could have attested, that if her mind had departed from its beautiful temple, an angelic spirit had entered in and possessed it.

William Fletcher was, in a few months, persuaded to unite himself with an orphan girl, a ward of Mr. Winthrop, who had, in the eyes of the elders, all the meek graces that befitted a godly maiden and dutiful helpmate. Fletcher remained constant to his purpose of emigrating to New-England, but he did not effect it till the year 1630, when he embarked with his family and effects in the ship *Arabella*, with Governor Winthrop, who the, for the first time, went to that land where his name will ever be held in affectionate and honourable remembrance.

CHAPTER II.

"For the temper of the brain in quick apprehensions and acute judgments, to say no more, the most High and Sovereign God hath not made the Indian inferior to the European."

— Roger Williams.

The magnitude of the enterprise in which the first settlers of New-England were engaged, the terrific obstacles they encountered, and the hard-ships they endured, gave to their characters a seriousness and solemnity, heightened, it may be, by the severity of their religious faith.

Where all were serious the melancholy of an individual was not conspicuous; and Mr. Fletcher's sadness would probably have passed unnoticed, but for the reserve of his manners, which piqued the pride of his equals, and provoked the curiosity of his inferiors.

The first probably thought that the apostolic principle of community of goods at least extended to opinions and feelings; and the second always fancy when a man shuts the door of his lips that there must be some secret worth knowing within.

Like many other men of an ardent temperament and disinterested love of his species, Mr. Fletcher was disappointed at the slow operation of principles, which, however efficient and excellent in the abstract, were to be applied to various and discordant subjects. Such men, inexperienced in the business of life, are like children, who, setting out on a journey, are impatient after the few first paces to be at the end of it. They cannot endure the rebuffs and delays that retard them in their course. These are the men of genius—the men of feeling—the men that the world calls visionaries; and it is because they are visionaries—because they have a beau-ideal in their own minds, to which they can see but a faint resemblance in the actual state of things, that they become impatient of detail, and cannot brook the slow progress to perfection. They are too rapid in their anticipations. The character of man, and the institutions of society, are yet very far from their possible and destined perfection. Still, how far is the present age in advance of that which drove reformers to a dreary wilderness!—of that which hanged quakers!—of that which condemned to death, as witches, innocent, unoffending old women! But it is unnecessary to heighten the glory of our risen day by comparing it with the preceding twilight.

To return to Mr. Fletcher. He was mortified at seeing power, which had been earned at so dear a rate, and which he had fondly hoped was to be applied to the advancement of man's happiness, sometimes perverted to purposes of oppression and personal aggrandizement. He was shocked when a religious republic, which he fancied to be founded on the basis of established truth, was disturbed by the out-break of heresies; and his heart sickened when he saw those, who had sacrificed whatever man holds dearest to religious freedom, imposing those shackles on others from which they had just released themselves at such a price. Partly influenced by these disgusts, and partly by that love of contemplation and retirement that belongs to a character of his cast, especially when depressed by some early disappointment, he refused the offices of honour and trust that were, from time to time, offered to him; and finally, in 1636, when Pynchon, Holioko, and Chapin, formed their settlement at Springfield, on Connecticut river, he determined to retire from the growing community of Boston to this frontier settlement.

Mrs. Fletcher received his decision as all wives of that age of undisputed masculine supremacy (or most of those of our less passive age) would do, with meek submission. The inconveniencies and dangers of that outpost were not unknown to her, nor did she underrate them; but Abraham would as soon have remonstrated against the command that bade him go forth from his father's house into the land of the Chaldees, as she would have failed in passive obedience to the resolve of her husband.

The removal was effected early in the summer of 1636. Springfield assumed, at once, under the auspices of its wealthy and enterprising proprietors, the aspect of a village. The first settlers followed the course of the Indians, and planted themselves on the borders of rivers—the natural gardens of the earth, where the soil is mellowed and enriched by the annual overflowing of the streams, and prepared by the unassisted processes of nature to yield to the indolent Indian his scanty supply of maize and other esculents. The wigwams which constituted the village, or, to use the graphic aboriginal designation, the 'smoke' of the natives gave place to the clumsy, but more

convenient dwellings of the pilgrims.

Where there are now contiguous rows of shops, filled with the merchandise of the east, the manufactures of Europe, the rival fabrics of our own country, and the fruits of the tropics; where now stands the stately hall of justice—the academy—the bank—churches, orthodox and heretic, and all the symbols of a rich and populous community—were, at the early period of our history, a few log-houses, planted around a fort, defended by a slight embankment and palisade.

The mansions of the proprietors were rather more spacious and artificial than those of their more humble associates, and were built on the well-known model of the modest dwelling illustrated by the birth of Milton—a form still abounding in the eastern parts of Massachusetts, and presenting to the eye of a New-Englander the familiar aspect of an awkward friendly country cousin.

The first clearing was limited to the plain. The beautiful hill that is now the residence of the gentry (for there yet lives such a class in the heart of our democratic community) and is embellished with stately edifices and expensive pleasure-grounds, was then the border of a dense forest, and so richly fringed with the original growth of trees, that scarce a sun-beam had penetrated to the parent earth.

Mr. Fletcher was at first welcomed as an important acquisition to the infant establishment; but he soon proved that he purposed to take no part in its concerns, and, in spite of the remonstrances of the proprietors, he fixed his residence a mile from the village, deeming exposure to the incursions of the savages very slight, and the surveillance of an inquiring neighbourhood a certain evil. His domain extended from a gentle eminence, that commanded an extensive view of the bountiful Connecticut to the shore, where the river indented the meadow by one of those sweeping graceful curves by which it seems to delight to beautify the land it nourishes.

The border of the river was fringed with all the water-loving trees; but the broad meadows were quite cleared, excepting that a few elms and sycamores had been spared by the Indians, and consecrated, by tradition, as the scene of revels or councils. The house of our pilgrim was a low-roofed modest structure, containing ample accommodation for a patriarchal family; where children, dependants, and servants were all to be sheltered under one roof-tree. On one side, as we have described, lay an open and extensive plain; within view was the curling smoke from the little cluster of houses about the fort—the habitation of civilized man; but all else was a savage howling wilderness.

Never was a name more befitting the condition of a people, than 'Pilgrim' that of our forefathers. It should be redeemed from the puritanical and ludicrous associations which have degraded it, in most men's minds, and be hallowed by the sacrifices made by these voluntary exiles. They were pilgrims, for they had resigned, for ever, what the good hold most dear—their homes. Home can never be transferred; never repeated in the experience of an individual. The place consecrated by parental love, by the innocence and sports of childhood, by the first acquaintance with nature; by the linking of the heart to the visible creation, is the only home. There there is a living and breathing spirit infused into nature: every familiar object has a history—the trees have tongues, and the very air is vocal. There the vesture of decay doth not close in and control the noble functions of the soul. It sees and hears and enjoys without the ministry of gross material substance.

Mr. Fletcher had resided a few months in Springfield when he one day entered with an open letter in his hand, that apartment of his humble dwelling styled, by courtesy, the parlour. His wife was sitting there with her eldest son, a stripling of fourteen, busily assisting him in twisting a cord for his cross-bow. She perceived that her husband looked disturbed; but he said nothing, and her habitual deference prevented her inquiring into the cause of his discomposure.

After taking two or three turns about the room, he said to his son, "Everell, my boy—go to the door, and await there the arrival of an Indian girl; she is, as you may see, yonder by the riverside, and will be here shortly. I would not that Jennet should, at the very first, shock the child with her discourteous ways."

"Child! coming here!" exclaimed the boy, dropping his bow and gazing through the window—"Who is she?—that tall girl, father—she is no more a child than I am!"

His mother smiled at an exclamation that betrayed a common juvenile jealousy of the honour of dawning manhood, and bade the boy obey his father's directions. When Everell had left the apartment, Mr. Fletcher said, "I have just received letters from Boston—from Governor Winthrop"—he paused.

"Our friends are all well, I hope," said Mrs. Fletcher.

"Yes, Martha, our friends are all well—but these letters contain something of more importance than aught that

concerns the health of the perishing body."

Mr. Fletcher again hesitated, and his wife, perplexed by his embarrassment, inquired, "Has poor deluded Mrs. Hutchinson again presumed to disturb the peace of God's people?"

"Martha, you aim wide of the mark. My present emotions are not those of a mourner for Zion. A ship has arrived from England, and in it came"—

"My brother Stretton!" exclaimed Mrs. Fletcher.

"No—no, Martha. It will be long ere Stretton quits his paradise to join a suffering people in the wilderness."

He paused for a moment, and when he again spoke, the softened tone of his voice evinced that he was touched by the expression of disappointment, slightly tinged by displeasure that shaded his wife's gentle countenance. "Forgive me, my dear wife," he said. "I should not have spoken aught that implied censure of your brother; for I know he hath ever been most precious in your eyes—albeit, not the less so, that he is yet without the fold—That which I have to tell you—and it were best that it were quickly told—is, that my cousin Alice was a passenger in this newly arrived ship.—Martha, your blushes wrong you. The mean jealousies that degrade some women have, I am sure, never been harboured in your heart."

"If I deserve your praise, it is because the Lord has been pleased to purify my heart and make it his sanctuary. But, if I have not the jealousies, I have the feelings of a woman, and I cannot forget that you was once affianced to your cousin Alice—and"—

"And that I once told you, Martha, frankly, that the affection I gave to her, could not be transferred to another. That love grew with my growth—strengthened with my strength. Of its beginning, I had no more consciousness than of the commencement of my existence. It was sunshine and flowers in all the paths of my childhood. It inspired every hope—modified every project—such was the love I bore to Alice—love immortal as the soul!—

"You know how cruelly we were severed at Southampton—how she was torn from the strand by the king's guards—within my view, almost within my grasp. How Sir William tempted me with the offer of pardon—my cousin's hand—and,—poor temptation indeed after that!—honours, fortune. You know that even Alice, my precious beautiful Alice, knelt to me. That smitten of God and man, and for the moment, bereft of the right use of reason, she would have persuaded me to yield my integrity. You know that her cruel father reproached me with virtually breaking my plighted troth, That many of my friends urged my present conformity; and you know, Martha, that there was a principle in my bosom that triumphed over all these temptations. And think you not that principle has preserved me faithful in my friendship to you? Think you not that your obedience—;your careful conformity to my wishes; your steady love, which hath kept far more than even measure with my deserts, is undervalued—can be lightly estimated?"

"Oh, I know," said the humble wife, "that your goodness to me does far surpass my merit; but bethink you, it is the nature of a woman to crave the first place."

"It is the right of a wife, Martha; and there is none now to contest it with you. This is but the second time I have spoken to you on a subject that has been much in our thoughts: that has made me wayward, and would have made my sojourning on earth miserable, but that you have been my support and comforter. These letters contain tidings that have opened a long sealed fountain. My uncle, Sir William, died last January. Leslie perished in a foreign service. Alice, thus released from all bonds, and sole mistress of her fortunes, determined to cast her lot in the heritage of God's people. She embarked with her two girls—her only children—a tempestuous voyage proved too much for a constitution already broken by repeated shocks. She was fully aware of her approaching death, and died as befits a child of faith, in sweet peace. Would to God I could have seen her once more—but," he added, raising his eyes devoutly, "not my will but thine be done! The sister of Leslie, a Mistress Grafton, attended Alice, and with her she left a will committing her children to my guardianship. It will be necessary for me to go to Boston to assume this trust. I shall leave home tomorrow, after making suitable provision for your safety and comfort in my absence. These children will bring additional labour to your household; and in good time hath our thoughtful friend Governor Winthrop procured for us two Indian servants. The girl has arrived. The boy is retained about the little Leslies; the youngest of whom, it seems, is a petted child; and is particularly pleased by his activity in ministering to her amusement."

"I am glad if any use can be made of an Indian servant," said Mrs. Fletcher, who, oppressed with conflicting emotions, expressed the lightest of them—a concern at a sudden increase of domestic cares where there were no facilities to lighten them.

"How any use! You surely do not doubt, Martha, that these Indians possess the same faculties that we do. The girl, just arrived, our friend writes me, hath rare gifts of mind—such as few of God's creatures are endowed with. She is just fifteen; she understands and speaks English perfectly well, having been taught it by an English captive, who for a long time dwelt with her tribe. On that account she was much noticed by the English who traded with the Pequods; and young as she was, she acted as their interpreter.

"She is the daughter of one of their chiefs, and when this wolfish tribe were killed, or dislodged from their dens, she, her brother, and their mother, were brought with a few other captives to Boston. They were given for a spoil to the soldiers. Some, by a christian use of money, were redeemed; and others, I blush to say it, for 'it is God's gift that every man should enjoy the good of his own labour,' were sent into slavery in the West Indies. Monoca, the mother of these children, was noted for the singular dignity and modesty of her demeanor. Many notable instances of her kindness to the white traders are recorded; and when she was taken to Boston, our worthy governor, ever mindful of his duties, assured her that her good deeds were held in remembrance, and that he would testify the gratitude of his people in any way she should direct. 'I have nothing to ask,' she said, 'but that I and my children may receive no personal dishonour.'

"The governor redeemed her children, and assured her they should be cared for. For herself, misery and sorrow had so wrought on her, that she was fast sinking into the grave. Many christian men and women laboured for her conversion but she would not even consent that the holyword should be interpreted to her; insisting, in the pride of her soul, that all the children of the Great Spirit were equal objects of His favour; and that He had not deemed the book he had withheld, needful to them."

"And did she," inquired Mrs. Fletcher, "thus perish in her sins?"

"She died," replied her husband, "immoveably fixed in those sentiments. But, Martha, we should not suit God's mercy to the narrow frame of our thoughts. This poor savage's life, as far as it has come to our knowledge, was marked with innocence and good deeds; and I would gladly believe that we may hope for her, on that broad foundation laid by the Apostle Peter—'In every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of Him.' "

"That text," answered Mrs. Fletcher, her heart easily kindling with the flame of charity, "is a light behind many a dark scripture, like the sun shining all around the edges of a cloud that would fain hide its beams."

"Such thoughts, my dear wife, naturally spring from thy kind heart, and are sweet morsels for private meditation; but it were well to keep them in thine own bosom lest, taking breath, they should lighten the fears of unstable souls. But here comes the girl, Magawisca, clothed in her Indian garb, which the governor has permitted her to retain, not caring, as he wisely says, to interfere with their innocent peculiarities; and she, in particular, having shewn a loathing of the English dress."

Everell Fletcher now threw wide open the parlour door, inviting the Indian girl, by a motion of his hand and a kind smile, to follow. She did so, and remained standing beside him, with her eyes rivetted to the floor, while every other eye was turned towards her. She and her conductor were no unfit representatives of the people from whom they sprung. Everell Fletcher was a fair ruddy boy of fourteen; his smooth brow and bright curling hair, bore the stamp of the morning of life; hope and confidence and gladness beamed in the falcon glance of his keen blue eye; and love and frolic played about his lips. The active hardy habits of life, in a new country, had already knit his frame, and given him the muscle of manhood; while his quick elastic step truly expressed the untamed spirit of childhood—the only spirit without fear and without reproach. His dress was of blue cloth, closely fitting his person; the sleeves reached midway between the elbow and wrist, and the naked, and as it would seem to a modern eye, awkward space, was garnished with deep-pointed lace ruffles of a coarse texture; a ruff, or collar of the same material, was worn about the neck.

The Indian stranger was tall for her years, which did not exceed fifteen. Her form was slender, flexible, and graceful; and there was a freedom and loftiness in her movement which, though tempered with modesty, expressed a consciousness of high birth. Her face, although marked by the peculiarities of her race, was beautiful even to an European eye. Her features were regular, and her teeth white as pearls; but there must be something beyond symmetry of feature to fix the attention, and it was an expression of dignity, thoughtfulness, and deep dejection that made the eye linger on Magawisca's face, as if it were perusing there the legible record of her birth and wrongs. Her hair, contrary to the fashion of the Massachusetts Indians, was parted on her forehead, braided, and confined to her head by a band of small feathers, jet black, and interwoven, and attached at equal distances by

rings of polished bone. She wore a waistcoat of deer-skin, fastened at the throat by a richly wrought collar. Her arms, a model for sculpture, were bare. A mantle of purple cloth hung gracefully from her shoulders, and was confined at the waist by a broad band, ornamented with rude hieroglyphics. The mantle and her strait short petticoat or kilt of the same rare and costly material, had been obtained, probably, from the English traders. Stockings were an unknown luxury; but leggins, similar to those worn by the ladies of Queen Elizabeth's court, were no bad substitute. The moccasin, neatly fitted to a delicate foot and ankle, and tastefully ornamented with bead-work, completed the apparel of this daughter of a chieftain, which altogether, had an air of wild and fantastic grace, that harmonized well with the noble demeanor and peculiar beauty of the young savage.

Mr. Fletcher surveyed her for a moment with a mingled feeling of compassion and curiosity, and then turning away and leaning his head on the mantelpiece, his thoughts reverted to the subject that had affected him far more deeply than he had ventured to confess, even to the wife of his bosom.

Mrs. Fletcher's first feeling was rather that of a housewife than a tender woman. 'My husband,' she thought, 'might as well have brought a wild doe from the forest to plough his fields, as to give me this Indian girl for household labour; but the wisest men have no sense in these matters.' This natural domestic reflection was soon succeeded by a sentiment of compassion, which scarcely needed to be stimulated by Everell's whisper of "do, mother, speak to her."

"Magawisca," she said in a friendly tone, "you are welcome among us, girl." Magawisca bowed her head. Mrs. Fletcher continued: "you should receive it as a signal mercy, child, that you have been taken from the midst of a savage people, and set in a christian family." Mrs. Fletcher paused for her auditor's assent, but the proposition was either unintelligible or unacceptable to Magawisca.

"Mistress Fletcher means," said a middle-aged serving woman who had just entered the room, "that you should be mightily thankful, Tawney, that you are snatched as a brand from the burning."

"Hush, Jennet!" said Everell Fletcher, touching the speaker with the point of an arrow which he held in his hand.

Magawisca's eyes had turned on Jennet, flashing like a sun-beam through an opening cloud. Everell's interposition touched a tender chord, and when she again cast them down, a tear trembled on their lids.

"You will have no hard service to do," said Mrs. Fletcher, resuming her address. "I cannot explain all to you now; but you will soon perceive that our civilized life is far easier—far better and happier than your wild wandering ways, which are indeed, as you will presently see, but little superior to those of the wolves and foxes."

Magawisca suppressed a reply that her heart sent to her quivering lips; and Everell said, "hunted, as the Indians are, to their own dens, I am sure, mother, they need the fierceness of the wolf, and the cunning of the fox."

"True—true, my son," replied Mrs. Fletcher, who really meant no unkindness in expressing what she deemed a self-evident truth; and then turning again to Magawisca, she said, in a gentle tone, "you have had a long and fatiguing journey—was it not, girl?"

"My foot," replied Magawisca, "is used to the wild-wood path. The deer tires not of his way on the mountain, nor the bird of its flight in the air."

She uttered her natural feeling in so plaintive a tone that it touched the heart like a strain of sad music; and when Jennet again officiously interposed in the conversation, by saying, that "truly these savages have their house in the wilderness, and their way no man knows," her mistress cut short her outpouring by directing her to go to the outer door and learn who it was that Digby was conducting to the house.

A moment after Digby, Mr. Fletcher's confidential domestic, entered with the air of one who has important intelligence to communicate. He was followed by a tall gaunt Indian, who held in his hand a deer-skin pouch. "Ha! Digby," said Mr. Fletcher, "have you returned? What say the Commissioners? Can they furnish me a guide and attendants for my journey?"

"Yes, an' please you, sir, I was in the nick of time, for they were just despatching a messenger to the Governor."

"On what account?"

"Why, it's rather an odd errand," replied Digby, scratching his head with an awkward hesitation. "I would not wish to shock my gentle mistress, who will never bring her feelings to the queer fashions of the new world; but Lord's mercy, sir, you know we think no more of taking off a scalp here, than we did of shaving our beards at home."

"Scalp!" exclaimed Mr. Fletcher. "Explain yourself, Digby."

The Indian, as if to assist Digby's communication, untied his pouch and drew from it a piece of dried and shrivelled skin, to which hair, matted together with blood, still adhered. There was an expression of fierce triumph on the countenance of the savage as he surveyed the trophy with a grim smile. A murmur of indignation burst from all present.

"Why did you bring that wretch here?" demanded Mr. Fletcher of his servant, in an angry tone.

"I did but obey Mr. Pynchon, sir. The thing is an abomination to the soul and eye of a christian, but it has to be taken to Boston for the reward."

"What reward, Digby?"

"The reward, sir, that is in reason expected for the scalp of the Pequod chief."

As Digby uttered these last words Magawisca shrieked as if a dagger had pierced her heart. She darted forward and grasped the arm that upheld the trophy. "My father!—Mononotto!" she screamed in a voice of agony.

"Give it to her—by Heaven, you shall give it to her," cried Everell, springing on the Indian and losing all other thought in his instinctive sympathy for Magawisca.

"Softly, softly, Mr. Everell," said Digby, "thatis the scalp of Sassacus, not Mononotto. The Pequods had two chiefs you know."

Magawisca now released her hold; and as soon as she could again command her voice, she said, in her own language to the Indian, "my father— my father—does he live?"

"He does," answered the Indian in the same dialect; "he lives in the wigwam of the chief of the Mohawks."

Magawisca was silent for a moment, and knit her brows as if agitated with an important deliberation. She then undid a bracelet from her arm and gave it to the Indian: "I charge ye," she said, "as ye hope for game in your hunting—grounds, for the sun on your wigwam, and the presence of the Great Spirit in your death—hour— I charge ye to convey this token to my father. Tell him his children are servants in the house of his enemies; but," she added, after a moment's pause, "to whom am I trusting?—to the murderer of Sassacus!—my father's friend!"

"Fear not," replied the Indian; "your errand shall be done. Sassacus was a strange tree in our forests; but he struck his root deep, and lifted his tall head above our loftiest branches, and cast his shadow over us; and I cut him down. I may not return to my people, for they called Sassacus brother, and they would fain avenge him. But fear not, maiden, your errand shall be done."

Mr. Fletcher observed this conference, which he could not understand, with some anxiety anddispleasure, and he broke it off by directing Jennet to conduct Magawisca to another apartment.

Jennet obeyed, muttering, as she went, "a notable providence this concerning the Pequod caitiff. Even like Adonibezek, as he has done to others the Lord hath requited him."

Mr. Fletcher then most reluctantly took into his possession the savage trophy, and dismissed the Indian, deeply lamenting that motives of mistaken policy should tempt his brethren to depart from the plainest principles of their religion.

CHAPTER III.

"But ah, who can deceive his destiny,
Or ween, by Warning, to avoid his Fate?"
— Fairy Queen

On the following morning Mr. Fletcher set out for Boston, and escaping all perils by flood and field, he arrived there at the expiration of nine days, having accomplished the journey, now the affair of a single day, with unusual expedition.

His wards were accompanied by two individuals who were now, with them, to become permanent members of his family. Mrs. Grafton, the sister of their father, and one Master Cradock, a scholar "skilled in the tongues," who attended them as their tutor. Mrs. Grafton was a widow, far on the shady side of fifty; though, as that was a subject to which she never alluded, she probably regarded age with the feelings ascribed to her sex, that being the last quality for which womankind would wish to be honoured, as is said by one whose satire is so good-humoured that even its truth may be endured. She was, unhappily for herself as her lot was cast, a zealous adherent to the church of England. Good people, who take upon themselves the supervisorship of their neighbours' consciences, abounded in that age; and from them Mrs. Grafton received frequent exhortations and remonstrances. To these she uniformly replied, 'that a faith and mode of religion that had saved so many was good enough to save her'—'that she had received her belief, just as it was, from her father, and that he, not she, was responsible for it.' Offensive such opinions must needs be in a community of professed reformers, but the good lady did not make them more so by the obtrusiveness of over-wrought zeal. To confess the truth, her mind was far more intent on the forms of head-pieces, than modes of faith; and she was far more ambitious of being the leader of fashion, than the leader of a sect. She would have contended more earnestly for a favourite recipe, than a favourite dogma; and though she undoubtedly believed "a saint in crape" to be "twice a saint in lawn," and fearlessly maintained that "no man could suitably administer the offices of religion without 'gown, surplice, and wig,' " yet she chiefly directed her hostilities against the puritanical attire of the ladies of the colony, who, she insisted, 'did most unnaturally belie their nature as women, and their birth and bringing-up as gentlewomen, by their ill-fashioned, ill-sorted, and unbecoming apparel.' To this heresy she was fast gaining proselytes; for, if we may believe the "simple cobbler of Agawam," there were, even in those early and pure days, "nugiperous gentle dames who inquired what dress the Queen is in this week." The contagion spread rapidly; and when some of the most vigilant and zealous sentinels proposed that the preachers should make it the subject of public and personal reproof, it was whispered that the scandal was not limited to idle maidens, but that certain of the deacons' wives were in it, and it was deemed more prudent to adopt gentle and private measures to eradicate the evil; an evil so deeply felt as to be bewailed by the merciless 'cobbler,' above quoted, in the following affecting terms: "Methinks it would break the hearts of Englishmen to see so many goodly English women imprisoned in French cages, peeping out of their hood-holes for some men of mercy to help them with a little wit, and nobody relieves them. We have about five or six of them in our colony. If I see any of them accidentally, I cannot cleanse my phansie of them for a month after."

It would seem marvellous that a woman like Mrs. Grafton, apparently engrossed with the world, living on the foam and froth of life, should become a voluntary exile to the colonies; but, to do her justice, she was kind-hearted and affectionate—susceptible of strong and controlling attachment, and the infant children of a brother on whom she had doated, outweighed her love of frivolous pleasures and personal indulgence.

She certainly believed that the resolution of her sister to go to the wilderness, had no parallel in the history of human folly and madness; but the resolution once taken, and, as she perceived, unconquerable, she made her own destiny conformable, not without some restiveness, but without serious repining. It was an unexpected shock to her to be compelled to leave Boston for a condition of life not only more rude and inconvenient, but really dangerous. Necessity, however, is more potent than philosophy, and Mrs. Grafton, like most people, submitted with patience to an inevitable evil.

As 'good Master Cradock' was a man rather acted upon than acting, we shall leave him to be discovered by our readers as the light of others falls on him.

Mr. Fletcher received the children—the relicts and gifts of a woman whom he had loved as few men can love, with an intense interest. The youngest, Mary, was a pretty petted child, wayward and bashful. She repelled Mr. Fletcher's caresses, and ran away from him to shelter herself in her aunt's arms—but Alice, the eldest, seemed instinctively to return the love that beamed in the first glance that Mr. Fletcher cast on her—in that brief eager glance he saw the living and beautiful image of her mother. So much was he impressed with the resemblance, that he said, in a letter to his wife, that it reminded him of the heathen doctrine of metempsychosis—and he could almost believe the spirit of the mother was transferred to the bosom of the child. The arrangement Mr. Fletcher made, for the transportation of his charge to Springfield, might probably be traced to the preference inspired by this resemblance.

He dispatched the little Mary with her aunt and the brother of Magawisca, the Indian boy Oneco, and such attendants as were necessary for their safe conduct—and he retained Alice and the tutor to be the companions of his journey. Before the children were separated, they were baptised by the Reverend Mr. Cotton, and in commemoration of the christian graces of their mother, their names were changed to the puritanical appellations of Hope and Faith.

Mr. Fletcher was detained, at first by business, and afterwards by ill-health, much longer than he had expected, and the fall, winter, and earliest months of spring wore away before he was able to set his face homeward. In the mean time, his little community at Bethel proceeded more harmoniously than could have been hoped from the discordant materials of which it was composed. This was owing, in great part, to the wise and gentle Mrs. Fletcher, the sun of her little system—all were obedient to the silent influence that controlled, without being perceived. But a letter which she wrote to Mr. Fletcher, just before his return, containing some important domestic details, may be deemed worth the perusal of our readers.

"Springfield, 1636. "To my good and honoured husband!

"Thy kind letter was duly received fourteen days after date, and was most welcome to me, containing, as it does, a portion of that stream of kindness that is ever flowing out from thy bountiful nature towards me. Sweet and refreshing was it, as these gentle days of spring after our sullen winter. Winter! ever disconsolate in these parts, but made tenfold more dreary by the absence of that precious light by which I have ever been cheered and guided.

"I thank thee heartily, my dear life, that thou dost so warmly commend my poor endeavours to do well in thy absence. I have truly tried to be faithful to my little nestlings, and to cheer them with notes of gladness when I have drooped inwardly for the voice of my mate. Yet my anxious thoughts have been more with thee than with myself; nor have I been unmindful of any of thy perplexities by sickness and otherwise, but in all thy troubles I have been troubled, and have ever prayed, that whatever might betide me, thou mightest return, in safety, to thy desiring family.

"I have had many difficulties to contend with in thy absence, of which I have forborne to inform thee, deeming it the duty of a wife never to disquiet her husband with her household cares; but now that, with the Lord's permission, thou art so soon to be with us, I would fain render unto thee an account of my stewardship, knowing that thou art not an hard master, and wilt consider the will and not the weakness of thy loving wife.

"This Dame Grafton is strangely out of place here—fitter for a parlour bird, than a flight into the wilderness; and but that she cometh commended to us as a widow, a name that is a draft from the Lord upon every Christian heart, we might find it hard to brook her light and wordly ways. She raileth, and yet I think not with an evil mind, but rather ignorantly, at our most precious faith, and hath even ventured to read aloud from her book of Common Prayer—an offence that she hath been prevented from repeating by the somewhat profane jest of our son Everell; whose love of mischief, proceeding from the gay temper of youth, I trust you will overlook. It was a few nights ago, when a storm was raging, that the poor lady's fears were greatly excited. My womanish apprehensions had a hard struggle with my duty, so terrific was the hideous howling of the wolves, mingling with the blasts that swept through the forest; but I stilled my beating heart with the thought, that my children leant on me, and I must not betray my weakness. But Dame Grafton was beside herself. At one moment she fancied we should be the prey of the wild beast, and at the next, that she heard the alarm yell of the savages. Everell brought her, her prayer-book, and affecting a well-beseeming gravity, he begged her to look out the prayer for distressed women, in imminent danger of being scalped by North American Indians. The poor lady, distracted with terror, seized the book, and turned over leaf after leaf, Everell meanwhile affecting to aid her search. In vain I shook my head, reprovingly, at

the boy—in vain I assured Mistress Grafton that I trusted we were in no danger; she was beyond the influence of reason; nothing allayed her fears, till chancing to catch a glance of Everell's eye, she detected the lurking laughter, and rapping him soundly over the ears with her book, she left the room greatly enraged. I grieve to add, that Everell evinced small sorrow for his levity, though I admonished him thereupon. At the same time I thought it a fit occasion to commend the sagacity whereby he had detected the short-comings of written prayers, and to express my hope, that unpromising as his beginnings are, he may prove a son of Jacob that shall wrestle and prevail.

"I have something farther to say of Everell, who is, in the main, a most devoted son, and as I believe, an apt scholar; as his master telleth me that he readeth Latin like his mother tongue, and is well grounded in the Greek. The boy doth greatly affect the company of the Pequod girl, Magawisca. If, in his studies, he meets with any trait of heroism, (and with such, truly, her mind doth seem naturally to assimilate) he straightway calleth for her and rendereth it into English, in which she hath made such marvellous progress, that I am sometimes startled with the beautifulforms in which she clothes her simple thoughts. She, in her turn, doth take much delight in describing to him the customs of her people, and relating their traditionary tales, which are like pictures, captivating to a youthful imagination. He hath taught her to read, and reads to her Spenser's rhymes, and many other books of the like kind; of which, I am sorry to say, Dame Grafton hath brought hither stores. I have not forbidden him to read them, well knowing that the appetite of youth is often whetted by denial; and fearing that the boy might be tempted, secretly, to evade my authority; and I would rather expose him to all the mischief of this unprofitable lore, than to tempt him to a deceit that might corrupt the sweet fountain of truth—the well-spring of all that is good and noble.

"I have gone far from my subject. When my boy comes before my mind's eye, I can see no other object. But to return. I have not been unmindful of my duty to the Indian girl, but have endeavoured to instil into her mind the first principles of our religion, as contained in Mr. Cotton's Catechism, and elsewhere. But, alas! to these her eye is shut and her ear is closed, not only with that blindness and deafness common to the natural man, but she entertaineth an aversion, which has the fixedness of principle, and doth continually remind me of Hannibal's hatred to Rome, and is like that inwrought with her filial piety. I have, in vain, attempted to subdue her to the drudgery of domestic service, and make her take part with Jennet; but as hopefully might you yoke a deer with an ox. It is not that she lacks obedience to me—so far as it seems she can command her duty, she is ever complying; but it appeareth impossible to her to clip the wings of her soaring thoughts, and keep them down to household matters.

"I have, sometimes, marvelled at the providence of God, in bestowing on this child of the forest, such rare gifts of mind, and other and outward beauties. Her voice hath a natural deep and most sweet melody in it, far beyond any stringed instrument. She hath too, (think not that I, like Everell, am, as Jennet saith, a charmed bird to her) she hath, though yet a child in years, that in her mien that doth bring to mind the lofty Judith, and the gracious Esther. When I once said this to Everell, he replied, "Oh, mother! is she not more like the gentle and tender Ruth?" To him she may be, and therefore it is, that innocent and safe as the intercourse of these children now is, it is for thee to decide whether it be not most wise to remove the maiden from our dwelling. Two young plants that have sprung up in close neighbourhood, may be separated while young; but if disjoined after their fibres are all intertwined, one, or perchance both, may perish.

"Think not that this anxiety springs from the mistaken fancy of a woman, that love is the natural channel for all the purposes, and thoughts, and hopes, and feelings of human life. Neither think, I beseech thee, that doating with a foolish fondness upon my noble boy, I magnify into importance whatsoever concerneth him. No—my heart yearneth towards this poor heathen orphan-girl; and when I see her, in his absence, starting at every sound, and her restless eye turning an asking glance at every opening of the door; every movement betokening a disquieted spirit, and then the sweet contentment that stealeth over her face when he appeareth;—oh, my honoured husband! all my woman's nature feeleth for her—not for any present evil, but for what may betide.

"Having commended this subject to thy better wisdom, I will leave caring for it to speak to thee of others of thy household. Your three little girls are thriving mightily, and as to the baby, you will not be ashamed to own him; though you will not recognise, in the bouncing boy that plays bo-peep and creeps quite over the room, the little creature who had scarcely opened his eyes on the world, when you went away. He is by far the largest child I ever had, and the most knowing; he has cut his front upper teeth, and sheweth signs of two more. He is

surprisingly fond of Oneco, and clappeth his hands with joy whenever he sees him. Indeed, the boy is a favourite with all the young ones, and greatly aideth me by continually pleasuring them. He is far different from his sister—gay and volatile, giving scarcely one thought to the past, and not one care to the future. Hissister often taketh him apart to discourse with him, and sometimes doth produce a cast of seriousness over his countenance, but at the next presented object, it vanisheth as speedily as a shadow before a sunbeam. He hath commended himself greatly to the favour of Dame Grafton, by his devotion to her little favourite: a spoiled child is she, and it seemeth a pity that the name of Faith was given to her, since her shrinking timid character doth not promise, in any manner, to resemble that most potent of the christian graces. Oneco hath always some charm to lure her waywardness. He bringeth home the treasures of the woods to please her—berries, and wild flowers, and the beautiful plumage of birds that are brought down by his unerring aim. Everell hath much advantage from the wood-craft of Oneco: the two boys daily enrich our table, which, in truth, hath need of such helps, with the spoils of the air and water.

"I am grieved to tell thee that some misrule hath crept in among thy servants in thy absence. Alas, what are sheep without their shepherd! Digby is, as ever, faithful—not serving with eye-service; but Hutton hath consorted much with some evildoers, who have been violating the law of God and the law of our land, by meeting together in merry companies, playing cards, dancing, and the like. For these offences, they were brought before Mr. Pynchon, and sentenced to receive, each, "twenty stripes well laid on." Hutton furthermore, having been overtaken with drink, was condemned to wear suspended around his neck for one month, a bit of wood on which Tooper is legibly written:—and Darby, who is ever a dawdler, having gone, last Saturday, with the cart to the village, dilly-dallied about there, and did not set out on his return till the sun was quite down, both to the eye and by the kalender. Accordingly, early on the following Monday, he was summoned before Mr. Pynchon, and ordered to receive ten stripes, but by reason of his youth and my intercession, which, being by a private letter, doubtless had some effect, the punishment was remitted; whereupon he heartily promised amendment and a better carriage.

"There hath been some alarm here within the last few days, on account of certain Indians who have been seen lurking in the woods around us. They are reported not to have a friendly appearance. We have been advised to remove, for the present, to the Fort; but as I feel no apprehension, I shall not disarrange my family by taking a step that would savour more of fear than prudence. I say I feel no apprehension—yet I must confess it—I have a cowardly womanish spirit, and fear is set in motion by the very mention of danger. There are vague forebodings hanging about me, and I cannot drive them away even by the thought that your presence, my honoured husband, will soon relieve me from all agitating apprehensions, and repair all the faults of my poor judgment. Fearful thoughts press on me—untoward accidents have prolonged thy absence—our re-union may yet be far distant, and if it should never chance in this world, oh remember that if I have fallen far short in duty, the measure of my love hath been full. I have ever known that mine was Leah's portion—that I was not the chosen and the loved one; and this has sometimes made me fearful—often joyless—but remember, it is only the perfect love of the husband that casteth out the fear of the wife.

"I have one request to prefer to thee which I have lacked courage to make by word of mouth, and therefore now commend it by letter to thy kindness. Be gracious unto me, my dear husband, and deem not that I overstep the modest bound of a woman's right in meddling with that which is thy prerogative—the ordering of our eldest son's education. Everell here hath few except spiritual privileges. God, who seeth my heart, knoweth I do not undervalue these—the manna of the wilderness. Yet to them might be added worldly helps, to aid the growth of the boy's noble gifts, a kind Providence having opened a wide door therefor in the generous offer of my brother Stretton. True, he hath not attained to our light whereby manifold errors of church and state are made visible; yet he hath ever borne himself uprightly, and to us, most lovingly, and as I remember there was a good Samaritan, and a faithful centurion, I think we are permitted to enlarge the bounds of our charity to those who work righteousness, albeit not of our communion."

"Thou hast already sown the good seed in our boy's heart, and it hath been (I say it not presumingly) nurtured with a mother's tears and prayers. Trust then to the promised blessing, and fear not to permit him to pass a few years in England, whence he will return to be a crown of glory to thee, my husband, and a blessing and honour to our chosen country. Importunity, I know, is not beseeming in a wife—it is the instrument of weakness, whereby, like the mouse in the fable, she would gnaw away what she cannot break. I will not, therefore, urge thee farther,

but leave the decision to thy wisdom and thy love. And now, my dear husband, I kiss and embrace thee, and may God company with thee, and restore thee, if it be his good pleasure, to thy ever faithful and loving and obedient wife,

Martha Fletcher.

"To her honoured husband these be delivered."

The above letter may indicate, but it feebly expresses, the character and state of mind of the writer. She never magnified her love by words, but expressed it by that self-devoting, self-sacrificing conduct to her husband and children, which characterizes, in all ages and circumstances, faithful and devoted woman. She was too generous to communicate all her fears, (about which a woman is usually least reserved) to her husband.

Some occurrences of the preceding day had given her just cause of alarm. At a short distance from Bethel, (the name that Mr. Fletcher had given his residence) there lived an old Indian woman, one of the few survivors of a tribe who had been faithful allies of the Pequods. After the destruction of her people, she had strayed up the banks of the Connecticut, and remained in Springfield. She was in the habit of supplying Mrs. Fletcher with wild berries and herbs, and receiving favours in return, and on that day went thither, as it appeared, on her customary errand.—She had made her usual barter, and had drawn her blanket around her as if to depart, but still she lingered standing before Mrs. Fletcher and looking fixedly at her. Mrs. Fletcher did not at first observe her; her head was bent over her infant sleeping on her lap, in the attitude of listening to its soft breathing. As she perused its innocent face a mother's beautiful visions floated before her; but, as she raised her eye and met the piercing glance of the old woman, a dark cloud came over the clear heaven of her thoughts. Nelema's brow was contracted, her lips drawn in, and her little sunken eye gleamed like a diamond from its dark recess.

"Why do you look at my baby thus?" asked Mrs. Fletcher.

The old woman replied in her own dialect, in a hurried inarticulate manner. "What says she, Magawisca?" asked Mrs. Fletcher of the Indian girl who stood beside her, and seemed to listen with unwonted interest.

"She says, madam, the baby is like a flower just opened to the sun, with no stain upon it—that he better pass now to the Great Spirit. She says this world is all a rough place—all sharp stones, and deep waters, and black clouds."

"Oh, she is old, Magawisca, and the days have come to her that have no pleasure in them. Look there," she said, "Nelema, at my son Everell;" the boy was at the moment passing the window, flushed with exercise and triumphantly displaying a string of game that he had just brought from the forest—"Is there not sunshine in my boy's face! To him every day is bright, and every path is smooth."

"Ah!" replied the old woman with a heavy groan, "I had sons too—and grandsons; but where are they? They trod the earth as lightly as that boy; but they have fallen like our forest trees, before the stroke of the English axe. Of all my race, there is not one, now, in whose veins my blood runs. Sometimes, when the spirits of the storm are howling about my wigwam, I hear the voices of my children crying for vengeance, and then I could myself deal the death-blow." Nelema spoke with vehemence and wildgesture; and her language, though interpreted by Magawisca's soft voice, had little tendency to allay the feeling her manner inspired. Mrs. Fletcher recoiled from her, and instinctively drew her baby closer to her breast.

"Nay," said the old woman, "fear me not, I have had kindness from thee, thy blankets have warmed me, I have been fed from thy table, and drank of thy cup, and what is this arm," and she threw back her blanket and stretched out her naked, shrivelled, trembling arm, "what is this to do the work of vengeance?"

She paused for an instant, glanced her eye wildly around the room, and then again fixed it on Mrs. Fletcher and her infant. "They spared not our homes," she said; "there where our old men spoke, where was heard the song of the maiden, and the laugh of our children; there now all is silence, dust, and ashes. I can neither harm thee, nor help thee. When the stream of vengeance rolls over the land, the tender shoot must be broken, and the goodly tree uprooted, that gave its pleasant shade and fruits to all."

"It is a shame and a sin," said Jennet who entered the room just as Magawisca was conveyveying Nelema's speech to Mrs. Fletcher; "a crying shame, for this heathen hag to be pouring forth here as if she were gifted like the prophets of old; she that can only see into the future by reading the devil's book, and if that be the case, as more than one has mistrusted, it were best, forthwith, to deliver her to the judges and cast her into prison."

"Peace, Jennet," said Mrs. Fletcher, alarmed lest Nelema should hear her, and her feelings, which were then at an exalted pitch, should be wrought to frenzy; but her apprehensions were groundless; the old woman saw nothing

but the visions of her imagination; heard nothing but the fancied voices of the spiritis of her race. She continued for a few moments to utter her thoughts in low inarticulate murmurs, and then, without again addressing Mrs. Fletcher, or raising her eyes, she left the house.

A few moments after her departure, Mrs. Fletcher perceived that she had dropped at her feet a little roll, which she found on examination, to be an arrow, and the rattle of a rattle-snake enveloped in a skin of the same reptile. She knew it was the custom of the savages to express much meaning by these symbols, and she turned to demand an explanation of Magawisca, who was deeply skilled in all the ways of her people.

Magawisca had disappeared, and Jennet, who had ever looked on the poor girl with a jealous and an evil eye, took this occasion to give vent to her feelings. "It is a pity," she said, "the child is out of the way the first time she was like to do a service; she may be skilled in snake's rattles, and bloody arrows, for I make no doubt she is as used to them, as I am to my broom and scrubbing-cloth."

"Will you call Magawisca to me," said Mrs. Fletcher, in a voice that from her would have been a silencing reproof to a more sensitive ear than Jennet's; but she, no ways daunted, replied, "Ah! that will I, madam, if I can find her; but where to look for her no mere mortal can tell; for she does not stay longer on a perch than a butterfly, unless indeed, it be when she is working on Mr. Everell's moccasins, or filling his ears with wild fables about those rampaging Indians. Ah, there she is!" she exclaimed, looking through the window, "talking with Nelema, just a little way in the wood—there, I see their heads above those scrub-oaks—see their wild motions—see Magawisca starts homeward—now the old woman pulls her back—now she seems entreating Nelema—the old hag shakes her head—Magawisca covers her eyes—what can all this mean? no good, I am sure. The girl is ever going to Nelema's hut, and of moonlight nights too, when they say witches work their will—birds of a feather flock together. Well, I know one thing, that if Master Everell was mine, I would sooner, in faith, cast him into the lion's den, or the fiery furnace, than leave him to this crafty offspring of a race that are the children and heirs of the evil one."

"Jennet," said Mrs. Fletcher, "thy tongue far outruns thy discretion. Restrain thy foolish thoughts, and bid Magawisca come to me."

Jennet sullenly obeyed, and soon after Magawisca entered. Mrs. Fletcher was struck with her changed aspect. She turned away, as one conscious of possessing a secret, and fearful that the eye, the herald of the soul, will speak unbidden. Her air was troubled and anxious, and instead of her usual light and lofty step, she moved timidly and dejectedly.

"Come to me, Magawisca," said Mrs. Fletcher, "and deal truly by me, as I have ever dealt by thee."

She obeyed, and as she stood by Mrs. Fletcher the poor girl's tears dropped on her benefactor's lap. "Thou hast been more than true," she said, "thou hast been kind to me as the mother-bird that shelters the wanderer in her nest."

"Then, Magawisca, if it concerneth me to know it, thou wilt explain the meaning of this roll which Nelema dropped at my feet."

The girl started and became very pale—to an observing eye, the changes of the olive skin are as apparent as those of a fairer complexion. She took the roll from Mrs. Fletcher and shut her eyes fast. Her bosom heaved convulsively; but after a short struggle with conflicting feelings, she said, deliberately, in a low voice—"That which I may speak without bringing down on me the curse of my father's race, I will speak. This," she added, unfolding the snake's skin, "this betokeneth the unseen and silent approach of an enemy. This, you know," and she held up the rattle, "is the warning voice that speaketh of danger near. And this," she concluded, taking the arrow in her trembling hand, "this is the symbol of death."

"And why, Magawisca, are these fearful tokens given to me? Dost thou know, girl, aught of a threatening enemy—of an ambushed foe?"

"I have said all that I may say," she replied.

Mrs. Fletcher questioned further, but could obtain no satisfaction. Magawisca's lips were sealed; and it was certain that if her resolution did not yield to the entreaties of her own heart, it would resist every other influence.

Mrs. Fletcher summoned Everell, and bade him urge Magawisca to disclose whatever Nelema had communicated. He did so, but sportively, for, he said, "the old woman was cracked, and Magawisca's head was turned. If there were indeed danger," he continued, "and Magawisca was apprised of it, think you, mother, she would permit us to remain in ignorance?" He turned an appealing glance to Magawisca, but her face was averted.

Without suspecting this was intentional, he continued, "you ought to do penance, Magawisca, for the alarm you have given mother. You and I will act as her patrol to-night."

Magawisca assented, and appeared relieved by the proposition, though her gloom was not lightened by Everell's gaiety. Mrs. Fletcher did not, of course, acquiesce in this arrangement, but she deemed it prudent to communicate her apprehensions to her trusty Digby. After a short consultation, it was agreed that Digby should remain on guard during the night, and that the two other men-servants should have their muskets in order, and be ready at a moment's warning. Such precautions were not infrequent, and caused no unusual excitement in the household. Mrs. Fletcher had it, as she expressed herself, 'borne in upon her mind, after the evening exercise, to make some remarks upon the uncertainty of life.' She then dismissed the family to their several apartments, and herself retired to indite the epistle given above.

Everell observed Magawisca closely through the evening, and he was convinced, from the abstraction of her manner and from the efforts she made, (which were now apparent to him) to maintain a calm demeanor, that there was more ground for his mother's apprehensions than he, at first, supposed. He determined to be the companion of Digby's watch, and standing high in that good fellow's confidence, he made a private arrangement with him, which he easily effected without his mother's knowledge, for his youthful zeal did not render him regardless of the impropriety of heightening her fears.

CHAPTER IV.

"It would have been happy if they had converted some before they had killed any."

— —Robinson.

The house at Bethel had, both in front and in rear, a portico, or, as it was more humbly, and therefore more appropriately named, a shed; that in the rear, was a sort of adjunct to the kitchen, and one end of it was enclosed for the purpose of a bed-room, and occupied by Magawisca. Everell found Digby sitting at the other extremity of this portico; his position was prudently chosen. The moon was high, and the heavens clear, and there concealed and sheltered by the shadow of the roof, he could, without being seen, command the whole extent of cleared ground that bordered on the forest, whence the foe would come, if he came at all.

Everell, like a good knight, had carefully inspected his arms and just taken his position beside Digby, when they heard Magawisca's window cautiously opened, and saw her spring through it. Everell would have spoken to her, but Digby made a signal of silence, and she, without observing them, hastened with a quick and light step towards the wood, and entered it, taking the path that led to Nelema's hut.

"Confound her!" exclaimed Digby; "she is in a plot with the old woman."

"No—no. On my life she is not, Digby."

"Some mischief—some mischief," said Digby, shaking his head. "They are a treacherous race. Let's follow her. No, we had best keep clear of the wood. Do you call after her; she will hearken to you."

Everell hesitated. "Speak quickly, Mr. Everell," urged Digby; "she will be beyond the reach of your voice. It is no light matter that could take her to Nelema's hut at this time of the night."

"She has good reason for going, Digby. I am sure of it; and I will not call her back."

"Reason," muttered Digby; "reason is but a jack-o'-lantern light in most people's minds. You trust her too far, Mr. Everell; but there, she is returning! See how she looks all around her, like a frightened bird that hears an enemy in every rustling leaf. Stand close—observe her—see, she lays her ear to the earth—it is their crafty way of listening—there, she is gone again!" he exclaimed, as Magawisca darted away into the wood. "It is past doubt she holds communication with some one. God send us a safe deliverance. I had rather meet a legion of Frenchmen than a company of these savages. They are a kind of beast we don't comprehend—out of the range of God's creatures—neither angel, man, nor yet quite devil. I would have sent to the fort for a guard to-night, but I liked not being driven hither and yon by that old hag's tokens; nor yet quite to take counsel from your good mother's fears, she being but a woman."

"I think you have caught the fear, Digby, without taking it's counsel," said Everell, "which does little credit to your wisdom; the only use of fear, being to provide against danger."

"That is true, Mr. Everell; but don't think I am afraid. It is one thing to know what danger is, and wish to shun it; and another thing to feel like you, fear-nought lads, that have never felt a twinge of pain, and have scarce a sense of your own mortality. You would be the boldest at an attack, Mr. Everell, and I should stand a siege best. A boy's courage is a keen weapon that wants temper."

"Apt to break at the first stroke from the enemy, you mean, Digby?" Digby nodded assent. "Well, I should like, at any rate, to prove it," added Everell.

"Time enough this half-dozen years yet, my young master. I should be loath to see that fair skin of thine stained with blood; and, besides, you have yet to get a little more worldly prudence than to trust a young Indian girl, just because she takes your fancy."

"And why does she take my fancy, Digby? because she is true and noble-minded. I am certain, that if she knows of any danger approaching us, she is seeking to avert it."

"I don't know that, Mr. Everell; she'll be first true to her own people. The old proverb holds fast with these savages, as well as with the rest of the world—'hawks won't pick out hawks' eyes.' Like to like, throughout all nature. I grant you, she hath truly a fair seeming."

"And all that's foul is our own suspicion, is it not, Digby?"

"Not exactly; there's plainly some mystery between Magawisca and the old woman, and we know these Pequods were famed above all the Indian tribes for their cunning."

"And what is superior cunning among savages but superior sense?"

"You may out-talk me, Mr. Everell," replied Digby, with the impatience that a man feels when he is sure he is right, without being able to make it appear. "You may out-talk me, but you will never convince me. Was not I in the Pequod war? I ought to know, I think."

"Yes, and I think you have told me they shewed more resolution than cunning there; in particular, that the brother of Magawisca, whom she so piteously bemoans to this day, fought like a young lion."

"Yes, he did, poor dog!—and he was afterwards cruelly cut off; and it is this that makes me think they will take some terrible revenge for his death. I often hear Magawisca talking to Oneco of her brother, and I think it is to stir his spirit; but this boy is no more like to him than a spaniel to a bloodhound."

Nothing Digby said had any tendency to weaken Everell's confidence in Magawisca.

The subject of the Pequod war once started, Digby and Everell were in no danger of sleeping at their post. Digby loved, as well as another man, and particularly those who have had brief military experience, to fight his battles o'er again; and Everell was at an age to listen with delight to tales of adventure, and danger. They thus wore away the time till the imaginations of both relater and listener were at that pitch, when every shadow is embodied, and every passing sound bears a voice to the quickened sense. "Hark!" said Digby, "did you not hear footsteps?"

"I hear them now," replied Everell; "they seem not very near. Is it not Magawisca returning?"

"No; there is more than one; and it is the heavy, though cautious, tread of men. Ha! Argus scents them." The old house-dog now sprang from his rest on a mat at the door-stone, and gave one of those loud inquiring barks, by which this animal first hails the approach of a strange footstep. "Hush, Argus, hush," cried Everell; and the old dog, having obeyed his instinct, seemed satisfied to submit to his master's voice, and crept lazily back to his place of repose.

"You have hushed Argus, and the footsteps too," said Digby; but it is well, perhaps, if there really is an enemy near, that he should know we are on guard."

"If there really is, Digby!" said Everell, who, terrific as the apprehended danger was, felt the irrepressible thirst of youth for adventure; "do you think we could both have been deceived?"

"Nothing easier, Mr. Everell, than to deceive senses on the watch for alarm. We heard something, but it might have been the wolves that even now prowl about the very clearing here at night. Ha!" he exclaimed, "there they are"—and starting forward he levelled his musket towards the wood.

"You are mad," said Everell, striking down Digby's musket with the butt end of his own. "It is Magawisca." Magawisca at that moment emerged from the wood.

Digby appeared confounded. "Could I have been so deceived?" he said; "could it have been her shadow—I thought I saw an Indian beyond that birch tree; you see the white bark? well, just beyond in the shade. It could not have been Magawisca, nor her shadow, for you see there are trees between the foot-path and that place; and yet, how should he have vanished without motion or sound?"

"Our senses deceive us, Digby," said Everell, reciprocating Digby's own argument.

"In this tormenting moonlight they do; but my senses have been well schooled in their time, and should have learned to know a man from a woman, and a shadow from a substance."

Digby had not a very strong conviction of the actual presence of an enemy, as was evident from his giving no alarm to his auxiliaries in the house; and he believed that if there were hostile Indians prowling about them, they were few in number, and fearful; still he deemed it prudent to persevere in their precautionary measures. "I will remain here," he said, "Mr. Everell, and do you follow Magawisca; sift what you can from her. Depend on't, there's something wrong. Why should she have turned away on seeing us? and did you not observe her hide something beneath her mantle?"

Everell acceded to Digby's proposition; not with the expectation of confirming his suspicions, but in the hope that Magawisca would shew they were groundless. He followed her to the front of the house, to which she seemed involuntarily to have bent her steps on perceiving him.

"You have taken the most difficult part of our duty on yourself, Magawisca," he said, on coming up to her. "You have acted as vidette, while I have been quiet at my post."

Perhaps Magawisca did not understand him, at any rate she made no reply.

"Have you met an enemy in your reconnoitring? Digby and I fancied that we both heard and saw the foe."

"When and where?" exclaimed Magawisca, in a hurried, alarmed tone.

"Not many minutes since, and just at the very edge of the wood."

"What! when Digby raised his gun? I thought that had been in sport to startle me."

"No—Magawisca. Sporting does not suit our present case. My mother and her little ones are in peril, and Digby is a faithful servant."

"Faithful!" echoed Magawisca, as if there were more in Everell's expression than met the ear; "he surely may walk straight who hath nothing to draw him aside. Digby hath but one path, and that is plain before him—but one voice from his heart, and why should he not obey it?" The girl's voice faltered as she spoke, and as she concluded she burst into tears. Everell had never before witnessed this expression of feeling from her. She had an habitual self-command that hid the motions of her heart from common observers, and veiled them even from those who most narrowly watched her. Everell's confidence in Magawisca had not been in the least degree weakened by all the appearances against her. He did not mean to imply suspicion by his commendation of Digby, but merely to throw out a leading observation which she might follow if she would.

He felt reproached and touched by her distress, but struck by the clew, which, as he thought, her language afforded to the mystery of her conduct, and confident that she would in no way aid or abet any mischief that her own people might be contriving against them, he followed the natural bent of his generous temper, and assured her again, and again, of his entire trust in her. This seemed rather to aggravate than abate her distress. She threw herself on the ground, drew her mantle over her face, and wept convulsively. He found he could not allay the storm he had raised, and he seated himself beside her. After a little while, either exhausted by the violence of her emotion, or comforted by Everell's silent sympathy, she became composed; and raised her face from her mantle, and as she did so, something fell from beneath its folds. She hastily recovered and replaced it, but not till Everell had perceived it was an eagle's feather. He knew this was the badge of her tribe, and he had heard her say, that "a tuft from the wing of the monarch-bird was her father's crest." A suspicion flashed through his mind, and was conveyed to Magawisca's, by one bright glance of inquiry. She said nothing, but her responding look was rather sorrowful than confused, and Everell, anxious to believe what he wished to be true, came, after a little consideration, to the conclusion, that the feather had been dropped in her path by a passing bird. He did not scrutinise her motive in concealing it; he could not think her capable of evil, and anxious to efface from her mind the distrust his countenance might have expressed—"This beautiful moon and her train of stars," he said, "look as if they were keeping their watch over our dwelling. There are those, Magawisca, who believe the stars have a mysterious influence on human destiny. I know nothing of the grounds of their faith, and my imagination is none of the brightest, but I can almost fancy they are stationed there as guardian angels, and I feel quite sure that nothing evil could walk abroad in their light."

"They do look peaceful," she replied mournfully; "but ah! Everell, man is ever breaking the peace of nature. It was such a night as this—so bright and still, when your English came upon our quiet homes."

"You have never spoken to me of that night Magawisca."

"No—Everell, for our hands have taken hold of the chain of friendship, and I feared to break it by speaking of the wrongs your people laid on mine."

"You need not fear it; I can honour noble deeds though done by our enemies, and see that cruelty is cruelty, though inflicted by our friends."

"Then listen to me; and when the hour of vengeance comes, if it should come, remember it was provoked."

She paused for a few moments, sighed deeply, and then began the recital of the last acts in the tragedy of her people; the principal circumstances of which are detailed in the chronicles of the times, by the witnesses of the bloody scenes. "You know," she said, "our fortress-homes were on the level summit of a hill. Thence we could see as far as the eye could stretch, our hunting-grounds, and our gardens, which lay beneath us on the borders of a stream that glided around our hill, and so near to it, that in the still nights we could hear its gentle voice. Our fort and wigwams were encompassed with a palisade, formed of young trees, and branches interwoven and sharply pointed. No enemy's foot had ever approached this nest, which the eagles of the tribe had built for their mates and their young. Sassacus and my father were both away on that dreadful night. They had called a council of our chiefs, and old men; our young men had been out in their canoes, and when they returned they had danced and feasted, and were now in deep sleep. My mother was in her hut with her children, not sleeping, for my brother Samoset had lingered behind his companions, and had not yet returned from the water-sport. The warning spirit,

that ever keeps its station at a mother's pillow, whispered that some evil was near; and my mother, bidding me lie still with the little ones, went forth in quest of my brother. All the servants of the Great Spirit spoke to my mother's ear and eye of danger and death. The moon, as she sunk behind the hills, appeared a ball of fire; strange lights darted through the air; to my mother's eye they seemed fiery arrows; to her ear the air was filled with death-sighs.

"She had passed the palisade, and was descending the hill, when she met old Cushmakin. "Do you know aught of my boy?" she asked.

"Your boy is safe, and sleeps with his companions; he returned by the Sassafras knoll; that way can only be trodden by the strong-limbed, and light-footed." "My boy is safe," said my mother; "then tell me, for thou art wise, and canst see quite through the dark future, tell me, what evil is coming to our tribe?" She then described the omens she had seen. "I know not," said Cushmakin, "of late darkness hath spread over my soul, and all is black there, as before these eyes, that the arrows of death have pierced; but tell me, Monoco, what see you now in the fields of heaven?"

"Oh, now," said my mother, "I see nothing but the blue depths, and the watching stars. The spirits of the air have ceased their moaning, and steal over my cheek like an infant's breath. The water-spirits are rising, and will soon spread their soft wings around the nest of our tribe."

"The boy sleeps safely," muttered the old man, "and I have listened to the idle fear of a doating mother."

"I come not of a fearful race," said my mother.

"Nay, that I did not mean," replied Cushmakin, "but the panther watching her young is fearful as a doe." The night was far spent, and my mother bade him go home with her, for our powwows have always a mat in the wigwam of their chief. "Nay," he said, "the day is near, and I am always abroad at the rising of the sun." It seemed that the first warm touch of the sun opened the eye of the old man's soul, and he saw again the flushed hills, and the shaded vallies, the sparkling waters, the green maize, and the gray old rocks of our home. They were just passing the little gate of the palisade, when the old man's dog sprang from him with a fearful bark. A rushing sound was heard. "Owanox! Owanox! (the English! the English!)" cried Cushmakin. My mother joined her voice to his, and in an instant the cry of alarm spread through the wigwams. The enemy were indeed upon us. They had surrounded the palisade, and opened their fire.

"Was it so sudden? Did they so rush on sleeping women and children?" asked Everell, who was unconsciously lending all his interest to the party of the narrator.

"Even so; they were guided to us by the traitor Wequash; he from whose bloody hand my mother had shielded the captive English maidens—he who had eaten from my father's dish, and slept on his mat. They were flanked by the cowardly Narragansetts, who shrunk from the sight of our tribe—who were pale as white men at the thought of Sassacus, and so feared him, that when his name was spoken, they were like an unstrung bow, and they said, 'He is all one God—no man can kill him.' These cowardly allies waited for the prey they dared not attack."

"Then," said Eyerell, "as I have heard, our people had all the honour of the fight."

"Honour! was it, Everell—ye shall hear. Our warriors rushed forth to meet the foe; they surrounded the huts of their mothers, wives, sisters, children; they fought as if each man had a hundred lives, and would give each, and all, to redeem their homes. Oh! the dreadful fray, even now, rings in my ears! Those fearful guns that we had never heard before—the shouts of your people—our own battle yell—the piteous cries of the little children—the groans of our mothers, and, oh! worse—worse than all—the silence of those that could not speak—The English fell back; they were driven to the palisade; some beyond it, when their leader gave the cry to fire our huts, and led the way to my mother's. Samoset, the noble boy, defended the entrance with a princelike courage, till they struck him down; prostrate and bleeding he again bent his bow, and had taken deadly aim at the English leader, when a sabre-blow severed his bowstring. Then was taken from our hearth-stone, where the English had been so often warmed and cherished, the brand to consume our dwellings. They were covered with mats, and burnt like dried straw. The enemy retreated without the palisade. In vain did our warriors fight for a path by which we might escape from the consuming fire; they were beatenback; the fierce element gained on us; the Narragansetts pressed on the English, howling like wolves for their prey. Some of our people threw themselves into the midst of the crackling flames, and their courageous souls parted with one shout of triumph; others mounted the palisade, but they were shot and dropped like a flock of birds smitten by the hunter's arrows. Thus did the strangers destroy, in our own homes, hundreds of our tribe."

"And how did you escape in that dreadful hour, Magawisca—you were not then taken prisoners?"

"No; there was a rock at one extremity of our hut, and beneath it a cavity into which my mother crept, with Oneco, myself, and the two little ones that afterwards perished. Our simple habitations were soon consumed; we heard the foe retiring, and when the last sound had died away, we came forth to a sight that made us lament to be among the living. The sun was scarce an hour from his rising, and yet in this brief space our homes had vanished. The bodies of our people were strewn about the smouldering ruin; and all around the palisade lay the strong and valiant warriors—cold—silent—powerless as the unformed clay."

Magawisca paused; she was overcome with the recollection of this scene of desolation. She looked upward with an intent gaze, as if she held communion with an invisible being. "Spirit of my mother!" burst from her lips. "Oh! that I could follow thee to that blessed land where I should no more dread the war—cry, nor the death—knife." Everell dashed the gathering tears from his eyes, and Magawisca proceeded in her narrative.

"While we all stood silent and motionless, we heard footsteps and cheerful voices. They came from my father and Sassacus, and their band, returning from the friendly council. They approached on the side of the hill that was covered with a thicket of oaks, and their ruined homes at once burst upon their view. Oh! what horrid sounds then pealed on the air! shouts of wailing, and cries for vengeance. Every eye was turned with suspicion and hatred on my father. He had been the friend of the English; he had counselled peace and alliance with them; he had protected their traders; delivered the captives taken from them, and restored them to their people: now his wife and children alone were living, and they called him traitor. I heard an angry murmur, and many hands were lifted to strike the death—blow. He moved not—'Nay, nay,' cried Sassacus, beating them off. 'Touch him not; his soul is bright as the sun; sooner shall you darken that, than find treason in his breast. If he hath shown the dove's heart to the English when he believed them friends, he will show himself the fierce eagle now he knows them enemies. Touch him not, warriors; remember my blood runneth in his veins.'

"From that moment my father was a changed

"From that moment my father was a changed man. He neither spoke nor looked at his wife, or children; but placing himself at the head of one band of the young men he shouted his war—cry, and then silently pursued the enemy. Sassacus went forth to assemble the tribe, and we followed my mother to one of our villages."

"You did not tell me, Magawisca," said Everell, "how Samoset perished; was he consumed in the flames, or shot from the palisade?"

"Neither—neither. He was reserved to whet my father's revenge to a still keener edge. He had forced a passage through the English, and hastily collecting a few warriors, they pursued the enemy, sprung upon them from a covert, and did so annoy them that the English turned and gave them battle. All fled save my brother, and him they took prisoner. They told him they would spare his life if he would guide them to our strong holds; he refused. He had, Everell, lived but sixteen summers; he loved the light of the sun even as we love it; his manly spirit was tamed by wounds and weariness; his limbs were like a bending reed, and his heart beat like a woman's; but the fire of his soul burnt clear. Again they pressed him with offers of life and reward; he faithfully refused, and with one sabre—stroke they severed his head from his body."

Magawisca paused—she looked at Everell and said with a bitter smile—"You English tell us, Everell, that the book of your law is better than that written on our hearts, for ye say it teaches mercy, compassion, forgiveness—if ye had such a law and believed it, would ye thus have treated a captive boy?"

Magawisca's reflecting mind suggested the most serious obstacle to the progress of the christian religion, in all ages and under all circumstances; the contrariety between its divine principles and the conduct of its professors; which, instead of always being a medium for the light that emanates from our holy law, is too often the darkest cloud that obstructs the passage of its rays to the hearts of heathen men. Everell had been carefully instructed in the principles of his religion, and he felt Magawisca's relation to be an awkward comment on them, and her inquiry natural; but though he knew not what answer to make, he was sure there must be a good one, and mentally resolving to refer the case to his mother, he begged Magawisca to proceed with her narrative.

"The fragments of our broken tribe," she said, "were collected, and some other small dependent tribes persuaded to join us. We were obliged to flee from the open grounds, and shelter ourselves in a dismal swamp. The English surrounded us; they sent in to us a messenger and offered life and pardon to all who had not shed the blood of Englishmen. Our allies listened, and fled from us, as frightened birds fly from a falling tree. My father looked upon his warriors; they answered that look with their battle—shout. 'Tell your people,' said my father to the

messenger, 'that we have shed and drank English blood, and that we will take nothing from them but death.'

"The messenger departed and again returned with offers of pardon, if we would come forth and lay our arrows and our tomahawks at the feet of the English. 'What say you, warriors,' cried my father—'shall we take pardon from those who have burned your wives and children, and given your homes to the beasts of prey—who have robbed you of your hunting—grounds, and driven your canoes from their waters?' A hundred arrows were pointed to the messenger. 'Enough—you have your answer,' said my father, and the messenger returned to announce the fate we had chosen."

"Where was Sassacus?—had he abandoned his people?" asked Everell.

"Abandoned them! No—his life was in theirs; but accustomed to attack and victory, he could not bear to be thus driven, like a fox to his hole. His soul was sick within him, and he was silent and left all to my father. All day we heard the strokes of the English axes felling the trees that defended us, and when night came, they had approached so near that we could see the glimmering of their watch-lights through the branches of the trees. All night they were pouring in their bullets, alike on warriors, women, and children. Old Cushmakin was lying at my mother's feet, when he received a death-wound. Gasping for breath he called on Sassacus and my father— 'Stay not here,' he said; 'look not on your wives and children, but burst your prison bound; sound through the nations the cry of revenge! Linked together, ye shall drive the English into the sea. I speak the word of the Great Spirit—obey it!' While he was yet speaking he stiffened in death. 'Obey him, warriors,' cried my mother; 'see,' she said, pointing to the mist that was now wrapping itself around the wood like a thick curtain— 'see, our friends have come from the spirit-land to shelter you. Nay, look not on us—our hearts have been tender in the wigwam, but we can die before our enemies without a groan. Go forth and avenge us.'

"Have we come to the counsel of old men and old women!" said Sassacus, in the bitterness of his spirit.

"When women put down their womanish thoughts and counsel like men, they should be obeyed," said my father. 'Follow me, warriors.'

"They burst through the enclosure. We saw nothing more, but we heard the shout from the foe, as they issued from the wood—the momentary fierce encounter—and the cry, 'they have escaped!' Then it was that my mother, who had listened with breathless silence, threw herself down on the mossy stones, and laying her hot cheek to mine—'Oh, my children—my children!' she said, 'would that I could die for you! But fear not death—the blood of a hundred chieftains, that never knew fear, runneth in your veins. Hark, the enemy comes nearer and nearer. Now lift up your heads, my children, and show them that even the weak ones of our tribe are strong in soul.'

"We rose from the ground—all about sat women and children in family clusters, awaiting unmoved their fate. The English had penetrated the forest-screen, and were already on the little rising-ground where we had been entrenched. Death was dealt freely. None resisted—not a movement was made—not a voice lifted—not a sound escaped, save the wailings of the dying children.

"One of your soldiers knew my mother, and a command was given that her life and that of her children should be spared. A guard was stationed round us.

"You know that, after our tribe was thus cut off, we were taken, with a few other captives, to Boston. Some were sent to the Islands of the Sun, to bend their free limbs to bondage like your beasts of burden. There are among your people those who have not put out the light of the Great Spirit; they can remember a kindness, albeit done by an Indian; and when it was known to your Sachems that the wife of Mononotto, once the protector and friend of your people, was a prisoner, they treated her with honour and gentleness. But her people were extinguished—her husband driven to distant forests—forced on earth to the misery of wicked souls—to wander without a home; her children were captives—and her heart was broken. You know the rest."

This war, so fatal to the Pequods, had transpired the preceding year. It was an important event to the infant colonies, and its magnitude probably somewhat heightened to the imaginations of the English, by the terror this resolute tribe had inspired. All the circumstances attending it were still fresh in men's minds, and Everell had heard them detailed with the interest and particularity that belongs to recent adventures; but he had heard them in the language of the enemies and conquerors of the Pequods; and from Magawisca's lips they took a new form and hue; she seemed, to him, to embody nature's best gifts, and her feelings to be the inspiration of heaven. This new version of an old story reminded him of the man and the lion in the fable. But here it was not merely changing sculptors to give the advantage to one or the other of the artist's subjects; but it was putting the chisel into the hands of truth, and giving it to whom it belonged.

He had heard this destruction of the original possessors of the soil described, as we find it in the history of the times, where, we are told, "the number destroyed was about four hundred;" and "it was a fearful sight to see them thus frying in the fire, and the streams of blood quenching the same, and the horrible scent thereof; but the victory seemed a sweet sacrifice, and they gave the praise thereof to God."

In the relations of their enemies, the courage of the Pequods was distorted into ferocity, and their fortitude, in their last extremity, thus set forth: "many were killed in the swamp, like sullen dogs, that would rather, in their self-willedness and madness, sit still to be shot or cut in pieces, than receive their lives for asking, at the hands of those into whose power they had now fallen."

Everell's imagination, touched by the wand of feeling, presented a very different picture of those defenceless families of savages, pent in the recesses of their native forests, and there exterminated, not by superior natural force, but by the adventitious circumstances of arms, skill, and knowledge; from that offered by those who "then living and worthy of credit did affirm, that in the morning entering into the swamp, they saw several heaps of them [the Pequods] sitting close together, upon whom they discharged their pieces, laden with ten or twelve pistol bullets at a time, putting the muzzles of their pieces under the boughs, within a few yards of them."

Everell did not fail to express to Magawisca, with all the eloquence of a heated imagination, his sympathy and admiration of her heroic and suffering people. She listened with a mournful pleasure, as one listens to the praise of a departed friend. Both seemed to have forgotten the purpose of their vigil, which they had marvellously kept without apprehension, or heaviness, when they were roused from their romantic abstraction by Digby's voice: "Now to your beds, children," he said; "the family is stirring, and the day is at hand. See the morning star hanging just over those trees, like a single watch-light in all the wide canopy. As you have not to look in a prayerbook for it, master Everell, don't forget to thank the Lord for keeping us safe, as your mother, God bless her, would say, through the night-watches. Stop one moment," added Digby, lowering his voice to Everell as he rose to follow Magawisca, "did she tell you?"

"Tell me! what?"

"What! Heaven's mercy! what ails the boy! Why, did she tell you what brought her out tonight? Did she explain all the mysterious actions we have seen? Are you crazy? Did not you ask her?"

Everell hesitated—fortunately for him the light was too dim to expose to Digby's eye the blushes that betrayed his consciousness that he had forgotten his duty. "Magawisca did not tell me," he said, "but I am sure Digby that"—

"That she can do no wrong—hey, Master Everell, well, that may be very satisfactory to you—but it does not content me. I like not her secret ways—'it's bad ware that needs a dark store.'"

Everell had tried the force of his own convictions on Digby, and knew it to be unavailing, therefore having no reply to make, he very discreetly retreated without attempting any.

Magawisca crept to her bed, but not to repose—neither watching nor weariness procured sleep for her. Her mind was racked with apprehensions, and conflicting duties, the cruellest rack to an honourable mind.

Nelema had communicated to her the preceding day, the fact which she had darkly intimated to Mrs. Fletcher, that Mononotto, with one or two associates was lurking in the forest, and watching an opportunity to make an attack on Bethel. How far his purpose extended, whether simply to the recovery of his children, or to the destruction of the family, she knew not. The latter was most probable, for hostile Indians always left blood on their trail. In reply to Magawisca's eager inquiries, Nelema said she had again, and again, assured her father of the kind treatment his children had received at the hands of Mrs. Fletcher; but he seemed scarcely to hear what she said, and precipitately left her, telling her that she would not again see him, till his work was done.

Magawisca's first impulse had been to reveal all to Mrs. Fletcher; but by doing this, she would jeopard her father's life. Her natural sympathies—her strong affections—her pride, were all enlisted on the side of her people; but she shrunk, as if her own life were menaced, from the blow that was about to fall on her friends. She would have done or suffered any thing to avert it—any thing but betray her father. The hope of meeting him, explains all that seemed mysterious to Digby. She did go to Nelema's hut—but all was quiet there. In returning she found an eagle's feather in the path,—she believed it must have just been dropped there by her father, and this circumstance determined her to remain watching through the night, that if her father should appear, she might avert his vengeance.

She did not doubt that Digby had really seen and heard him; and believing that her father would not shrink

from a single armed man, she hoped against hope, that his sole object was to recover his children; hoped against hope, we say, for her reason told her, that if that were his only purpose, it might easily have been accomplished by the intervention of Nelema.

Magawisca had said truly to Everell, that her father's nature had been changed by the wrongs he received. When the Pequods were proud and prosperous, he was more noted for his humane virtues, than his warlike spirit. The supremacy of his tribe was acknowledged, and it seemed to be his noble nature, as it is sometimes the instinct of the most powerful animals, to protect and defend, rather than attack and oppress. The ambitious spirit of his brother chieftain Sassacus, had ever aspired to dominion over the allied tribes; and immediately after the appearance of the English, the same temper was manifest in a jealousy of their encroachments. He employed all his art and influence and authority, to unite the tribes for the extirpation of the dangerous invaders. Mononotto, on the contrary, averse to all hostility, and foreseeing no danger from them, was the advocate of a hospitable reception, and pacific conduct.

This difference of feeling between the two chiefs, may account for the apparent treachery of the Pequods, who, as the influence of one or the other prevailed, received the English traders with favour and hospitality, or, violating their treaties of friendship, inflicted on them cruelties and death.

The stories of the murders of Stone, Norton, and Oldham, are familiar to every reader of our early annals; and the anecdote of the two English girls, who were captured at Wethersfield, and protected and restored to their friends by the wife of Mononotto, has already been illustrated by a sister labourer; and is precious to all those who would accumulate proofs, that the image of God is never quite effaced from the souls of his creatures; and that in their darkest ignorance, and deepest degradation, there are still to be found traits of mercy and benevolence. These will be gathered and treasured in the memory, with that fond feeling with which Mungo Park describes himself to have culled and cherished in his bosom, the single flower that bloomed in his melancholy track over the African desert.

The chieftain of a savage race, is the depository of the honour of his tribe; and their defeat is a disgrace to him, that can only be effaced by the blood of his conquerors. It is a common case with the unfortunate, to be compelled to endure the reproach of inevitable evils; and Mononotto was often reminded by the remnant of his tribe, in the bitterness of their spirit, of his former kindness for the English. This reproach sharpened too keenly the edge of his adversity.

He had seen his people slaughtered, or driven from their homes and hunting-grounds, into shameful exile; his wife had died in captivity, and his children lived in servile dependence in the house of his enemies.

Sassacus perished by treachery, and Mononotto alone remained to endure this accumulated misery. In this extremity, he determined on the rescue of his children, and the infliction of some signal deed of vengeance, by which he hoped to revive the spirit of the natives, and reinstate himself as the head of his broken and dispersed people: in his most sanguine moments, he meditated a unity and combination that should eventually expel the invaders.

CHAPTER V.

"There have been sweet singing voices
In your walks that now are still;
There are seats left void in your earthly homes,
Which none again may fill."

— Mrs. Hemans

Magawisca rose from her sleepless pillow to join the family at prayers, her mind distracted with opposing fears, which her face, the mirror of her soul, too truly reflected.

Mrs. Fletcher observed her narrowly, and confirmed in her forebodings by the girl's apprehensive countenance, and still farther by Digby's report of her behaviour during the night, she resolved to dispatch him to Mr. Pyncheon for his advice and assistance, touching her removal to the fort, or the appointment of a guard for Bethel. Her servant, (who prudently kept his alarm to himself, knowing, as he said, that a woman's fears were always ahead of danger) applauded her decision, and was on the point of proceeding to act upon it, when a messenger arrived with the joyful tidings, that Mr. Fletcher was within a few hours ride of Bethel. And the intelligence, no less joyful to Dame Grafton, that with his luggage, already arrived at the village, was a small box of millinery, which she had ordered from London.

Mrs. Fletcher feeling, as good wives do, a sense of safety from the proximity of her husband, bade Digby defer any new arrangement till he had the benefit of his master's counsel. The whole house was thrown into the commotion so common in a retired family, when an arrival is about to interrupt the equable current of life. Whatever unexpressed and superior happiness some others might have felt, no individual made such bustling demonstrations as Mrs. Grafton. It was difficult to say which excited her most, the anticipation of seeing her niece, Hope Leslie, or of inspecting the box of millinery.

Immediately after dinner, two of the men—servants were despatched to the village to transport their master's luggage. They had hardly gone when Mrs. Grafton recollected that her box contained a present for Madam Holioko, which it would be a thousand pities to have brought to Bethel, and lie there, perhaps a week before it would be sent to her, and 'she would like of all things, if Mrs. Fletcher saw no objection, to have the pony saddled and ride to the village herself, where the present could be made forthwith.'

Mrs. Fletcher was too happy to throw a shadow across any one's path, and wearied too, perhaps, with Mrs. Grafton's fidgetting, (for the good dame had all day been wondering whether her confidential agent had matched her orange satin; how she had trimmed her cap, she ordered a horse to be saddled and brought to the door. The animal proved a little restive, and Mrs. Grafton, not excelling in horsemanship, became alarmed and begged that Digby might be allowed to attend her.

Digby's cleverness was felt by all the household, and his talents were always in requisition for the miscellaneous wants of the family; but Digby, like good servants in every age, was aware of his importance, and was not more willing than a domestic of the present day, to be worked like a machine. He muttered something of "old women's making fools of themselves with new top-knots," and saying aloud, that "Mistress Grafton knew it was his master's order, that all the men—servants should not be away from the place at the same time," he was turning off, when Mrs. Fletcher, who was standing at the door observing him, requested him with more authority than was usual in her manner, to comply with Mrs. Grafton's request.

"I would not wish," said Digby, still hesitating, "to disoblige Mistress Grafton—if it were a matter of life and death," he added, lowering his voice; "but to get more furbelows for the old lady when with what she has already, she makes such a fool of herself, that our young witlings, Master Everell and Oneco, garnish out our old Yorkshire hen with peacock's feathers and dandalions, and then call her, 'Dame Grafton in a flurry.' "

"Hush, Digby!" said Mrs. Fletcher, "it ill fits you to laugh at such fooleries in the boys— they shall be corrected, and do you learn to treat your master's friend with respect."

"Come—come, Digby," screamed Mrs. Grafton.

"Shall I go and break my master's orders?" asked Digby, still bent on having his own way.

"For this once you shall, Digby," answered Mrs. Fletcher, "and if you need an apology to your master, I shall

not fail to make it."

"But if any thing should happen to you, Mistress Fletcher"—

"Nothing will happen, my good Digby. Is not your master at hand? and an hour or two will be the extent of your absence. So, get thee along without more ado."

Digby could not resist any farther the authority of his gentle mistress, and he walked by the side of Mrs. Grafton's pony, with slow unwilling steps.

All was joy in Mrs. Fletcher's dwelling. "My dear mother," said Everell, "it is now quite time to look out for father and Hope Leslie. I have turned the hour-glass three times since dinner, and counted all the sands I think. Let us all go on the front portico where we can catch the first glimpse of them, as they come past the elm-trees. Here, Oneco," he continued, as he saw assent in his mother's smile, "help me out with mother's rocking-chair—rather rough rocking," he added as he adjusted the rockers lengthwise with the logs that served for the flooring—"but mother wont mind trifles just now. Ah! blessed baby brother," he continued, taking in his arms the beautiful infant—"you shall come too, even though you cheat me out of my birthright, and get the first embrace from father." Thus saying, he placed the laughing infant in his go-cart, beside his mother. He then aided his little sisters in their arrangement of the playthings they had brought forth to welcome and astonish Hope; and finally he made an elevated position for Faith Leslie, where she might, he said, as she ought, catch the very first glimpse of her sister.

"Thank, thank you, Everell," said the little girl as she mounted her pinnacle; "if you knew Hope, you would want to see her first too—every body loves Hope. We shall always have pleasant times when Hope gets here."

It was one of the most beautiful afternoons at the close of the month of May. The lagging spring had at last come forth in all her power; her "work of gladness" was finished, and forests, fields, and meadows were bright with renovated life. The full Connecticut swept triumphantly on, as if still exulting in its release from the fetters of winter. Every gushing rill had the spring-note of joy. The meadows were, for the first time, enriched with patches of English grain, which the new settlers had sown, scantily, by way of experiment, prudently occupying the greatest portion of the rich mould, with the native Indian corn. This product of our soil is beautiful in all its progress, from the moment, when as now it studded the meadow with hillocks, shooting its bright-pointed spear from its mother earth, to its maturity, when the long golden ear bursts from the rustling leaf.

The grounds about Mrs. Fletcher's house had been prepared with the neatness of English taste; and a rich bed of clover that overspread the lawn immediately before the portico, already rewarded the industry of the cultivators. Over this delicate carpet, the domestic fowls, the first civilized inhabitants of the country, of their tribe, were now treading, picking their food here and there like dainty little epicures.

The scene had also its minstrels; the birds, those ministers and worshippers of nature, were on the wing, filling the air with melody; while, like diligent little housewives, they ransacked forest and field for materials for their house-keeping.

A mother, encircled by healthful sporting children, is always a beautiful spectacle—a spectacle that appeals to nature in every human breast. Mrs. Fletcher, in obedience to matrimonial duty, or, it may be, from some lingering of female vanity, had, on this occasion, attired herself with extraordinary care. What woman does not wish to look handsome?—in the eyes of her husband.

"Mother," said Everell, putting aside the exquisitely fine lace that shaded her cheek, "I do not believe you looked more beautiful than you do to day when, as I have heard, they called you 'the rose of the wilderness'—our little Mary's cheek is as round and as bright as a peach, but it is not so handsome as yours, mother. 'Your heart has sent this colour here,' he continued, kissing her tenderly—"it seems to have come forth to tell us that our father is near."

"It would shame me, Everell," replied his mother, embracing him with a feeling that the proudest drawing-room belle might have envied, "to take such flattery from any lips but thine."

"Oh do not call it flattery, mother—look, Magawisca—for heaven's sake cheer up—look, would you know mother's eye? just turn it, mother, one minute from that road—and her pale cheek too—with this rich colour on it?"

"Alas! alas!" replied Magawisca, glancing her eyes at Mrs. Fletcher, and then as if heart-struck, withdrawing them, "how soon the flush of the setting sun fades from the evening cloud."

"Oh Magawisca," said Everell impatiently, "why are you so dismal? your voice is too sweet for a bird of

ill-omen. I shall begin to think as Jennet says—though Jennet is no text-book for me—I shall begin to think old Nelema has really bewitched you."

"You call me a bird of ill-omen," replied Magawisca, half proud, half sorrowful, "and you call the owl a bird of ill-omen, but we hold him sacred—he is our sentinel, and when danger is near he cries, awake! awake!"

"Magawisca, you are positively unkind—Jeremiah's lamentations on a holiday would not be more out of time than your croaking is now—the very skies, earth, and air seem to partake our joy at father's return, and you only make a discord. Do you think if your father was near I would not share your joy?"

Tears fell fast from Magawisca's eye, but she made no reply, and Mrs. Fletcher observing and compassionating her emotion, and thinking it probably arose from comparing her orphan state to that of the merry children about her, called her and said, "Magawisca, you are neither a stranger, nor a servant, will you not share our joy? Do you not love us?"

"Love you!" she exclaimed, clasping her hands, "love you! I would give my life for you."

"We do not ask your life, my good girl," replied Mrs. Fletcher, kindly smiling on her, "but a light heart and a cheerful look. A sad countenance doth not become this joyful hour. Go and help Oneco—he is quite out of breath, blowing those soap bubbles for the children."

Oneca smiled, and shook his head, and continued to send off one after another of the prismatic globes, and as they rose and floated on the air and brightened with the many-coloured ray, the little girls clapped their hands, and the baby stretched his to grasp the brilliant vapour.

"Oh!" said Magawisca, impetuously covering her eyes, "I do not like to see any thing so beautiful, pass so quickly away."

Scarcely had she uttered these words, when suddenly, as if the earth had opened on them, three Indian warriors darted from the forest and pealed on the air their horrible yells.

"My father! my father!" burst from the lips of Magawisca, and Oneco.

Faith Leslie sprang towards the Indian boy, and clung fast to him—and the children clustered about their mother—she instinctively caught her infant and held it close within her arms as if their ineffectual shelter were a rampart.

Magawisca uttered a cry of agony, and springing forward with her arms uplifted, as if deprecating his approach, she sunk down at her father's feet, and clasping her hands, "save them—save them," she cried, "the mother—the children—oh they are all good—take vengeance on your enemies—but spare—spare our friends—our benefactors—I bleed when they are struck—oh command them to stop!" she screamed, looking to the companions of her father, who unchecked by her cries, were pressing on to their deadly work.

Mononotto was silent and motionless, his eye glanced wildly from Magawisca to Oneco. Magawisca replied to the glance of fire—"yes, they have sheltered us—they have spread the wing of love over us—save them—save them—oh it will be too late," she cried, springing from her father, whose silence and fixedness showed that if his better nature rebelled against the work of revenge, there was no relenting of purpose. Magawisca darted before the Indian who was advancing towards Mrs. Fletcher with an uplifted hatchet. "You shall hew me to pieces ere you touch her," she said, and planted herself as a shield before her benefactress.

The warrior's obdurate heart untouched by the sight of the helpless mother and her little ones, was thrilled by the courage of the heroic girl—he paused and grimly smiled on her when his companion, crying, "hasten, the dogs will be on us!" levelled a deadly blow at Mrs. Fletcher—but his uplifted arm was penetrated by a musket shot and the hatchet fell harmless to the floor.

"Courage, mother!" cried Everell, reloading the piece, but neither courage nor celerity could avail—the second Indian sprang upon him, threw him on the floor, wrested his musket from him, and brandishing his tomahawk over his head, he would have aimed the fatal stroke, when a cry from Mononotto arrested his arm.

Everell extricated himself from his grasp, and one hope flashing into his mind, he seized a buglehorn which hung beside the door, and winded it. This was the conventional signal of alarm—and he sent forth a blast—long and loud—a death-cry.

Mrs. Grafton and her attendants were just mounting their horses to return home. Digby listened for a moment—then exclaiming, "it comes from our master's dwelling! ride for your life, Hutton!" he tossed away a bandbox that encumbered him, and spurred his horse to its utmost speed.

The alarm was spread through the village, and in a brief space Mr. Pyncheon with six armed men were pressing

towards the fatal scene.

In the mean time the tragedy was proceeding at Bethel. Mrs. Fletcher's senses had been stunned with terror. She had neither spoken nor moved after she grasped her infant. Everell's gallant interposition, restored a momentary consciousness; she screamed to him—"Fly, Everell, my son, fly; for your father's sake, fly."

"Never," he replied, springing to his mother's side.

The savages, always rapid in their movements, were now aware that their safety depended on despatch. "Finish your work, warriors," cried Mononotto. Obedient to the command, and infuriated by his bleeding wound, the Indian, who on receiving the shot, had staggered back, and leant against the wall, now sprang forward, and tore the infant from its mother's breast. She shrieked, and in that shriek, passed the agony of death. She was unconscious that her son, putting forth a strength beyond nature, for a moment kept the Indian at bay; she neither saw nor felt the knife struck at her own heart. She felt not the arms of her defenders, Everell and Magawisca, as they met around her neck. She fainted, and fell to the floor, dragging her impotent protectors with her.

The savage, in his struggle with Everell, had tossed the infant boy to the ground; he fell quite unharmed on the turf at Mononotto's feet. There raising his head, and looking up into the chieftain's face, he probably perceived a gleam of mercy, for with the quick instinct of infancy, that with unerring sagacity directs its appeal, he clasped the naked leg of the savage with one arm, and stretched the other towards him with a piteous supplication, that no words could have expressed.

Mononotto's heart melted within him; he stooped to raise the sweet suppliant, when one of the Mohawks fiercely seized him, tossed him wildly around his head, and dashed him on the door-stone. But the silent prayer—perhaps the celestial inspiration of the innocent creature, was not lost. "We have had blood enough," cried Mononotto, "you have well avenged me, brothers."

Then looking at Oneco, who had remained in one corner of the portico, clasping Faith Leslie in his arms, he commanded him to follow him with the child. Everell was torn from the lifeless bodies of his mother and sisters, and dragged into the forest. Magawisca uttered one cry of agony and despair, as she looked, for the last time, on the bloody scene, and then followed her father.

As they passed the boundary of the cleared ground, Mononotto tore from Oneco his English dress, and casting it from him—"Thus perish," he said, "every mark of the captivity of my children. Thou shalt return to our forests," he continued, wrapping a skin around him, "with the badge of thy people."

CHAPTER VI.

"It is but a shadow vanished—a bubble broke, a dreame finish't—Eternitie will pay for all."

— Roger Williams

Scarcely had the invaders disappeared, and the sound of their footsteps died away, when Digby and Hutton came in view of the dwelling. "Ah!" said Hutton, reining in his horse, "I thought all this fluster was for nothing—the blast a boy's prank. A pretty piece of work we've made of it; you'll have Mistress Grafton about your ears for tossing away her Lon'on gimcracks. All is as quiet here as a Saturday night; nothing to be seen but the smoke from the kitchen—chimney, and that's a pleasant sight to me, for I went off without my dinner, and methinks it will now taste as savoury as Jacob's pottage."

Digby lent no attention to his companion's chattering, but pressed on; his fears were allayed, but not removed. As he approached the house, he felt that the silence which pervaded it, boded no good; but the horrors of the reality far surpassed the worst suggestions of his vague apprehensions. "Oh, my mistress! my mistress!" he screamed, when the havoc of death burst upon his sight. "My good mistress—and her girls!—and the baby too! Oh, God—have mercy on my master!" and he bent over the bodies and wrung his hands: "not one—not one spared!"

"Yes, one," spoke a trembling whining voice, which proved to be Jennet's, who had just emerged from her hiding—place covered with soot; "by the blessing of a kind Providence, I have been preserved for some wise end, but," she continued, panting, "the fright has taken my breath away, besides being squeezed as flat as a pancake in the bed-room chimney."

"Stop—for Heaven's sake, stop, Jennet, and tell me, if you can, if Mr. Everell was here."

Jennet did not know; she remembered having seen the family in general assembled, just before she heard the yell of the savages.

"How long," Digby inquired, "have they been gone? how long since you heard the last sound?"

"That's more than mortal man, or woman either, in my case, could tell, Mr. Digby. Do you think, when a body seems to feel a scalping knife in their heads, they can reckon time? No; hours are minutes, and minutes hours, in such a case."

"Oh fool! fool!" cried Digby, and turning disgusted away, his eye fell on his musket. "Thank the Lord!" he exclaimed, "Mr. Everell has poured one shot into the fiends; he alone knew where the gun was, bless the boy—bless him; he has a strong arm, and a stout soul—bless him. They have taken him off—we'll after him, Hutton. Jennet, bring my hunting pouch. Look to your fire-lock, Hutton. Magawisca!—Oneco! Faith Leslie, all gone!" he continued, his first amazement dissipating, and thought after thought flashing the truth on his mind. "I remember last night—Oh, Mr. Everell, how the girl deceived you—she knew it all."

"Ah, Magawisca! so I thought," said Jennet. "She knows every thing evil that happens in earth, sea, or air; she and that mother-witch, Nelema. I always told Mrs. Fletcher she was warming a viper in her bosom, poor dear lady; but I suppose it was for wise ends she was left to her blindness."

"Are you ready, Hutton?" asked Digby, impatiently.

"Ready!—yes, I am ready, but what is the use, Digby? what are we two against a host? and, besides, you know not how long they have been gone."

"Not very long," said Digby, shuddering and pointing to blood that was trickling, drop by drop, from the edge of the flooring to the step. How long the faithful fellow might have urged, we know not, for cowardice hath ever ready and abundant arguments, and Hutton was not a man to be persuaded into danger; but the arrival of Mr. Pyncheon and his men, put an end to the debate.

Mr. Pyncheon was the faithful, paternal guardian of his little colony. He saw in this scene of violent death, not only the present overwhelming misery of the family at Bethel, but the fearful fate to which all were exposed who had perilled their lives in the wilderness; but he could give but brief space to bitter reflections, and the lamentings of nature. Instant care and service were necessary for the dead and the living. The bodies of the mother and children were removed to one of the apartments, and decently disposed, and then, after a fervent prayer, a duty never omitted in any emergency by the pilgrims, whose faith in the minute superintendence of Providence was

practical, he directed the necessary arrangements for the pursuit of the enemy.

Little could be gathered from Jennet. She was mainly occupied with her own remarkable preservation, not doubting that Providence had specially interposed to save the only life utterly insignificant in any eyes but her own. She recollected to have heard Magawisca exclaim, 'My father!' at the first onset of the savages. The necessary conclusion was, that the party had been led by the Pequod chief. It was obviously probable that he would return, with his children and captives, to the Mohawks, where, it was well known, he had found refuge; of course the pursuers were to take a westerly direction. Jennet was of opinion that the party was not numerous; and encumbered as they must be with their prisoners, the one a child whom it would be necessary, in a rapid flight to carry, Mr. Pynchon had sanguine expectations that they might be overtaken.

The fugitives, obliged to avoid the cleared meadows, had, as Mr. Pynchon believed, taken an indirect path through the forest to the Connecticut; which, in pursuance of their probable route, they would, of course cross, as soon as they could, with safety. He selected five of his men, whom he deemed fittest for the expedition, and recommending it to them to be guided by the counsel of Digby, whose impatient zeal was apparent, he directed them to take a direct course to the river. He was to return to the village, and despatch a boat to them, with which they were to ply up the river, in the hope of intercepting the passage of the Indians.

The men departed, led by Digby, to whose agitated spirit every moment's delay had appeared unnecessary and fatal; and Mr. Pynchon was mounting his horse, when he saw Mr. Fletcher, who had avoided the circuitous road through the village, emerge from the forest, and come in full view of his dwelling. Mr. Pynchon called to Jennet, "yonder is your master—he must not come hither while this precious blood is on the threshold—I shall take him to my house, and assistance shall be sent to you. In the mean time, watch those bodies faithfully."

"Oh! I can't stay here alone," whimpered Jennet, running after Mr. Pynchon—"I would not stay for all the promised land."

"Back, woman," cried Mr. Pynchon, in a voice of thunder; and Jennet retreated, the danger of advancing appearing, for the moment, the greater of the two.

Mr. Fletcher was attended by two Indians, who followed him, bearing on a litter, his favourite, Hope Leslie. When they came within sight of Bethel, they shouted the chorus of a native song. Hope inquired its meaning. They told her, and raising herself, and tossing back the bright curls that shaded her eyes, she clapped her hands, and accompanied them with the English words,—"The home!—the home!—the chieftain's home!"—"And my home too, is it not?" she said.

Mr. Fletcher was touched with the joy with which this bright little creature, who had left a palace in England, hailed his rustic dwelling in the wilderness. He turned on her a smile of delight—he could not speak; the sight of his home had opened the flood-gates of his heart. "Oh now," she continued, with growing animation, "I shall see my sister. But why does not she come to meet us?—Where is your Everell? and the girls? There is no one looking out for us."

The stillness of the place, and the absence of all living objects, struck Mr. Fletcher with fearful apprehensions, heightened by the sight of his friend, who was coming, at full gallop, towards him. To an accurate observer, the effects of joy and sorrow, on the human figure, are easily discriminated—misery depresses, contracts, and paralyses the body, as it does the spirit.

"Remain here for a few moments," said Mr. Fletcher to his attendants, and he put spurs to his horse, and galloped forward.

"Put down the litter," said Hope Leslie to her bearers. "I cannot stand stock-still, here, in sight of the house where my sister is." The Indians knew their duty, and determined to abide by the letter of their employer's orders, did not depress the litter.

"There, take that for your sulkiness," she said, giving each a tap on his ear, and half impatient, half sportive, she leaped from the litter, and bounded forward.

The friends met. Mr. Pynchon covered his face, and groaned aloud. "What has happened to my family?" demanded Mr. Fletcher. "My wife?—my son?—my little ones?—Oh! speak—God give me grace to hear thee!"

In vain Mr. Pynchon essayed to speak—he could find no words to soften the frightful truth. Mr. Fletcher turned his horse's head towards Bethel, and was proceeding to end, himself, the insupportable suspense, when his friend, seizing his arm, cried—"Stop, stop—go not thither—thy house is desolate"—and then, half-choked with groans and sobs, he unfolded the dismal story.

Not a sound, nor a sigh, escaped the blasted man. He seemed to be turned into stone, till he was roused by the wild shrieks of the little girl, who, unobserved, had listened to the communication of Mr. Pynchon.

"Take the child with you," he said—"I shall go to my house. If—if my boy returns, send a messenger instantly; otherwise, suffer me to remain alone till to-morrow."

He passed on, without appearing to hear the cries and entreaties of Hope Leslie, who, forcibly detained by Mr. Pynchon, screamed, "Oh! take me—take me with you—there are but us two left—I will not go away from you!" but at last, finding resistance useless, she yielded, and was conveyed to the village, where she was received by her aunt Grafton, whose grief was as noisy and communicative, as Mr. Fletcher's had been silent, and unexpressed by any of the forms of sorrow.

Early on the following morning, Mr. Pynchon, attended by several others, men and women, went to Bethel to offer their sympathy and service. They met Jennet at the door, who, greatly relieved by the sight of human faces, and ears willing to listen, informed them, that immediately after her master's arrival, he had retired to the apartment that contained the bodies of the deceased, charging her not to intrude on him.

A murmur of apprehension ran around the circle. "It was misjudged to leave him here alone," whispered one. "It is not every man, though his faith stand as a mountain in his prosperity, that can bear to have the Lord put forth his hand, and touch his bone and his flesh."

"Ah!" said another, "my heart misgave mewhen Mr. Pynchon told us how calm he took it; such a calm as that is like the still dead waters that cover the lost cities—quiet is not the nature of the creature, and you may be sure that unseen havoc and ruin are underneath."

"The poor dear gentleman should have taken something to eat or drink," said a little plump, full-fed lady; "there is nothing so feeding to grief as an empty stomach. Madam Holioke, do not you think it would be prudent for us to guard with a little cordial and a bit of spiced cake—if this good girl can give it to us," looking at Jennet. "The dear lady that's gone was ever thrifty in her housewifery, and I doubt not she hath left such witnesses behind."

Mrs. Holioke shook her head, and a man of a most solemn and owl aspect, who sat between the ladies, turned to the last speaker and said, in a deep guttural tone, "Judy, thou shouldst not bring thy carnal propensities to this house of mourning—and perchance of sin. Where the Lord works, Satan worketh also, tempting the wounded. I doubt our brother Fletcher hath done violence to himself. He was ever of a proud—that is to say, a peculiar and silent make—and what won't bend, will break."

The suggestion in this speech communicated alarm to all present. Several persons gathered about Mr. Pynchon. Some advised him to knock at the door of the adjoining apartment; others counselled forcing it if necessary. While eachone was proffering his opinion, the door opened from within, and Mr. Fletcher came among them.

"Do you bring me any news of my son?" he asked Mr. Pynchon.

"None, my friend—the scouts have not yet returned."

Till this question was put and answered, there was a tremulousness of voice, a knitting of the brow, and a variation of colour, that indicated the agitation of the sufferer's soul; but then a sublime composure overspread his countenance and figure. He noticed every one present with more than his usual attention, and to a superficial observer, one who knew not how to interpret his mortal paleness, the wild melancholy of his glazed eye and his rigid muscles, which had the inflexibility and fixedness of marble, he might have appeared to be suffering less than any person present. Some cried outright—some stared with undisguised and irrepressible curiosity—some were voluble in the expression of their sympathy, while a few were pale, silent, and awe-struck. All these many coloured feelings fell on Mr. Fletcher like light on a black surface—producing no change—meeting no return. He stood leaning on the mantel-piece, till the first burst of feeling was over—till all, insensibly yielding to his example, became quiet, and the apartment was as still as that in which death held his silent dominion.

Mr. Pynchon then whispered to him. "My friend, bear your testimony now—edify us with a seasonable word, showing that you are not amazed at your calamity—that you counted the cost before you undertook to build the Lord's building in the wilderness. It is suitable that you should turn your affliction to the profit of the Lord's people."

Mr. Fletcher felt himself stretched on a rack, that he must endure with a martyr's patience; he lifted up his head and with much effort spoke one brief sentence—a sentence which contains all that a christian could feel, or

the stores of language could express—he uttered, "God's will be done!" and then hurried away, to hide his struggles in solitude.

Relieved from the restraint of his presence, the company poured forth such moral, consoling, and pious reflections as usually flow spontaneously from the lips of the spectators of suffering; and which would seem to indicate that each individual has a spare stock of wisdom and patience for his neighbour's occasions, though, through some strange fatality, they are never applied to his own use.

We hope our readers will not think we have wantonly sported with their feelings, by drawing a picture of calamity that only exists in the fictitious tale. No—such events, as we have feebly related, were common in our early annals, and attended by horrors that it would be impossible for the imagination to exaggerate. Not only families but villages, were cut off by the most dreaded of all foes—the ruthless, vengeful savage.

In the quiet possession of the blessings transmitted, we are, perhaps, in danger of forgetting, or undervaluing the sufferings by which they were obtained. We forget that the noble pilgrims lived and endured for us—that when they came to the wilderness, they said truly, though it may be somewhat quaintly, that they turned their backs on Egypt—they did virtually renounce all dependence on earthly supports—they left the land of their birth—of their homes—of their father's sepulchres—they sacrificed ease and preferment, and all the delights of sense—and for what?—to open for themselves an earthly paradise?—to dress their bowers of pleasure and rejoice with their wives and children? No—they came not for themselves—they lived not to themselves. An exiled and suffering people, they came forth in the dignity of the chosen servants of the Lord, to open the forests to the sun-beam, and to the light of the Sun of Righteousness—to restore man—man oppressed and trampled on by his fellow; to religious and civil liberty, and equal rights—to replace the creatures of God on their natural level—to bring down the hills, and make smooth the rough places, which the pride and cruelty of man had wrought on the fair creation of the Father of all.

What was their reward? Fortune?—distinctions?—the sweet charities of home? No—but their feet were planted on the mount of vision, and they saw, with sublime joy, a multitude of people where the solitary savage roamed the forest—the forest vanished, and pleasant villages and busy cities appeared—the tangled foot-path expanded to the thronged high-way—the consecrated church planted on the rock of heathen sacrifice.

And that we might realize this vision—enter into this promised land of faith—they endured hardship, and braved death—deeming, as said one of their company, that "he is not worthy to live at all, who, for fear or danger of death, shunneth his country's service, or his own honour— since death is inevitable and the fame of virtue immortal."

If these were the fervors of enthusiasm, it was an enthusiasm kindled and fed by the holy flame that glows on the altar of God—an enthusiasm that never abates, but gathers life and strength as the immortal soul expands in the image of its Creator.

We shall now leave the little community, assembled at Bethel, to perform the last offices for one who had been among them an example of all the most attractive virtues of woman. The funeral ceremony was then, as it still is, among the descendants of the pilgrims, a simple affectionate service; a gathering of the people—men, women, and children, as one family, to the house of mourning.

Mononotto and his party in their flight had less than an hour's advantage of their pursuers; and, retarded by their captives, they would have been compelled to despatch them, or have been overtaken, but for their sagacity in traversing the forest; they knew how to wind around morasses, to shape their course to the margin of the rivulets, and to penetrate defiles, while their pursuers, unpractised in that accurate observation of nature, by which the savage was guided, were clambering over mountains, arrested by precipices, or half buried in swamps.

After an hour's silent and rapid flight, the Indians halted to make such arrangements as would best accelerate their retreat. They placed the little Leslie on the back of one of the Mohawks, and attached her there by a happy, or strong wide band, passed several times over her, and around the body of her bearer. She screamed at her separation from Oneco, but being permitted to stretch out her hand and place it in his, she became quiet and satisfied.

The Mohawk auxiliaries, who so lately had seemed two insatiate bloodhounds, now appeared to regard the reciprocal devotion of the children with complacency; but their amity was not extended to Everell; and Saco in particular, the Indian whom he had wounded, and whose arm was irritated and smarting, eyed him with glances of brooding malignity. Magawisca perceived this, and dreading lest the savage should give way to a sudden impulse

of revenge, she placed herself between him, and Everell. This movement awakened Mononotto from a sullen reverie, and striking his hands together, angrily, he bade Magawisca remove from the English boy.

She obeyed, and mournfully resumed her place beside her father, saying, as she did so, in a low thrilling tone, "my father—my father!—where is my father's look, and voice?—Mononotto has found his daughter, but I have not found my father."

Mononotto felt her reproach—his features relaxed, and he laid his hand on her head.

"My father's soul awakes!" she cried, exultingly. "Oh, listen to me—listen to me!"—she waived her hand to the Mohawks to stop, and they obeyed. "Why," she continued in an impassioned voice—"why hath my father's soul stooped from its ever upward flight? Till this day his knife was never stained with innocent blood. Yonder roof," and she pointed towards Bethel, "has sheltered thy children—the wing of the mother-bird was spread over us—we ate of the children's bread; then, why hast thou shed their blood?— why art thou leading the son into captivity? Oh, spare him!—send him back—leave one light in the darkened habitation!"

"One," echoed Mononotto; "did they leave me one? No;—my people, my children, were swept away like withered leaves before the wind— and there where our pleasant homes were clustered, is silence and darkness—thistles have sprung up around our hearth—stones, and grass has overgrown our path—ways. Magawisca, has thy brother vanished from thy memory? I tell thee, that as Samoset died, that boy shall die. My soul rejoiced when he fought at his mother's side, to see him thus make himself a worthy victim to offer to thy lion-hearted brother—even so fought Samoset."

Magawisca felt that her father's purpose was not to be shaken. She looked at Everell, and already felt the horrors of the captive's fate—the scorching fires, and the torturing knives; and when her father commanded the party to move onward, she uttered a piercing shriek.

"Be silent, girl," said Mononotto, sternly; "cries and screams are for children and cowards."

"And I am a coward," replied Magawisca, reverting to her habitually calm tone, "if to fear my father should do a wrong, even to an enemy, is cowardice." Again her father's brow softened, and she ventured to add, "send back the boy, and our path will be all smooth before us—and light will be upon it, for my mother often said, 'the sun never sets on the soul of the man that doeth good.' "

Magawisca had unwittingly touched the spring of her father's vindictive passions. "Dost thou use thy mother's words," he said, "to plead for one of the race of her murderers? Is not her grave among my enemies? Say no more, I command you, and speak not to the boy; thy kindness but sharpens my revenge."

There was no alternative. Magawisca must feel, or feign submission; and she laid her hand on her heart, and bowed her head, in token of obedience. Everell had observed, and understood her intercession, for, though her words were uttered in her own tongue, there was no mistaking her significant manner; but he was indifferent to the success of her appeal. He still felt the dying grasp of his mother—still heard his slaughtered sisters cry to him for help—and, in the agony of his mind, he was incapable of an emotion of hope, or fear.

The party resumed their march, and suddenly changing their direction, they came to the shore of the Connecticut. They had chosen a point for their passage where the windings of the river prevented their being exposed to view for any distance; but still they cautiously lingered till the twilight had faded into night. While they were taking their bark canoe from the thicket of underwood, in which they had hidden it, Magawisca said, unobserved, to Everell, "keep an eagle-eye on our path-way—our journey is always towards the setting sun—every turn we make is marked by a dead tree, a lopped branch, or an arrow's head carved in the bark of a tree; be watchful—the hour of escape may come." She spoke in the lowest audible tone, and without changing her posture or raising her eyes; and though her last accents caught her father's ear, when he turned to chide her he suppressed his rebuke, for she sat motionless, and silent as a statue.

The party were swiftly conveyed to the opposite shore. The canoe was then again taken from the river and plunged into the wood; and believing they had eluded pursuit, they prepared to encamp for the night. They selected for this purpose a smooth grassy area, where they were screened and defended on the river-side by a natural rampart, formed of intersecting branches of willows, sycamores, and elms.

Oneco collected dead leaves from the little hollows, into which they had been swept by eddies of wind, and, with the addition of some soft ferns, he made a bed and pillow for his little favourite, fit for the repose of a wood nymph. The Mohawks regarded this labour of love with favour, and one of them took from his hollow girdle some pounded corn, and mixing grains of maple-sugar with it, gave it to Oneco, and the little girl received it from him

as passively as the young bird takes food from its mother. He then made a sylvan cup of broad leaves, threaded together with delicate twigs, and brought her a draught of water from a fountain that swelled over the green turf and trickled into the river, drop by drop, as clear and bright as crystal. When she had finished her primitive repast, he laid her on her leafy bed, covered her with skins, and sang her to sleep.

The Indians refreshed themselves with pounded maize, and dried fish. A boyish appetite is not fastidious, and, with a mind at ease, Everell might have relished this coarse fare; but now, though repeatedly solicited, he would not even rise from the ground where he had thrown himself in listless despair. No excess of misery can enable a boy of fifteen for any length of time to resist the cravings of nature for sleep. Everell, it may be remembered, had watched the previous night, and he soon sunk into oblivion of his griefs. One after another, the whole party fell asleep, with the exception of Magawisca, who sat apart from the rest, her mantle wrapped closely around her, her head leaning against a tree, and apparently lost in deep meditation. The Mohawks, by way of precaution, had taken a position on each side of Everell, so as to render it next to impossible for their prisoner to move without awakening them. But love, mercy, and hope, count nothing impossible, and all were at work in the breast of Magawisca. She warily waited till the depth of the night, when sleep is most profound, and then, with a step as noiseless as the falling dew, she moved round to Everell's head, stooped down, and putting her lips close to his ear, pronounced his name distinctly. Most persons have experienced the power of a name thus pronounced. Everell awakened instantly and perfectly—and at once understood from Magawisca's gestures, for speak again she dared not, that she urged his departure.

The love of life and safety is too strong to be paralyzed for any length of time. Hope was kindled; extrication and escape seemed possible; quickening thoughts rushed through his mind. He might be restored to his father; Springfield could not be far distant; his captors would not dare to remain in that vicinity after the dawn of day; one half hour and he was beyond their pursuit. He rose slowly and cautiously to his feet. All was yet profoundly still. He glanced his eye on Faith Leslie, whom he would gladly have rescued; but Magawisca shook her head, and he felt that to attempt it, would be to ensure his own failure.

The moon shone through the branches of the trees, and shed a faint and quivering light on the wild groupe. Everell looked cautiously about him, to see where he should plant his first footstep. 'If I should tread on those skins,' he thought, 'that are about them; or on those dead rustling leaves, it were a gone case with me.'— During this instant of deliberation, one of the Indians murmured something of his dreaming thoughts, turned himself over, and grasped Everell's ankle. The boy bit his quivering lip, and suppressed an instinctive cry, for he perceived it was but the movement of sleep, and he felt the hold gradually relaxing. He exchanged a glance of joy with Magawisca, when a new source of alarm startled them—they heard the dashing of oars. Breathless—immoveable—they listened. The strokes were quickly repeated, and the sound rapidly approached, and a voice spoke—"not there boys—not there, a little higher up."

Joy and hope shot through Everell's heart as he sprang, like a startled deer, but the Mohawk, awakened too by the noise, grasped his leg with one hand, and with the other drawing his knife from his girdle, he pointed it at Everell's heart, in the act to strike if he should make the least movement, or sound.

Caution is the instinct of the weaker animals; the Indian cannot be surprised out of his wariness. Mononotto and his companions, thus suddenly awakened, remained as fixed and silent as the trees about them.

The men in the canoes suspended their oars for a moment, and seemed at a loss how to proceed, or whether to proceed at all. "It is a risky business, I can tell you, Digby," said one of them, "to plunge into those woods—it is ill fighting with wild beasts in their own den—they may start out upon us from their holes when we are least looking for them."

"And if they should," replied Digby, in the voice of one who would fain enforce reason with persuasion, "if they should, Lawrence, are we not six stout christian men, with bold hearts, and the Lord on our side, to boot?"

"I grant ye, that's fighting at odds; but I mistrust we have no command from the Lord to come out on this wild—goose chase."

"I take a known duty," replied Digby, "always to be a command from the Lord, and you, Lawrence, I am sure, will be as ready as another man to serve under such an order."

Lawrence was silenced for a moment, and another voice spoke—"Yes, so should we all, Master Digby, if you could make out the order; but I can't see the sense of risking all our lives, and getting but a 'thank ye for nothing' when we get back, if, indeed, we ever get out of the bowels of the forest again, into a clearing. To be sure, we've

tracked them thus far, but now, on the river, we lose scent. You know they thread the forest as handily as my good woman threads her needle; and for us to pursue them, is as vain a thing as for my old chimney-corner cat to chase a catamount through the woods. Come, come— let's head about, and give it up for a bad job."

"Stop, stop, my friends," cried Digby, as they were about to put the boat around; "ye surely have not all faint hearts. Feare-naught, you will not so belie your christian-name, as to turn your back on danger. And you, John Wilkin, who cut down the Pequods, as you were wont to mow the swarth in Suffolk, will you have it thrown up to you, that you wanted courage to pursue the caitiffs? Go home, Lawrence, and take your curly-pated boy on your knee, and thank God with what heart you may, for his spared life; and all, all of you go to that childless man, at Bethel, and say, 'we could not brave the terrors of the forest to save your child, for we have pleasant homes and wives and children.' For myself, the Lord helping, while I've life, I'll not turn back without the boy; and if there's one among you, that hopes for God's pity, let him go with me."

"Why, I'm sure it was not I that proposed going back," said Lawrence.

"And I'm sure," said the second speaker, "that I'm willing, if the rest are, to try our luck further."

"Now, God above reward ye, my good fellows," cried Digby, with renewed life; "I knew it was but trying your metal, to find it true. It is not reasonable that you should feel as I do, who have seen my master's home looking like a slaughter-house. My mistress—the gentlest and the best!—Oh! it's too much to think of. And then that boy, that's worth a legion of such men as we are—of such as I, I mean. But come, let's pull away; a little further up the stream—there's no landing here, where the bank is so steep."

"Stay—row a little closer," cried one of the men; "I see something like a track on the very edge of the bank; its being seemingly impossible, is the very reason why the savages would have chosen it."

They now approached so near the shore that Everell knew they might hear a whisper, and yet to move his lips was certain death. Those who have experienced the agony of a night-mare, when life seemed to depend on a single word, and that word could not be pronounced, may conceive his emotions at this trying moment. Friends and rescue so near, and so unavailing!

"Ye are mistaken," said another of the pursuing party, after a moment's investigation, "it's but a heron's track," which it truly was; for the savages had been careful not to leave the slightest trace of their footsteps where they landed. "There's a cove a little higher up," continued the speaker; "we'll put in there, and then if we don't get on their trail, Master Digby must tell us what to do."

"It's plain what we must do then," said Digby, "go strait on westerly. I have a compass, you know; there is not, as the hunters tell us, a single smoke between this and the vallies of the Housatonick. There the tribes are friendly, and if we reach them without falling in with our enemy, we will not pursue them further."

"Agreed, agreed," cried all the men, and they again dashed in their oars and made for the cove. Everell's heart sunk within him as the sounds receded; but hope once admitted, will not be again excluded, and with the sanguine temperament of youth, he was already mentally calculating the chances of escape. Not so Magawisca; she knew the dangers that beset him; she was aware of her father's determined purpose. Her heart had again been rent by a divided duty; one word from her would have rescued Everell, but that word would have condemned her father; and when the boat retired, she sunk to the ground, quite spent with the conflict of her feelings.

It may seem strange that the Indians did not avail themselves of the advantage of their ambush to attack their pursuers; but it will be remembered, the latter were double their number, and besides, Mononotto's object now was, to make good his retreat with his children; and to effect this, it was essential he should avoid any encounter with his pursuers. After a short consultation with his associates, they determined to remain in their present position till the morning. They were confident they should be able to detect and avoid the track of the enemy, and soon to get in advance of them.

CHAPTER VII.

"—But the scene
Is lovely round; a beautiful river there
Wanders amid the fresh and fertile meads,
The paradise he made unto himself,
Mining the soil for ages. On each side
The fields swell upwards to the hills; beyond,
Above the hills, in the blue distance, rise
The mighty columns with which earth props heaven.
There is a tale about these gray old rocks,
A sad tradition"
—Bryant.

It is not our purpose to describe, step by step, the progress of the Indian fugitives. Their sagacity in traversing their native forests; their skill in following and eluding an enemy, and all their politic devices, have been so well described in a recent popular work, that their usages have become familiar as household words, and nothing remains but to shelter defects of skill and knowledge under the veil of silence; since we hold it to be an immutable maxim, that a thing had better not be done, than be ill-done.

Suffice it to say, then, that the savages, after crossing the track of their pursuers, threaded the forest with as little apparent uncertainty as to their path, as is now felt by travellers who pass through the same still romantic country, in a stage-coach and on a broad turnpike. As they receded from the Connecticut, the pine levels disappeared; the country was broken into hills, and rose into high mountains.

They traversed the precipitous sides of a river that, swoln by the vernal rains, wound its way' among the hills, foaming and raging like an angry monarch. The river, as they traced its course, dwindled to a mountain rill, but still retaining its impetuous character, leaping and tumbling for miles through a descending defile, between high mountains, whose stillness, grandeur, and immobility, contrasted with the noisy reckless little stream, as stern manhood with infancy. In one place, which the Indians called the throat of the mountain, they were obliged to betake themselves to the channel of the brook, there not being room on its margin for a footpath. The branches of the trees that grew from the rocky and precipitous declivities on each side, met and interlaced, forming a sylvan canopy over the imprisoned stream. To Magawisca, whose imagination breathed a living spirit into all the objects of nature, it seemed as if the spirits of the wood had stooped to listen to its sweet music.

After tracing this little sociable rill to its source, they again plunged into the silent forest—waded through marshy ravines, and mounted to the summits of sterile hills; till at length, at the close of the third day, after having gradually descended for several miles, the hills on one side receded, and left a little interval of meadow, through which they wound into the lower valley of the Housatonick.

This continued and difficult march had been sustained by Everell with a spirit and fortitude that evidently won the favour of the savages, who always render homage to superiority over physical evil. There was something more than this common feeling, in the joy with which Mononotto noted the boy's silent endurance, and even contempt of pain. One noble victim seemed to him better than a "human hecatomb." In proportion to his exultation in possessing an object worthy to avenge his son, was his fear that his victim would escape from him. During the march, Everell had twice, aided by Magawisca, nearly achieved his liberty. These detected conspiracies, though defeated, rendered the chief impatient to execute his vengeance; and he secretly resolved that it should not be delayed longer than the morrow.

As the fugitives emerged from the narrow defile, a new scene opened upon them; a scene of valley and hill, river and meadow, surrounded by mountains, whose encircling embrace, expressed protection and love to the gentle spirits of the valley. A light summer shower had just fallen, and the clouds, "in thousand liveries dight," had risen from the western horizon, and hung their rich draperies about the clear sun. The horizontal rays passed over the valley, and flushed the upper branches of the trees, the summits of the hills, and the mountains, with a flood of light, whilst the low grounds reposing in deep shadow, presented one of those striking and accidental contrasts in nature, that a painter would have selected to give effect to his art.

The gentle Housatonick wound through the depths of the valley, in some parts contracted to a narrow channel, and murmuring over the rocks that rippled its surface; and in others, spreading wide its clear mirror, and lingering like a lover amidst the vines, trees, and flowers, that fringed its banks. Thus it flows now—but not as then in the sylvan freedom of nature, when no clattering mills and bustling factories, threw their prosaic shadows over the silver waters—when not even a bridge spanned their bosom—when not a trace of man's art was seen save the little bark canoe that glided over them, or lay idly moored along the shore. The savage was rather the vassal, than the master of nature; obeying her laws, but never usurping her dominion. He only used the land she prepared, and cast in his corn but where she seemed to invite him by mellowing and upheaving the rich mould. He did not presume to hew down her trees, the proud crest of her uplands, and convert them into "russet lawns and fallows grey." The axman's stroke, that music to the settler's ear, never then violated the peace of nature, or made discord in her music.

Imagination may be indulged in lingering for a moment in those dusky regions of the past; but it is not permitted to reasonable instructed man, to admire or regret tribes of human beings, who lived and died, leaving scarcely a more enduring memorial, than the forsaken nest that vanishes before one winter's storms.

But to return to our wanderers. They had entered the expanded vale, by following the windings of the Housatonick around a hill, conical and easy of ascent, excepting on that side which overlooked the river, where, half-way from the base to the summit, rose a perpendicular rock, bearing on its beetling front the age of centuries. On every other side, the hill was garlanded with laurels, now in full and profuse bloom; here and there surmounted by an intervening pine, spruce, or hemlock, whose seared winter foliage was fringed with the bright tender sprouts of spring. We believe there is a chord, even in the heart of savage man, that responds to the voice of nature. Certain it is, the party paused, as it appeared from a common instinct, at a little grassy nook, formed by the curve of the hill, to gaze on this singularly beautiful spot. Everell looked on the smoke that curled from the huts of the village, embosomed in pine trees, on the adjacent plain. The scene, to him, breathed peace and happiness, and gushing thoughts of home filled his eyes with tears. Oneco plucked clusters of laurels, and decked his little favourite, and the old chief fixed his melancholy eye on a solitary pine, scathed and blasted by tempests, that rooted in the ground where he stood, lifted its topmost branches to the bare rock, where they seemed, in their wild desolation, to brave the elemental fury that had stripped them of beauty and life.

The leafless tree was truly, as it appeared to the eye of Mononotto, a fit emblem of the chieftain of a ruined tribe. "See you, child," he said, addressing Magawisca, "those unearthed roots? the tree must fall—hear you the death-song that wails through those blasted branches?"

"Nay, father, listen not to the sad strain; it is but the spirit of the tree mourning over its decay; rather turn thine ear to the glad song of this bright stream, image of the good. She nourishes the aged trees, and cherishes the tender flowrets, and her song is ever of happiness, till she reaches the great sea—image of our eternity."

"Speak not to me of happiness, Magawisca; it has vanished with the smoke of our homes. I tell ye, the spirits of our race are gathered about this blasted tree. Samoset points to that rock—that sacrifice-rock." His keen glance turned from the rock to Everell.

Magawisca understood its portentous meaning, and she clasped her hands in mute and agonizing supplication. He answered to the silent entreaty. "It is in vain—my purpose is fixed, and here it shall be accomplished. Why hast thou linked thy heart, foolish girl, to this English boy? I have sworn, kneeling on the ashes of our hut, that I would never spare a son of our enemy's race. The lights of heaven witnessed my vow, and think you, that now this boy is given into my hands to avenge thy brother, I will spare him for thy prayer? No—though thou lookest on me with thy mother's eye, and speakest with her voice, I will not break my vow."

Mononotto had indeed taken a final and fatal resolution; and prompted, as he fancied, by super-natural intimations, and, perhaps, dreading the relentings of his own heart, he determined on its immediate execution. He announced his decision to the Mohawks. A brief and animated consultation followed, during which they brandished their tomahawks, and cast wild and threatening glances at Everell, who at once comprehended the meaning of these menacing looks and gestures. He turned an appealing glance to Magawisca. She did not speak. "Am I to die now?" he asked; she turned shuddering from him.

Everell had expected death from his savage captors, but while it was comparatively distant, he thought he was indifferent to it, or rather, he believed he should welcome it as a release from the horrible recollection of the massacre at Bethel, which haunted him day and night. But now that his fate seemed inevitable, nature was

appalled, and shrunk from it; and the impassive spirit, for a moment, endured a pang that there cannot be in any "corp'ral sufferance." The avenues of sense were closed, and past and future were present to the mind, as if it were already invested with the attributes of its eternity. From this agonizing excitement, Everell was roused by a command from the savages to move onward. "It is then deferred," thought Magawisca, and heaving a deep sigh, as if for a moment relieved from a pressure on her over-burthened heart, she looked to her father for an explanation; he said nothing, but proceeded in silence towards the village.

The lower valley of the Housatonick, at the period to which our history refers, was inhabited by a peaceful, and, as far as that epithet could ever be applied to our savages, an agricultural tribe, whose territory, situate midway between the Hudson and the Connecticut, was bounded and defended on each side by mountains, then deemed impracticable to a foe. These inland people had heard from the hunters of distant tribes, who occasionally visited them, of the aggressions and hostility of the English strangers, but regarding it as no concern of theirs, they listened, much as we listen to news of the Burmese war—Captain Symmes' theory—or lectures on phrenology. One of their hunters, it is true, had penetrated to Springfield, and another had passed over the hills to the Dutch fort at Albany, and returned with the report that the strangers' skin was the colour of cowardice—that they served their women, and spoke an unintelligible language. There was little in this account to interest those who were so ignorant as to be scarcely susceptible of curiosity, and they hardly thought of the dangerous strangers at all, or only thought of them as a people from whom they had nothing to hope or fear, when the appearance of the ruined Pequod chief, with his English captives, roused them from their apathy.

The village was on a level, sandy plain, extending for about half a mile, and raised by a natural and almost perpendicular bank fifty feet above the level of the meadows. At one extremity of the plain, was the hill we have described; the other was terminated by a broad green, appropriated to sports and councils.

The huts of the savages were irregularly scattered over the plain—some on cleared ground, and others just peeping out of copses of pine trees—some on the very verge of the plain, overlooking the meadows—and others under the shelter of a high hill that formed the northern boundary of the valley, and seemed stationed there to defend the inhabitants from their natural enemies—cold, and wind.

The huts were the simplest structures of human art; but, as in no natural condition of society a perfect equality obtains, some were more spacious and commodious than others. All were made with flexible poles, firmly set in the ground, and drawn and attached together at the top. Those of the more indolent, or least skilful, were filled in with branches of trees and hung over with coarse mats; while those of the better order were neatly covered with bark, prepared with art, and considerable labour for the purpose. Little garden patches adjoined a few of the dwellings, and were planted with beans, pumpkins, and squashes; the seeds of these vegetables, according to an Indian tradition, (in which we may perceive the usual admixture of fable and truth,) having been sent to them, in the bill of a bird, from the south-west, by the Great Spirit.

The Pequod chief and his retinue passed, just at twilight, over the plain, by one of the many foot-paths that indented it. Many of the women were still at work with their stone-pointed hoes, in their gardens. Some of the men and children were at their sports on the green. Here a straggler was coming from the river with a string of fine trout; another fortunate sportsman appeared from the hill-side with wild turkeys and partridges; while two emerged from the forest with still more noble game, a fat antlered buck.

This village, as we have described it, and perhaps from the affection its natural beauty inspired, remained the residence of the savages long after they had vanished from the surrounding country. Within the memory of the present generation the remnant of the tribe migrated to the west; and even now some of their families make a summer pilgrimage to this, their Jerusalem, and are regarded with a melancholy interest by the present occupants of the soil.

Mononotto directed his steps to the wigwam of the Housatonick chief, which stood on one side of the green. The chief advanced from his hut to receive him, and by the most animated gestures expressed to Mononotto his pleasure in the success of his incursion, from which it seemed that Mononotto had communicated with him on his way to the Connecticut.

A brief and secret consultation succeeded, which appeared to consist of propositions from the Pequod, and assent on the part of the Housatonick chief, and was immediately followed by a motion to separate the travellers. Mononotto and Everell were to remain with the chief, and the rest of the party to be conducted to the hut of his sister.

Magawisca's prophetic spirit too truly interpreted this arrangement; and thinking or hoping there might be some saving power in her presence, since her father tacitly acknowledged it by the pains he took to remove her, she refused to leave him. He insisted vehemently; but finding her unyielding, he commanded the Mohawks to force her away.

Resistance was vain, but resistance she would still have made, but for the interposition of Everell. "Go with them, Magawisca," he said, "and leave me to my fate.—We shall meet again."

"Never!" she shrieked; "your fate is death."

"And after death we shall meet again," replied Everell, with a calmness that evinced his mind was already in a great degree resigned to the event that now appeared inevitable. "Do not fear for me, Magawisca. Better thoughts have put down my fears. When it is over, think of me."

"And what am I to do with this scorching fire till then?" she asked, pressing both her hands on her head. "Oh, my father, has your heart become stone?"

Her father turned from her appeal, and motioned to Everell to enter the hut. Everell obeyed; and when the mat dropped over the entrance and separated him from the generous creature, whose heart had kept true time with his through all his griefs, who he knew would have redeemed his life with her own, he yielded to a burst of natural and not unmanly tears.

If this could be deemed a weakness, it was his last. Alone with his God, he realized the sufficiency of His presence and favour. He appealed to that mercy which is never refused, nor given in stinted measure to the humble suppliant. Every expression of pious confidence and resignation, which he had heard with the heedless ear of childhood, now flashed like an illumination upon his mind.

His mother's counsels and instructions, to which he had often lent a wearied attention—the passages from the sacred book he had been compelled to commit to memory, when his truant thoughts were ranging forest and field, now returned upon him as if a celestial spirit breathed them into his soul. Stillness and peace stole over him. He was amazed at his own tranquillity. 'It may be,' he thought, 'that my mother and sisters are permitted to minister to me.'

He might have been agitated by the admission of the least ray of hope; but hope was utterly excluded, and it was only when he thought of his bereft father, that his courage failed him.

But we must leave him to his solitude and silence, only interrupted by the distant hootings of the owl, and the heavy tread of the Pequod chief, who spent the night in slowly pacing before the door of the hut.

Magawisca and her companions were conducted to a wigwam standing on that part of the plain on which they had first entered. It was completely enclosed on three sides by dwarf oaks. In front there was a little plantation of the edible luxuries of the savages. On entering the hut, they perceived it had but one occupant, a sick emaciated old woman, who was stretched on her mat covered with skins. She raised her head, as the strangers entered, and at the sight of Faith Leslie, uttered a faint exclamation, deeming the fair creature a messenger from the spirit-land—but being informed who they were and whence they came, she made every sign and expression of courtesy to them, that her feeble strength permitted.

Her hut contained all that was essential to savage hospitality. A few brands were burning on a hearth-stone in the middle of the apartment. The smoke that found egress, passed out by a hole in the centre of the roof, over which a mat was skilfully adjusted, and turned to the windward-side by a cord that hung within. The old woman, in her long pilgrimage, had accumulated stores of Indian riches; piles of sleeping-mats laid in one corner; nicely dressed skins garnished the walls; baskets, of all shapes and sizes, gaily decorated with rude images of birds and flowers, contained dried fruits, medicinal herbs, Indian corn, nuts, and game. A covered pail, made of folds of birch-bark, was filled with a kind of beer—a decoction of various roots and aromatic shrubs. Neatly turned wooden spoons and bowls, and culinary utensils of clay supplied all the demands of the inartificial housewifery of savage life.

The travellers, directed by their old hostess, prepared their evening repast, a short and simple process to an Indian; and having satisfied the cravings of hunger, they were all, with the exception of Magawisca and one of the Mohawks, in a very short time, stretched on their mats and fast asleep.

Magawisca seated herself at the feet of the old woman, and had neither spoken nor moved since she entered the hut. She watched anxiously and impatiently the movements of the Indian, whose appointed duty it appeared to be, to guard her. He placed a wooden bench against the mat which served for a door, and stuffing his pipe with

tobacco from the pouch slung over his shoulder, and then filling a gourd with the liquor in the pail and placing it beside him, he quietly sat himself down to his night-watch.

The old woman became restless, and her loud and repeated groans, at last, withdrew Magawisca from her own miserable thoughts. She inquired if she could do aught to allay her pain; the sufferer pointed to a jar that stood on the embers in which a medicinal preparation was simmering. She motioned to Magawisca to give her a spoonful of the liquor; she did so, and as she took it, "it is made," she said, "of all the plants on which the spirit of sleep has breathed," and so it seemed to be; for she had scarcely swallowed it, when she fell asleep.

Once or twice she waked and murmured something, and once Magawisca heard her say, "Hark to the wekolis!—he is perched on the old oak, by the sacrifice-rock, and his cry is neither musical, nor merry—a bad sign in a bird."

But all signs and portents were alike to Magawisca—every sound rung a death-peal to her ear, and the hissing silence had in it the mystery and fearfulfulness of death. The night wore slowly and painfully away, as if, as in the fairy tale, the moments were counted by drops of heart's-blood. But the most wearisome nights will end; the morning approached; the familiar notes of the birds of earliest dawn were heard, and the twilight peeped through the crevices of the hut, when a new sound fell on Magawisca's startled ear. It was the slow measured tread of many feet. The poor girl now broke silence, and vehemently entreated the Mohawk to let her pass the door, or at least to raise the mat.

He shook his head with a look of unconcern, as if it were the petulant demand of a child, when the old woman, awakened by the noise, cried out that she was dying—that she must have light and air, and the Mohawk started up, impulsively, to raise the mat. It was held between two poles that formed the door-posts, and while he was disengaging it, Magawisca, as if inspired, and quick as thought, poured the liquor from the jar on the fire into the hollow of her hand, and dashed it into the gourd which the Mohawk had just replenished. The narcotic was boiling hot, but she did not cringe; she did not even feel it; and she could scarcely repress a cry of joy, when the savage turned round and swallowed, at one draught, the contents of the cup.

Magawisca looked eagerly through the aperture, but though the sound of the footsteps had approached nearer, she saw no one. She saw nothing but a gentle declivity that sloped to the plain, a few yards from the hut, and was covered with a grove of trees; beyond and peering above them, was the hill, and the sacrifice-rock; the morning star, its rays not yet dimmed in the light of day, shed a soft trembling beam on its summit. This beautiful star, alone in the heavens, when all other lights were quenched, spoke to the superstitious, or, rather, the imaginative spirit of Magawisca. 'Star of promise,' she thought, 'thou dost still linger with us when day is vanished, and now thou art there, alone, to proclaim the coming sun; thou dost send in upon my soul a ray of hope; and though it be but as the spider's slender pathway, it shall sustain my courage.' She had scarcely formed this resolution, when she needed all its efficacy, for the train, whose footsteps she had heard, appeared in full view.

First came her father, with the Housatonick chief; next, alone, and walking with a firm undaunted step, was Everell; his arms folded over his breast, and his head a little inclined upward, so that Magawisca fancied she saw his full eye turned heavenward; after him walked all the men of the tribe, ranged according to their age, and the rank assigned to each by his own exploits.

They were neither painted nor ornamented according to the common usage at festivals and sacrifices, but every thing had the air of hasty preparation. Magawisca gazed in speechless despair. The procession entered the wood, and for a few moments, disappeared from her sight—again they were visible, mounting the acclivity of the hill, by a winding narrow foot-path, shaded on either side by laurels. They now walked singly and slowly, but to Magawisca, their progress seemed rapid as a falling avalanche. She felt that, if she were to remain pent in that prisonhouse, her heart would burst, and she sprang towards the door-way in the hope of clearing her passage, but the Mohawk caught her arm in his iron grasp, and putting her back, calmly retained his station. She threw herself on her knees to him—she entreated—she wept—but in vain: he looked on her with unmoved apathy. Already she saw the foremost of the party had reached the rock, and were forming a semicircle around it—again she appealed to her determined keeper, and again he denied her petition, but with a faltering tongue, and a drooping eye.

Magawisca, in the urgency of a necessity that could brook no delay, had forgotten, or regarded as useless, the sleeping potion she had infused into the Mohawk's draught; she now saw the powerful agent was at work for her, and with that quickness of apprehension that made the operations of her mind as rapid as the impulses of instinct, she perceived that every emotion she excited but hindered the effect of the potion, suddenly seeming to relinquish

all purpose and hope of escape, she threw herself on a mat, and hid her face, burning with agonizing impatience, in her mantle. There we must leave her, and join that fearful company who were gathered together to witness what they believed to be the execution of exact and necessary justice.

Seated around their sacrifice—rock—their holy of holies—they listened to the sad story of the Pequod chief, with dejected countenances and downcast eyes, save when an involuntary glance turned on Everell, who stood awaiting his fate, cruelly aggravated by every moment's delay, with a quiet dignity and calm resignation, that would have become a hero, or a saint. Surrounded by this dark cloud of savages, his fair countenance kindled by holy inspiration, he looked scarcely like a creature of earth.

There might have been among the spectators, some who felt the silent appeal of the helpless courageous boy; some whose hearts moved them to interpose to save the selected victim; but they were restrained by their interpretation of natural justice, as controlling to them as our artificial codes of laws to us.

Others of a more cruel, or more irritable disposition, when the Pequod described his wrongs, and depicted his sufferings, brandished their tomahawks, and would have hurled them at the boy, but the chief said—"Nay, brothers—the work is mine—he dies by my hand—for my first-born—life for life—he dies by a single stroke, for thus was my boy cut off. The blood of sachems is in his veins. He has the skin, but not the soul of that mixed race, whose gratitude is like that vanishing mist," and he pointed to the vapour that was melting from the mountain tops into the transparent ether; "and their promises are like this," and he snapped a dead branch from the pine beside which he stood, and broke it in fragments "Boy, as he is, he fought for his mother, as the eagle fights for its young. I watched him in the mountain—path, when the blood gushed from his torn feet; not a word from his smooth lip, betrayed his pain."

Mononotto embellished his victim with praises, as the ancients wreathed theirs with flowers. He brandished his hatchet over Everell's head, and cried, exultingly, "See, he flinches not. Thus stood my boy, when they flashed their sabres before his eyes, and bade him betray his father. Brothers—My people have told me I bore a woman's heart towards the enemy. Ye shall see. I will pour out this English boy's blood to the last drop, and give his flesh and bones to the dogs and wolves."

He then motioned to Everell to prostrate himself on the rock, his face downward. In this position the boy would not see the descending stroke. Even at this moment of dire vengeance, the instincts of a merciful nature asserted their rights.

Everell sunk calmly on his knees, not to supplicate life, but to commend his soul to God. He clasped his hands together. He did not—he could not speak; his soul was

"Rapt in still communion that transcends
The imperfect offices of prayer."

At this moment a sun-beam penetrated the trees that enclosed the area, and fell athwart his brow and hair, kindling it with an almost supernatural brightness. To the savages, this was a token that the victim was accepted, and they sent forth a shout that rent the air. Everell bent forward, and pressed his forehead to the rock. The chief raised the deadly weapon, when Magawisca, springing from the precipitous side of the rock, screamed—"Forbear!" and interposed her arm. It was too late. The blow was levelled—force and direction given—the stroke aimed at Everell's neck, severed his defender's arm, and left him unharmed. The lopped quivering member dropped over the precipice. Mononotto staggered and fell senseless, and all the savages, uttering horrible yells, rushed toward the fatal spot.

"Stand back!" cried Magawisca. "I have bought his life with my own. Fly, Everell—nay, speak not, but fly—thither—to the east!" she cried, more vehemently.

Everell's faculties were paralyzed by a rapid succession of violent emotions. He was conscious only of a feeling of mingled gratitude and admiration for his preserver. He stood motionless, gazing on her. "I die in vain then," she cried, in an accent of such despair, that he was roused. He threw his arms around her, and pressed her to his heart, as he would a sister that had redeemed his life with her own, and then tearing himself from her, he disappeared. No one offered to follow him. The voice of nature rose from every heart, and responding to the justice of Magawisca's claim, bade him "God speed!" To all it seemed that his deliverance had been achieved by miraculous aid. All—the dullest and coldest, paid involuntary homage to the heroic girl, as if she were a superior being, guided and upheld by supernatural power.

Every thing short of miracle she had achieved. The moment the opiate dulled the senses of her keeper, she

escaped from the hut; and aware that, if she attempted to penetrate to her father through the semicircular line of spectators that enclosed him, she should be repulsed, and probably borne off the ground, she had taken the desperate resolution of mounting the rock, where only her approach would be unperceived. She did not stop to ask herself if it were possible, but impelled by a determined spirit, or rather, we would believe, by that inspiration that teaches the bird its unknown path, and leads the goat, with its young, safely over the mountain crags, she ascended the rock. There were crevices in it, but they seemed scarcely sufficient to support the eagle with his grappling talon, and twigs issuing from the fissures, but so slender, that they waved like a blade of grass under the weight of the young birds that made a rest on them, and yet, such is the power of love, stronger than death, that with these inadequate helps, Magawisca scaled the rock, and achieved her generous purpose.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Pawwow—a priest. These do begin and order their service and invocation of their gods, and all the people follow, and join interchangeably in a laborious bodily service unto sweating, especially of the priest, who spends himself in strange antick gestures and actions, even unto fainting. Being once in their houses and beholding what their worship was, I never durst be an eye-witness, spectator, or looker-on, lest I should have been a partaker of Satan's inventions and worships."

— —Roger Williams.

The following letter, written by Hope Leslie, and addressed to Everell Fletcher, then residing in England, will show, briefly, the state of affairs at Bethel, seven years subsequent to the date of the events already detailed. Little had occurred, save the changes of the seasons, in nature and human life, to mark the progress of time.

"Dear Everell,

"This is the fifth anniversary of the day you left us—your birth-day, too, you know; so we celebrate it, but with a blended joy and grief, which, as my dear guardian says, is suitable to the mixed condition of human life.

"I surprised him, this morning, with a painting, on which I had expended much time and laid out all my poor skill. The scene is a forest glade—a boy is sleeping under a birch tree, near a thicket of hazle bushes, and from their deepest shadow peeps a gaunt wolf in the act of springing on him, while just emerging from the depths of the wood, in the back ground, appears a man with a musket levelled at the animal. I had placed the painting on the mantel-piece, and it caught your father's eye as he entered to attend our morning exercise. He said nothing, for, you know, the order of our devotions is as strictly observed as were the services of the ancient temple. So we all took our accustomed places—I mine on the cushion beside your father; yours still stands on the other side of him, like the vacant seat of Banquo. Love can paint as well as fear; and though no form, palpable to common eyes, is seated there, yet, to our second sight, imagination produces from her shadowy regions the form of our dear Everell.

"I believe the picture had touched the hidden springs of memory, for your father, though he was reading the chapter of Exodus that speaks of the wise-hearted men who wrought for the sanctuary, (a portion of scripture not particularly moving,) repeatedly wiped the gathering tears from his eyes. Jennet is never lagging in the demonstration of religious emotion, and I inferred, from her responsive hems! and hahs! that, as there was no obvious cause for tears, she fancied affecting types were lurking in the 'loops and selvedges, and tenons and sockets, and fine twined linen,' about which your father was reading. But when he came, in his prayer, to his customary mention of his absent child—when he touched upon the time when his habitation was made desolate—and then upon the deliverance of his son, his only son, from the savage foe, and the ravening beast—his voice faltered—every heart responded; Digby sobbed aloud—and even aunt Grafton, whose aversion to standing at her devotions has not diminished with her increasing years, stood a monument of patience till the clock twice told the hour; though it was but the other day when she thought your father was drawing to a close, and he started a new topic, that she broke out, after her way of thinking aloud, "well, if he is going on t'other tack, I'll sit down."

"When the exercise was finished, Digby gave vent to his pleasure. 'There, Jennet,' he said, rubbing his hands exultingly, 'you are always on the look-out for witchcraft. I wonder what you call that? It is a perfect picture of the place where I found Mr. Everell, as that fellow there, in the frieze jacket is of me; and any body would know that, though they would not expect to see John Digby painted in a picture. To be sure, Mr. Everell does not look quite so pale and famished as he did when I first saw him sleeping under that birch tree: as I live, she has put his name there, just as he had carved it. Well, it will be a kind of a history for Mr. Everell's children, when we, and the forest too, are laid low.'

"Your father permitted the honest fellow's volubility to flow unrepressed; he himself only said, as he drew me to him and kissed me, 'you have kept a faithful copy of our dear Everell in your memory.'

"My honest tutor Cradock and aunt Grafton contended for the honour of my excellence in the art—poor Cradock, my Apollo! He maintained that he had taught me the theory, while aunt Grafton boasted her knowledge of the practice: but, alas! the little honour my success reflected on them, was not worth their contest; and I did them no injustice in secretly ascribing all my skill to the source whence the Corinthian maid derived her power to

trace, by the secret lamp, the shade of her lover. Affection for my dear Everell and for his father is my inspiration; but, I confess, it might never have appeared in the mimicry, of even this rude painting, if aunt Grafton had not taken lessons at the Convent of the Chartreux at Paris, and had daily access, as you know she has a thousand times repeated to us, to the paintings of Rossi and Albati in the palace of Fontainebleau.

"But into what egotism does this epistolary journalizing betray me? The day is yours, Everell, and I will not speak again of myself.

"Aunt Grafton, meaning to do it what honour she could, had our dinner-table set out with massive silver dishes, engraved with her family's armorial bearings. They have never before seen the light in America. Your father smiled at their contrast with our bare walls, pine tables, chairs, said, 'we looked like Attila, in his rude hut, surrounded with the spoils of Rome;' and aunt Grafton, who has a decided taste for all the testimonials of her family grandeur, entered into a warm discussion with Master Cradock as to how far the new man might lawfully indulge in a vain show. By the way, their skirmishing on the debateable grounds of church and state, have of late almost ceased. When I remarked this to your father, he said, he believed I had brought about the present amicable state of affairs by affording them a kind of neutral ground, where their common affections and interests met. Whatever has produced this result, it is too happy not to be carefully cherished, so I have taken care that my poor tutor, who never would intentionally provoke a human being, should avoid, as far as possible, all those peculiarities, which, as some colours offend certain animals, were sure, every day, and thrice a day, to call forth aunt Grafton's animadversions. I have, too, entered into a secret confederacy with Digby—the effect of which is, that Master Cradock's little brown wig is brushed every morning, and is, at least once each day, straight on his head. The brush has invaded too, the hitherto unexplored regions of his broadcloth, and his black stock gives place, on every Lord'sday at least, to a white collar. Aunt Grafton herself has more than once remarked, that 'for one of these scholar-folks, he goes quite decent.' As to aunt Grafton, I am afraid that if you were here, though we may both have gained with our years a little discretion—yet I am afraid we should laugh, as we were wont to do, at her innocent peculiarities. She spends many a weary hour in devising new head-gear, and both daily, as Jennet says, break the law against costly apparel. Jennet is the same untired and tiresome railer. If there are anodynes for the tongue in England, pray send some for her.

"We are going, to-morrow, on an excursion to a new settlement on the river, called Northampton. Your father feared the toils and perils of the way for me, and has consented, reluctantly, to my being of the party. Aunt Grafton remonstrated, and expressed her natural and kind apprehensions, by alleging that it was 'very unladylike, and a thing quite unheard of in England,' for a young person, like me, to go out exploring a new country. I urged, that our new country develops faculties that young ladies, in England, were unconscious of possessing. She maintained, as usual, that whatever was not practised and known in England, was not worth possessing; but finally she concluded her opposition with her old customary phrase, 'Well, it's peculiar of you, Miss Hope,' which, you know, she always uses to characterize whatever opposes her opinions or inclinations.

"My good tutor, who would fain be my ægisbearer, insists on attending me. You may laugh at him, Everell, and call him my knight-errant, or squire, or what you will; but I assure you, he is a right godly and suitable appendage to a pilgrim damsel. I will finish my letter when I return; a journey of twenty miles has put my thoughts, (which, you know, are ever ready to take wing,) to flight.

"25th October, Thursday,—or, as the injunction has come from Boston that we be more particular in avoiding these heathen designations, 10th month, 5th day.

"Dear Everell,—We followed the Indian footpath that winds along the margin of the river, and reached Northampton without any accident. There is but a narrow opening there, scooped out of the forest, and Mr. Holioko, wishing to have an extensive view of the country, engaged an Indian guide to conduct your father and himself to the summit of a mountain, which rises precipitously from the meadows, and overlooks an ocean of forest.

"I had gazed on the beautiful summits of this mountain, that, in this transparent October atmosphere, were as blue and bright as the heaven themselves, till I had an irrepressible desire to go to them; and, like the child who cried for the horns of the silver moon, I should have cried too, if my wishes had been unattainable.

"Your father acquiescéd (as my conscience tells me, Everell, he does too easily) in my wishes, and nobody objected but my tutor, who evidently thought it would be unmanly for him to shrink from toils that I braved, and who looked forward with dread and dismay to the painful ascent. However, we all reached the summit, without

scath to life or limb, and then we looked down upon a scene that made me clap my hands, and my pious companions raise their eyes in silent devotion. I hope you have not forgotten the autumnal brilliancy of our woods. They say the foliage in England has a paler sickly hue, but for our western world—nature's youngest child—she has reserved her many-coloured robe, the brightest and most beautiful of her garments. Last week the woods were as green as an emerald, and now they look as if all the summer-spirits had been wreathing them with flowers of the richest and most brilliant dyes.

"Philosophers may inquire into the process of nature, and find out, if they can, how such sudden changes are produced, though, after all, I fancy their inquiries will turn out like the experiment of the inquisitive boy, who cut open the drum to find the sound; but I love to lend my imagination to poets' dreams, and to fancy nature has her myriads of little spirits, who

"do wander every where,

"Swifter than the moon's sphere."

He must have a torpid imagination, and a cold heart, I think, who does not fancy these vast forests filled with invisible intelligences. Have these beautiful vallies of our Connecticut, which we saw from the mountain, looking like a smile on nature's rugged face, and stretching as far as our vision extended, till the broad river diminished in the shadowy distance, to a silver thread; have they been seen and enjoyed only by those savages, who have their summer home in them? While I was pondering on this thought, Mr. Holioko, who seldom indulges in a fanciful suggestion, said to your father, 'The Romans, you know, brother Fletcher, had their Cenotapha, empty sepulchres, in honour of those who died in their country's cause, and mouldered on a distant soil. Why may we not have ours? and surmise that the spirits of those who have died for liberty and religion, have come before us to this wilderness, and taken possession in the name of the Lord?'

"We lingered for an hour or two on the mountain. Mr. Holioko and your father were noting the sites for future villages, already marked out for them by clusters of Indian huts. The instinct of the children of the forest guides them to these rich intervals, which the sun and the river prepare almost till for them. While the gentlemen were thus engaged, I observed that the highest rock of the mountain was crowned with a pyramidal pile of stones, and about them were strewn relicts of Indian sacrifices. It has, I believe, been the custom of people, in all ages, who were instructed only by nature, to worship on high places. I pointed to the rude altar, and ventured to ask Mr. Holioko if an acceptable service might not have been offered there?

"He shook his head at me, as if I were little better than a heathen, and said, 'it was all worship to an unknown God.'

"'But,' said your father, 'the time is approaching, when through the vallies beneath, and on this mount, incense shall rise from christian hearts.'

"'It were well,' replied Mr. Holioko, 'if we now, in the spirit, consecrated it to the Lord.'

"'And let me stand sponsor for it,' said I, 'while you christen it Holioko.'

"I was gently rebuked for my levity, but my hint was not unkindly taken; for the good man has never since spoken of his name—sake, without calling it 'Mount Holioko.'

"My senses were enchanted on that high place. I listened to the mighty sound that rose from the forest depths of the abyss, like the roar of the distant ocean, and to the gentler voices of nature, borne on the invisible waves of air—the farewell notes of the few birds that still linger with us—the rustling of the leaves beneath the squirrel's joyous leap—the whizzing of the partridge startled from his perch; the tinkling of the cow-bell, and the barking of the Indian's dog. I was lying with my ear over the rock, when your father reminded me that it was time to return, and bade Digby, who had attended us, 'look well to Miss Leslie's descent, and lend a helping hand to Master Cradock.'

"My poor tutor's saffron skin changed to brick colour; and that he might not think I heard the imputation cast upon his serviceable powers, I stepped between him and Digby, and said, 'that with such wings on each side of me, I might fly down the mountain.'

"'Ah, Miss Hope Leslie,' said Cradock, restored to his self-complacency, 'you are a merry thought between us.' He would fain have appeared young and agile; not from vanity, Everell, but to persuade me to accept his proffered assistance. Poor old man! he put me in mind, as he went after Digby, panting and leaping (or rather settling) from crag to crag, of an ancient horse, that almost cracks his bones to keep pace with a colt. His involuntary groans betrayed the pain of his stiffened muscles, and I lingered on every projecting cliff, on the pretence of taking a

farewell look of the vallies, but really to allow him time to recover breath.

"In the mean time the gentlemen had got far in advance of us. We came to the last rock of difficult passage; Digby gave me his hand to assist me in springing from it, and asked Cradock to ascertain if the foot—hold below was sure; a necessary precaution, as the matted leaves had sometimes proved treacherous. Cradock in performing this office, startled a rattle—snake, that lay concealed under a mass of leaves and moss; the reptile coiled himself up, and darted his fangs into his hand. I heard the rattle of victory, and saw the poor man's deathly paleness, as he sunk to the ground, exclaiming, 'I am but a dead sinner!'

"Digby turned to pursue the snake, and I sprang from the rock. I begged Cradock to show me the wound; it was on the back of his hand. I assured him I could easily extract the venom, and would have applied my lips to the wound, but he withdrew his hand. Digby at that moment returned. 'She would suck the poison from my hand, Digby,' said Cradock; 'verily, she is but little lower than the angels.'

"'What! Miss Hope!' exclaimed Digby, 'would you be guilty of self—murder, even if you could save the old gentleman from dying—and dying, as it were, by the will of the Lord?' I assured Digby that there was no danger whatever to me; that I had read of many cases of poison being extracted in that way, without the slightest injury to the person extracting it. He asked me where I had read such stories. I was obliged to refer to a book of aunt Grafton's, called 'The Wonders of the Crusades.' This seemed to Digby but apocryphal authority; he shook his head, and said, 'he would believe such fables no where out of the Bible. 'I entreated, vehemently, for I well knew it could not harm me, and I believed it to be life or death to my poor tutor. He seemed half disposed to yield to me. 'Thou hast a marvellous persuasion, child,' he said; 'and now I remember me of a proverb they have in Italy—the lips extract venom from the heart, and poison from the wound.'

"Digby again shook his head. 'Nothing but one of those flourishes they put into verses,' he said. 'Come, come, Master Cradock, stir up a manly spirit, and let's on to the fort, where we may get help it's lawful for you to use; and don't ransack your memory for any more such scholar—rubbish to uphold you in consenting to our young lady's exposing her life, to save the fag end of yours.'

"'Expose her life!' retorted Cradock, rising with a feeling of honest indignation, that for a moment overcame the terror of death. 'Digby, you know that if I had a hundred lives, I would rather lose them all, than expose her precious life.'

"'I believe you, Master Cradock—I believe you; and whether you live, or die, I will always uphold you for a true—hearted man; and you must excuse me for my boldness in speaking, when I thought our young Mistress was putting herself in the jaws of death.'

"We now made all speed to reach the fort; but when we arrived there, no aid could be obtained, and poor Cradock's death was regarded as inevitable. I remembered to have heard Nelema say, that she knew a certain antidote to the poison of a rattle—snake; and when I told this to your father, he ordered our horses to be saddled, and we set out immediately for home, where we arrived in six hours. Even in that brief space the disease had made fearful progress. The wound was horribly inflamed, and the whole arm swoln and empurpled. I saw despair in every face that looked on Cradock. I went myself, attended by Jennet and Digby, to Nelema's hut, for I knew if the old woman was in one of her moody fits, she would not come for any bidding but mine.

"Jennet, as you know was always her wont, took up her testimony against 'the old heathen witch.' 'It were better,' she said, 'to die, than to live by the devil's help.' I assured her, that if the case were her own, I would not oppose her pious preference; but that now I must have my own way, and I believed the Giver of life would direct the means of its preservation.

"Though it was near midnight, we found Nelema sitting at the entrance of her hut. I told her my errand. 'Peace be with you, child,' she said. 'I knew you were coming, and have been waiting for you.' She is superstitious, or loves to affect supernatural knowledge, and I should have thought nothing of her harmless boast, had I not seen by the significant shake of Jennet's head, that she set it down against her. The old woman filled a deer—skin pouch from a repository of herbs in one corner of her hut, and then returned to Bethel with us. We found Cradock in a state of partial delirium, and nervous restlessness, which, your father said, was the immediate precursor of death. Aunt Grafton was kneeling at his bedside, reading the prayers for the dying.

Nelema ordered every one, with the exception of myself, to leave the room, for she said her cures would not take effect, unless there was perfect silence. Your father retired to his own apartment, and gave orders that he should, in no case, be diverted from his prayers. Aunt Grafton withdrew with evident reluctance, and Jennet,

lingered till Nelema's patience was exhausted, when she pushed her out of the room, and barred the door against her.

"I confess, Everell, I would gladly have been excluded too, for I recoiled from witnessing Cradock's mortal agony; but I dared in no wise cross Nelema, so I quietly took the lamp, as she bade me, and stood at the head of the bed. She first threw aside her blanket, and discovered a kind of wand, which she had concealed beneath it, wreathed with a snake's skin. She then pointed to the figure of a snake delineated on her naked shoulder. 'It is the symbol of our tribe,' she said. 'Foolish child!' she continued, for she saw me shudder; 'it is a sign of honour, won for our race by him who first drew from the veins the poison of the king of all creeping things. The tale was told by our fathers, and sung at our feasts; and now am I, the last of my race, bidden to heal a servant in the house of our enemies.' She remained for a moment, silent, motionless, and perfectly abstracted. A loud groan from Cradock roused her. She bent over him, and muttered an incantation in her own tongue. She then, after many efforts, succeeded in making him swallow a strong decoction, and bathed the wound and arm with the same liquor. These applications were repeated at short intervals, during which she brandished her wand, making quick and mysterious motions, as if she were writing hieroglyphics on the invisible air. She writhed her body into the most horrible contortions, and tossed her withered arms wildly about her, and, Everell, shall I confess to you, that I trembled lest she should assume the living form of the reptile whose image she bore? So violent was her exercise, that the sweat poured from her face like rain, and, ever and anon, she sank down in momentary exhaustion, and stupor; and then would spring to her feet, as a race horse starts on the course, fling back her long black locks that had fallen over her bony face, and repeat the strange process.

"After a while—how long I know not, for anxiety and terror prevented my taking any note of time—Cradock showed plain symptoms of amendment—his respiration became free—the colour in his face subsided—his brow, which had been drawn to a knot, relaxed, and his whole appearance became natural and tranquil. 'Now,' whispered Nelema to me, 'fear no more for him—he has turned his back on the grave. I will stay here and watch him; but go thou to thy bed—thy cheek is pale with weariness and fear.'

"I was too happy at that moment to feel weariness, and would have remained, but Nelema's gestures for me to withdraw were vehement, and I left her, mentally blessing her for her effectual aid. As I opened the door, I stumbled against Jennet. It was evident from her posture, that she had been peeping through the key-hole. Do not think me a vixen, Everell, if I confess that my first impulse was to box her ears; however, I suppressed my rage, and, for the first time in my life, was prudent and temporizing, and I stooped to beg her to go with me to my room—I am sure it was with the timid voice of one who asks a favour, for, the moment we were in the light, I saw by her mien that she felt the power was all in her own hands. 'It is enough,' she said, 'to make the hair of a saint stand on end to have such carryings-on in my master's house; and you, Miss Hope Leslie, that have been, as it were, exalted to heaven in point of privileges, that you should be nothing better than an aid and abetment of this imissary of Satan.'

" 'Hush,' said I, 'Jennet, and keep your breath to give thanks for good Mr. Cradock's recovery. Nelema has cured him—Satan does not send forth his emissaries with healing gifts.'

" 'Now, Miss Leslie,' retorted the provoking creature, 'you are in the very gall of bitterness and blindness of the flesh. Did not the magicians with their enchantments even as did Moses and Aaron? The sons of darkness always put on the form of the sons of light. I always said so. I knew what it would come to. I said she was a witch in Mistress Fletcher's time.'

" 'And you spoke falsely then, as you do now, Jennet, for Nelema is no witch.'

" 'No witch!' rejoined Jennet, screaming with her screech-owl voice, so loud that I was afraid your father would overhear her; 'try her then—see if she can read in the Bible—or Mr. Cotton's catechism—no, no; but give her your aunt Grafton's prayer book, and she will read as glib as a minister.'

" 'Jennet,' said I, 'you are mad outright—you seem to forget that Nelema cannot read any thing.'

" 'It is all the same as if she could,' persisted Jennet; 'her master makes short teaching—there are none so deaf as those that won't hear. I tell you again, Miss Hope Leslie—remember Mrs. Fletcher—remember what she got for shutting her ears to me.'

"You will forgive me, Everell, for losing my patience utterly at these profane allusions to your mother, and commanding Jennet to leave my room.

"She made me bitterly repent my want of self-command; for, self-willed as the fools of Solomon's time, she

determined to have her own way, and went to your father's room, where she gained admittance, and gave such a description of Nelema's healing process, that, late as it was, I was summoned to his presence.

"As I followed Jennet along the passage, she whispered to me, 'now for the love of your own soul, don't use his blind partiality to pervert his judgment.'

"I made no reply, but mentally resolved that I would task my power and ingenuity to the utmost to justify Nelema. When we came into the study, Jennet, to my great joy, was dismissed. It is much easier for me to contend with my superiors, than my inferiors. Your father bade me sit down by him. I seated myself on the foot-stool at his feet, so that I could look straight into his eyes; for many a time, when my heart has quailed at his solemn address, the tender spirit stationed in that soft hazle eye of his—so like yours, Everell—has quieted all my apprehensions. I spoke first, and said, 'I was sure Jennet had spoiled the good news of my tutor's amendment, or he would not look so grave.'

"He replied, 'that it was time to look grave when a pow-wow dared to use her diabolical spells, mutterings, and exorcisms, beneath a christian roof, and in the presence of a christian maiden, and on a christian man; but,' he added, 'perhaps Jennet hath not told the matter rightly—her zeal is not always according to knowledge. I would gladly believe that my house has not been profaned. Tell me, Hope, all you witnessed—tell me truly.'

"I obeyed. Your father heard me through without any comment, but now and then a deep-drawn sigh; and when I had finished, he asked, 'what I understood by the strange proceedings I had described?'

" 'May I not answer,' I said, 'in the language of scripture, 'that this only I know, that whereas thy servant was sick, he is now whole.'"

" 'Do not, my dear child,' said your father, 'rashly misapply scripture—and thus add to your sin, in (as I trust ignorantly) dealing with this witch and her familiars.'

"I replied, 'I did not believe Nelema had used any witchcraft.'

"He asked me, 'if I had not been told, that some of our catechised Indians had confessed that when they were pagans they were pow-wows, devoted in their infancy to demons—that these pow-wows were factors for the devil—that they held actual conversation, and were in open and avowed confederacy with him?'

"I said, 'I had heard all this;' but asked, 'if it were right to take the confession of these poor children of ignorance and superstition against themselves?' I repeated what I had often heard you, Everell, say, that Magawisca believed the mountain, and the valley, the air, the trees, every little rivulet, had their present invisible spirit—and that the good might hold discourse with them. 'Why not believe the one,' I asked, 'as well as the other?'

"Your father looked at me sternly. 'Dost thou not believe in witchcraft, child?' he said. While I hesitated how to reply, lest I should, in some way, implicate Nelema, your father hastily turned the leaves of the Bible, that lay on his table, and opened to every text where familiar spirits, necromancers, sorcerers, wizards, witches, and witchcraft, are spoken of.

"I felt as if the windows of heaven were opened on my devoted head. As soon as I could collect my wits, I said something, confusedly, about not having thought much on the subject; but that I had supposed, as indeed I always did, that bad spirits were only permitted to appear on earth, when there were, also, good spirits and holy prophets to oppose them.

"Your father looked steadily at me, for a few moments, then closing the Bible, he said, 'I will not blame thee, my child, but myself, that I have left thee to the guidance of thy natural erring reason; I should have better instructed thee.' He then kissed me, bade me good night, and opened the door for me to depart. I ventured to ask, 'if I might not say to Jennet, that it was his order, she should be silent in regard to Nelema?'

" 'No, no,' he said, 'meddle no farther with that matter, but go to your own apartment, and remain there till the bell rings for morning prayers.'

"My heart rebelled, but I dared not disobey. I came to my room, and have been sitting by my open window, in the hope of hearing Nelema's parting footsteps; but I have listened in vain, and unable to sleep, I have tried to tranquillize my mind by writing to you. Poor old Nelema! if she is given up to the magistrates, it will go hard with her—Jennet is such an obstinate self-willed fool! I believe she will be willing to see Nelema hung for a witch, that she may have the pleasure of saying, 'I told you so.'

"Poor Nelema!—such a harmless, helpless, lonely being—my tears fall so fast on my paper, that I can scarcely write. I blame myself for bringing her into this hapless case—but it may be better than I fear. I will leave

my letter and try to sleep.

"It is as I expected: Nelema was sent, early this morning, to the magistrates. She was tried before our triumvirate, Mr. Pynchon, Holioko, and Chapin. It was not enough to lay on her the crime of curing Cradock, but Jennet and some of her gossips imputed to her all the mischances that have happened for the last seven years. My testimony was extorted from me, for I could not disguise my reluctance to communicate any thing that could be made unfavourable to her. Our magistrates looked sternly on me, and Mr. Holioko said, 'Take care, Hope Leslie, that thou art not found in the folly of Balaam, who would have blessed, when the Lord commanded him to curse.'

"I said, 'It was better to mistake in blessing than in cursing, and that I was sure Nelema was as innocent as myself.' I know not whence I had my courage, but I think truth companies not with cowardice; however, what I would fain call courage, Mr. Pynchon thought necessary to rebuke as presumption:—"Thou art somewhat forward, maiden," he said, 'in giving thy opinion; but thou must know, that we regard it but as the whistle of a bird; withdraw, and leave judgment to thy elders.'

"In leaving the room I passed close to Nelema. I gave her my hand in token of kindness; and though I heard a murmur of 'shame— shame!' I did not withdraw it till the poor old creature had bowed her wrinkled brow upon it, and dropped a tear which no suffering could have extorted.

"The trial went on, and she was pronounced worthy of death; but as the authority of our magistracy does not extend to life, limb, or banishment, her fate is referred to the court at Boston. In the mean time, she awaits her sentence in a cell, in Mr. Pynchon's cellar. We have, as yet, no jail.

"Digby has been summoned before the magistrates, and publicly reprov'd for expressing himself against their proceedings. Mr. Pynchon charged him to speak no more against godly governors and righteous government, for "to such scoffers heaven had sent divers plagues—some had been spirited away by Satan—some blown up in our harbours—and some, like poor Austin of Quinnepaig, taken into Turkish captivity!" Digby's feelings are suppressed, but not subdued.

"How I wish you were here, dear Everell. Sometimes I wish your mother's letter had not been so persuasive. Nothing but that last request of hers, would have induced your father to send you to your uncle Stretton. If you were here, I am sure you would devise some way to save Nelema. When she is gone, you will never again hear of Magawisca. I shall never hear more of my sweet sister. They both, if we may believe Nelema, still dwell safely in the wigwam of Mononotto, among the Mohawks. These Mohawks are said to be a fierce race; and all those tribes who dwell near the coast, and have, in some measure, come under a christian jurisdiction, and are called 'praying and catechised Indians,' say, that the Mohawks are to them as wolves to sheep. I cannot bear to think of my gentle timid sister, a very dove in her nature, among these fierce tribes. I wonder that I am ever happy, and yet it is so natural to me to be happy! The commander of the fort at Albany, at Governor Winthrop's request, has made great efforts to obtain some information about my sister, but without any satisfactory result. Still Nelema insists to me, that her knowledge is certain; and when I have endeavoured to ascertain the source whence she derived it, she pointed upwards, indicating that she held mysterious intelligence with the spirits of the air; but I believe she employed this artifice to hide some intercourse she holds with distant and hostile tribes.

"What a tragi-comedy is life, Everell!—I am sure your favourite, Shakespear, has copied nature in dividing his scenes between mirth and sadness. I have laughed to-day, heartily, and for a few moments I quite forgot poor Nelema, and all my heart-rending anxieties about her. My tutor, for the first time since his most unlucky mishap, left his room, and made his appearance in the parlour. I was sitting there with aunt Grafton, and I rose to shake his hand, and express my unfeigned joy on his recovery. His little gray eyes were, for a moment, blinded with tears at what he was pleased to call the 'condescendency of my regard for him.' He then stood for a moment, as if he were lost, as you know is always his wont, when a blur comes over his mind, which is none of the clearest at best. I thought he looked pale and weak, and I offered him a chair and begged him to sit down, but he declined it with a wave, or rather a poke, of his hand, for he never in his life made a motion so graceful as a wave, and drawing a paper from his pocket, he said, 'I have here an address to thee, sweet Miss Hope Leslie, wherein I have put in a body of words the spirit of my late meditations, and I have endeavoured to express, in the best latinity with which many years of daily and nightly study have possessed me, my humble sense of that marvellous wit and kindness of thine, which made thee, as it were, a ministering angel unto me, when I was brought nigh unto the grave by the bite of that most cunning beast of the field, with whom, I verily believe, the devil left a portion of his spirit, in payment of the body he borrowed to beguile our first parents.'

"This long preamble finished, Master Cradock began the reading of his address, of which, being in the language of the learned, I could not, as you know, understand one word; however, he did not perceive that my smiles were not those of intelligence, nor hear aunt Grafton's remark, that 'much learning and little wit had made him as crazy as a loon.' He had not proceeded far, when his knees began to shake under him, and disdaining to sit, (an attitude, I suppose, proscribed in the ceremonies of the schools, the only ceremonies he observes) he contrived, with the aid of the chair I had placed for him, to kneel. When he had finished his address, which, according to the rules of art, had a beginning, a middle, and, thank heaven, an end, he essayed to rise; but, alas! though, like Falstaff, he had an 'alacrity in sinking,' to rise was impossible; for beside the usual impediments of his bulk and clumsiness, he was weakened and stiffened by his late sickness; so I was fain to call Digby to his assistance, and run away to my own apartment to write you, dear Everell, who are ever patient with my Bethel chronicles, an account of what aunt Grafton calls, 'this scholar foolery.'

"Yesterday was our lecture day, and I went to the village to attend the meeting. A sudden storm of hail and wind came on during the exercises, and continued after, and I was obliged to accept Mrs. Pynchon's invitation to go home with her. After we had taken our supper, I observed Mr. Pynchon fill a plate, bountifully, with provisions from the table, and give it with a large key, which he took from a little cupboard over the fire-place, to a serving woman. She returned, in a short time, with the key, and, as I observed, restored it to its place. Digby came shortly after to attend me home. The family hospitably urged me to remain, and ascertaining from Digby that there was no especial reason for my return, I dismissed him.

"The next morning I was awakened from a deep sleep by one of Mr. Pynchon's daughters, who told me, with a look of terror, that a despatch had arrived early that morning from Boston, notifying the acquiescence of the Court there, in the opinion of our magistrates, and Nelema's sentence of condemnation to death—that her father had himself gone to the cell to announce her fate to her, when lo! she had vanished—the prison-door was fast—the key in its usual place—but the witch was spirited away. I hurried on my clothes, and trembling with surprise, pleasure, or whatever emotion you may please to ascribe to me, I descended to the parlor, where the family and neighbours had assembled to talk over the strange event. I only added exclamations to the various conjectures that were made. No one had any doubt as to who had been Nelema's deliverer, unless a suspicion was implied in the inquiring glances which Mr. Pynchon cast on me, but which, I believe, no one but myself observed. Some could smell sulphur from the outer kitchen door to the door of the cell; and there were others who fancied that, at a few yards distance from the house, there were on the ground marks of a slight scorching—a plain indication of a visitation from the enemy of mankind. One of the most sagacious of our neighbours remarked, that he had often heard of Satan getting his servants into trouble, but he never before heard of his getting them out. However, the singularity of the case only served to magnify their wonder, without, in the least, weakening their faith in the actual, and, as it appeared, friendly alliance between Nelema, and the evil one. Indeed, I was the only person present whose belief in her witchcraft was not, as it were, converted into sight.

"Everell, I had been visited by a strange dream that night, which I will venture to relate to you; for you, at least, will not think me confederate with Nelema's deliverer.

"Methought I stood, with the old woman, beneath the elm tree, at the end of Mr. Pynchon's garden; the moon, through an opening of the branches, shone brightly on her face—it was wet with tears.

"'I shall not forget,' she said, 'who saved me from dying by the hand of an enemy. As surely as the sun will appear there again,' she added, pointing to the east—'so surely, Hope Leslie, you shall see your sister.'

" 'But, Nelema,' said I, 'my poor little sister is in the far western forests—you can never reach there.'

" 'I will reach there,' she replied—'if I crawl on my hands and knees, I will reach there.'

"Think you, dear Everell, my sister will ever expound this dream to me?

"I was the first to carry the news to Bethel. Your father was in one of his meditative humours, and heeded it no more than if I had told him a bird had flown from its cage. Jennet joined in the general opinion, that Satan, or at least one of his emissaries, had opened the prison door; and our good Digby, with his usual fearlessness, maintained, in the teeth of her exhortation and invective, that an angel had wrought for the innocent old woman.

"A week has elapsed. It is whispered that on the night Nelema vanished, Digby was missed by his bed-fellow!—strange depredations were committed on Jennet's larder!—and muffled oars were heard on the river!

"Our magistrates have made long and frequent visits to Bethel, and have held secret conferences with your

father. The purport of them I leave you to conjecture from the result. Yesterday he sent for me to the study. He appeared deeply affected. It was some time before he could command his voice; at length he said, that he had determined to accept for me Madam Winthrop's invitation to Boston. I told him, and told him truly, that I did not wish to go to Boston—that I was perfectly contented—perfectly happy. 'And what,' I asked, 'will you and poor aunt Grafton do without me?'

"Your aunt goes with you," he said; "and as for me, my dear child, I have too long permitted myself the indulgence of having you with me. I have a pilgrimage to accomplish through this wilderness, and I am sinful if I linger to watch the unfolding of even the single flower that has sprung up in my path."

"But," said I, "does not He who appoints the path through the wilderness, set the flowers by the wayside? I will not—I will not be plucked up and cast away." He kissed me, and said, "I believe, my beloved child, thou wert sent in mercy to me; but it were indeed sinful to convert the staff vouchsafed to my pilgrimage into fetters. I should ever bear in mind that life is a race and a warfare, and nothing else: you have this yet to learn, Hope. I have proved myself not fit to teach, or to guide thee—nor is your aunt. Madam Winthrop will give you pious instruction and counsel, and her godly niece, Esther Downing, will, I trust, win you to the narrow path, which, as the elders say, she doth so steadily pursue."

"The idea of this puritanical guardianship did not strike me agreeably, and besides, I love Bethel—I love your father—with my whole soul I love him; and, as you already know, Everell, therefore it is no confession, I love to have my own way, and I said, I would not go."

"You must go, my child," said your father; "I cannot find it in my heart to chide you for your reluctance, but you must go. Neither you, nor I, have any choice."

"But why must I go?" I asked.

"Ask no questions," he replied; "it is fixed that you must go. Tell your aunt Grafton that she must be ready to leave Springfield next week. Mr. Pyncheon and his servants attend you. Now leave me, my child, for when you are with me, you touch at will every chord in my heart, and I would fain keep it still now."

"I left him, Everell, while I could command my tears; and after I had given them free course, I informed aunt Grafton of our destiny. She was so delighted with the prospect of a visit to Boston, that I, too, began to think it must be very pleasant; and my dread of this straight-laced Mrs. Winthrop and her perpendicular niece, gave place to indefinite anticipations of pleasure. I shall, at any rate, see you sooner than if I remained here. Thank heaven, the time of your return approaches; and now that it is so near, I rejoice that your father has not been persuaded, by those who seem to me to take a very superfluous care of his private affairs, to recall you sooner. On this subject he has stood firm: satisfied, as he has always said, that he could not err in complying with the last request of your sainted mother."

"Aunt Grafton charges me with divers messages to you, but I will not add a feather to this leaden letter, which you will now have to read, as I have written it, by instalments."

"Farewell, dear Everell, forget not thy loving friend and sister, "Hope Leslie."

As Hope had declined her aunt's messages, the good lady affixed them herself—and here they follow.

"To Everell Fletcher. "Valued sir

—Being much hurried in point of time, I would fain have been myself excused from writing, but Miss Hope declines adding to her letter what I have indited.

In your last, you mention being visited with the great cold, which, I take from your account of it, to be the same as that with which we were all shaken soon after the coronation of his present Majesty. (God bless him!) I had then a recipe given me for an infallible remedy, by the Lady Penyvere, great aunt, by the mother's side, to la belle Rosette, maid of honour to the queen.

"I enclose it for you, believing it will greatly advantage you, though Hope insists that if the cold has not yet left you, it will be a chronic disease before this reaches you; in which case, I would advise you to apply to old Lady Lincoln, who hath in her family receipt-book, many renowned cures for chronics. I remember one in particular, somewhere about the middle of the book, which follows immediately after a rare recipe for an every-day plum-pudding."

"I doubt not that years have mended thee, and that thou wouldst now condemn the folly and ignorance of thy childhood, which made thee then deride the most sovereign remedies. Hope, I am sorry to say, is as obstinate as ever; and it was but yesterday, when I wished her to take some diluents for a latent fever, that she reminded me of

the time when she, and you, in one of your mischievous pranks, threw the pennyroyal tea out of the window, and suffered me to believe that it had cured an incipient pleurisy. Thus presumptuous is youth! Hope is, to be sure, notwithstanding her living entirely without medicine, in indifferent good health; her form is rather more slender than when you left us, as is becoming at seventeen; but her cheek is as round and as ruddy as a peach. I should not care so much about her self-will on the score of medicine, but that her stomach being in such perfect order now, would bear every kind of preventive, and medicines of this class are so simple, that they can do no harm. I believe it is true, as old Doctor Panton used to say, 'your healthy people are always prejudiced against medicine.' I wish you would drop a hint on this subject in your next letter to her, for the slightest hint from you goes further than a lecture from me.

"It was very thoughtful in you, Mr. Everell, and what I once should not have expected, to inquire so particularly after my health. I am happy to say, that at this present I am better than I have been for years, which is unaccountable to me, as, since the hurry of our preparations for Boston, I have forgotten my pills at night, and my tonics in the morning.

"I wish you to present many thanks to Lady Amy for assisting you in my commissions. The articles in general suited, though the pinking of the flounces was too deep. My gown was a trifle too dark—but do not mention that to Lady Amy, for I make no doubt she took due pains, and only wanted a right understanding of the real hue, called *feuille morte*, which, between you and I—*sub rosa*, mind—my gown would not be called, by any person skilled in the colours of silk. Hope thought to convince me I was wrong by matching it with a dead leaf from the forest. Was not that peculiar of Hope?

"Now, Mr. Everell, I do not wish to be an old woman before my time, therefore I will have another silk of a brighter cast. Brown it must be, but lively—lively. I will enclose a lock of Hope's hair, which is precisely the hue I mean. You will observe it has a golden tinge, that makes it appear in all lights as if there were sunshine on it, and yet it is a decided brown; a difficult colour to hit, but by due inquiry, and I am sure, from the pains you were at to procure the articles I requested for Hope, you will spare no trouble, I think it may be obtained.

"I am greatly beholden to you for the pocket-glass you sent me; it is a mighty convenient article, and an uncommon pretty little attention, Mr. Everell.

"Your present to Hope was a real beauty. The only blue fillet, and the prettiest, of any colour, I ever saw; and such a marvellous match for her eyes—that is, when the light is full on them; but you know they always had a changeable trick with them. I remember Lady Amy's once saying to me before we left England, that my niece would yet do mischief with those laughing black eyes of hers. I liked her sister's (poor dear Mary—God help her the while!) better then, they were the true Leslie blue. But one word more of the fillet. Your taste in it cannot be too much commended; but then, as I tell Hope, one does not want always to see the same thing; and she doth continually wear it;—granted, it keeps the curls out of her eyes, and they do look lovely falling about it, but she wears it, week-days and Sundays, feast days and fast days, and she never yet has put on the *Henriette*; (do remember a thousand thanks to Lady Amy for the pattern) the *Henriette*, I made her, like that worn by the queen the first night she appeared in the royal box.

"I should like to have a little more chit-chat with you, Mr. Everell, now my pen has got, so to speak, warm in the harness; but business before pleasure. I beg you will remember me to all inquiring friends. Alas! few in number now, as most of my surviving contemporaries have died since I left England.

"Farewell, Mr. Everell, these few lines are from your friend and well-wisher,
"Bertha Grafton.

"N.B. It is a great pleasure to me to think you are living in a churchman's family, where you can't but steer clear of—you know what—peculiarities.

"N.B. Hope will have given you the particulars of poor Master Cradock's miscarriage; his mind was set a little agee by it, but he appears to be mending.

"N.B. The enclosed recipe hath marvellous virtues in fevers, as well as in colds."

CHAPTER IX.

"A country lad is my degree,
An' few there be that ken me, O;
But what care I how few they be,
I'm welcome aye to Nannie, O."

— Burns

There are hints in Miss Leslie's letter to Everell Fletcher, that require some amplification to be quite intelligible to our readers. She looked upon herself, as the unhappy, though innocent cause, of the old Indian woman's misfortune—and, rash as generous, she had resolved, if possible, to extricate her. With the inconsiderate warmth of youthful feeling, she had, before the grave and reverend magistrates, declared her belief in Nelema's innocence, and thereby implied a censure of their wisdom. This was, certainly, an almost unparalleled presumption, in those times, when youth was accounted inferiority; but the very circumstance that, in one light, aggravated her fault, in another, mitigated it; and her youth, being admitted in extenuation of her offence, she was allowed to escape with a reproof and admonition of moderate length—while her poor guardian was condemned to a long and private conference, on the urgency of reclaiming the spoiled child. Various modes of effecting so desirable an object were suggested, for, as the Scotchman said, in an analogous case, "Ilka man can manage a wife but him that has her."

This matter had passed over, and justice was proceeding in her stern course, when fortune, accident, or more truly, Providence, favoured the benevolent wishes of our heroine. She had, as has been seen, been carried by an unforeseen circumstance, to the house of one of the magistrates. There, mindful of the poor old prisoner, whose sentence, she knew, was daily expected from Boston; she had been watchful of every circumstance relating to her, and when she observed the key of her prison deposited in an accessible place, (no one dreaming of any interference in behalf of the condemned) she was inspired with a sudden resolution to set her free. This was a bold, dangerous, and unlawful interposition; but Hope Leslie took counsel only from her own heart, and that told her that the rights of innocence were paramount to all other rights, and as to danger to herself, she did not weigh it—she did not think of it.

Digby came to the village to attend her home, and this afforded her an opportunity of concert with him: in the depths of the night, when all the household were in profound sleep, she stole from her bed, found her way to the door of the dungeon, and leading out the prisoner, gave her into Digby's charge, who had a canoe in waiting, in which he ferried her to the opposite shore, where he left her, after having supplied her with provisions to sustain her to the vallies of the Housatonick, if, indeed, her wasted strength should enable her to reach there. The gratitude of the poor old creature for her unexpected deliverance from shameful death, is faintly touched on in Hope's letter. She could scarcely, without magnifying her own merit, have described the vehement emotion with which Nelema promised that she would devote the remnant of her miserable days to seeking and restoring her lost sister. Again and again, while Hope urged her departure, she reiterated this promise, and finally, when she parted from Digby, she repeated, as if it were a prophecy, 'She shall see her sister.'

Young persons are not apt to make a very exact adjustment of means and ends, and our heroine certainly placed an undue confidence in the power of the helpless old woman, to accomplish her promise; but she needed not this, to increase her present joy at her success. She crept to her bed, and was awakened in the morning, as she has herself related, with the information of Nelema's escape. She had now a part to play to which she was unused—to mask her feelings, affect ignorance, and take part in the consternation of the assembled village. As may be imagined, her assumed character was awkwardly enough performed, but all were occupied with their own surmises, and no one thought of her—no one, excepting Mr. Pynchon, who had scarcely fixed his eye on her, when a suspicion that had before flashed on his mind, was confirmed. He knew, from the simplicity of her nature, and from her habitual frankness, that she would not have hesitated to avow her pleasure in Nelema's escape, if she had not herself been accessory to it. He watched her averted eye—he observed her unbroken silence, and her lips that, in spite of all her efforts, played into an inevitable smile at the superstitious surmises of some of the wise people, whose philosophy had never dreamed of that every-day axiom of modern times—that super-natural aid

should not be called in to interpret events which may be explained by natural causes.

However satisfactory Mr. Pyncheon's conclusions were to himself, he confined them, for the present, to his own bosom. He was a merciful man, and probably felt an emotion of joy at the old woman's escape, that could not be suppressed by the stern justice that had pronounced her worthy of death. But while he easily reconciled himself to the loss of the prisoner, he felt the necessity of taking instant and efficient measures to subdue to becoming deference and obedience, the rash and lawless girl, who had dared to interpose between justice and its victim. His heart recoiled from punishing her openly, and he contented himself with insisting, in a private interview with Mr. Fletcher, on the necessity of her removal to a stricter control than his; and recommended, for a time, a temporary transfer of his neglected authority to less indulgent hands.

Mr. Fletcher complied so far as to consent that his favourite should be sent, for a few months, to Boston, to the care of Madam Winthrop, whose character being brought out by the light of her husband's official station, was held up as a sort of pattern throughout New-England. But we must, for the present, pass by state characters; gallery portraits, for the miniature picture that lies next our heart, and which it is full time should be formally presented to our readers, whose curiosity, we trust, has not been sated by occasional glimpses.

Nothing could be more unlike the authentic, 'thoroughly educated,' and thoroughly disciplined young ladies of the present day, than Hope Leslie; as unlike as a mountain rill to a canal—the one leaping over rocks and precipices, sportive, free, and beautiful, or stealing softly on, in unseen, unpraised loveliness; the other, formed by art, restrained within prescribed and formal limits, and devoted to utility. Neither could any thing in outward show, be more unlike a modern belle, arrayed in the mode de Paris of the last *Courier des dames*, than Hope Leslie, in her dress of silk or muslin, shaped with some deference to the fashion of the day, but more according to the dictates of her own skill and classic taste, which she followed, somewhat pertinaciously, in spite of the suggestions of her experienced aunt.

Fashion had no shrines among the pilgrims; but where she is most abjectly worshipped, it would be treason against the paramount rights of nature, to subject such a figure as Hope Leslie's to her tyranny. As well might the exquisite classic statue be arrayed in corsets, manches en gigot, garnitures en tulle, Her height was not above the medium standard of her sex; she was delicately formed; the high health and the uniform habits of a country life, had endowed her with the beauty with which poetry has invested Hebe; while her love for exploring hill and dale, ravine and precipice, had given her that elastic step and ductile grace which belong to all agile animals, and which made every accidental attitude, such, as a painter would have selected to express the nymphlike beauty of Camilla.

It is in vain to attempt to describe a face, whose material beauty, though that beauty may be faultless, is but a medium for the irradiations of the soul. For the curious, we would, if we could, set down the colour of our heroine's eyes; but, alas! it was undefinable, and appeared gray, blue, hazle, or black, as the outward light touched them, or as they kindled by the light of her feelings.

Her rich brown hair, turned in light waves from her sunny brow, as if it would not hide the beauty it sheltered. Her mouth, at this early period of her life, had nothing of the seriousness and contemplation that events might afterwards havetraced there. It rather seemed the station of all sportive, joyous, and kindly feeling, and at the slightest motion of her thoughts, curled into smiles, as if all the breathings of her young heart were happiness and innocence.

It may appear improbable that a girl of seventeen, educated among the strictest sect of the puritans, should have had the open, fearless, and gay character of Hope Leslie; but it must be remembered that she lived in an atmosphere of favour and indulgence, which permits the natural qualities to shoot forth in unrepressed luxuriance—an atmosphere of love, that like a tropical climate, brings forth the richest flowers and most flavourous fruits. She was transferred from the care of the gentlest and tenderest of mothers, to Mr. Fletcher, who, though stern in his principles, was indulgent in his practice; whose denying virtues were all self-denying; and who infused into the parental affection he felt for the daughter, something of the romantic tenderness of the lover of her mother. Her aunt Grafton doated on her; she was the depository of her vanity, as well as of her affection. To her simple tutor, she seemed to embody all that philosophers and poets had set down in their books, of virtue and beauty; and those of the old and rigid, who were above, or below, the influence of less substantial charms, regarded the young heiress with deference. In short, she was the petted lamb of the fold.

It has been seen that Hope Leslie was superior to some of the prejudices of the age. This may be explained,

without attributing too much to her natural sagacity. Those persons she most loved, and with whom she had lived from her infancy, were of variant religious sentiments. Her father had belonged to the established church, and though he had much of the gay spirit that characterized the cavaliers of the day; he was serious and exact in his observance of the rites of the church. She had often been her mother's companion at the proscribed 'meeting,' and witnessed the fervor with which she joined in the worship of a persecuted and suffering people. Early impressions sometimes form moulds for subsequent opinions; and when at a more reflecting age, Hope heard her aunt Grafton rail with natural good sense, and with the freedom, if not the point, of mother wit, at some of the peculiarities of the puritans, she was led to doubt their infallibility; and like the bird that spreads his wings and soars above the limits by which each man fences in his own narrow domain, she enjoyed the capacities of her nature, and permitted her mind to expand beyond the contracted boundaries of sectarian faith. Her religion was pure and disinterested—no one, therefore, should doubt its intrinsic value, though it had not been coined into a particular form, or received the current impress.

Though the history of our heroine, like a treasured flower, has only left its sweetness on the manuscript page, from which we have amplified it; yet we have been compelled to infer, from some transactions which we shall faithfully record, that she had faults; but we leave our readers to discover them. Who has the resolution to point out a favourite's defects?

As our fair readers are not apt to be observant of dates, it may be useful to remind them that Miss Leslie's letter was written in October. In the following May, two ships, from the mother country, anchored at the same time in Boston-Bay. Some passengers, from each ship, availed themselves of the facility of the pilot-boat to go up to the town. Among others, were two gentlemen, who met now for the first time: the one, a youth in manhood's earliest prime, with a frank, intelligent, and benevolent countenance, over which, as he strained his eyes to the shore, joy and anxiety flitted with rapid vicissitude. The other had advanced further into life; he might not be more than five and thirty, possibly not so much; but his face was deeply marked by the ravages of the passions, or perhaps the stirring scenes of life. His eyes were black and piercing, set near together, and overhung by thick black brows, whose incessant motion indicated a restless mind. The concentration of thought, or the designing purpose, expressed by the upper part of his face, was contradicted by his loose, open flexible lips. His complexion had the same puzzling contrariety—it was dark and saturnine, but enlivened with the ruddy hue of a bon-vivant. His nose neither turned up nor down, was neither Grecian nor Roman. In short, the countenance of the stranger was a worthless dial-plate—a practical refutation of the science of physiognomy; and as the infallible art of phrenology was unknown to our fathers, they were compelled to ascertain the character (as their unlearned descendants still are) by the slow developement of the conduct. The person of the stranger had a certain erect and gallant bearing that marks a man of the world, but his dress was strictly puritanical; and his hair, so far from being permitted the 'freedom of growing long,' then deemed 'a luxurious feminine prolixity,' or being covered with a wig, (one of the abominations that, according to Eliot, had brought on the country the infliction of the Pequod war,) was cropped with exemplary precision. But though the stranger's apparel was elaborately puritanical, still there was a certain elegance about it, which indicated that his taste had reluctantly yielded to his principles. His garments were of the finest materials, and exactly fitted to a form of striking manly symmetry. His hair, it is true, was scrupulously clipped, but being thick and jet black, it becomingly defined a forehead of uncommon whiteness and beauty. In one particular he had departed from the letter of the law, and instead of exposing his throat by the plain, open linen collar, usually worn, he sheltered its ugly protuberance with a fine cambric ruff, arranged in box-plaits. In short, though, with the last exception, a nice critic could not detect the most venial error in his apparel; yet, among the puritans, he looked much like a 'dandy quaker' of the present day, amidst his sober-suited brethren.

Whilst the boat, impelled by a favouring tide, and fair breeze, glided rapidly towards the metropolis of the now thriving colony, the gentlemen fell into conversation with the pilot. The elder stranger inquired if Governor Winthrop had been re-elected?

"Yes—God bless him," replied the sailor; "the worthy gentleman has taken the helm once more."

"Has he," asked the stranger, eagerly, "declared for King or Parliament?"

"Ho! I don't know much about their land-tackle," replied the seaman; "but, to my mind, the fastings we have had all along when the King won the day, and the rejoicings when the Parliament gained it, was what you might call a declaration. Since you speak of it, I do remember I heard the boys up in town saying, that our magistrates, at

election, did scruple about the oath, and concluded to leave out that part which promises to bear true faith and allegiance to our sovereign lord King Charles."

"So, we have thrown his Majesty overboard, and are to sail under Parliament colours," said the young gentleman. "Well," he continued, "this might have been predicted some five or six years since, for, I remember, there were then disputes, whether the King's ensign should be spread there," and he pointed to the fortifications on Castle Island, past which the boat was, at that moment, gliding. They scruple now about the oath. Then their consciences rebelled against the red cross in the ensign; which, I remember, was called, 'the Pope's gift,' 'a relique of papacy,' 'an idolatrous sign,'

"Scruples of conscience are ever honourable," said the elder stranger; "and doubtless your Governor has good reason for not complying with the scripture rule—'render unto Cæsar, the things that are Cæsar's!'"

"There is no doubt of it," replied the seaman. "The Governor—God bless him—knows the rules of the good book as well as I know the ropes of a ship; and there is no better pilot than he for all weathers, as he shows by not joining in the hue and cry against the good creature tobacco. Fair winds through life, and a pleasant harbour at last, do I wish him for this piece of christian love!"— at the same time he illustrated his benediction by putting a portion of the favourite luxury in his mouth.

"I am sorry," said the young gentleman, "that our magistrates have volunteered a public expression of their feelings—their sympathies, of course, are with the Parliament party—they virtually broke the yoke of royal authority, when they left their native land, and shewed what value they set on liberty by sacrificing for it every temporal good. Now they have a right to enjoy their liberty in peace."

"Peace!" said the elder gentleman, emphatically—"thus it ever is with the natural man, crying peace—peace—where there is no peace.— Think you, young man, that if the King were to recover his power, he would not resume all the privileges he has formerly granted to these people, who—thanks to Him whose ark abideth with them!—shew themselves so ready to cast off their allegiance?"

"The King, no doubt," replied the young gentleman, "would like to resume both power and possession; but still, I think we might retain our own, on the principle that he had no right to give, and in truth could not give, what was not his, and what we have acquired, either by purchase of the natives, or by lawful conquest, which gives us the right to the vacuum domicilium."

"I am happy to see, sir," said the elder gentleman, slightly bowing and smiling, "that your principles, at least, are on the side of the puritans."

"My feelings and principles both, sir; but that does not render me insensible to the happiness of the adverse party, or the wisdom of all parties, which is peace; the peace which the generous Falkland so earnestly invokes, every patriot may ardently desire. Peace, if I may borrow a figure from our friend the pilot here, is a fair wind and a flood—tide—and war a storm, that must wreck some, and may wreck both friend and foe."

The young gentleman seemed tired of the conversation, and turned away, fixing his eager gaze on the shore, towards which his heart bounded. His companion, however, was not disposed to indulge him in silence. "This town, sir," he said, "appears to be familiar to you. I, alas! am a stranger and a wanderer." This was spoken in a tone of unaffected seriousness.

"Of such this country is the natural home," replied the young man, regarding his companion for the first time with some interest, for he had been repelled by what seemed to him to savour of cant, of which he had heard too much in the mother country. "I should be happy, sir," he said, courteously, "to render my acquaintance with the town of any service to you."

The stranger bowed in acknowledgment of the civility. "I would gladly," he said, "find entertainment with some godly family here. Is Mr. Wilson still teacher of the congregation?"

"No, sir—if he were, you might securely count on his hospitality, as it was so notorious, that, 'come in, you are heartily welcome,' was said to be the anagram of his name. But if he is gone, the doors in Boston are always open to the stranger. Mr. Cotton, I believe, is the present minister—is he not, pilot?"

"Yes—an please you, sir—but I'm thinking," he added, with a leer, "that that butterfly will bean odd fish to harbour with any of our right godly ones." The young gentleman followed the direction of the pilot's eye, and for the first time observed a lad, who sat on one side of the boat leaning over, and amusing himself with lashing the waves with a fanciful walking-stick. He overheard the pilot's remark, and raised his head, as it appeared involuntarily, for he immediately averted it again, but not till he had exposed a face of uncommon beauty. He

looked about fifteen. He had the full melting dark eye, and rich complexion of southern climes; masses of jetty curls parted on his forehead, shaded his temples and neck, and "smooth as Hebe's was his unrazored lip." It was obvious that it was his dress which had called forth the sailor's sarcasm. The breast and sleeves of his jerkin were embroidered, a deep-pointed rich lace ruff embellished his neck, if a neck round and smooth as alabaster could be embellished, and his head was covered with a little fantastic Spanish hat, decorated with feathers.

"Does that youth appertain to you, sir?" asked the young gentleman of the elder stranger.

"Yes—he is a sort of dependant—a page of mine," he replied, with an embarrassed manner; but in a moment recovering his self-possession, he added, "I infer from the gratuitous remarks of our very frank pilot, and from the survey you have taken of the lad, that you think his apparel extraordinary."

"It might, possibly," replied the young man, with a smile, "offend against certain sumptuary laws of our colony, and thus prove inconvenient to you."

"Roslin, do you hear," said the master to the page, who nodded his head without raising it; "thy finery, boy, as I have told thee, must be retrenched;" then turning to his companion, and lowering his voice to a confidential tone, he added; "the lad hath lived on the continent, and hath there imbibed these vanities, of which I hope in good time to reform him; perhaps his youth hath overwrought, with my indulgence, in suffering them thus long."

The young gentleman courteously prevented any further, and as he thought, unnecessary exculpation, by saying, "that the offence was certainly a very trifling one, and if observed at all, would be, by the most scrupulous, considered as venial in so young a lad." He now again turned his ardent gaze to the shore. "Ah! there is the spire of the new meeting-house," he said; "when I went away the good people assembled under a thatched roof, and within mud walls."

"And I can remember," said the pilot, "for I was among the first comers to the wilderness, when for weeks the congregation met under an oak tree—and there was heart-worship there, gentlemen, if there ever was on the ball."

A church standing where Joy's buildings are now located, was the only one then in Boston. The greater part of the houses were built in its vicinity, just about the heart of the peninsula, on whose striking and singular form, its first possessors aver they saw written prophecies of its future greatness. Some of its most prominent features have been softened by time, and others changed by the busy art of man. Wharves, whole streets, and the noble granite market-house, (a prouder memorial to its founder than a triumphal arch) now stand where the deep "cove" stretched its peaceful harbour, between the two hills that stood like towers of defence at its extremities. That at the north rose to the height of fifty feet above the sea, and on its level summit stood a windmill; towards the sea it presented an abrupt declivity, and was fortified at its base by a strong battery. The eastern hill was higher than its sister by some thirty feet; it descended kindly towards the town, and was, on that side planted with corn. Towards the sea its steep and ragged cliffs announced that nature had formed it for defence; and accordingly our fathers soon fortified it with "store of great artillery," and changed the first pastoral name of Cornhill, which they had given it, to the more appropriate designation of Fort-hill. A third hill flanked the town, rising to the height of one hundred and thirty-eight feet. "All three," says Johnson, "like over-topping towers, keepe a constant watch to foresee the approach of forrein dangers, being furnished with a beacon, and loudbabbling guns, to give notice by their redoubled eccho, to all their sister townes."

Shawmut, a word expressing living fountains, was the Indian name of Boston. Tri-mountain, its first English name, and descriptive of Beaconhill, which, as we are told, rose in three majestic and lofty eminences; the most eastern of these summits having on its brow three little hillocks. Its present, and, as we fondly believe immortal name, was given with characteristic reverence in honour of one of its first pastors, Mr. Cotton, who came from Boston, in England.

But we return from this digression to our pilot-boat, which now had nearly reached its landing place. A throng had gathered on the "town-dock" in expectation of friends, or news from friends. In vain did the young stranger's eye explore the crowd for some familiar face; he was obliged to check the greetings that rose to his lips, and repress the throbings of his heart. "Time," he said, "has wrought strange changes. I fancied that even the stones in Boston would know me; but now, I see not one welcoming look, unless it be in those barbary and rose bushes, that appear just as they did the last time I scrambled over wind-mill hill." They now landed at the foot of this hill, and the young gentleman told his companion, that he should go to his old home at Governor Winthrop's, where he was sure of finding friends to welcome him. "And if you will accompany me thither," he said, "I

uncertain our kind Governor will render you all the courtesies, which, as a stranger, you may require."

This opportune offer was, of course accepted; and the gentlemen proceeded like old acquaintances, arm in arm together, after a short consultation between the master and page, the amount of which seemed to be that the boy should attend him, and await without Governor Winthrop's door, further orders.

They had not gone far, when, as they turned a corner, two young ladies issued from the door of a house a little in advance, and walked on without observing them. The young gentleman quickened his steps. "It must be she!" he exclaimed, in a most animated tone. "There is but one person in the world that has such tresses!" and his eye rested on the bright golden ringlets that peeped from beneath a chip gipsy hat, worn by one of the ladies.

"That is not a rational conclusion of yours," said his companion. "Women have cunning devices, by which to change the order of nature in the colouring of the hair. I have seen many a court dame arrayed in the purchased locks of her serving-maid; besides, you know it is the vain fashion of the day to make much use of coloured powders, fluids, and unguents."

"That may all be; but do you not see this nymph's locks are, as Rosalind says, of the colour God chooses?"

"It were better, my friend, if you explained your meaning without a profane quotation from a play; a practice to which our godless cavaliers are much addicted; but pardon my reproof—age has privileges."

"I do not know," replied the young gentleman, "what degree of seniority may confer this privilege—if some half dozen years, I submit to your right; and the more readily, as I am just now too happy to quarrel about any thing; but excuse me, I must quicken my pace to overtake this girl, who trips it along as if she had Mercury's wings on those pretty feet."

"Ah, that's a foot to leave its print in the memory," said the elder gentleman, in an animated and natural tone, that eagerly as his companion was pressing on, did not escape his observation.

They had now approached the parties they were pursuing, near enough to hear their voices, and catch a few words of their conversation. "You say it's edifying, and all that," said the shortest of the two young ladies, in reply to what seemed, from the tone in which it was concluded, to have been an expostulation; "and I dare say, dear Esther, you are quite right, for you are as wise as Solomon, and always in the right; but for my part, I confess, I had infinitely rather be at home drying marigolds, and matching embroidery silks for aunt Grafton."

"Hope Leslie! by Heaven!" exclaimed the young man, springing forward. The young lady turned at the sound of her name, uttered a scream of joy, and under the impulse of strong affection and sudden delight, threw her arms around the stranger's neck, and was folded in the embrace of Everell Fletcher.

The next instant, the consciousness that the street was an awkward place for such a demonstration of happiness, or, perhaps, the thought that the elegant young man before her was no longer the play-fellow of her childhood, suffused her neck and face with the deepest crimson; and a sort of exculpatory exclamation of, "I was so surprised!" burst from her lips, and extorted a smile even from Everell's new acquaintance, whose gravity had all the fixedness of premeditation.

For a moment, Everell's eyes were rivetted to Hope Leslie's face, which he seemed to compare with the image in his memory. "Yes," he said, as if thinking aloud, "the same face that I saw, for the first time, peeping through my curtains, the day Digby brought me home to Bethel—how is Digby?—my dear father?—Mrs. Grafton?—the Winthrops?—every body?"

"All, all well; but I must defer particulars till I have introduced you to my friend, Miss Downing."

"Miss Downing! is it possible!" exclaimed Everell, and a recognition followed, which shewed, that though he had not, before, observed the lady, who had turned aside, and was sheltered under the thick folds of a veil, the parties were not unknown to each other. Miss Leslie now drew her friend's arm within hers, and as she did so, she perceived she trembled excessively; but too considerate to remark an agitation, which it was obvious the lady did not mean to betray, she did not appear to notice it, and proceeded to give Everell such particulars of his friends, as he must be most impatient to hear. She told him that his father was in Boston, and that in compliance with his son's wishes, he had determined to fix his residence there. Everell was rejoiced at this decision, for gloomy recollections were, in his mind, always associated with Bethel, and he was never happy when he thought of the dangers to which Miss Leslie was exposed there.

"My last letters from America," he said, "informed me that you had as yet no tidings from your sister, or my friend Magawisca."

"Nor have we now—still I cling to my belief, that my poor sister will some day be restored to me; Nelema's

promise is prophecy to me."

They had by this time reached Governor Winthrop's. Miss Downing withdrew her arm from her friend, with the intention of retiring to her own apartment; but her steps faltered, and she sunk down in the first chair she could reach, hoping to escape all observation in the bustle of joy occasioned by the unexpected arrival of Everell; and she did so, excepting that her aunt called the colour to her cheek, by saying, "My dear Esther, you have sadly fatigued yourself—you are as pale as death!" and Hope Leslie, noticing that Everell cast stolen glances of anxious inquiry at her friend, made, with the usual activity of a romantic imagination, a thousand conjectures as to the nature of their acquaintance. But there was nothing said or done to assist her speculations, and while the governor was looking over a letter of introduction, presented to him by Everell's chance acquaintance, who had announced himself by the name of Sir Philip Gardiner, the young ladies withdrew to their own apartment.

CHAPTER X.

A "pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, stedfast, and demure."

— Il Penseroso

When the two ladies were alone, there were a few moments of embarrassed and uninterrupted silence, a rare occurrence between two confidential young friends. Hope Leslie was the first to speak. "Come, my dear Esther," she said, "it is in vain for you to think of hiding your heart from me; if you do not fairly conduct me through its mazes, I shall make use of the clue you have dropped, and find my own way through the labyrinth."

"Hope Leslie—what clue do you mean? You should not trifle thus."

"Well then, I will be as serious as you please, and most solemnly demand why thou hast never hinted to the friend of thy bosom, that thou hadst seen, in thine own country, this youth, Everell Fletcher, of whom I have, at divers times and sun-dry places, most freely spoken to thee?"

"I never told you I had not seen him."

"Oh no! but methinks, for a godly, gracious maiden, as thou art, Esther; approved by our elders, the pattern of our deacons' wives; your actions, as well as your language, should be the gospel 'yea, yea, and nay, nay;' this 'paltering with a double sense,' as the poet has it, would better become a profane damsel, like myself."

"If I have lacked sincerity, I merit your reproach; but I meant to have told you. Mr. Fletcher's arrival now was unexpected"—

"And you were indisposed? your nerves deranged? your circulations disordered? I thought so, when I saw that burning blush, that looked, even through the folds of your veil, as if it would set it on fire; but now your surprise is over, why look so like the tragic muse? Raise up your eyes and look at me, dear Esther, and do not let those long eye-lashes droop over your pale cheek, like a weeping willow over the monumental marble."

"Oh, Hope Leslie! if it were not sinful, I could wish that monumental marble might press the clods on my cold bosom."

Hope was startled at the unaffected solemnity, and deep distress, of her friend: every pulsation of her heart was audible, and her lips, which before were as pale as death, became absolutely blue. She threw her arms around her, and kissed her tenderly. "Dear, dear Esther," she said, "forgive me for offending thee. I never will ask thee any thing again—never, so long as I live. You may look glad, or sorry—blush, or faint—do any thing you please, and I never will ask you for a reason."

"You are very kind, very generous, Hope; but have you not, already, guessed the secret I have striven to hide?—you hesitate—answer me truly."

"Why, then, if I must answer truly—perhaps, I have," replied Hope, looking, in spite of herself, as archly as the mischievous little god, when he sees one of his own arrows trembling in the heart; " 'set a thief to catch a thief,' dear Esther, is an old maxim; and though I have never felt this nervous malady, yet, you know, I am skilled in the books that describe the symptoms, thanks to aunt Grafton's plentiful stock of romances and plays."

"Oh most unprofitable skill! but I have no right to reproach thee, since what hath been but the sport of thy imagination, is my experience—degrading experience. Whatever it may cost me, you shall know all, Hope Leslie. You have justly reproached me with insincerity—I will, at least, lighten my conscience of the burden of that sin."

Hope's curiosity was on tiptoe; and notwithstanding her generous resolution, not voluntarily to penetrate her friend's mystery, she was delighted with the dawn of a disclosure, which, she believed, would amount to a simple confession of a tender sentiment. She sincerely pitied Miss Downing's sufferings; but it is, perhaps, impossible for a third person to sympathise fully with feelings of this nature. "Now, Esther," she said, sportively, "fancy me to be the priest, and yourself the penitent. Confess freely, daughter—our holy church, through me, her most unworthy servant, doth offer thee full absolution."

"Stop, stop, Hope Leslie—do not trifle with holy words, and most unholy rites; but listen, seriously, and compassionate a weakness that can never be forgotten."

Miss Downing then proceeded to relate some of the following particulars; but as her narrative was confused

by her emotions, and as it is necessary our readers should, for the sake of its illustration, be possessed of some circumstances which were omitted by her, we here give it, more distinctly, in our own language.

Esther was the daughter of Emanuel Downing, the husband of Governor Winthrop's sister, so often mentioned by that gentleman in his journal, as the faithful and useful friend of the pilgrims, whom he finally joined in New-England.

Esther Downing was of a reserved, tender, and timid cast of character, and being bred in the strictest school of the puritans, their doctrines and principles easily commingled with the natural qualities of her mind. She could not have disputed the nice points of faith, sanctification and justification, with certain celebrated contemporary female theologians, but no one excelled her in the practical part of her religion. In the language of the times, justification was witnessed, both by word, and work.

That young ladies were then indulged in a moderate degree of personal embellishment, we learn from one of the severest pilgrim satirists, who avers, that he was 'no cynic to the due bravery of the true gentry,' and allows that 'a good text always deserves a fair margent.' Miss Downing was certainly a pure and beautiful 'text,' but her attire never varied from the severest gospel simplicity. It is possible that she was fortified in this self-denying virtue, by that lively little spirit, (that ever hovers about a woman's toilette) whispering in her ear, that all the arts of the tiring-woman could not improve the becomingness of her Madonna style. She wore her hair, which was of a sober brown hue, parted on her forehead, and confined behind in a braid that was so adjusted, it may be accidentally, as to perfectly define the graceful contour of her head. Her complexion was rather pale, but so exquisitely fair and transparent, that it showed the faintest tinge of colour, and set off, to the greatest advantage, features, which, if not striking, had the admitted beauty of perfect symmetry. She was, at least, half a head taller than our heroine, or the Venus de Medicis; but as neither of these were standards with the pilgrims, no one who ventured to speak of the personal graces of Esther Downing, ever impeached their perfection. Spiritual graces were then, (as they should always be) in far higher estimation, than external charms, and Miss Downing, who would have been a reigning belle in our degenerate times, was always characterized by a religious epithet—she was the 'godly,' or the 'gracious maiden.' She attained the age of nineteen, without one truant wish straying beyond the narrow bound of domestic duty and religious exercises; but the course of youth and beauty 'never doth run smooth,' and the perils that commonly beset it, now assailed the tender Esther.

Everell Fletcher came to her father's, to pass two months. He had then, for some years, resided in the family of his uncle Stretton, a moderate churchman; who, though he had not seen fit to eradicate the religious and political principles that had been planted in the mind of the boy, had so tempered them, that, to confess the truth, the man fell far below the standard of puritanism. At first Esther was rather shocked, by the unsubdued gaiety, the unconstrained freedom, and the air of a man of society, that distinguished Everell from the few demure solemn young men of her acquaintance; but there is an irresistible charm in ease, simplicity, and frankness, when chastened by the refinements of education, and there is a natural affinity in youth, even when there is no resemblance in the character; and Esther Downing, who, at first, remained in Everell's presence but just as long as the duties of hospitality required, soon found herself lingering in the parlor, and strolling in the walks, that were his favourite resort. It seemed as if the sun had risen on her after a polar winter, and cheerfulness and her pleasant train sprung up in a mind that had been chilled and paralyzed by the absence of whatever cherishes the gay temper of youth; but it was, after all, but the stunted growth of a polar summer.

She felt a change stealing over her—new thoughts were in her heart—

"And love and happiness their theme."

She did not investigate the cause of this change, but suffered the current of her feelings to flow unchecked, till she was roused to reflection by her serving maid, who said to her mistress, one evening when she came in from a long moon-light walk with Everell, "our worthy minister has been here to-day, and he asked me, what kept you from the lecture-room, so oft, of late? I minded him it rained last night. He said, that in months past no tempest detained you from the place of worship. I made no answer to that—beside, that it was not for me to gainsay the minister He stood, as if meditating a minute, and then he took up your psalm-book, and, as he did so, a paper dropped with some verses written on it, and he said, with almost a smile, 'ah, Judy, then your young lady tries her hand, sometimes, at versifying the words of the royal psalmist?' "

"Did he look at the lines, Judy?" asked Esther, blushing deeply with the consciousness that they were but a profane sentimental effusion.

"Yes, my lady—but he looked solemnized and said nothing more about them; but turning to me and speaking as if he would ask a question, he said, 'Judy, it was your mistress' wont to keep the wheel of prayer in perpetual motion. I doubt not her private duty is still faithfully done?' I answered to him, that your honoured parents had been absent the last week, and you had company to entertain, and you were not quite as long at closet—exercise as usual."

"Judy, you were very ready with your excuses for me," said her mistress, after a moment's thoughtfulness.

"It must be a dumb dog, indeed," replied the girl, "that cannot bark for such a kind mistress as thou art."

How often does an accident—a casual word even—serve as a key to unlock feelings of which the possessor has been unconscious. The conscientious girl was suddenly awakened from what appeared to her a sinful dream. Had she perceived, on investigation, a reciprocal sentiment in Everell Fletcher, she would probably have permitted her feelings to flow in their natural channel; but not mingling with his, they were, like a stream, that being dammed—up, flows back, and spreads desolation, where it should have produced life and beauty.

The severest religionists of the times did not require the extinction of the tenderest human affections. On the contrary, there was, perhaps, never a period when they were more frequently and perfectly illustrated. How many delicate women, whom the winds of heaven had never visited roughly, subscribed with their lives to that beautiful declaration of affection from a tender and devoted wife—"Whithersoever your fatal destinie," she said to her husband, "shall dryve you, eyther by the furious waves of the great ocean, or by the manifolde and horrible dangers of the lande, I will surely beare you company. There can be no peryll chaunce to me so terrible, nor any kynde of deathe so cruell, that shall not be much easier for me to abyde than to live so farre separate from you."

But though human affections were permitted, they were to be in manifest subservience to religious devotion—their encroachments were watched with a vigilance resembling the jealousy with which the Israelites defended, from every profane footstep, the holy circle around the ark of the living God. It was this jealousy that now alarmed the fearful superstitious girl; and after some days of the most unsparing self—condemnation, embittered by an indefinite feeling of disappointment, she fell into a dangerous illness; and in the paroxysms of her fever, she prayed fervently that her Creator would resume the spirit, which had been too weak, to maintain its fidelity. It seemed as if her prayer were soon to be granted—she felt herself, and was pronounced by her physician, to be on the verge of the grave. She then was inspired with a strong desire, proceeding, as she believed, from a divine intimation, but which might possibly have sprung from natural feeling, to open her heart to Everell. This disclosure, followed by her dying admonition, would, she hoped, rescue him from the vanities of youth. She accordingly requested her mother to conduct him to her bedside, and to leave them alone for a few moments; and when her request was complied with, she made, to the astonished youth, in the simplicity and sincerity of her heart, a confession, that in other circumstances the rack would not have extorted.

At first, Fletcher fancied her reason was touched. He soothed her, and attempted to withdraw, to call her attendants. She interpreted his thoughts, assured him he was mistaken, and begged that he would not waste one moment of her ebbing life. He then knelt at her bedside, took her burning hand in his, and bathed it with tears of deep commiseration, and tender regret. He promised to lay up her exhortations in his heart, and cherish them as the law of his life; but he did not intimate that he had ever felt a sentiment responding to hers. There was that in the solemnity of the death—bed, in her purity and truth, that would have rebuked the slightest insincerity, however benevolent the feeling that dictated it.

This strange interview lasted but a few moments. Miss Downing, in the energy of her feeling, raised herself on her elbow—the effort exhausted her, and she sunk back in a stupor which appeared to be the immediate precursor of death. Her friends flocked around her, and Fletcher retired to his own room, filled with sorrowful concern at the involuntary influence he had exercised on this sensitive being, who seemed to him far better fitted for heaven, than for earth.

But Miss Downing was not destined yet to be translated to a more congenial sphere. Her unburthened heart reposed, after its long struggles—the original cause of her disease was lightened, if not removed, and the elasticity of a youthful constitution rose victorious over her malady. She never mentioned Everell Fletcher; but she heard, incidentally, that he had remained at her father's, till she was pronounced out of danger, and had then gone to his uncle Stretton's, in Suffolk.

The following autumn, her father, in compliance with a request of Madam Winthrop, and in the hope that a voyage would benefit her health, which was still delicate, sent her to Boston. There she met Hope Leslie—a

bright gay spirit—an allegro to her penseroso. They were unlike in every thing that distinguished each; and it was therefore more probable, judging from experience, that they would become mutually attached. Whatever the theory of the affections may be, the fact was, that they soon became inseparable and confidential friends. Hope sometimes ventured to rally Esther on her over-scrupulousness, and Miss Downing often rebuked the laughing girl's gaiety; but, however variant their dispositions, they melted into each other, like light and shade, each enhancing the beauty and effect of the other.

Hope often spoke of Everell, for he was associated with all the most interesting recollections of her childhood, and probably with her visions of the future; for what girl of seventeen has not a lord for her air-built castles?

Miss Downing listened calmly to her description of the hero of her imagination, but never, by word or sign, gave token that she knew aught of him, other than was told her; and the secret might have died with her, had not her emotion, at Everell's unexpected appearance, half revealed the state of her heart to her quick-sighted friend. This revelation she finished by a full confession, interrupted by tears of bitter mortification.

"Oh!" she concluded, "had I but known how to watch and rule my own spirit, I should have been saved these pangs of remorse and shame."

"My dear Esther," said Hope, brushing away the tears of sympathy that suffused her eyes, "I assure you I am not crying because I consider it a crying case; you people that dwell in the clouds have always a mist before you; now I can see that your path is plain, and sure the end thereof; just give yourself up to my guidance, who, though not half so good and wise as you are, am far more sure-footed. I do not doubt in the least, Everell feels all he ought to feel. I defy any body to know you and not love you, Esther. And do you not see, that if he had made any declaration at the time, it might have seemed as if he were moved by pity, or gratitude. He knew you was coming to New-England, and that he was to follow you; and now he has anticipated his return by some weeks, and why, nobody knows, and it must be because you are here—don't you think so? You will not speak, but I know by your smile what you think, as well as if you did."

Arguments appear very sound that are fortified by our wishes, and Miss Downing's face was assuming a more cheerful expression, when Jennet (our old friend Jennet) came into the room to give the young ladies notice to prepare for dinner, and to inform them that Sir Philip Gardiner was to dine with them—"and a godly appearing man he is," said Jennet, "as ever I laid my eyes on; and it is a wonder to me, that our Mr. Everell should have fallen into such profitable company, for, I am sorry to see it, and loath to say it, he looks as gay as when he used to play his mad pranks at Bethel—when it was next to an impossibility to keep you and him, Miss Hope, from talking and laughing even on a Sabbath day. I think," she continued, glancing her eye at Miss Downing, "sober companions do neither of you any good; and it is so strange Mr. Everell should come home with his hair looking like one of those heathen pictures of your aunt's."

"Oh! hush Jennet! It would be a sin to crop those dark locks of Mr. Everell."

"A sin indeed, Miss Leslie! That is the way you always turn things wrong side out; a sin to have his hair cropped like his father's—or the honourable Governor's—or this Sir Philip Gardiner's—or any other christian man's."

"Well, Jennet, I wish it would come into your wise head, that christian tongues were not made for railing. As to my being serious to-day, that is entirely out of the question; therefore, you may spare yourself hint and exhortation, and go to my aunt, and ask her for my blue boddice and necklace. But no—"she said, stopping Jennet, for she recollected that she had directed the blue boddice because it matched her blue fillet, Everell's gift, and a secret voice told her she had best, under existing circumstances, lay that favourite badge aside. "No, Jennet, bring me my pink boddice, and my ruby locket." Jennet obeyed, but not without muttering as she left the room, a remonstrance against the vanities of dress.

Jennet was one of those persons, abounding in every class of life, whose virtues are most conspicuous in "damning sins they are not inclined to." We ought, perhaps, to apologise for obtruding so humble and disagreeable a personage upon our readers. But the truth is, she figured too much on the family record of the Fletchers, to be suppressed by their faithful historian. Those personages, yclep'd bores in the copious vocabulary of modern times, seem to be a necessary ingredient in life, and like pinching shoes, and smoky rooms, constitute a portion of its trials. Jennet had first found favour with Mrs. Fletcher from her religious exterior. To employ none but godly servants was a rule of the pilgrims; and there were certain set phrases and modes of dress, which produced no slight impression upon the minds of the credulous. To do Jennet justice, she had many temporal

virtues; and though her religion was of the ritual order, and, therefore, particularly disagreeable to her spiritual Mistress, yet her household faculties were invaluable, for then, as now, in the interior of New-England, a faithful servant was like the genius of a fairy tale—no family could hope for more than one.

Long possession legalized Jennet's rights, and increased her tyrannical humours, which were naturally most freely exercised on those members of the family, who had grown from youth to maturity under her eye. In nothing was the sweetness of Hope Leslie's temper more conspicuous, than in the perfect good nature with which she bore the teasing impertinencies of this menial, who, like a cross cur, was ready to bark at every passer by.

Youth and beauty abridge the labours of the toilet, and our young friends, though on this occasion unusually solicitous about the impression they were to make, were not long in attiring themselves; and when Mrs. Grafton presented herself to attend them to dinner, they were awaiting her. "Upon my word," she said, "young ladies, you have done honour to the occasion; it is not every day we have two gentlemen fresh from Old England to dine with us; I am glad you have shown yourselves sensible of the importance of the becomings. It is every woman's duty, upon all occasions, to look as well as she can."

"And a duty so faithfully performed, my dear aunt," said Hope, "that I fancy, like other duties, it becomes easy from habit."

"Easy," replied Mrs. Grafton, with perfect naiveté; "second nature, my dear—second nature. I was taught from a child, to determine the first thing in the morning, what I should wear that day; and now it is as natural to me as to open my eyes when I wake."

"I should think, madam," said Esther, "that other and higher thoughts were more fitting a rational creature, preserved through the night-watches."

Hope was exquisitely susceptible to her aunt's frailties, but she would fain have sheltered them from the observation of others. "Now, my gentle Esther," she whispered to Miss Downing, "lecturing is not your vocation, and this is not lecture day. On jubilee days slaves were set free, you know, and why should not follies be?"

Miss Downing could not have failed to have made some sage reply to her friend's casuistry, but the ringing of a bell announced the dinner, and the young ladies, arm in arm, followed Mrs. Grafton to the dining-room. Just as they entered, Hope whispered, "remember, Esther, the festal day is sacred, and may not be violated by a sad countenance." This was a well-timed caution; it called a slight tinge to Miss Downing's cheeks, and relieved her too expressive paleness.

Everell Fletcher met them at the door. The light of his happiness seemed to gild every object. He complimented Mrs. Grafton on her appearance; told her she had not, in the least, changed since he saw her—an implied compliment, always, after a woman has passed a certain age. He congratulated Miss Downing upon the very apparent effect of the climate on her health, and then, breaking through the embarrassment that slightly constrained him in addressing her, he turned to Hope Leslie, and they talked of the past, the present, and the future, with spontaneous animation; their feelings according and harmonising, as naturally as the music of the stars when they sang together.

CHAPTER XI.

"Our New-England shall tell and boast of her Winthrop, a Lawgiver as patient as Lycurgus, but not admitting any of his criminal disorders; as devout as Numa, but not liable to any of his heathenish madneses; a Governor in whom the excellencies of christianity made a most improving addition unto the virtues, wherein, even without those, he would have made a parallel for the great men of Greece or of Rome, which the pen of a Plutarch has eternized."

— Cotton Mather

We hold ourselves bound by all the laws of decorum, to give our readers a formal introduction to the government-mansion, and its inmates. The house stood in the main street, (Washington-street) on the ground now occupied by 'South-row.' There was a little court in front of it: on one side, a fine garden; on the other, a beautiful lawn, or, as it was called, 'green,' extending to the corner on which the 'Old South' (church) now stands, and an ample yard and offices in the rear.

The mighty master of fiction has but to wave the wand of his office, to present the past to his readers, with all the vividness and distinctness of the present; but we, who follow him at an immeasurable distance—we who have no magician's enchantments, wherewith we can imitate the miracles wrought by the rod of the prophet; we must betake ourselves to the compass and the rule, and set forth our description as minutely and exactly, as if we were making out an inventory for a salesman. In obedience to this necessity, we offer the following detailed description of the internal economy of a pilgrim mansion, not on any apocryphal authority, but quoted from an authentic record of the times.

"In the principal houses was a great hall, ornamented with pictures; a great lantern; velvet cushions in the window-seat to look into the garden: on either side, a great parlour, a little parlour or study, furnished with great looking-glasses, turkey carpets, window-curtains and valance, picture and a map, a brass clock, red leather back chairs, a great pair of brass andirons. The chambers well furnished with feather-beds, warmingpans, and every other elegance and comfort. The pantry well filled with substantial fare and dainties, Madeira wine, prunes, marmalade, silver-tankards and wine-cups, not uncommon."

If any are incredulous as to the correctness of the above extract, we assure them that its truth is confirmed by the spaciousness of the pilgrim habitations still standing in Boston, and occupied by their descendants. These pilgrims were not needy adventurers, nor ruined exiles. Mr. Winthrop himself, had an estate in England, worth seven hundred pounds per annum. Some of his associates came from lordly halls, and many of them brought wealth, as well as virtue, to the colony.

The rigour of the climate, and the embarrassments incident to their condition, often reduced the pilgrims, in their earliest period, to the wants of extreme poverty; but their sufferings had the dignity and merit of being voluntary, and are now, as the tattered garments of the saints are to the faithful, sacred in the eyes of their posterity.

Our humble history has little to do with the public life of Governor Winthrop, which is so well known to have been illustrated by the rare virtue of disinterested patriotism, and by such even and paternal goodness, that a contemporary witty satirist could not find it in his heart to give him a harsher name than 'Sir John Temperwell.' His figure, (if we may believe the portrait that honourably decorates the wall of his lineal descendant) was tall and spare; his eye, dark blue, and mild in its expression: he had the upraised brow, which is said to be indicative of a religious disposition; his hair, and his beard which he wore long, were black. On the whole, we must confess, the external man presents the solemn and forbidding aspect of the times in which he flourished; though we know him to have been a model of private virtue, gracious and gentle in his manners, and exact in the observance of all gentlemanly courtesy.

His wife was admirably qualified for the station she occupied. She recognised, and continually taught to matron and maiden, the duty of unqualified obedience from the wife to the husband, her appointed lord and master; a duty that it was left to modern heresy to dispute; and which our pious fathers, or even mothers, were so far from questioning, that the only divine right to govern, which they acknowledged, was that vested in the husband over the wife. Madam Winthrop's matrimonial virtue never degenerated into the slavishness of fear, or

the obsequiousness of servility. If authorised and approved by principle, it was prompted by feeling; and, if we may be allowed a coarse comparison, like a horse easy on the bit, she was guided by the slightest intimation from him who held the rein; indeed—to pursue our humble illustration still farther—it sometimes appeared as if the reins were dropped, and the inferior animal were left to the guidance of her own sagacity.

Without ever overstepping the limits of feminine propriety, Madam Winthrop manifestly enjoyed the dignity of her official station, and felt that if the governor were the greater, she was the lesser light. There was a slight tinge of official importance in her manner of conferring her hospitalities, and her counsel; but she seemed rather to intend to heighten the value of the gift, than the merit of the giver.

Governor Winthrop possessed the patriarchal blessing of a numerous offspring; but as they were in no way associated with the personages of our story, we have not thought fit to encumber it with any details concerning them.

We return from our long digression to the party we left in Governor Winthrop's parlour.

The tables were arranged for dinner. Tables, we say, for a side-table was spread, but in a manner so inferior to the principal board, which was garnished with silver tankards, wine cups, and rich china, as to indicate that it was destined for inferior guests. This indication was soon verified, for on a servant being sent to announce dinner to Governor Winthrop, who was understood to be occupied with some of the natives on state business; that gentleman appeared attended by four Indians—Miantunnomoh, the young and noble chief of the Narragansetts, two of his counsellors, and an interpreter. Hope turned to Everell to remark on the graceful gestures by which they expressed their salutations to the company—"Good heavens!" she exclaimed, "Everell, what ails you?" for she saw he was as pale as death.

"Nothing, nothing," said Everell, wishing to avoid observation, and turning towards the window: he then added in explanation to Hope, who followed him, "these are the first Indians I have seen since my return, and they brought, too vividly to mind, my dear mother's death."

Governor Winthrop motioned to his Indian guests to take their seats at the side-table, and the rest of the company, including the elder Fletcher and Cradock, surrounded the dinner table, and serving-men and all, reverently folded their arms and bowed their heads, while the grace, or prefatory prayer, was pronouncing.

After all the rest had taken their seats, the Indians remained standing; and although the governor politely signified to the interpreter that their delay wronged the smoking viands, they remained motionless, the chief drawn aside from the rest, his eye cast down, his brow lowering, and his whole aspect expressive of proud displeasure.

The governor rose and demanded of the interpreter the meaning of their too evident dissatisfaction.

"My chief bids me say," replied the savage, "that he expects such treatment from the English saggamore, as the English receive in the wigwam of the Narragansett chief. He says, that when the English stranger visits him, he sits on his mat, and eats from his dish."

"Tell your chief," replied the governor, who had urgent state reasons for conciliating Miantunnomoh, "that I pray him to overlook the wrong I have done him; he is right; he deserves the place of honour. I have heard of his hospitable deeds, and that he doth give more than even ground to his guests; for our friend, Roger Williams, informed us, that he hath known him, with his family, to sleep abroad to make room in his wigwam for English visitors."

Governor Winthrop added the last circumstance, partly as a full confession of his fault, and partly as an apology to his help-mate, who looked a good deal disconcerted by the disarrangement of her dinner. However, she proceeded to give the necessary orders; the table was remodelled—a sufficient addition made, and the haughty chief, his countenance relaxing to an expression of grave satisfaction, took his seat at the governor's right hand. His associates being properly accommodated at the table, the rest of the company resumed their stations.

Everell cast his eye around on the various viands which covered the hospitable board.—"Times have mended," he said to Madam Winthrop, "in my absence. I remember once sitting down with my father, to a good man's table, on which was nothing but a sorry dish of clams; but our host made up for the defect of his entertainment by the excess of his gratitude, for, as I remember, he gave thanks that 'we were permitted to eat of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand.'"

Hope Leslie understood so well the temper of the company she was in, that she instantly perceived a slight depression of their mercury at what appeared to them, a tone of levity in Everell. She interposed her shield. "What

may we expect for the future," she said, "if now it seems strange to us, that ten years ago, the best in the colony were reduced to living upon muscles, acorns, and ground nuts; and that our bountiful governor, having shared his flour and meat with the poorest in the land, had his last batch of bread in the oven, when the ship with succours arrived? the Lion, or the Blessing of the Bay—which was it, Master Cradock? for it was you who told me the story," she added, bending towards Cradock, who sat opposite to her.

Cradock, who always felt, at the slightest notice from Hope, an emotion similar to that of a pious catholic, when he fancied the image of the saint he worships to bend propitiously towards him; Cradock dropped his knife and fork, and erecting his body with one of those sudden jerks characteristic of awkward men, he hit the elbow of a servant who was just placing a gravy-boat on the table, and brought the gravy down on his little brown wig, whence it found its way, in many a bubbling rill, over his face, neck, and shoulders.

A murmur of sympathy and suppressed laughter ran around the table; and while a servant, at his mistress' bidding, was applying napkins to Cradock, he seemed only intent on replying to Miss Leslie. "It was the Lion, Miss Hope—ha—indeed—a wonderful memory—yes, yes—it was the Lion. The Blessing of the Bay was the governor's own vessel."

"That name," said Sir Philip Gardiner, in a low tone to Hope Leslie, next whom he sat, "should, I think, have been reserved, where names are significant, for a more just appropriation."

He spoke in a tone of confidential gallantry so discordant with his demeanor, that the fair listener lost the matter in the manner, and turning to him with one of those looks so confounding to a man who means to speak but to one ear in the company—"What did you say, sir?" she asked.

"He said, my dear," said Mrs. Grafton, who sat at the knight's left hand, and who would have considered it worse to suppress a compliment, than to conceal treason; "he said, my dear, that you should have been named, the Blessing of the Bay."

Sir Philip recoiled a little at this flat version of his compliment; but he had other interests to sustain, more important than his knightly courtesy, and he was just contriving something to say, which might secure him a safe passage past Scylla and Charybdis, when Madam Winthrop, who was exclusively occupied with the duty of presiding, begged Sir Philip would change his plate, and take a piece of wild turkey, which she could recommend as savoury and tender; or, a piece of the venison—the venison, she said, was a present from the son of their good old friend and ally, Chicatabot, and she was sure it was of the best.

The knight declined the proffered delicacies, alleging he had already been tempted to excess by the cod's-head and shoulders—a rarity to a European.

"But," said Miss Leslie, "you will not dine on fish alone, and on Friday too—why we shall suspect you of being a Romanist."

If there was any thing in the unwonted blush that deepened the knight's complexion, which might lead an observer to suspect that an aimless dart had touched a vulnerable point, he adroitly averted suspicion by saying, "that he trusted temperance and self-denial were not confined to a corrupt and superstitious church, and that for himself, he found much use in voluntary mortifications of appetite."

"Fastings oft," said Cradock, who had been playing the part of a valiant trencherman, taking liberally of all of the various feast, "fastings oft are an excellent thing for those who have grace for them; and yours, Sir Philip, if one may judge from the ruddiness of your complexion, are wonderfully prospered." The knight received the simple compliment with a silent bow.

Cradock turned to Miss Downing, who sat on his right—"Now, Miss Esther, you do wrong yourself; there is that pigeon's wing, just as I gave it to you."

Hope Leslie looked up with a deprecating glance, as if she would have said, 'Heaven help my tutor! he never moves without treading on somebody's toes.'

"Is not Miss Downing well?" asked the elder Fletcher, who now, for the first time, noticed that she looked unusually pale and pensive.

"Perfectly well," said Esther.

"Indifferently well, my dear, you mean," said Madam Winthrop. "Esther," she added, "always feeds like a Canary bird; but I never despair of a young lady—they have all the chameleon gift of living upon air."

"Will Miss Downing mend her appetite with wine," asked young Fletcher, "and allow me the honour of taking it with her?"

Everell!" exclaimed Hope, touching his elbow, but not in time to check him.

"My son!" said his father, in a voice of rebuke.

"Mr. Fletcher!" exclaimed Governor Winthrop, in a tone of surprise.

"What have I done now?" asked Everell of Hope Leslie; but Hope was too much diverted with his mistake and honest consternation to reply.

"You have done nothing inexcusable, my young friend," said the governor; "for you probably did not know that the vain custom of drinking, one to another, has been disused, at my table, for ten years; and that our general court prohibited this 'employment of the creature out of its natural use,' by their order, in the year of our Lord, 1639, four years since; so that the custom hath become quite obsolete with us, though it may be still in practice among our laxer brethren of England."

"With due deference I speak," said Everell, "to my elders and superiors; but it really appears to me to border on the quixotism of fighting wind-mills, to make laws against so innocent a custom."

"No vanity is innocent, Mr. Everell Fletcher," replied the governor, "as you will, yourself, after proper consideration, confess. Tell me, when but now, you would have proffered wishes of health to my niece, Esther, was it not an empty compliment, and not meant by you for an argument of love, which should always be unfeigned?"

The governor's proposition appeared to himself to be merely an abstract metaphysical truth; but to the younger part of his audience, at least, it conveyed much more than met the ear.

Miss Downing blushed deeply, and Everell attempted, in vain, to stammer a reply. Hope Leslie perceived the pit, and essayed a safe passage over it. "Esther," she said, "Everell shall not be our knight at tilt or tournament, if he cannot use the lance your uncle has dropped at his feet. Are there not always, Everell, in your heart, arguments of love unfeigned, when you drink to the health of a fair lady?"

Before Everell had time to reply, except by a sparkling glance, the governor said, "This is somewhat too light a discussion of a serious topic."

This rebuke quenched, at once, the spark of gaiety Hope had kindled, and the dinner, never a prolonged meal in this pattern mansion, was finished without any other conversation than that exacted by the ordinary courtesies of the table.

After the repast was ended, the Indian chief took his leave with much fainter expressions of attachment than he had vouchsafed on a former visit, as the governor had afterwards occasion to remember.

The party dispersed in various directions, and the governor withdrew, with the elder Fletcher, to his study. When there, Governor Winthrop lighted his pipe, a luxury in which he sparingly indulged; and then, looking over a packet of letters, he selected one, and handed it to Mr. Fletcher, saying, "There is an epistle from brother Downing which your son has brought to me. Read it, yourself; you will perceive that he has stated his views on a certain subject, interesting to you, and to us all; and stated them directly, without any of the circumlocution and ambiguity, which a worldly-minded man would have employed on a like occasion."

Mr. Downing introduced the important topic of his epistle, which Mr. Fletcher read with the deepest attention, by saying that "Fletcher, junior, returns to the colony, a fit instrument, as I trust, to promote its welfare and honour. He is gifted with divers and goodly talents, and graced with sufficient learning.

"I have often been sorely wounded at hearing the censures passed on our brother Fletcher, for having sent his son into the bosom of a prelatical family, but I confidently believe the youth returns to his own country with his puritan principles uncorrupted; although, it is too true, as our stricter brethren often remark, that he has little of the outward man of a 'pilgrim indeed.'

"He is, brother Winthrop, a high-metalled youth, and on this account I feel, as you doubtless will, the urgency of coupling him with a member of the congregation, and one who may, in all likelihood, accomplish for him that precious promise of the apostle, 'the believing wife shall sanctify the unbelieving husband.'

"I have already taken the first step towards bringing about so desirable an end, by inviting the young man to my house, where he spent two months of the summer. I then favoured his intimate intercourse with my well-beloved daughter Esther, whose outward form, I may say without boasting, is a fit temple for the spirit within."

Mr. Downing then proceeded to state some circumstances already known to the reader, and particularly dwelt on Everell's remaining at his house during his daughter's dangerous illness; touched lightly on their having had an

interview, very affecting to both parties, and in regard to the particulars of which, both, with the shyness natural to youth, had been silent; and finally, set forth in strong terms, the concern evinced by Everell while Esther's recovery was doubtful.

"Notwithstanding," the letter proceeded to say, "these circumstances are so favourable to my wishes, I have some apprehensions; and therefore, brother, I bespeak your immediate interposition in behalf of the future spiritual prosperity of this youth. He hath been assiduously courted by Miss Leslie's paternal connexions, and I have reason to believe, they have solicited him to marry her, and bring her to England. But without such solicitation the marriage is a probable one. Miss Leslie is reported here, to be wanting in grace, a want that I fear would not impoverish her in young Fletcher's estimation; and to be a maiden of rare comeliness, a thing precious in the eyes of youth—too apt to set a high price on that which is but dust and ashes. The young lady is of great estate too; but that I think will not weigh with the young man, for I discern a lofty spirit in him, that would spurn the yoke of mammon. Nor do I think, with some of our brethren, that 'gold and grace did never yet agree.' Yet there are some, who would make this alliance a ground of further scandal against our brother Fletcher. It is whispered that his worldly affairs are not so prosperous as we could wish. Mark me, brother— my confidence in him is unmoved, and I think, and am sure, that he would not permit his son to espouse this maiden, with the dowry of a queen, if thereby he endangered his spiritual welfare. But, brother, you in the new world, are as a city set on a hill. Many lie in wait for your halting, and all appearance of evil should be avoided. On this account and many others, brother Fletcher and all of us should duly prize that medium and safe condition for which Agur prayed.

"One more reason I would suggest, and then commend the business to thy guidance, who art justly termed by friend and foe—the Moses of God's people in the wilderness.

"It seemeth to me, the motive of Miss Leslie's mother, in going with her offspring to the colony, should be duly weighed and respected. Could her purpose, in any other way, be so certainly accomplished, as by uniting her daughter speedily with a godly and approved member of the congregation?"

Every sentence of this letter stung Mr. Fletcher. He repeatedly threw it down, rose from his seat, and after taking two or three turns across the study, screwed his courage to the sticking point, and returned to it again. Governor Winthrop's attention appeared to be rivetted to a paper he was perusing, till he could no longer, from motives of delicacy to his friend, affect to abstract his attention from him. Mr. Fletcher finished the letter, and leaning over the table, covered his face with his hands. His emotion could not be hidden. The veins in his temples and forehead swelled almost to bursting, and his tears fell like rain-drops on the table. Governor Winthrop laid his hand on his friend's arm, and by a gentle pressure, expressed a sympathy that it would have been difficult to embody in words.

After a few moments' struggle with his feelings, Mr. Fletcher subdued his emotion, and turning to Governor Winthrop, he said, with dignity—"I have betrayed before you a weakness that I have never expressed, but in that gracious presence, where weakness is not degradation. Thus has it ever pleased Him, who knows the infirmity of my heart, to try me. From my youth, my path hath been hedged up with earthly affections. Is it that I have myself forged the fetters that bind me to the earth? Is it that I have given to the creature what I owed to the Creator, that one after another of my earthly delights is taken from me? that I am thus stripped bare? Oh! it has been the thought that came unbidden to my nightly meditations, and my daily reveries, that I might live to see these children of two saints in heaven united. This sweet child is the image of her blessed mother. She was her precious legacy to me, and she hath been such a spirit of love and contentment in my lone dwelling, that she hath inwrought herself with every fibre of my heart."

"This was natural," said Governor Winthrop.

"Ay, my friend—and was it not inevitable? I did think," he continued, after a momentary pause, "that in their childhood, their affections, as if instinct with their parents' feelings, mingled in natural union; if their hearts retain this bent, I think it were not right to put a force upon them."

"Certainly not," replied his friend; "but the affections of youth are flexible, and may be turned from their natural bent by a skilful hand. It is our known duty to direct them heaven-ward. In taking care for the spiritual growth of our young people, who are soon to stand in their father's places, we do, as we are bound, most assuredly build up the interests of our Zion. I should ill deserve the honourable name my brethren have given me, if I were not zealous over our youth. In fearing any opposition from the parties in question, I think, my worthy brother, you

disquiet yourself in vain. It appeareth from Downing's letter, that there have been tender passages between your son and his daughter Esther; and even if Hope Leslie hath fed her fancies with thoughts of Everell, yet I think she would be forward to advance her friend's happiness, for, notwithstanding she doth so differ from her in her gay carriage, their hearts appear to be knit together."

"You do my beloved child but justice; what is difficult duty to others, hath ever seemed impulse in her; and I have sometimes thought that the covenant of works was to her a hindrance to the covenant of grace; and that, perhaps, she would hate sin more for its unlawfulness, if she did not hate it so much for its ugliness."

Governor Winthrop thought his friend went a little too far in magnifying the virtue of his favourite. "Pardon," he said, "the wounds inflicted by a friend—they are faithful. I have thought the child rests too much on performances; and you must allow, brother, that she hath not, I speak it tenderly, that passiveness, that, next to godliness, is a woman's best virtue."

"I should scarcely account," replied Mr. Fletcher, "a property of soulless matter, a virtue." This was spoken in a tone of impatience that indicated truly that the speaker, like an over fond parent, could better endure any reproach cast on himself, than the slightest imputation on his favourite. Governor Winthrop was not a man to shrink from inflicting what he deemed a salutary pain, because his patient recoiled from his touch, he therefore proceeded in his admonition.

"Partiality is dangerous, as we see in the notable history of David and Absalom, and elsewhere; and perhaps it was your too great indulgence that emboldened the child to the daring deed of violating the law, by the secret release of the condemned."

"That violation rests on suspicion, not proof," said Mr. Fletcher, hastily.

"And why," replied Governor Winthrop, smiling, "is it permitted to rest on suspicion? from respect to our much suffering brother Fletcher, and consideration of the youth of the offender, we have winked at the offence. But we will pass that—I would be the last to lift the veil that hath fallen over it; I only alluded to it, to enforce the necessity of a stricter watch over this lawless girl. Would it not be wise and prudent to take my brother's counsel, and consign her to some one who should add to affection, the modest authority of a husband?"

Governor Winthrop paused for a reply, but receiving none, he proceeded—"One of our most promising youth hath this day discoursed to me of Hope Leslie, and expressed a matrimonial intent towards her."

"And who is this?" demanded Mr. Fletcher.

"William Hubbard—the youth who hath come with so much credit from our prophets' school at Cambridge. He is a discreet young man, steeped in learning, and of approved orthodoxy."

"These be cardinal points with us," replied Mr. Fletcher, calmly, "but they are not like to commend him to a maiden of Hope Leslie's temper. She inclineth not to bookish men, and is apt to vent her childish gaiety upon the ungainly ways of scholars."

Thus our heroine, by her peculiar taste, lost at least the golden opportunity of illustrating herself by a union with the future historian of New-England.

After a little consideration, the governor resumed the conversation. "It is difficult," he said, "to suit a maiden who hath more whim, than reason—what think you of Sir Philip Gardiner?"

"Sir Philip Gardiner! a new-comer of to-day! and old enough to be the father of Hope Leslie!"

"The fitter guide for her youth. Besides, brother, you magnify his age—he is still on the bedside of forty. He is a man of good family, who, after having fought on the side where his birth naturally cast him, hath been plucked, as a brand from the burning, by the preaching and exhortation of the godly Mr. Wilkins; and feeling, as he declares, a pious horror at the thought of imbruing his hands any further in blood, he hath come to cast his lot among us, instead of joining our friends in England."

"Hath he credentials to verify all these particulars?"

Governor Winthrop coloured, slightly, at an interrogatory that implied a deficiency of wariness on his part, and replied, "that he thought the gentleman scarcely needed other than he carried in his language and deportment, but that he had come furnished with a letter of introduction, satisfactory in all points."

"From whom?" inquired Mr. Fletcher.

"From one Jeremy Austin—who expresseth himself as, and Sir Philip says is, a warm friend to us."

"Is he known to you?"

"No—but I think I have heard him mentioned as a well-willer to our colony."

This was not perfectly satisfactory to Mr. Fletcher, but he forbore to press the point further, and turned his attack to that part of the suggestion that appeared most vulnerable. "Methinks," he said, "you are over-hasty in proposing to match Hope Leslie with this stranger."

"Nay, I meant not a formal proposition. I noted that Sir Philip was struck with Hope's outward graces. He is an uncommon personable man, and hath that bearing that finds favour in maidens' eyes, and the thought came to me, that he may have been sent here, in good time, to relieve all our perplexities; and to confess the truth, brother, if I may use the sporting language of our youth, I am impatient to put jesses on this wild bird of yours, while she is on our perch. But to be serious, and surely the subject doth enforce us to it, I am satisfied that you will not oppose any means that may offer to secure the lambs of our flock in the true fold."

"I shall oppose nothing that will promote the spiritual prosperity of those dear to me as my own soul. I have no reason to doubt my son's filial obedience; he hath never been wanting, and though both he and I have fallen under censure, I see not that I erred in sending him from me, since I but complied with the last request of his sainted mother, and that compliance deprived me of the only child left of my little flock. I speak not vauntingly; but let not those who have remained in Egypt, condemn him who has drank of the bitterest waters of the wilderness." Mr. Fletcher, finding himself again yielding to irrepressible emotions, rose and hastily left his more equal-tempered and less interested friend.

Thus did these good men, not content with their magnanimous conflict with necessary evils, involve themselves in superfluous trials. Whatever gratified the natural desires of the heart was questionable, and almost every thing that was difficult and painful, assumed the form of duty. As if the benevolent Father of all had stretched over our heads a canopy of clouds, instead of the bright firmament, and its glorious host, and ever-changing beauty; and had spread under our feet a wilderness of bitter herbs, instead of every tree and plant yielding its good fruit.—But we would fix our eyes on the bright halo that encircled the pilgrims' head; and not mark the dust that sometimes sullied his garments.

CHAPTER XI.

"Then crush, even in their hour of birth
The infant buds of love,
And tread his glowing fire to earth,
Ere 'tis dark in clouds above."
— Halleck

The observance of the Sabbath began with the puritans, as it still does with a great portion of their descendants, on Saturday night. At the going down of the sun on Saturday, all temporal affairs were suspended; and so zealously did our fathers maintain the letter, as well as the spirit of the law, that, according to a vulgar tradition in Connecticut, no beer was brewed in the latter part of the week, lest it should presume to work on Sunday.

It must be confessed that the tendency of the age is to laxity; and so rapidly is the wholesome strictness of primitive times abating, that, should some antiquary, fifty years hence, in exploring his garret rubbish, chance to cast his eye on our humble pages, he may be surprised to learn, that even now the Sabbath is observed, in the interior of New-England, with an almost judaical severity.

On Saturday afternoon an uncommon bustle is apparent. The great class of procrastinators are hurrying to and fro to complete the lagging business of the week. The good mothers, like Burns' matron, are plying their needles, making "auld claes look amaist as weel's the new;" while the domestics, or help, (we prefer the national descriptive term) are wielding with might and main, their brooms, and mops, to make all tidy for the Sabbath.

As the day declines, the hum of labour dies away, and after the sun is set, perfect stillness reigns in every well-ordered household, and not a foot-fall is heard in the village street. It cannot be denied, that even the most spiritual, missing the excitement of their ordinary occupations, anticipate their usual bed-time. The obvious inference from this fact, is skilfully avoided by certain ingenious reasoners, who allege that the constitution was originally so organised, as to require an extra quantity of sleep on every seventh night. We recommend it to the curious, to inquire, how this peculiarity was adjusted, when the first day of the week was changed from Saturday to Sunday.

The Sabbath morning is as peaceful as the first hallowed day. Not a human sound is heard without the dwellings, and but for the lowing of the herds, the crowing of the cocks, and the gossiping of the birds, animal life would seem to be extinct, till, at the bidding of the church-going bell, the old and young issue from their habitations, and with solemn demeanor, bend their measured steps to the meeting-house. The family of the minister—the squire—the doctor—the merchants—the modest gentry of the village, and the mechanic and labourer, all arranged in their best, all meeting on even ground, and all with that consciousness of independence and equality, which breaks down the pride of the rich, and rescues the poor from servility, envy, and discontent. If a morning salutation is reciprocated, it is in a suppressed voice; and if perchance, nature, in some reckless urchin, burst forth in laughter, "my dear, you forget it's Sunday!" is the ever ready reproof.

Though every face wears a solemn aspect, yet we once chanced to see even a deacon's muscles relaxed by the wit of a neighbour, and heard him allege in a half deprecating, half laughing voice, "the squire is so droll, that a body must laugh, though it be Sabbath-day."

The farmer's ample waggon, and the little one-horse vehicle, bring in all who reside at an inconvenient walking distance,—that is to say, in our riding community, half a mile from the church. It is a pleasing sight to those who love to note the happy peculiarities of their own land, to see the farmer's daughters blooming, intelligent, and well-bred, pouring out of these homely coaches, with their nice white gowns, pruned shoes, leghorn hats, fans, and parasols, and the spruce young men with their plaited ruffles, blue coats, and yellow buttons. The whole community meet as one religious family, to offer their devotions at the common altar. If there is an out-law from the society—a luckless wight, whose vagrant taste has never been subdued, he may be seen stealing along the margin of some little brook, far away from the condemning observation, and troublesome admonitions of his fellows.

Towards the close of the day, or, (to borrow a phrase descriptive of his feelings who first used it) 'when the

sabbath begins to abate,' the children cluster about the windows. Their eyes wander from their catechisms to the western sky, and though it seems to them as if the sun would never disappear, his broad disk does slowly sink behind the mountain; and while his last ray still lingers on the eastern summits, merry voices break forth, and the ground resounds with bounding footsteps. The village-belle arrays herself for her twilight walk; the boys gather on 'the green;' the lads and girls throng to the 'singing-school;' while some coy maiden lingers at home, awaiting her expected suitor—and all enter upon the pleasures of the evening with as keen a relish as if the day had been a preparatory penance.

After having favoured our readers with this longskipping-place, we resume the thread of our narrative. We have passed over eight days, which glided away without supplying any events to the historian of our heroine's life; though even then the thread was spinning that was to form the woof of her destiny.

Intent on verifying the prediction she had made to Esther, that Everell would soon declare himself her lover, she promoted the intercourse of the parties in every way she could, without making her motive apparent. While she treated Everell with frank sisterly affection, and was always easy and animated in his society, which she enjoyed above all other pleasures, she sedulously sought to bring Esther's moral and mental graces forth to the light. In their occasional walks, she took good care that Everell should be the companion of her friend, while she permitted Sir Philip Gardiner to attend her. He was a man of the world, au fait in all the arts of society, and though he sometimes offended her by the excess of his flattering gallantries, yet he often deeply interested her with his lively descriptions of countries and manners unknown to her.

It was just at twilight, on Saturday evening, when the elder Mr. Fletcher coming into Madam Winthrop's parlour, found his son sitting there alone, and interrupted a very delightful meditation on the eloquence of Hope Leslie, who had just been with him, descanting on the virtues of her friend Esther. The charms of the fair speaker had, we believe, a far larger share of his thoughts, than the subject of her harangue.

"We have a lecture extraordinary to-night," said Mr. Fletcher; "our rulers some time since, issued an order limiting our regular religious meetings to one, during the week. Shall you go, my son?"

"Sir—go to the lecture?" replied Everell, as if just waking from a dream, and then added, for then he caught a glimpse of Hope through the door, with her hat and mantle. "Oh, yes—certainly sir, I shall go to the lecture."

He snatched his hat, and would have joined Miss Leslie; but she saw his intention, and turning to him, as she passed the threshold of the door, she said, "You need not go with me, Everell; I have to call for aunt Grafton, at Mrs. Cotton's."

"May not I call with you?"

"No; I had rather you would not," she said decidedly, and hurried away without any explanation of her preference.

"What can have disturbed Hope?" asked Mr. Fletcher, for both he and his son had observed that her cheek was flushed, and her eye tearful.

"I cannot imagine," replied Everell; "she left me not half an hour since, all smiles and gaiety."

"It is but the April-temper of youth," said the father. "Hope is of a feeling make: she often reminds me of the Delta lands, where the fruits spring forth before the waters have retired. Smiles are playing on her lips before the tear is dry on her cheek. But this sensitiveness should be checked; the dear child's feelings have too long been indulged."

"And as long as they are all innocent, Sir, why should they not be indulged?"

"Because, my son, she must be hardened for the cross-accidents and unkind events, or, rather I should say, the wholesome chastisements of life. She cannot—we can none of us—expect indulgence from the events of life." Mr. Fletcher paused for a moment, looked around, then shut the door, and returned to his son. "Everell," he said, "you have ever been dutiful to me."

"And ever shall be, my dear father," replied Everell with frank confidence, little thinking how soon the virtue might become difficult.

"Trust not, my son, to thine own strength; it may soon be put to a test that will make thee feel it to be but weakness. Everell, thou seest that Hope loves thee even as she loved thee in thy childhood. Let her affection remain of this temper, I charge thee, as thou respectest thy father's, and thine own honour. And, Everell, it were well if you fixed your eye on"—

"Stop, sir!—stop, I beseech you, and tell me—not because I have any thoughts—any intentions, I mean—any

formed purpose, I would say—but tell me, I entreat you, why this prohibition?"

Everell spoke with such earnestness and ingenuousness, that his father could not refuse to answer him: but his reasons seemed even to himself to lose half their force as they emerged from their shroud of mystery. He acknowledged, in the first place, what his most cherished wishes had been, in relation to Hope, and Everell. He then communicated the intimations that had been thrown out, that his views for his son were mercenary.

Everell laughed at the idea. "No one," he said, "can so well afford such an imputation as you, sir, whose whole life has been a practical refutation of it: and for my own part, I am satisfied with the consciousness that I would not marry any woman with a fortune, whom I would not marry if the case were reversed, or even if we were both penniless."

"I believe this is not an empty boast, my son; but we have set ourselves up for a mark to the world, and, as brother Winthrop has said, and repeated to me, we cannot be too solicitous to avoid all appearance of evil. There are covetous souls, who, on the slightest ground, would suspect us of pursuing our own worldly by-ends."

"And so, sir, to win the approbation, or rather the good word of these covetous souls, we are to degrade ourselves to their level, and act as if we were capable of their mean passions."

"Everell! my son, you speak presumptuously; we are capable of all evil;—but we will waive that question at present. Our individual wishes must be surrendered to the public good. We who have undertaken this great work in the wilderness, must not live to ourselves. We have laid the foundation of an edifice, and our children must be so coupled together, as to secure its progress and stability when the present builders are laid low."

"And so, my dear father, a precious gem is to be mortared in like a common brick, wherever may best suit the purposes and views of the builders. You are displeased, Sir. Perhaps I spoke somewhat hastily. But, once for all, I entreat you not to dispose of us as if we were mere machines: we owe you our love and reverence."

"And obedience, Everell."

"Yes, sir, as far as it can be manifested by not doing what you command us not to do."

"Have I then strained parental authority so far, that you think it necessary thus to qualify your duty?"

"No, indeed, my dear father; and it is because your authority has ever been too gentle to be felt, that I wince at the galling of a new yoke. You will admit that my submission has not been less perfect, for being voluntary. Trust me, then, for the future; and I promise"—

Everell was perhaps saved from rashly committing himself, by the entrance of Madam Winthrop, who inquired if the gentlemen were ready to attend her to the lecture.

"Come, Mr. Everell," she said, "here is Esther to show you the way, than whom there can be no safer guide."

Miss Downing stood beside her aunt, but she shrunk back at Everell's approach, hurt at what seemed to her a solicitation for his attention. He perceived her instinctive movement, but without appearing to notice it, he offered his arm to Madam Winthrop, saying, "As there is no skill in guiding one quite willing to be led, I will not impose the trouble on Miss Downing, if you will allow me the honour of attending you."

Madam Winthrop submitted with the best grace to this cross purpose. The elder Fletcher offered his arm to Miss Downing, and endeavoured to draw her into conversation; but she was timid, downcast, and reserved; and mentally comparing her with Hope Leslie, he felt how improbable it was that Everell would ever prefer her. The old, even when grave and rigid, are said to affect the young and gay; on the same principle, perhaps, that a dim eye delights in bright colours.

"Is that Gorton's company?" asked Everell, pointing towards several prisoners, who, in the custody of a file of soldiers, appeared to be going towards the sanctuary.

"Yes," replied Madam Winthrop; "the governor and our ruling elders have determined, that as they are to be tried next week, they shall have the benefit of all our public teaching in the mean time."

"I should fear they would deem this punishment before trial," said Everell.

"They did reluct mightily at first; but on being promised that if they had occasion to speak, after sermon, they should be permitted, provided they only spoke the words of sobriety and truth, they consented to come forth."

This Gorton, whom Hubbard calls 'a prodigious minter of exorbitant novelties,' had been brought, with his adherents, from Rhode-Island, by force of arms, to be tried for certain civil and ecclesiastical offences, for which, according to the most learned antiquary of our new world, (Mr. Savage,) they were not amenable to the magistracy of Massachusetts.

The prisoners were ushered into the church, and placed before the ruling elders. The governor then entered,

unattended by his halberd-bearers,—(a ceremony dispensed with, except on Sunday)—and, followed by his family, he walked slowly to his pew, where Miss Leslie was already seated between Mrs. Grafton, and Sir Philip Gardiner. She rose, and contrived to exchange her location for one next Miss Downing. "Look, Esther," she said in a whisper to her friend, "at that lad who stands in the corner of the gallery, just beside the lamp."

"I see him; but what of him?"

"Why, just observe how he gazes at me: his eye is like a burning-glass—it really scorches me. I wish the service were over. Do you think it will be long?"

"It may be long, but I trust not tedious," replied Esther, with a gravity which was the harshest rebuke she could ever command.

"Oh, it will be both!" said Hope, in a despairing tone; "for there is Mr. Wheeler in the pulpit, and he always talks of eternity till he forgets time."

"My dear Hope!" said Esther, in a voice of mingled surprise and reproof.

The service presently began, and Hope endeavoured dutifully to assume a decorous demeanour, and join Esther in singing the psalm; but her mind was soon abstracted, and her voice died away.

The preacher had not proceeded far in his discourse, before all her patience was exhausted. Even those who are the most strenuous advocates for the passive duties of the sanctuary, might have bestowed their pity on our heroine, who had really serious cause for her feverish impatience; obliged to sit, while a young man, accounted a 'universal scholar,' seemed determined, like many unfledged preachers, to tell all he knew in that one discourse, which was then called a prophesying—an extempore effusion. He was bent, not only on making 'root and branch work' of poor Gorton's heresies, but on eradicating every tare from the spiritual field. To Hope, he appeared to maintain one even pace straight forward, like the mortal in the fairy tale, sentenced to an eternal walk over a boundless plain.

"Do, Esther, look at the candles," she whispered; "don't you think it must be nine o'clock?"

"Oh hush!—no, not yet eight."

Hope sighed audibly, and once more resumed a listening attitude. All human labours have their end, and therefore had the preacher's. But, alas for our heroine! when he had finished, Gorton, whose face for the last hour had expressed that he felt much like a criminal condemned to be scourged before he is hung—Gorton rose, and, smarting under a sense of wrongs, he repeated all the points of the discourse, and made points where there were none; refuted and attacked, and proved (to his own satisfaction), 'that all ordinances, ministers, sacraments, were but men's inventions—silver shrines of Diana.'

While this self-styled 'professor of mysteries' spoke, Hope was so much interested in his genuine enthusiasm and mysticism, (for he was the Swedenborg of his day,) that she forgot her own secret subject of anxiety: but when he had finished, and half a dozen of the ruling elders rose at the same moment to prove the weapons of orthodoxy upon the arch heretic, she whispered to Esther, "I can never bear this;—I must make an apology to Madam Winthrop, and go home."

"Stay," said Esther; "do you not see Mr. Cotton is getting up?"

Mr. Cotton, the regular pastor, rose to remind his brethren of the decree, "that private members should be very sparing in their questions and observations after public sermons;" and to say, that he should postpone any farther discussion of the precious points before them, as it was near nine o'clock—after which it was not suitable for any christian family to be unnecessarily abroad.

Hope now, and many others instinctively rose, in anticipation of the dismissing benediction; but Mr. Cotton waved his hand for them to sit down, till he could communicate to the congregation the decision to which the ruling elders and himself had come, on the subject of the last Sabbath sermon. 'He would not repeat what he had before said upon that lust of costly apparel, which was fast gaining ground, and had already, as was well known, crept into godly families. He was pleased that there were among them gracious women, ready to turn at a rebuke, as was manifested in many veils being left at home, that were floating over the congregation like so many butterflies' wings in the morning. Economy, he justly observed, was, as well as simplicity, a christian grace; and therefore the rulers had determined, that those persons who had run into the excess of immoderate veils and sleeves, embroidered caps, and gold and silver lace, should be permitted to wear them out, but new ones should be forfeited.'

This sumptuary regulation announced, the meeting was dismissed.

Madam Winthrop whispered to Everell that she was going, with his father, to look in upon a sick neighbour, and would thank him to see her niece home. Everell stole a glance at Hope, and dutifully offered his arm to Miss Downing.

Hope, intent only on one object, was hurrying out of the pew, intending, in the jostling of the crowd, to escape alone; but she was arrested by Madam Winthrop's saying, "Miss Leslie, Sir Philip offers you his arm;" and at the same moment her aunt stooped forward, to beg her to wait a moment till she could send a message to Deacon Knowles' wife, that she might wear her new gown with the Turkish sleeves the next day.

"Oh martyrdom!" thought Hope, with indeed little of the spirit of a martyr. She dared not speak aloud, but she continued to whisper to Mrs. Grafton—"For pity's sake, do leave Mrs. Knowles to take care of herself; I am tired to death with staying here."

"No wonder," replied her aunt, in the same low tone, "it is enough to tire Job himself;—but just have a minute's patience, dearie; it is but doing as a body would be done by, to let Mistress Knowles know she may come out in her new gown to-morrow."

"Well, just as you please, ma'am; but I will go along with Sir Philip, and you can follow with Mr. Cradock. Mr. Cradock, you will wait for Mrs. Grafton?"

"Surely, surely," said the good man eagerly; "there is nothing you could ask me, Miss Hope, as you well know—be it ever so disagreeable—that I would not do."

"Thank you for nothing, Mr. Cradock," said the testy dame, with a toss of her head; "you are over civil, I think, to-night. It is very well, Miss Hope, it is very well;—you may go;—you know Cradock at best is purblind at night;—but it is very well;—you can go—I can get home alone. It is very peculiar of you, Mr. Cradock."

Poor Cradock saw he had offended, but how, he knew not; and he looked imploringly to Hope to extricate him; but she was too anxious about her own affairs, to lend her usual benevolent care to his embarrassment.

"My dear aunt," said she, "I will not go without you, if you prefer to go with me; only do let us go."

Mrs. Grafton now acquiesced, for in her flurry she had lost sight of the messenger whom she intended to entrust with the important errand. Sir Philip arranged her hood and cloak; with a grace that she afterwards said "was so like her dear deceased," and in a few moments, the party was in the street, and really moving homeward.

Mrs. Grafton prided herself on a slow, measured step, which she fancied was the true gait of dignity. Hope, on the contrary, always moved, as the spirit moved her; and now she felt an irresistible impulse to hurry forward.

"My dear," said her aunt, "how can you fly so? I am sure, if they in England were to see you walk, they would think you had been brought up here to chase the deer in the woods."

Hope dared not confess her anxiety to get forward, and she could no longer check it.

"It is very undignified, and very unladylike, and very unbecoming, Hope; and I must say, it is untoward and unfroward of you, to hurry me along so. Don't you think it is very peculiar of Hope, Sir Philip?"

The knight suspected that Miss Leslie's haste was merely impatience of his society; and he could scarcely curb his chagrin, while he said, that "the young lady undoubtedly moved with uncommon celerity;—indeed he had before suspected she had invisible wings."

"Thank you for your hint, Sir Philip," exclaimed Hope. "It is a night," she continued, looking up at the bright moon, "to make one long to soar—so I will just spread my wings, and leave you to crawl on the earth." She withdrew her arm from Sir Philip's, and tripping on before them, she soon turned a corner, and was out of sight.

We must leave the knight, biting his lips with vexation, and feeling much like a merchant obliged to pay a heavy duty on a lost article. However, to do him justice, he did not make an entire loss of it, but so adroitly improved the opportunity to win the aunt's favour, that she afterwards said to Hope, that if she must see her wedded to a puritan, she trusted it would be Sir Philip, for he had nothing of the puritan but the outside.

Hope had not proceeded far, when she heard a quick step behind her, and looking back, she saw the young man whose gaze had disturbed her at the lecture. She had an indefinite womanly feeling of fear; but a second thought told her she had best conceal it, and she slackened her pace. Her pursuer approached till he was parallel to her, and slackened his also. He looked at her without speaking; and as Hope glanced her eye at him, she was struck with an expression of wretchedness and passion that seemed unnatural, on a countenance so young and beautiful. "Any thing is better than this strange silence," thought Hope; so she stopped, looked the stranger full in the face, and said inquiringly, "You have perhaps lost your way?"

"Lost my way?" replied the youth, in a half articulate voice: "Yes, lady—I have lost my way."

The melancholy tone and mysterious look of the stranger, led Hope to suspect that he meant to convey more than the natural import of his words; but without seeming to understand more, she said, "I perceive, by your foreign accent, that you are a stranger here. If you will tell me where you wish to go, I will direct you."

"And who will guide you, lady?" responded the stranger, in a thrilling tone. "The lost may warn, but cannot guide."

"I need no guidance," said Hope hastily, still persisting in understanding him literally: "I am familiar with the way; and if I cannot be of service to you, must bid you good night."

"Stop one moment!" exclaimed the stranger, laying his hand on Hope's arm, with an imploring look: "You look so good—so kind—you may be of service to me;" and then bursting into a passionate flood of tears, he added—"Oh, mon Dieu!—No, no—there is no help for me!"

Hope now lost all thought for herself, in concern for the unhappy being before her. "Who— or what are you?" she asked.

"I!—what am I?" he replied in a bitter tone: "Sir Philip Gardiner's slave—or servant—or page—or—whatever he is pleased to call me. Nay, lady, look not so piteously on me!—I love my master—at least, I did love him;—but I think innocence is the breath of love!—Heaven's mercy, lady! you will make me weep again, if you look at me thus."

"Nay, do not weep; but tell me," said Hope, "what I can do for you: I cannot remain here longer."

"Oh! you can do nothing for me—no one can do any thing for me. But, lady—take care for thyself."

"What do you mean?" demanded Hope, in a tone of mingled alarm and impatience: "do you mean any thing?"

The boy looked apprehensively about him, and approaching his lips close to Hope's ear, he said in a whisper—"Promise me you will not love my master. Do not believe him, though he pledge the word of a true knight always to love you;— though he swear it on the holy crucifix, do not believe it!"

Hope now began to think that the youth's senses were impaired; and, more impatient than ever to escape from him, she said—"Oh, I can promise all that, and as much more in the same way, as you will ask of me. But leave me now, and come to me again, when you want a much more difficult service."

"I never shall want any thing else, lady," he replied, shaking his head sorrowfully: "I want nothing else, but that you would pity me! You may, for angels pity; and I am sure you look like one. Pity me!—never speak of me, and forget me." He dropped on his knee—pressed her hand to his lips—rose to his feet, and left her so hastily, that she was scarcely conscious of his departure till he was beyond her sight.

Whatever matter for future reflection this interview might have afforded her, Hope had now no time to dwell on it; and she hastened forward, and surmounting a fence at the south-eastern extremity of the burial ground, she entered the enclosure, now the church-yard of the stone chapel. The moon was high in the heavens; masses of black clouds were driven by a spring gale over her bright disk, producing startling changes, from light to darkness, and from darkness to that gleamy, indefinite, illusive brightness, which gives to moonlight its dominion over the imagination.

At another time, Hope Leslie would have shrunk from going alone, so late at night, to this region of silence and sad thoughts; and her fancy might have embodied the shadows that flitted over the little mounds of earth, but she was now so engrossed by one absorbing, anxious expectation, that she scarcely thought of the place where it was to be attained—and she pressed on, as if she was passing over common clods. Once, indeed, she paused, as the moon shot forth a bright ray—stooped down before a little hillock—pressed her brow to the green turf, and then raising her eyes to heaven, and clasping her hands, she exclaimed, "Oh, my mother! if ever thy presence is permitted to me, be with me now!"— After this solemn adjuration, she again rose to her feet, and looked anxiously around her for some expected object. "But I cannot know," she said, "till I have passed the thicket of evergreens;—that was the appointed spot."

She passed the thicket—and at that moment the intensity of her feelings spread a mist before her eyes. She faltered, and leaned on one of the grave-stones for support;—and there we must leave her for the present, to the secrecy she sought.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.