The Linwoods, volume 1

Catharine Maria Sedgwick

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THE LINWOODS; OR, "SIXTY YEARS SINCE" IN AMERICA. BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOPE LESLIE," "REDWOOD,"

The Eternal Power

Lodged in the will of man the hallowed names

Of freedom and of country.

Miss Mitford IN TWO VOLUMES. VOL. I.

PREFACE.

The title of these volumes will render their readers liable to a disappointment, from which a few prefatory words may save them. It was chosen simply to mark the period of the story, and that period was selected as one to which an American always gratefully recurs, and as affording a picturesque light for domestic features. The writer has aimed to exhibit the feeling of the times, and to give her younger readers a true, if a slight, impression of the condition of their country at the most the onlysuffering period of its existence, and by means of this impression

to deepen their gratitude to their patriot−fathers; a sentiment that will tend to increase their fidelity to the free institutions transmitted to them. Historic events and war details have been avoided; the writer happily being aware that no effort at

"A swashing and a martial outside"

would conceal the weak and unskilled woman.

A very few of our "immortal names" have been introduced, with what propriety the reader must determine. It may be permitted to say, in extenuation of what may seem presumption, that whenever the writer has mentioned Washington, she has felt a sentiment resembling the awe of the pious Israelite when he approached the ark of the Lord.

For the rest, the author of these volumes is most happy in trusting to the indulgent disposition which our American public constantly manifest towards native literature.

TO LOUISA MINOT,

These volumes are inscribed by their author, as an expression of that friendship which was begun in youth, and has increased with every added year of life.

CHAPTER I.

"Un notable exemple de la forcenée curiosité de notre nature, s'amusant se préoccuper des choses futures, comme si elle n'avoit pas assez à faire à désirer les présentes."

Montaigne.

Some two or three years before our revolutionary war, just at the close of day, two girls were seen entering Broadway through a wicket garden−gate, in the rear of a stately mansion which fronted on Broad−street, that being then the court−end of the city the residence of unquestioned aristocracy (sic transit gloria mundi!) whence royal favour and European fashions were diffused through the province of New−York.

The eldest of the two girls had entered on her teens. She was robust and tall for her years, with the complexion of a Hebe, very dark hair, an eye (albeit belonging to one of the weaker sex) that looked as if she were born to empire it might be over hearts and eyes and the step of a young Juno. The younger could be likened neither to goddess, queen, nor any thing that assumed or loved command. She was of earth's gentlest and finestmould framed for all tender humanities, with the destiny of woman written on her meek brow. "Thou art born to love, to suffer, to obey, to minister, and not to be ministered to." Well did she fulfil her mission! The girls were followed by a black servant in livery. The elder pressed forward as if impelled by some powerful motive, while her companion lagged behind, sometimes chasing a young bird, then smelling the roses that peeped through the garden−paling; now stopping to pat a good−natured mastiff, or caress a chubby child: many a one attracted her with its broad shining face and linsey−woolsey short−gown and petticoat, seated with the family group on the freshly−scoured stoops of the Dutch habitations that occurred at intervals on their way. "Come, do come along, Bessie, you are stopping for every thing," said her companion, impatiently. Poor Bessie, with the keenest sensibility, had, what rarely accompanies it, a general susceptibility to external impressions, one might have fancied she had an extra set of nerves. When the girls had nearly reached St. Paul's church, their attendant remonstrated, "Miss Isabella, you are getting quite out to the fields missis said you were only going a turn up the Broadway."

"So I am, Jupe."

"A pretty long turn," muttered Jupiter; and after proceeding a few paces further, he added, in a raised voice, "the sun is going down, Miss Isabella."

"That was news at 12 o'clock, Jupiter."

"But it really is nearly set now, Isabella," interposed her companion Bessie.

"Well, what if it is, Bessie? it is just the right time Effie is always surest between sundown and dark."

"Mercy, Isabella! you are not going to Effie's. It is horrid to go there after sundown please Isabella, don't." Isabella only replied by a "pshaw, child!" and a laugh.

Bessie mustered her moral courage (it required it all to oppose Isabella), and stopping short, said, "I am not sure it is right to go there at all."

"There is no right nor wrong in the matter, Bessie, you are always splitting hairs." Notwithstanding her bold profession, Isabella paused, and with a tremulousness of voice that indicated she was not indifferent to the cardinal points in her path of morality, she added, "why do you think it is not right, Bessie?"

"Because the Bible says, that sorcery, and divination, and every thing of that kind, is wicked."

"Nonsense, child! that was in old times, you know."

Isabella's evásion might have quieted a rationalist of the present day, but not Bessie, who had been bred in the strict school of New−England orthodoxy; and she replied, "What was right and wrong in old times, is right and wrong now, Isabella."

"Don't preach, Bessie I will venture all theharm of going to Effie's; and you may lay the sin at my door;" and with her usual independent, fearnaught air, she turned into a shady lane that led by a cross−cut to "Aunt Katy's garden", a favourite resort of the citizens for rural recreations. The Chatham−street theatre has since occupied the same spot that theatre is now a church. Isabella quickened her pace. Bessie followed most unwillingly. "Miss Belle," cried out Jupiter, "I must detest, in your ma's name, against your succeeding farther."

"The tiresome old fool!" With this exclamation on her lips, Isabella turned round, and drawing her person up to the height of womanhood, she added, "I shall go just as far as I please, Jupe follow me; if anybody is scolded it shall be me, not you. I wish mamma," she continued, pursuing her way, "would not send Jupe after us, just as if we were two babies in leading−strings."

"I would not go a step farther for the world, if he were not with us," said Bessie.

"And pray, what good would he do us if there were danger such a desperate coward as he is?"

"He is a man, Isabella."

"He has the form of one Jupe," she called out (the spirit of mischief playing about her arch mouth), pointing to a slight elevation, called Gallows hill, where a gibbet was standing, "Jupe, is not that the place where they hung the poor creatures who were concerned in the negro−plot?"

"Yes, miss, sure it is the awful place:" and he mended his pace, to be as near as might be to the young ladies.

"Did not some of your relations suffer there, Jupiter?"

"Yes, miss, two of my poster'ty my grandmother and aunt Venus."

Isabella repressed a smile, and said, with unaffected seriousness, "it was a shocking business, Bessie a hundred and fifty poor wretches sacrificed, I have heard papa say. Is it true, Jupe, that their ghosts walk about here, and have been seen many a time when it was so dark you could not see your hand before your face?"

"I dare say, Miss Belle. Them that's hung onjustly always travels."

"But how could they be seen in such darkness?"

"'Case, miss, you know ghosts have a light in their anterior, just like lanterns."

"Ah, have they? I never understood it before what a horrid cracking that gibbet makes! Bless us! and there is very little wind."

"That makes no distinctions, miss; it begins as the sun goes down, and keeps it up all night. Miss Belle, stop one minute don't go across the hill that is right in the ghost−track!"

"Oh don't, for pity's sake, Isabella," said Bessie, imploringly.

"Hush, Bessie, it is the shortest way, and" (in a whisper) "I want to scare Jupe. Jupe, it seems to me there is an odd hot feel in the ground here."

"There sarten is, miss, a very onhealthy feeling."

"And, my goodness! Jupiter, don't you feel a very, very slight kind of a trembling a shake or a roll, as if something were walking in the earth, under our feet?"

"I do, and it gets worser and worser, every step."

"It feels like children playing under the bed, and hitting the sacking with their heads."

"Oh, Lord, miss yes it goes bump, bump, against my feet."

By this time they had passed to the further side of the hill, so as to place the gibbet between them and the western sky, lighted up with one of those brilliant and transient radiations that sometimes immediately succeed the sun's setting, diffusing a crimson glow, and outlining the objects relieved against the sky with light red. Our young heroine, like all geniuses, knew how to seize a circumstance. "Oh, Jupe," she exclaimed, "look, what a line of blood is drawn round the gibbet!"

"The Lord have marcy on us, miss!"

"And, dear me! I think I see a faint shadow of a man with a rope round his neck, and his head on one side do you see, Jupe?"

Poor Jupe did not reply. He could bear it no longer. His fear of his young mistress his fear of a scolding at home, all were merged in the terror Isabella had conjured up by the aid of the traditionary superstitions with which his mind was previouslyfilled; and without attempting an answer, he fairly ran off the ground, leaving Isabella laughing, and Bessie expostulating, and confessing that she did not in the least wonder that poor Jupe was scared.

Once more she ventured to entreat Isabella to give up the expedition to Effie's, for this time at least, when she was interrupted and reassured by the appearance of two friends, in the persons of Isabella's brother and Jasper Meredith, returning, with their dogs and guns, from a day's sport.

"What wild−goose chase are you on, Belle, at this time of day?" asked her brother. "I am sure Bessie Lee has not come to Gallows hill with her own good will."

"I have made game of my goose, at any rate, and given Bessie Lee a good lesson, on what our old schoolmaster would call the potentiality of mankind but come," she added, for though rather ashamed to confess her purpose when she knew ridicule must be braved, courage was easier to Isabella than subterfuge, "Come along with us to Effie's, and I will tell you the joke I played off on Jupe." Isabella's joke seemed to her auditors a capital one, for they were at that happy age when laughter does not ask a reason to break forth from the full fountain of youthful spirits. Isabella spun out her story till they reached Effie's door, which admitted them, not to any dark laboratory of magic, but to a snug little Dutch parlour, with a nicely−sanded floor afireplace gay with the flowers of the season, pionies and Guelder−roses, and ornamented with storied tiles, that, if not as classic, were, as we can vouch, far more entertaining than the sculptured marble of our own luxurious days.

The pythoness Effie turned her art to good account, producing substantial comforts by her mysterious science; and playing her cards well for this world, whatever bad dealings she might have with another. Even Bessie felt her horror of witchcraft diminished before this plump personage, with a round, good−humoured face, looking far more like the good vrow of a Dutch picture than like the gaunt skinny hag who has personated the professors of the bad art from the Witch of Endor downwards. Effie's physiognomy, save an ominous contraction of her eyelids, and the keen and somewhat sinister glances that shot between them, betrayed nothing of her calling.

There were, as on all similar occasions, some initiatory ceremonies to be observed before the fortunes were told. Herbert, boylike, was penniless; and he offered a fine brace of snipe to propitiate the oracle. They were accepted with a smile that augured well for the official response he should receive. Jasper's purse, too, was empty: and after ransacking his pockets in vain, he slipped out a gold sleeve−button, and told Effie he would redeem it the next time he came her way. Meanwhile there was a little by−talk between Isabella and Bessie; Isabella insisting on paying the fee for her friend, and Bessie insisting that "she would have no fortune told, that she did not believe Effie could tell it, and if she could, she would not for all the world let her." In vain Isabella ridiculed and reasoned by turns. Bessie, blushing and trembling, persisted. Effie at the same moment was shuffling a pack of cards, as black as if they had been sent up from Pluto's realms; and while she was muttering over some incomprehensible phrases, and apparently absorbed in the manipulations of her art, she heard and saw all that passed, and determined that if poor little Bessie would not acknowledge, she should feel her power.

Herbert, the most incredulous, and therefore the boldest, first came forward to confront his destiny. "A great deal of rising in the world, and but little sinking for you, Master Herbert Linwood you are to go over the salt water, and ride foremost in royal hunting−grounds."

"Good! good! go on, Effie."

"Oh what beauties of horses a pack of hounds High! how the steeds go how they leap the buck is at bay there are you!"

"Capital, Effie! I strike him down?"

"You are too fast, young master I can tell no more than I see the sport is past the place is changed there is a battle−field, drums, trumpets, and flags flying Ah, there is a sign of danger a pit yawns at your feet."

"Shocking!" cried Bessie; "pray, don't listen any more, Herbert."

"Pshaw, Bessie! I shall clear the pit. Effie loves snipe too well to leave me the wrong side of that."

Effie was either offended at Herbert's intimation that her favours might be bought, or perhaps she saw his lack of faith in his laughing eye, and, determined to punish him, she declared that all was dark and misty beyond the pit; there might be a leap over it, and a smooth road beyond she could not tell she could only tell what she saw.

"You are a croaking raven, Effie!" exclaimed Herbert; "I'll shuffle my own fortune;" and seizing the cards, he handled them as knowingly as the sibyl herself, and ran over a jargon quite as unintelligible; and then holding them fast, quite out of Effie's reach, he ran on "Ah, ha I see the mist going off like the whiff from a Dutchman's pipe; and here's a grand castle, and parks, and pleasure−grounds; and here am I, with a fair blue−eyed lady, within it." Then dashing down the cards, he turned and kissed Bessie's reddening cheek, saying, "Let others wait on fortune, Effie, I'll carve my own."

Isabella was nettled at Herbert's open contempt of Effie's seership. She would not confess nor examine the amount of her faith, nor did she choose to be made to feel on how tottering a base it rested. She was exactly at that point of credulity wheremuch depends on the sympathy of others. It is said to be essential to the success of animal magnetism, that not only the operator and the subject, but the spectators, should believe. Isabella felt she was on disenchanted ground, while Herbert, with his quizzical smile, stood charged, and aiming at her a volley of ridicule; and she proposed that those who had yet their fortunes to hear should, one after another, retire with Effie to a little inner room. But Herbert cried out, "Fair play, fair play! Dame Effie has read the riddle of my destiny to you all, and now it is but fair I should hear yours."

Bessie saw Isabella's reluctance, and she again interposed, reminding her of "mamma the coming night," and poor Isabella was fain to give up the contest for the secret conference, and hush Bessie, by telling Effie to proceed.

"Shall I tell your fortin and that young gentleman's together?" asked Effie, pointing to Jasper. Her manner was careless; but she cast a keen glance at Isabella, to ascertain how far she might blend their destinies.

"Oh, no, no no partnership for me," cried Isabella, while the fire which flashed from her eye evinced that the thought of a partnership with Jasper, if disagreeable, was not indifferent to her.

"Nor for me, either, mother Effie," said Jasper; "or if there be a partnership, let it be with the pretty blue−eyed mistress of Herbert's mansion."

"Nay, master, that pretty miss does not choose her fortune told and she's right poor thing!" she added, with an ominous shake of the head. Bessie's heart quailed, for she both believed and feared.

"Now, shame on you, Effie," cried Herbert; "she cannot know any thing about you, Bessie; she has not even looked at your fortune yet."

"Did I say I knew, Master Herbert? Time must show whether I know or not."

Bessie still looked apprehensively. "Nonsense," said Herbert; "what can she know? she never saw you before."

"True, I never saw her; but I tell you, young lad, there is such a thing as seeing the shadow of things far distant and past, and never seeing the realities, though they it be that cast the shadows." Bessie shuddered Effie shuffled the cards. "Now just for a trial," said she; "I will tell you something about her not of the future; for I'd be loath to overcast her sky before the time comes but of the past."

"Pray, do not," interposed Bessie; "I don't wish you to say any thing about me, past, present, or to come."

"Oh, Bessie," whispered Isabella, "let her try there can be no harm if you do not ask her the past is past, you know now we have a chance to know if she really is wiser than others." Bessie again resolutely shook her head.

"Let her go on," whispered Herbert, "and see what a fool she will make of herself."

"Let her go on, dear Bessie," said Jasper, "or she will think she has made a fool of you."

Bessie feared that her timidity was folly in Jasper's eyes; and she said, "she may go on if you all wish, but I will not hear her;" and she covered her ears with her hands.

"Shall I?" asked Effie, looking at Isabella; Isabella nodded assent, and she proceeded. "She has come from a great distance her people are well to do in the world, but not such quality as yours, Miss Isabella Linwood she has found some things here pleasanter than she expected some not so pleasant the house she was born in stands on the sunny side of a hill." At each pause that Effie made, Isabella gave a nod of acquiescence to what she said; and this, or some stray words, which might easily have found their way through Bessie's little hands, excited her curiosity, and by degrees they slid down so as to oppose a very slight obstruction to Effie's voice. "Before the house," she continued, "and not so far distant but she may hear its roaring, when a storm uplifts it, is the wide sea that sea has cost the poor child dear." Bessie's heart throbbed audibly. "Since she came here she has both won love and lost it."

"There, there you are out," cried Herbert, glad of an opportunity to stop the current that was becoming too strong for poor Bessie.

"She can best tell herself whether I am right," said Effie, coolly.

"She is right right in all," said Bessie, retreating to conceal the tears that were starting from her eyes.

Isabella neither saw nor heard this she was only struck with what Effie delivered as a proof of her preternatural skill; and more than ever eager to inquire into her own destiny, she took the place Bessie had vacated.

Effie saw her faith, and was determined to reward it. "Miss Isabella Linwood, you are born to walk in no common track," she might have read this prediction, written with an unerring hand on the girl's lofty brow, and in her eloquent eye. "You will be both served and honoured those that have stood in kings' palaces will bow down to you but the sun does not always shine on the luckiest you will have a dark day trouble when you least expect it joy when you are not looking for it." This last was one of Effie's staple prophecies, and was sure to be verified in the varied web of every individual's experience. "You have had some trouble lately, but it will soon pass away, and for ever." A safe prediction in regard to any girl of twelve years. "You'll have plenty of friends, and lots of suiters the right one will be "

"Oh, never mind don't say who, Effie," cried Isabella, gaspingly.

"I was only going to say the right one will be tall and elegant, with beautiful large eyes I can't say whether blue or black but black, I think; for his hair is both dark and curling."

"Bravo, bravissimo, brother Jasper!" exclaimed Herbert; "it is your curly pate Effie sees in those black cards, beyond a doubt."

"I bow to destiny," replied Jasper, with an arch smile, that caught Isabella's eye.

"I do not," she retorted "look again, Effie it must not be curling hair I despise it."

"I see but once, miss, and then clearly; but there's curling hair on more heads than one."

"I never never should like any one with curling hair," persisted Isabella.

"It would be no difficult task for you to pull it straight, Miss Isabella," said the provoking Jasper. Isabella only replied by her heightened colour; and bending over the table, she begged Effie to proceed.

"There's not much more shown me, miss you will have some tangled ways besetments, wonderments, and disappointments."

"Effie's version of the 'course of true love never does run smooth,' " interposed Jasper.

"But all will end well," she concluded; "your husband will be the man of your heart he will be beautiful, and rich, and great; and take you home to spend your days in merry England."

"Thank you thank you, Effie," said Isabella,languidly. The "beauty, riches, and days spent in England" were well enough, for beauty and riches are elements in a maiden's beau−ideal; and England was then the earthly paradise of the patrician colonists. But she was not just now in a humour to acquiesce in the local habitation and the name which the "dark curling hair" had given to the ideal personage. Jasper Meredith had not even a shadow of faith in Effie; but next to being fortune's favourite, he liked to appear so; and contriving, unperceived by his companions, to slip his remaining sleeve−button into Effie's hand, he said, "Keep them both;" and added aloud, "Now for my luck, Dame Effie, and be it weal or be it wo, deliver it truly."

Effie was propitiated, and would gladly have imparted the golden tinge of Jasper's bribe to his future destiny; but the opportunity was too tempting to be resisted, to prove to him that she was mastered by a higher power: and looking very solemn, and shaking her head, she said, "There are too many dark spots here. Ah, Mr. Jasper Meredith disappointment! disappointment! the arrow just misses the mark the cup is filled to the brim the hand is raised the lips parted to receive it then comes the slip!" She hesitated, she seemed alarmed; perhaps she was so, for it is impossible to say how far a weak mind may become the dupe of its own impostures "Do not ask me any farther," she added. The young people now all gathered round her. Bessie rested her elbows on the table, and her burning cheeks on her hands, and riveted her eyes on Effie, which, from their natural blue, were deepened almost to black, and absolutely glowing with the intensity of her interest.

"Go on, Effie," cried Jasper; "if fortune is cross, I'll give her wheel a turn."

"Ah, the wheel turns but too fast a happy youth is uppermost."

"So far, so good."

"An early marriage."

"That may be weal, or may be wo," said Jasper; "weal it is," he added, in mock heroic; "but for the dread of something after."

"An early death!"

"For me, Effie? Heaven forefend!"

"No, not for you; for here you are again a leader on a battle−field the dead and dying in heaps pools of blood there's the end on't," she concluded, shuddering, and throwing down the cards.

"What, leave me there, Effie! Oh, no death or victory!"

"It may be death, it may be victory; it is not given to me to see which."

Jasper, quite undaunted, was on the point of protesting against a destiny so uncertain, when a deep−drawn sigh from Bessie attracted the eyes of the group, and they perceived the colour was gonefrom her cheeks, and that she was on the point of fainting. The windows were thrown open Effie produced a cordial, and she was soon restored to a sense of her condition, which she attempted to explain, by saying she was apt to faint even at the thought of blood!

They were now all ready, and quite willing to bid adieu to the oracle, whose responses not having been entirely satisfactory to any one of them, they all acquiesced in Bessie's remark, that "if it were ever so right, she did not think there was much comfort in going to a fortune−teller."

Each seemed in a more thoughtful humour than usual, and they walked on in silence till they reached the space, now the park, then a favourite play−ground for children, shaded by a few locusts, and here and there an elm or stinted oak. Leaning against one of these was the fine erect figure of a man, who seemed just declining from the meridian of life, past its first ripeness and perfection, but still far from the decay of age. "Ah, you runaways!" he exclaimed, on seeing the young people advancing. "Belle, your mother has been in the fidgets about you for the last hour."

"Jupiter might have told her, papa, that we were quite safe."

"Jupe truly! he came home with a rigmarole that we could make nothing of. I assured her there was no danger, but that assurance never quieted any woman. Herbert, can you tell me what theseboys are about? they seem rather to be at work than play."

"What are you about, Ned?" cried Herbert to a young acquaintance.

"Throwing up a redoubt to protect our fort," and he pointed as he spoke to a rude structure of poles, bricks, and broken planks on an eminence, at the extremity of the unfenced ground.

"And what is your fort for, my lad?" asked Mr. Linwood.

"To keep off the British, sir."

"The British! and who are you?"

"Americans, sir!"

A loud huzzaing was heard from the fort "What does that mean?" asked Mr. Linwood.

"The whigs are hanging a tory, sir."

"The little rebel rascals! Herbert! you throwing up your hat and huzzaing too!"

"Certainly, sir I am a regular whig."

"A regular fool! put on your hat and use it like a gentleman. This matter shall be looked into here are the seeds of rebellion springing up in their young hot bloods this may come to something, if it is not seen to in time. Jasper, do you hear any thing of this jargon in your schools?"

"Lord bless me! yes, sir; the boys are regularly divided into whigs and tories they have their badges and their pass−words, and I am sorry to say that the whigs are three to one."

"You are loyal then, my dear boy?"

"Certainly, sir, I owe allegiance to the country in which I was born."

"And you, my hopeful Mr. Herbert, with your huzzas, what say you for yourself?"

"I say ditto to Jasper, sir I owe allegiance to the country in which I was born."

"Don't be a fool, Herbert don't be a fool, even in jest I hate a whig as I do a toad, and if my son should prove a traitor to his king and country, by George, I would cut him off for ever!"

"But, sir," said the imperturbable Herbert, "if he should choose between his king and country "

"There is no such thing they are the same so no more of that."

"I am glad Herbert has his warning in time," whispered Isabella to Bessie.

"But it seems to me he is right for all," replied Bessie.

So arbitrarily do circumstances mould opinions. Isabella seemed like one who might have been born a rebel chieftainess, Bessie as if her destiny were passive obedience.

We have thus introduced some of the dramatis personæ of the following volumes to our readers. It may seem that in their visit to Effie, they prematurely exhibited the sentiments of riper years but what are boys and girls but the prototypes of men and women time and art may tinge and polish the wood, but the texture remains as nature formed it.

Bessie Lee was an exotic in New−York. The history of her being there was simply this. New−England has, from the first been a favourite school for the youth from the middle and southern states. Mr. Linwood sent Herbert (who had given him some trouble by early manifesting that love of self−direction which might have been the germe of his whiggism) to a Latin school in a country town near Boston. While there, he boarded in the family of a Colonel Lee a most respectable farmer, who had acquired his title and some military fame in the campaign of forty−five against the French. Herbert remained a year with the Lees, and he returned the kindness he received there with a hearty and lasting affection. Here was his first experience of country life, and every one knows how delightful to childhood are its freedom, exercises, and pleasures, in harmony (felt, long before understood) with all the laws of our nature. When Herbert returned he was eloquent in his praises of Bessie her beauty, gayety (then the excitability of her disposition sometimes appeared in extravagant spirits), her sweetness and manageableness; a feminine quality that he admired the more from having had to contend with a contrary disposition in his sister Isabella, who, in all their childish competitions, had manifested what our Shaker friends would calla leading gift. Isabella's curiosity being excited to see this rara avis of Herbert (with her the immediate consequence of an inclination was to find the means of its gratification), she asked her parents to send for Bessie to come to New−York, and go to school with her. Mrs. Linwood, a model of conjugal nonentity, gave her usual reply, "just as your papa says, dear." Her father seldom said her nay, and Isabella thought her point gained, till he referred the decision of the matter to her aunt Archer.

"Oh dear! now I shall have to argue the matter an hour; but never mind, I can always persuade aunt at last." Mrs. Archer, as Isabella had foreboded, was opposed to the arrangement she thought there would be positive unkindness in transplanting a little girl from her own plain, frugal family, to a luxurious establishment in town,

where all the refinements and elegances then known in the colony were in daily use. "It is the work of a lifetime, my dear Belle," she said, "to acquire habits of exertion and self−dependance such habits are essential to this little country−girl she does not know their worth, but she would be miserable without them how will she return to her home, where they have a single servant of all−work, after being accustomed to the twelve slaves in your house?"

"Twelve plagues, aunt! I am sure I should behappier with one, if that one were our own dear good Rose."

"I believe you would, Belle, happier and better too; for the energy which sometimes finds wrong channels now, would then be well employed."

"Do you see no other objection, aunt, to Bessie's coming?" asked Isabella, somewhat impatient at the episode, though she was the subject of it.

"I see none, my dear, but what relates to Bessie herself. If her happiness would on the whole be diminished by her coming, you, my dear generous Belle, would not wish it."

"No, aunt certainly not but then I am sure it would not be she will go to all the schools I go to that I shall make papa promise me and she will make a great many friends and and I want to have her come so much. Now don't, please don't tell papa you disapprove of it just let me have my own way this time."

"Ah, Belle, when will that time come that you do not have your own way?"

Isabella perceived her aunt would no longer oppose her wishes. The invitation was sent to Bessie, and accepted by her parents; and the child's singular beauty and loveliness secured her friends, one of the goods Isabella had predicted. She did not suffer precisely the evil consequences Mrs. Archer rationally anticipated from her residence in New−York, yet that, conspiring with events, gave the hue (bright or sad?) to her after life. Physically andmorally, she was one of those delicate structures that require a hardening process she resembled the exquisite instrument that responds music to the gentle touches of the elements, but is broken by the first rude gust that sweeps over it. But we are anticipating.

"There is a history in all men's lives,

Figuring the nature of the times deceased;

The which observed, a man may prophesy,

With a near aim, of the main chance of things,

As yet not come to life."

CHAPTER II.

"This life, sae far's I understand,

Is a' enchanted fairy−land,

Where pleasure is the magic wand,

That, wielded right,

Makes hours like minutes, hand in hand,

Dance by fu' light."

Burns.

As soon as Mr. Linwood became aware of his son's whig tendencies, he determined, as far as possible, to counteract them; and instead of sending him, as he had purposed, to Harvard University, into a district which he considered infected with the worst of plagues, he determined to retain him under his own vigilant eye, at the loyal literary institution in his own city. This was a bitter disappointment to Herbert.

"It is deused hard," he said to Jasper Meredith, who was just setting out for Cambridge to finish his collegiate career there, "that you, who have such a contempt for the Yankees, should go to live among them; when I, who love and honour them from the bottom of my heart, must stay here, play the good boy, and quietly submit to this most unreasonable paternal fiat."

"No more of my contempt for the Yankees, Hal,an' thou lovest me," replied Jasper; "you remember Æsop's advice to Crœsus at the Persian court?"

"No, I am sure I do not. You have the most provoking way of resting the lever by which you bring out your own knowledge on your friend's ignorance."

"Pardon me, Herbert; I was only going to remind you of the Phrygian sage's counsel to Crœsus, to speak flattery at court, or hold his tongue. I assure you, that as long as I live among these soidisant sovereigns, I shall conceal my spleen, if I do not get rid of it."

"Oh, you'll get rid of it. They need only to be seen at their homes to be admired and loved."

"Loved!"

"Yes, loved; to tell you the truth, Jasper," Herbert's honest face reddened as he spoke, "it was something of this matter of loving that I have been trying for the last week to make up my mind to speak to you. You may think me fool, dunce, or what you please; but, mark me, I am serious you remember Bessie Lee?"

"Perfectly! I understand you excellent!"

"Hear me out, and then laugh as much as you like. Eliot, Bessie's brother, will be your classmate you will naturally be friends for he is a first−rate and you will naturally "

"Fall in love with his pretty sister?"

"If not forewarned, you certainly would; for there is nothing like her this side heaven. Butremember, Jasper, as you are my friend, remember, I look upon her as mine. 'I spoke first,' as the children say; I have loved Bessie ever since I lived at Westbrook."

"Upon my soul, Herbert, you have woven a pretty bit of romance. This is the very youngest dream of love I ever heard of. Pray, how old were you when you went to live at farmer Lee's?"

"Eleven Bessie was six I stayed there two years; and last year, as you know, Bessie spent with us."

"And she is now fairly entered upon her teens; you have nothing to fear from me, Herbert, depend on't. I never was particularly fond of children there is not the slightest probability of my falling into an intimacy with your yeoman friend, or ever, in any stage of my existence, getting up a serious passion for a peasant girl. I have no affinities for birds of the basse cour. My flight is more aspiring 'birds of a feather flock together,' my dear fellow, and the lady of my love must be such a one as my lady aunts in England and my eagle−eyed mother will not look down upon. So a truce to your fears, dear Herbert. Give me the letter you promised to your farmer, scholar, friend; and rest assured, he never shall find out that I do not think him equal in blood and breeding to the King of England, as all these Yankees fancy themselves to be."

Herbert gave the letter, but not with the best grace. He did not like Jasper's tone towards hisNew−England friends. He half wished he had not written the letter, and quite, that he had been more frugal of his praise of Jasper. With the letter, he gave to Jasper various love−tokens from Isabella and himself for Bessie. The young men were saying their last parting words, when Herbert suddenly exclaimed, "Oh, I forgot! Isabella sent you a keepsake," and he gave Jasper a silk purse, with a dove and olive−branch prettily wrought on it.

"Oh, you savage!" exclaimed Jasper, "had you forgotten this!" He pressed it to his lips. "Dear, dear Belle! I kiss your olive−branch we have had many a falling−out, but thus will they always end." Then slipping a ring from his finger, on which was engraven a heart, transfixed by an arrow "Beg Isabella," he said, "to wear this for my sake. It is a pretty bauble, but she'll not value it for that, nor because it has been worn by all our Capulets since the days of good Queen Bess, as my aunt, Lady Mary, assured me; but perhaps she will care for it for pshaw." He dashed off an honest tear a servant announced that his uncle was awaiting him, and cordially embracing Herbert, they parted.

As Herbert had expected, Eliot Lee and Meredith were classmates, but not, as he predicted, or at least not immediately, did they become friends. Their circumstances, and those habits which grow out of circumstances, were discordant. Meredith had been bred in a luxurious establishment, and was taught to regard its artificial and elaborate arrangement as essential to the production of a gentleman. He was a citizen "of no mean city," though we now look back upon New−York at that period, with its some eighteen or twenty thousand inhabitants, as little more than a village. There was then, resulting from the condition of America far more disparity between the facilities and refinements of town and country than there now is; and even now there are young citizens (and some citizens in certain illusions remain young all their lives) who look with the most self−complacent disdain on country breeding. Prior to our revolution, the distinctions of rank in the colonies were in accordance with the institutions of the old world. The coaches of the gentry were emblazoned with their family arms, and their plate with the family crest. If peers and baronets were rarœ aves, there were among the youths of Harvard "nephews of my lord," and "sons of Sir George and Sir Harry." These were, naturally, Meredith's first associates. He was himself of the privileged order and, connected with many a noble family in the mother country, he felt his aristocratic blood tingle in every vein. A large property, which had devolved to him on the death of his father, was chiefly vested in real estate in America, and his guardians, with the consent of his mother, who herself remained in England, had judiciously decided to educatehim where it would be most advantageous for him finally to fix his residence.

The external circumstances the appliances and means of the two young men, were certainly widely different. Eliot Lee's parentage would not be deemed illustrious, according to any artificial code; but graduated by nature's aristocracy (nature alone sets a seal to her patents of universal authority), he should rank with the noble of every land. And he might claim what is now considered as the peculiar, the purest, the enduring, and in truth the only aristocracy of our own. He was a lineal descendant from one of the renowned pilgrim fathers, whose nobility, stamped in the principles that are regenerating mankind, will be transmitted by their sons on the Missouri and the Oregon, when the stars and garters of Europe have perished and are forgotten.

Colonel Lee, Eliot's father, was a laborious New−England farmer, of sterling sense and integrity in the phrase of his people, "an independent, fore−handed man;" a phrase that implies a property of four or five thousand dollars

over and above a good farm, unencumbered with debts, and producing rather more than its proprietor, in his frugal mode of life, has occasion to spend. Eliot's mother was a woman of sound mind, and of that quick and delicate perception of the beautiful in nature and action, that is the attribute of sensibility and the proof of its existence, though the possessor,like Eliot's mother, may, from diffidence or personal awkwardness, never be able to imbody it in graceful expression. She had a keen relish of English literature, and rich acquisitions in it; such as many of our ladies, who have been taught by a dozen masters, and instructed in half as many tongues, might well envy. With all this, she was an actual operator in the arduous labours that fall to the female department of a farming establishment plain farmer Lee's plain wife. This is not an uncommon combination of character and condition in New−England. We paint from life, if not to the life: our fault is not extravagance of colouring.

It is unnecessary to enter into the details of Eliot Lee's education. Circumstances combined to produce the happiest results to develop his physical, intellectual, and moral powers; in short, to make him a favourable specimen of the highest order of New−England character. He had just entered on his academic studies, when his father (as our friend Effie intimated in her dark soothsaying) was lost while crossing Massachusetts Bay during a violent thunder−storm. Fortunately, the good colonel's forecast had so well provided for his heirs, that his widow was able to maintain the respectable position of his family without recalling her son from college. There, as many of our distinguished men have done, he made his acquisitions available for his support by teaching.

Meredith and Eliot Lee were soon acknowledged to be the gifted young men of their class. Though nearly equals in capacity, Eliot, being by far the most patient and assiduous, bore off the college honours. Meredith did not lack industry certainly not ambition; but he had not the hardihood and self−discipline that it requires to forego an attractive pursuit for a dry study: and while Eliot, denying his natural tastes, toiled by the midnight lamp over the roughest academic course, he gracefully ran through the light and beaten path of belles−lettres.

They were both social Meredith rather gay in his disposition. Both had admirable tempers; Meredith's was partly the result of early training in the goodly seemings of the world, Eliot's the gift of Heaven, and therefore the more perfect. Eliot could not exist without self−respect. The applause of society was essential to Meredith. He certainly preferred a real to a merely apparent elevation; but experience could alone decide whether he were willing to pay its price sustained effort, and generous sacrifice. Both were endowed with personal graces. Neither man nor woman, that ever we could learn, is indifferent to these.

Before the young men had proceeded far in their collegiate career they were friends, if that holy relation may be predicated of those who are united by accidental circumstances. That they were on a confidential footing will be seen by the followingconversation. Meredith was in his room, when, on hearing a tap at his door, he answered it by saying, "Come in, Eliot, my dear fellow. My good, or your evil genius, has brought you to me at the very moment when I am steeped to the lips in trouble."

"You in trouble! why what is the matter?"

"Diable! matter enough for song or sermon. 'Not a trouble abroad but it lights o' my shoulders' First, here is a note from our reverend Prœses. 'Mr. Jasper Meredith, junior class you are fined, by the proper authority, one pound ten, for going into Boston last Thursday night, to an assembly or ball, contrary to college laws as this is the first offence of the kind reported against you, we have, though you have been guilty of a gross violation of known duty, been lenient in fixing the amount of your fine.' Lenient, good Præses! Take instead one pound ten ounces of my flesh. My purse is far leaner than my person, though that be rather of the Cassius order. Now, Eliot, is not this a pretty bill for one night's sorry amusement one pound ten, besides the price of two ball tickets, and sundry confections."

"How, two ball tickets, Meredith?"

"Why, I gave one to the tailor's pretty sister, Sally Dunn."

"Sally Dunn! Bravo, Meredith. Plebeian as you think my notions, I should hardly have escorted Sally Dunn to a ball."

"My service to you, Eliot! do not fancy I have been enacting a scene fit for Hogarth's idle apprentice. Were I so absurd, do you fancy these Boston patricians would admit a tailor's sister within their taboed circle? No no, little Sally went with company of her own cloth, and trimmings to match (in her brother's slang) rosy milliners and journeyman tailors, to a ball got up by her compeers. I sent in to them lots of raisins and almonds, which served as a love−token for Sally and munching for her companions."

"You have, indeed, paid dear for your whistle, Meredith."

"Dear! you have not heard half yet. Sir knight of the shears assailed me with a whining complaint of my 'paying attention,' as he called it, to his sister Sally, and I could only get off by the gravest assurances of my profound respect for the whole Dunn concern, followed up by an order for a new vest, that being the article the youth would least mar in the making, and here is his bill two pounds two. This is to be added to my ball expenses, fine, and all, as our learned professor would say, traced to the primum mobile, must be charged to pretty Sally Dunn. Oh woman! woman! ever the cause of man's folly, perplexity, misery, and destruction!"

"You are getting pathetic, Meredith."

"My dear friend, there is nothing affects a man's sensibilities like an empty purse unless it be anempty stomach. You have not heard half my sorrows yet. Here is a bill, a yard long, from the livery−stable, and here another from Monsieur Paté et Confiture!"

"And your term−bills?"

"Oh! my term−bills I have forwarded, with the dignity of a Sir Charles Grandison, to my uncle. Now, Eliot," he continued, disbursing a few half crowns and shillings on the table, and holding up his empty purse, and throwing into his face an expression of mock misery, "Now, Eliot, let us resolve ourselves into a committee of ways and means, and tell me by what financial legerdemain I can get affixed to these scrawls that happiest combination of words in the English language that honeyed phrase, 'received payment in full' 'oh, gentle shepherd, tell me where?' "

"Where deficits should always find supplies, Meredith, in a friend's purse. I have just settled the account of my pedagogue labours for the last term, and as I have no extra bills to pay, I have extra means quite at your service."

Meredith protested, and with truth, that nothing was farther from his intentions than drawing on his friend; and when Eliot persisted and counted out the amount which Meredith said would relieve his little embarrassments, he felt, and magnanimously expressed his admiration of those 'working−day world virtues' (so he called them), industry and frugality, which secured to Eliot the tranquillityof independence, and the power of liberality. It is possible that, at another time, and in another humour, he might have led the laugh against the sort of barter trade the selling one kind or degree of knowledge to procure another, by which a Yankee youth, who is willing to live like an anchorite or a philosopher in the midst of untasted pleasures, works his passage through college.

Subsequent instances occurred of similar but temporary obligations on the part of Meredith. Temporary of course, for Meredith was too thoroughly imbued with the sentiments of a gentleman to extend a pecuniary obligation beyond the term of his necessity.

CHAPTER III.

"Hear me profess sincerely had I a dozen sons, each in my love alike, I had rather had eleven die nobly for their country, than one voluptuously surfeit out of action."

Shakspeare.

The following extracts are from a letter from Bessie Lee to her friend Isabella Linwood.

Letter

"Dearest Isabella,

"You must love me, or you could not endure my stupid letters you that can write so delightfully about nothing, and have so much to write about, while I can tell nothing but what I see, and I see so little! The outward world does not much interest me. It is what I feel that I think of and ponder over; but I know how you detest what you call sentimental letters, so I try to avoid all such subjects. Compared with you I am a child two years at our age makes a great difference I am really very childish for a girl almost fourteen, and yet, and yet, Isabella, I sometimes seem to myself to have gone so far beyond childhood, that I have almost forgotten that careless, light−hearted feeling I used to have. I do not think I ever was so light−hearted as some children, and yet I was not serious at least, not in the right way. Many atime, before I was ten years old, I have sat up in my own little room till twelve o'clock Saturday night, reading, and then slept for an hour and a half through the whole sermon the next morning. I do believe it is the natural depravity of my heart. I never read over twice a piece of heathen poetry that moves me but I can repeat it and yet, I never could get past 'what is effectual calling?' in the Westminster Catechism; and I always was in disgrace on Saturday, when parson Wilson came to the school to hear us recite it: oh dear, the sight of his wig and three−cornered hat petrified me!"

"Jasper Meredith is here, passing the vacation with Eliot. I was frightened to death when Eliot wrote us he was coming we live in such a homely way only one servant, and I remember well how he used to laugh at every thing he called à la bourgeoise. I felt this to be a foolish, vulgar pride, and did my best to suppress it; and since I have found there was no occasion for it, for Jasper seemed (I do not mean seemed, I think he is much more sincere than he used to be) to miss nothing, and to be delighted with being here. I do not think he realizes that I am now three years older than I was in New−York, for he treats me with that sort of partiality devotion you might almost call it that he used to there, especially when you and he had had a falling out. He has been giving me some lessons in Italian. He says I have a wonderful talent for learning languages, but it is not so: you know what hobbling work I made with the French when you and I went to poor old Mademoiselle Amand Jasper is quite a different teacher, and I never fancied French. He has been teaching me to ride, too we have a nice little pony, and he has a beautiful horse so that we have the most delightful gallops over the country every day. It is very odd, though I am such a desperate coward, I never feel the least timid when I am riding with Jasper indeed, I do not think of it. Eliot rarely finds time to go with us when he is at home from college he has so much to do for mother dear Eliot, he is husband, father, brother, every thing to us."

"I had not time, while Jasper and Eliot stayed, to finish my letter, and since they went away I have been so dull! The house seems like a tomb. I go from room to room, but the spirit is not here. Master Hale, the schoolmaster, boards with us, and gives me lessons in some branches that Eliot thinks me deficient in; but ah me! where are the talents for acquisition that Jasper commended? Did you ever know, dear Isabella, what it was to have every thing affected by the departure of friends, as nature is by the absence of light allfade into one dull uniform hue. When Eliot and Jasper were here, all was bright and interesting from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof now! ah me!

"I am shocked to find how much I have written about myself. My best respects to your father and mother, and love to Herbert. Burn this worthless scrawl without fail, dear Isabella, and believe me ever most affectionately

"Yours, "Bessie Lee."

Jasper Meredith to Herbert Linwood.

"Dear Linwood,

"I have been enjoying a very pretty little episode in my college life, passing the vacation at Westbrook, with your old friends the Lees. A month in a dull little country town would once have seemed to me penance enough for my worst sin, but now it is heaven to get anywhere beyond the sound of college bells beyond the reach of automaton tutors periodical recitations chapel prayers, and college rules.

"I went to the Lees with the pious intention of quizzing your rustics to the top o' my bent; but Herbert, my dear fellow, I'll tell you a secret; when people respect themselves, and value things according to their real intrinsic worth, it gives a shock to our artificial and worldly estimates, and makes us feel as if we stood upon a wonderful uncertain foundation. These Lees are so strong in their simplicity they would so disdain aping and imitating those that we (not they, be sure!) think above them they are so sincere in all their ways no awkward consciousness no shame−facedness whatever about the homely details of their family affairs. By heavens, Herbert, I could not find a folly a meanness or even a ludicrous rusticity at which to aim my ridicule.

"I begin to think no, no, no, I do not but, if there were many such families as these Lees in the world, an equality, independent of all extraneous circumstances (such as the politicians of this country are now ranting about), might subsist on the foundation of intellect and virtue.

"After all, I see it is a mere illusion. Mrs. Lee's rank, though in Westbrook she appears equal to any Roman matron, is purely local. Hallowed as she is in your boyish memory, Herbert, you must confess she would cut a sorry figure in a New− York drawing−room.

"Eliot might pass current anywhere; but then he has had the advantage of Boston society, and an intimacy with pardon my coxcombry your humble servant. Bessie sweet Bessie Lee, is a gem fit to be set in a coronet. Don't be alarmed, Herbert, you are welcome to have the setting of her. There is metal, as you know, more attractive to me. Bessie is not much grown since she was in New−York she is still low in stature, and sochildish in her person, that I was sometimes in danger of treating her like a child of forgetting that she had come within the charmed circle of proprieties. But, if she has still the freshness and immaturity of the unfolding rose−bud the mystical charm of woman the divinity stirring within her beams through her exquisite features. Such features! Phidias would have copied them in his immortal marble. How in the world should such a creature, all sentiment, refinement, imagination, spring up in practical, prosaic New−England! She is a wanderer from some other star. I am writing like a lover, and not as I should to a lover. But, on my honour, Herbert, I am no lover of little Bessie I mean. I should as soon think of being enamoured of a rose, a lily, or a violet, an exquisite sonnet, or an abstraction.

"It is an eternity since Isabella has written me a postscript why is this? Farewell, Linwood.

"Yours, "P.S. One word on politics a subject I detest, and meddle with as little as possible. There must be an outbreak there is no avoiding it. But there can be no doubt which party will finally prevail. The mother country has soldiers, money, every thing; "tis odds beyond arithmetic.' As one of my friends said at a dinner in Boston the other day, 'the growling curs may bark for a while, but they will be whipped into submission, and wear their collars patiently for ever after.' I trust, Herbert bert, you are already cured of what my uncle used to call the 'boy−fever' but if not, take my advice be quiet, prudent, neutral. As long as we are called boys, we are not

expected to be patriots, apostles, or martyrs. At this crisis your filial and fraternal duties require that you should suppress, if not renounce, the opinions you used to be so fond of blurting out on all occasions. I am no preacher I have done a word to the wise. "M ."

We resume the extracts from Bessie's letters.

Letter

"Dear Isabella,

Never say another word to me of what you hinted in your last letter: indeed, I am too young; and besides, I never should feel easy or happy again with Jasper, if I admitted such a thought. I have had but one opinion since our visit to Effie; not that I believed in her at least, not much; but I have always known who was first in his thoughts heart opinion; and besides, it would be folly in me, knowing his opinions about rank, Mother thinks him very proud, and somewhat vain; and she begins not to be pleased with his frequent visits to Westbrook. She thinks no, fears, or rather she imagines, that Jasper and I no, that Jasper or I no, that I it is quite too foolish to write, Isabella mother does not realize what a wide world there is between us. I might possibly, sometimes, think he loved(this last word was carefully effaced, and cared substituted) cared for me, if he did not know you.

"How could Jasper tell you of Eliot's prejudice against you? Jasper himself infused it, unwittingly, I am sure, by telling him that when with you, I lived but to do 'your best pleasure, were it to fly, to swim, or dive into the fire.' Eliot fancies that you are proud and overbearing I insist, dear Isabella, that such as you are born to rule such weak spirits as mine; but Eliot says he does not like absolutism in any form, and especially in woman's. Ah, how differently he would feel if he were to see you I am sure you would like him I am not sure, even, that you would not have preferred him to Jasper, had he been born and bred in Jasper's circumstances. He has more of some qualities that you particularly like, frankness and independence and mother says (but then mother is not at all partial to Jasper) he has a thousand times more real sensibility he does, perhaps, feel more for others. I should like to know which you would think the handsomest. Eliot is at least three inches the tallest; and, as Jasper once said, 'cast in the heroic mould, with just enough, and not an ounce too much of mortality' but then Jasper has such grace and symmetry just what I fancy to be the beau−ideal of the arts. Jasper's eyes are almost too black too piercing; and yet they are softened by his long lashes, and his olive complexion, so expressive like that fine old portrait in your drawing−room. His mouth, too, is beautiful it has such a defined, chiselled look but then do you not think that his teeth being so delicately formed, and so very, very white, is rather a defect? I don't know how to describe it, but there is rather an uncertain expression about his mouth. Eliot's, particularly when he smiles, is truth and kindness itself and his deep, deep blue eye, expresses every thing by turns I mean every thing that should come from a pure and lofty spirit now tender and pitiful enough for me, and now superb and fiery enough for you but what a silly, girlish letter I am writing 'Out of the abundance of the heart,' you know! I see nobody but Jasper and Eliot, and I think only of them."

We continue the extracts from Bessie's letters. They were strictly feminine, even to their being dateless we cannot, therefore, ascertain the precise period at which they were written, except by their occasional allusions to contemporaneous events.

"Thanks, dear Isabella, for your delightful letter by Jasper no longer Jasper, I assure you to his face, but Mr. Meredith oh, I often wish the time back when I was a child, and might call him Jasper, and feel the freedom of a child. I wonder if I should dare to call you Belle now, or even Isabella? Jasper, since his last visit at home, tells me so much of your being 'the mirror of fashion the observed of all observers' (these are his ownwords drawing−room terms that were never heard in Westbrook but from his lips), that I feel a sort of fearful shrinking. It is not envy I am too happy now to envy anybody in the wide world. Eliot is at home, and Jasper is passing a week here. Is it not strange they should be so intimate, when they differ so widely on political topics? I suppose it is because Jasper does not care much about the matter; but this indifference sometimes provokes Eliot.

Jasper is very intimate with Pitcairn and Lord Percy; and Eliot thinks they have more influence with him than the honour and interest of his country. Oh, they talk it over for hours and hours, and end, as men always do with their arguments, just where they began. Jasper insists that as long as the quarrel can be made up it is much wisest to stand aloof, and not, 'like mad boys, to rush foremost into the first fray;' besides, he says he is tied by a promise to his uncle that he will have nothing to do with these agitating disputes till his education is finished. Mother says (she does not always judge Jasper kindly) that it is very easy and prudent to bind your hands with a promise when you do not choose to lift them.

"Ah, there is a terrible storm gathering! Those who have grown up together, lovingly interlacing their tender branches, must be torn asunder some swept away by the current, others dispersed by the winds."

Letter

"Dear Isabella,

The world seems turned upside down since I began this letter war (war, what an appalling sound) has begun blood has been spilt, and our dear, dear Eliot but I must tell you first how it all was. Eliot and Jasper were out shooting some miles from Cambridge, when, on coming to the road, they perceived an unusual commotion old men and young, and even boys, all armed, in wagons, on horseback, and on foot, were coming from all points, and all hurrying onward in one direction. On inquiring into the hurly−burly, they were told that Colonel Smith had marched to Concord to destroy the military stores there; and that our people were gathering from all quarters to oppose his return. Eliot immediately joined them, Jasper did not; but, dear Isabella, I that know you so well, know, whatever others may think, that tories may be true and noble. There was a fight at Lexington. Our brave men had the best of it. Eliot was the first to bring us the news. With a severe wound in his arm, he came ten miles that we need not be alarmed by any reports, knowing, as he told mother, that she was no Spartan mother, to be indifferent whether her son came home with his shield or on his shield.

"Jasper has not been to Westbrook since the battle. My mind has been in such a state of alarm since, I cannot return to my ordinary pursuits. I was reading history with the children, and the English poets with mother, but I am quite broken up.

"I do not think this horrid war should separate those who have been friends; thank God, my dear Isabella, we of womankind are exempts not called upon to take sides our mission is to heal wounds, not to make them; to keep alive and tend with vestal fidelity the fires of charity and love. My kindest remembrance to Herbert. I hope he has renounced his whiggism; for if it must come to that, he had better fight on the wrong side (ignorantly) than break the third commandment. Write soon, dear Isabella, and let me know if this hurly−burly extends to New−York dear, quiet New−York! In war and in peace, in all the chances and changes of this mortal life, your own

Bessie Lee."

Miss Linwood to Bessie Lee.

"Exempts! my little spirit of peace your vocation it may be, my pretty dove, to sit on your perch with an olive−branch in your bill, but not mine. Oh for the glorious days of the Clorindas, when a woman might put down her womanish thoughts, and with helmet and lance in rest do battle with the bravest! Why was the loyal spirit of my race my exclusive patrimony? Can his blood, who at his own cost raised a troop of horse for our martyr king, flow in Herbert's veins? or his who followed the fortunes of the unhappy James? Is my father's son a renegado a rebel? Yes, Bessie my blood burns in my cheeks while I write it. Herbert, the only male scion of the Linwoods my brother our pride our hope has declared himself of the rebel party 'Ichabod, Ichabod, the glory is departed, is written on our door−posts.'

"But to come down from my heroics; we are in a desperate condition such a scene as I have just passed through! Judge Ellis was dining with us, Jasper Meredith was spoken of. 'In the name of Heaven, Ellis,' said my father, 'why do you suffer your nephew to remain among the rebel crew in that infected region?'

"'I do not find,' replied the judge, glancing at Herbert, 'that any region is free from infection.'

"'True, true,' said my father; 'but the air of the Yankee states is saturated with it. I would not let an infant breathe it, lest rebellion should break out when he came to man's estate.' I am sorry to say it, dear Bessie; but my father traces Herbert's delinquency to his sojourn at Westbrook. I saw a tempest was brewing, and thinking to make for a quiet harbour, I put in my oar, and repeated the story you told me in your last letter of our noncombatant, Mr. Jasper. The judge was charmed. 'Ah, he's a prudent fellow!' he said; 'he'll not commit himself!'

"'Not commit himself!' exclaimed my father; 'by Jupiter, if he belonged to me, he should commit himself. I would rather he should jump the wrong way than sit squat like a toad under a hedge,till he was sure which side it was most prudent to jump.' You see, Bessie, my father's words implied something like a commendation of Herbert. I ventured to look up their eyes met I saw a beam of pleasure flashing from them, and passing like an electric spark from one heart to another. Oh, why should this unholy quarrel tear asunder such true hearts!

"The judge's pride was touched he is a mean wretch. 'Ah, my dear sir,' he said, 'it is very well for you, who can do it with impunity, to disregard prudential considerations; for instance, you remain true to the king, the royal power is maintained, and your property is protected. Your son I suppose a case your son joins the rebels, the country is revolutionized, and your property is secured as the reward of Mr. Herbert's patriotism.'

"My father hardly heard him out. 'Now, by the Lord that made me!' he exclaimed, setting down the decanter with a force that broke it in a thousand pieces, 'I would die of starvation before I would taste a crumb of bread that was the reward of rebellion.'

"It was a frightful moment; but my father's passion, you know, is like a whirlwind; one gust, and it is over; and mamma is like those short−stemmed flowers that lie on the earth; no wind moves her. So, though the judge was almost as much disconcerted as the decanter, it seemed all to have blown over, while mamma, as in case of any ordinaryaccident, was directing Jupe to remove the fragments, change the cloth, etc. But alas! the evil genius of our house triumphed; for even a bottle of our oldest Madeira, which is usually to my father like oil to the waves, failed to preserve tranquillity. The glasses were filled, and my father, according to his usual custom, gave 'the king God bless him.'

"Now you must know, though he would not confess he made any sacrifice to prudence, he has for some weeks omitted to drink wine at all, on some pretext or other, such as he had a headache, or he had dined out the day before, or expected to the day after; and thus Herbert has escaped the test. But now the toast was given, and Herbert's glass remained untouched, while he sat, not biting, but literally devouring his nails. I saw the judge cast a sinister look at him, and then a glance at my father. The storm was gathering on my father's brow. 'Herbert, my son,' said mamma, 'you will be too late for you appointment.' Herbert moved his chair to rise, when my father called out, 'Stop, sir no slinking away under your mother's shield hear me no man who refuses to drink that toast at my table shall eat of my bread or drink of my wine.'

"'Then God forgive me for I never will drink it so help me Heaven!'

"Herbert left the room by one door my father by another mamma stayed calmly talking tothat fixture of a judge, and I ran to my room, where, as soon as I had got through with a comfortable fit of crying, I sat down to write you (who are on the enemy's side) an account of the matter. What will come of it, Heaven only knows!

"But, my dear little gentle Bessie, I never think of you as having any thing to do with these turbulent matters; you are in the midst of fiery rebel spirits, but you are too pure, too good to enter into their counsels, and far too just for any self−originating prejudices, such as this horrible one that pervades the country, and fires New−England against the legitimate rights of the mother country over her wayward, ungrateful child. Don't trouble your head about these squabbles, but cling to Master Hale, your poetry, and history: by−the−way, I laughed heartily that you, who have done duty reading so virtuously all your life, should now come to the conclusion 'that history is dry.' I met with a note in Herodotus, the most picturesque of historians, the other day that charmed me. The writer of the note says there is no mention whatever of Cyrus in the Persian history. If history then is mere fiction, why may we not read romances of our own choosing? My instincts have not misguided me, after all.

"So, Miss Bessie, Jasper Meredith is in high favour with you, and the friend of your nonpareil brother. Jasper could always be irresistible when he chose, and he seems to have been 'i' the vein' at Westbrook. With all our impressions (are they prejudices, Bessie?) against your Yankee land, we thought him excessively improved by his residence among you. Indeed, I think if he were never to get another letter from his worldly icicle mother, to live away from his time−serving uncle, and never receive another importation of London coxcombries, he would be what nature intended him a paragon.

"I love your sisterly enthusiasm. As to my estimation of your brother being affected by the accidents of birth and fortune, indeed, you were not true to your friend when you intimated that. Certainly, the views you tell me he takes of my character are not particularly flattering, or even conciliating. However, I have my revenge you paint him en beau the portrait is too beautiful to be very like any man born and reared within the disenchanted limits of New−England. I am writing boldly, but no offence, dear Bessie; I do not know your brother, and I have yes, out with it, with the exception of your precious little self I have an antipathy to the New−Englanders a disloyal race, and conceited, fancying themselves more knowing in all matters, high and low, especially government and religion, than the rest of the world 'all−sufficient, self−sufficient, and insufficient.'

"Pardon me, gentle Bessie I am just now at fever heat, and I could not like Gabriel if he werewhig and rebel. Ah, Herbert! but I loved him before I ever heard these detestable words; and once truly loving, especially if our hearts be knit together by nature, I think the faults of the subject do not diminish our affection, though they turn it from its natural sweet uses to suffering."

Letter

"Dear Bessie,

A week a stormy, miserable week has passed since I wrote the above, and it has ended in Herbert's leaving us, and dishonouring his father's name by taking a commission in the rebel service. Papa has of course had a horrible fit of the gout. He says he has for ever cast Herbert out of his affections. Ah! I am not skilled in metaphysics, but I know that we have no power whatever over our affections. Mamma takes it all patiently, and chiefly sorroweth for that Herbert has lost caste by joining the insurgents, whom she thinks little better than so many Jack Cades.

"For myself, I would have poured out my blood every drop of it, to have kept him true to his king and country; but in my secret heart I glory in him that he has honestly and boldly clung to his opinions, to his own certain and infinite loss. I have no heart to write more.

"Yours truly, "Isabella Linwood. "P.S. You may show the last paragraph (confidentially) to Jasper; but don't let him know that I wished him to see it. I. L."

CHAPTER IV.

"An' forward, though I canna see,

I guess an' fear."

Burns.

Three years passed over without any marked change in the external condition of our young friends. Herbert Linwood endured the hardships of an American officer during that most suffering period of the war, and remained true to the cause he had adopted, without any of those opportunities of distinction which are necessary to keep alive the fire of ordinary patriotism.

It has been seen that Eliot Lee, with most of the young men of the country (as might be expected from the insurgent and generous spirit of youth), espoused the popular side. It ought not to have been expected, that when the young country came to the muscle and vigour of manhood, it should continue to wear the leading−strings of its childhood, or remain in the bondage and apprenticeship of its youth. It has been justly said, that the seeds of our revolution and future independence were sown by the Pilgrims. The political institutions of a people may be inferred from their religion. Absolutism, as a mirror, reflects the Roman Catholic faith. Whatever varieties of names were attachedto the religious sects of America, they were, with the exception of a few Pepists, all Protestants all, as Burke said of them, "agreed (if agreeing in nothing else) in the communion of the spirit of liberty theirs was the Protestantism of the Protestant religion the dissidence of dissent." It was morally certain, that as soon as they came to man's estate, their government would accord with this spirit of liberty; would harmonize with the independent and republican spirit of the religion of Christ, the only authority they admitted. The fires of our republic were not then kindled by a coal from the old altars of Greece and Rome, whose freest government exalted the few, and retained the many in grovelling ignorance and servitude: ours came forth invincible in the declaration of liberty to all, and equality of rights.

Such minds as Eliot Lee's, reasoning and religious, were not so much moved by the sudden impulses of enthusiasm as incited by the convictions of duty. His heart was devoted to his country, his thoughts absorbed in her struggle; but he quenched, or rather smothered his intense desire to go forth with her champions, and remained pursuing his legal studies, near enough to his home to perform his paramount but obscure duty to his widowed mother and her young family.

Jasper Meredith's political preferences, if not proclaimed, were easily guessed. It was obvious that his tastes were aristocratic and feudal hissympathies with the monarch, not with the people. New−York was the headquarters of the British army, and Judge Ellis, his uncle, on the pretext of keeping his nephew out of the way of the seductions of a very gay society, advised him to pursue the study of the law in New−England, and thus for a while he avoided pledging himself. He resided in Boston or its vicinity, never far from Westbrook. He had a certain eclat in the drawing−rooms of Boston, but he was no favourite there. A professed neutrality was, if not suspicious, most offensive in the eyes of neck−or−nothing patriots. But Meredith did not escape the whisper that his neutrality was a mere mask. His accent, which was ambitiously English, was criticised, and his elaborate dress, manufactured by London artists, was particularly displeasing to the sons of the Puritans, who, absorbed in great objects, were then more impatient even than usual of extra sacrifices to the graces.

The transition from Boston to Westbrook was delightful to Meredith. There was no censure of any sort, but balm for the rankling wounds of vanity; and it must be confessed that he not only appeared better, but was better at Westbrook than elsewhere: the best parts of his nature were called forth; he was (if we may desecrate a technical expression) in the exercise of grace. There is a certain moral atmosphere, as propitious to moral wellbeing as a genial temperature is to health. Vanity has a sort of thermometer, which enables the possessor tograduate and

adapt himself to the dispositions, the vanities (is there any gold in nature without this alloy?) of others. Meredith, when he wished to be so, was eminently agreeable. Those always stand in a most fortunate light who vary the monotony of a village existence, and he broke like a sunbeam through the dull atmosphere that hung over West−brook. He brought the freshest news, he studied good Mrs. Lee's partialities and prejudices, and (without her being aware of their existence) accommodated himself to them. He supplied to Eliot what all social beings hanker after, companionship with one of his own age, pursuits, and associations. The magnet that drew him to West−brook was never the acknowledged attraction. Meredith was not in love with Bessie Lee. She was too spiritual a creature for one of earth's mould; but his self−love, his ruling passion, was flattered by her. He saw and enjoyed (what, alas! no one else then saw) his power over her. He saw it in the mutations of her cheek, in the kindling of her eye, in the changes of her voice. It was as if an angel had left his sphere to incense him. Meredith must be acquitted of a deliberate attempt to insnare her affections. He thought not and cared not for the future. He cared only for a present selfish gratification. A ride at twilight or a walk by moonlight with this creature, all beauty, refinement, and tenderness, was a poetic passage to him to her it was fraught with life or death.

Poor Bessie! she should have been hardened for the changing climate of this rough world; but by a fatal, but very common error, she had been cherished like a tropical bird, or an exotic plant. "She has such delicate health! she is so different from my other children!" said the mother. "She is so gentle and sensitive," said the brother. And thus, with all their sound judgment, instead of submitting her to a hardening process, it seemed an instinct with them, by every elaborate contrivance, to fence her from the ordinary trials and evils of life. Only when she was happy did they let her alone; with Meredith she seemed happy, and they were satisfied. Bessie shared this unfounded tranquillity, arising with them partly from confidence in Meredith, and partly from the belief that she was in no danger of suffering from an unrequited love; but Bessie's arose from the most childlike ignorance of that study puzzling to the wisest and craftiest the human heart. She was the most modest and unexacting of human creatures her gentle spirit urged no rights asked nothing, expected nothing beyond the present moment. The worshipper was satisfied with the presence of the idol. Her residence in New−York had impressed a conviction that a disparity of birth and condition was an impassable gulf. It was natural enough that she should have imbibed this opinion; for, being a child, the aristocratic opinions of the society she was in were expressed, unmitigated bycourtesy; they sunk deep in her susceptible mind, a mind too humble to aspire above any barrier that nature or society had set up.

There was another foundation of her fancied security. This was shaken by the following conversation: Meredith was looking over an old pocketbook, when a card dropped from it on the floor at Bessie's feet: she handed it to him he smiled as he looked at it, and held it up before her. She glanced her eye over it, and saw it was a note of the date of their visit to the soothsayer Effie, and of Effie's prediction in relation to the "dark curling hair."

"I had totally forgotten this," said he, carelessly.

"Forgotten it!" echoed Bessie, in a tone that indicated but too truly her feelings.

"Certainly I had and why not, pray?"

"Oh, because " she hesitated.

"Because what, Bessie?"

Bessie was ashamed of her embarrassment, and faltering the more the more she tried to shake it off, she said, "I did not suppose you could forget any thing that concerned Isabella."

"Upon my honour, you are very much mistaken; I have scarcely thought of Effie and her trumpery prediction since we were there."

"Why have you preserved the card, then, Jasper?" asked Bessie, in all simplicity.

Jasper's complexion was not of the blushing order, or he would have blushed as he replied, at the same time replacing the card "Oh, Lord, I don't know! accident the card got in here among these old memoranda and receipts, 'trivial fond records' all!"

"There preserve it," said Bessie, "and we will look at it one of these days."

"When?"

"When as it surely will be, the prediction is verified."

"If not till then," he said, "it will never again see the light this is the oddest fancy of yours," he added.

"Not fancy, but faith."

"Faith most unfounded why, Bessie, Isabella and I were always quarrelling."

"And always making up. Do you ever quarrel now, Jasper?"

"Oh, she is still of an April temper; but I" he looked most tenderly at Bessie "have lived too much of late in a serene atmosphere to bear well her fitful changes."

A long time had passed since Bessie had mentioned Isabella to Meredith. She knew not why, but she had felt a growing reluctance to advert to her friend even in thought; and she was now conscious of a thrilling sensation at the careless, cold manner in which Jasper spoke of her. It seemed as if a load had fallen off her heart. She felt like a mariner who has at length caught a glimpse of what seems distant land, and is bewilderedwith new sensations, and uncertain whether it be land or not. She was conscious Jasper's eye was on hers, though her own was downcast. She longed to escape from that burning glance, and was relieved by a bustle in the next room, and her two little sisters running in, one holding up a long curling tress of her own beautiful hair, and crying out "Did not you give this to me, Bessie?"

"Is not it mine?" said the competitor.

"No, it is mine!" exclaimed Jasper, snatching it, and holding it beyond their reach.

The girls laughed, and were endeavouring to regain it, when he slipped a ring from his finger, and set it rolling on the floor, saying, "The hair is mine the ring belongs to whoever gets it." The ring, obedient to the impulse he gave it, rolled out of the room; the children eagerly followed, he shut the door after them, and repeated, kissing the lock of hair "It is mine is it not?"

"Oh, no no, Jasper give it to me," cried Bessie, excessively confused.

"You will not give it to me! well 'a fair exchange is no robbery,' " and taking the scissors from Bessie's workbox, he cut off one of his own luxuriant dark locks, and offered it to her. She shook her head.

"That is unkind most unfriendly, Bessie" he paused a moment, and then, still holding both locks, he extended the ends to Bessie, and asked her if she could tie a true love−knot. Bessie's heart was throbbing; she was frightened at her own emotion; she was afraid of betraying it; and she tied the knot as the natural thing for her to do.

"There is but one altar for such a sacrifice as this," said Meredith, and he was putting it into his bosom, when Bessie snatched it from him, burst into tears, and left the room.

After this, there was a change in Bessie's manners her spirits became unequal, she was nervous and restless Meredith, in the presence of observers, was measured and cautious to the last degree in his attentions to her when however they were alone together, though not a sentence might be uttered that a lawyer could have tortured into a special plea, yet his words were fraught with looks and tones that carried them to poor Bessie's heart with a power that cannot be imagined by those

"Who have ceased to hear such, or ne'er heard."

It was about this period that Meredith wrote the following reply to a letter from his mother.

Letter

"You say, my dear madam, that you have heard 'certain reports about me, which you are not willing to believe, and yet cannot utterly discredit.' You say, also, 'that though you should revolt with horror from sanctioning your son in those liaisons that are advised by Lord Chesterfield, and others of your friends, yet you see no harm in' loverlike attentions 'to young persons in inferior stations; they serve' you add, 'to keep alive and cultivate that delicate finesse so essential to the success of a man of the world, and, provided they have no immoral purpose, are quite innocent,' as the object of them must know there is an 'impassable gulf between her and her superiors in rank, and is therefore responsible for her mistakes.' I have been thus particular in echoing your words, that I may assure you my conduct is in conformity to their letter and spirit. Tranquillize yourself, my dear madam. There is nothing, in any little fooleries I may be indulging in, to disquiet you for a moment. The person in question is a divine little creature quite a prodigy for this part of the world, where she lives in a seclusion almost equal to that of Prospero's isle; so that your humble servant, being scarce more than the 'third man that e'er she saw,' it would not be to marvel at 'if he should be the first that e'er she loved' and if I am, it is my destiny my conscience is quite easy I never have committed myself, nor ever shall: time and absence will soon dissipate her illusions. She is an unaspiring little person, quite aware of the gulf, as you call it, between us. She believes that even if I were lover and hero enough to play the Leander and swim it, my destiny is fixed on the other side. I have no distrust of myself, and I beg you will have none; I am saved from all responsibility as to involving the happiness of this lily of the valley, by her very clear−sighted mother, and her sage of a brother, her natural guardians.

"It is yet problematical whether, as you suppose, a certain lady's fortune will be made by the apostacy of her disinherited brother. If the rebels win the day, the property of the tories will be confiscated, or transferred to the rebel heir. But all that is in futuro fortune is a fickle goddess; we can only be sure of her present favours and deserve the future by our devotion.

"With profound gratitude and affection, "Yours, my dear mother, "J. Meredith. "P. S. My warmest thanks for the inestimable box, which escaped the sea and land harpies, and came safe to hand. The Artois buckle is a chef d'œuvre, worthy the inventive genius of the royal count whose taste rules the civilized world. The scarlet frock−coat, with its unimitated, if not inimitable, capes, 'does credit (as friend Rivington would say in one of his flashy advertisements) to the most elegant operator of Leicester−fields.' I must reserve it till I go to New−York, where they always take the lead in this sort of civilization the boys would mob me if I wore it in Boston. The umbrella, a rare invention! is a curiosity here. I understand they have been introduced into New−York by the British officers. Novelty as it is, I venture to spread it here, as its utility commends it to these rationalists, who reason about an article of dress as they would concerning an article of faith. "Once more, your devoted son, M."

Meredith's conscience was easy! "He had not committed himself!" Ah, let man beware how he wilfully or carelessly perverts and blinds God's vicegerent, conscience.

Meredith was suddenly recalled to New−York, and Bessie Lee was left to ponder on the past, and weave the future of shattered faith and blighted hopes. The scales fell too late from the eyes of her mother and brother. They reproached themselves, but never poor Bessie. They hoped that time, operating on her gentle, unresisting temper, would restore her serenity. She, like a stricken deer, took refuge under the shadow of their love, she was too affectionate, too generous, to resign herself to wretchedness without an effort. She wasted her strength in concealing the wound that rankled at her heart.

CHAPTER V.

"I, considering how honour would become such a person, was pleased to let him seek danger, where he was like to find fame."

Shakspeare

Another sorrow soon overtook poor Bessie; but now she had a right to feel, and might express all she felt, and look full in the face of her friends for sympathy, for they shared the burden with her.

In the year 1778, letters were sent by General Washington to the governors of the several states, earnestly entreating them to re−enforce the army. The urgency of this call was acknowledged by every patriotic individual; and never did heart more joyously leap than Eliot Lee's, when his mother said to him "My son, I have long had misgivings about keeping you at home; but last night, after reading the general's letter, I could not sleep; I felt for him, for the country; my conscience told me you ought to go, Eliot; even the images of the children, for whose sake only I have thought it right you should stay with us, rose up against me: we should pay our portion for the privileges they are to enjoy. I have made up my mind to it, and on my knees I have given you to my country. The widow's son," she continued, clearing hervoice, "is something more than the widow's mite, Eliot; but I have given you up, and now I have done with feelings nothing is to be said or thought of but how we shall soonest and best get you ready."

Eliot was deeply affected by his mother's decision, voluntary and unasked; but he did not express his satisfaction, his delight, till he ascertained that she had well considered the amount of the sacrifice and was willing to meet it. Then he confessed that nothing but a controlling sense of his filial duty had enabled him to endure loitering at the fireside, when his country needed the aid he withheld.

The decision made, no time was lost. Letters were obtained from the best sources to General Washington, and in less than a week Eliot was ready for his departure.

It was a transparent morning, late in autumn, in bleak, wild, fitful, poetic November. The vault of heaven was spotless; a purple light danced over the mountain summits; the mist was condensed in the hollows of the hills, and wound them round like drapery of silver tissue. The smokes from the village chimneys ascended through the clear atmosphere in straight columns; the trees on the mountains, banded together, still preserved a portion of their summer wealth, though now faded to dun and dull orange, marked and set off by the surrounding evergreens. Here and there a solitary elm stood bravely up against the sky, every limb, every stem defined; a naked form, showing the beautiful symmetry that had made its summer garments hang so gracefully. Fruits and flowers, even the hardy ones that venture on the frontiers of winter, had disappeared from the gardens; the seeds had dropped from their cups; the grass of the turf−borders was dank and matted down; all nature was stamped with the signet seal of autumn, memory and hope. Eliot had performed the last provident offices for his mother; every thing about her cheerful dwelling had the look of being kindly cared for. The strawberry−beds were covered, the raspberries neatly trimmed out, the earth well spaded and freshly turned; no gate was off its hinges, no fence down, no window unglazed, no crack unstopped.

A fine black saddle−horse, well equipped, was at the door. Little Fanny Lee stood by him, patting him, and laying her head, with its shining flaxen locks, to his side "Rover," she said, with a trembling voice, "be a good Rover won't you? and when the naughty regulars come, canter off with Eliot as fast as you can."

"Hey! that's fine!" retorted her brother, a year younger than herself. "No, no, Rover, canter up to them, and over them, and never dare to canter back here if you turn tail on them, Rover."

"Oh, Sam! how awful; would you have Eliot killed?"

"No, indeed, but I had rather he'd come deused near it than to have him a coward."

"Don't talk so loud, Sam Bessie will hear you."

But the young belligerant was not to be silenced. He threw open the "dwelling−room" door, to appeal to Eliot himself. The half−uttered sentence died away on his lips. He entered the apartment, Fanny followed; they gently closed the door, drew their footstools to Eliot's feet, and quietly sat down there. How instinctive is the sympathy of children! how plain, and yet how delicate its manifestations!

Bessie was sitting beside her brother, her head on his shoulder, and crying as if her heart went out with every sob. The youngest boy, Hal, sat on Eliot's knee, with one arm around his neck, his cheek lying on Bessie's, dropping tear after tear, sighing, and half−wondering why it was so.

The good mother had arrived at that age when grief rather congeals the spirit than melts it. Her lips were compressed, her eyes tearless, and her movements tremulous. She was busying herself in the last offices, doing up parcels, taking last stitches, and performing those services that seem to have been assigned to women as safety−valves for their ever effervescing feelings.

A neat table was spread with ham, bread, sweetmeats, cakes, and every delicacy the house afforded all were untasted. Not a word was heard exceptsuch broken sentences as "Come, Bessie, I will promise to be good if you will to be happy!"

"Eliot, how easy for you how impossible for me!"

"Dear Bessie, do be firmer, for mother's sake. For ever! oh no, my dear sister, it will not be very long before I return to you; and while I am gone, you must be every thing to mother."

"I! I never was good for any thing, Eliot and now "

"Bessie, my dear child, hush you have been you always will be a blessing to me. Don't put any anxious thoughts into Eliot's mind we shall do very well without him."

"Noble, disinterested mother!" trembled on Eliot's lips; but he suppressed words that might imply reproach to Bessie.

The sacred scene was now broken in upon by some well−meaning but untimely visiters. Eliot's approaching departure had created a sensation in Westbrook; the good people of that rustic place not having arrived at the refined stage in the progress of society, when emotion and fellow−feeling are not expressed, or expressed only by certain conventional forms. First entered Master Hale, with Miss Sally Ryal. Master Hale "hoped it was no intrusion;" and Miss Sally answered, "by no means; she had come to lend a helping hand, and not to intrude" whereupon she bustled about, helped herself and her companion to chairs, and unsettled everybody else in the room. Mrs. Lee assumed a more tranquilmien; poor Bessie suppressed her sobs, and withdrew to a window, and

Eliot tried to look composed and manly. The children, like springs relieved from a pressure, reverted to their natural state, dashed off their tears, and began whispering among themselves. Miss Sally produced from her workbag a comforter for Mr. Eliot, of her own knitting, which she "trusted would keep out the cold and rheumatism:" and she was kindly showing him how to adjust it, when she spied a chain of braided hair around his neck "Ah, ha, Mr. Eliot, a love−token!" she exclaimed.

"Yes, it is," said little Fanny, who was watching her proceedings; "Bessie and I cut locks of hair from all the children's heads and mother's, and braided it for him; and I guess it will warm his bosom more than your comforter will, Miss Sally."

It was evident, from the look of ineffable tenderness Eliot turned on Fanny, that he "guessed" so too; but he nevertheless received the comforter graciously, hinting, that a lady who had been able to protect her own bosom from the most subtle enemy, must know how to defend another's from common assaults. Miss Sally hemmed, looked at Master Hale, muttered something of her not always having been invulnerable; and finally succeeded in recalling to Eliot's recollection a tradition of a love−passage between Miss Sally and the pedagogue.

A little girl now came trotting in, with "grandmother'slove, and a vial of her mixture for Mr. Eliot good against camp−distemper and the like."

Eliot received the mixture as if he had all grandmother's faith in it, slipped a bright shilling into the child's hand for a keepsake, kissed her rosy cheek, and set her down with the children.

Visiters now began to throng. One man in a green old age, who had lost a leg at Bunker's Hill, came hobbling in, and clapping Eliot on the shoulder, said, "this is you, my boy! This is what I wanted to see your father's son a−doing: I'd go too, if the rascals had left me both my legs. Cheer up, widow, and thank the Lord you've got such a son to offer up to your country the richer the gift, the better the giver, you know; but I don't wonder you feel kind o' qualmish at the thoughts of losing the lad. Come, Master Hale, can't you say something? A little bit of Greek, or Latin, or 'most any thing, to keep up their sperits at the last gasp, as it were."

"I was just going to observe, Major Avery, to Mrs. Lee, respecting our esteemed young friend, Mr. Eliot, that I, who have known him from the beginning, as it were, having taught him his alphabet, which may be said to be the first round of the ladder of learning (which he has mounted by my help), or rather (if you will allow me, ma'am, to mend my figure) the poles that support all the rounds; having had, as I observed, a primordial acquaintance with him, I can testify that he is worthyevery honourable adjective in the language, and we have every reason to hope that his future tense will be as perfect as his past."

"Wheugh!" exclaimed the major, "a pretty long march you have had through that speech!"

The good schoolmaster, quite unruffled, proceeded to offer Eliot a time−worn Virgil; and finished by expressing his hopes that "he would imitate Cæsar in maintaining his studies in the camp, and keep the scholar even−handed with the soldier."

Eliot charmed the old pedagogue, by assuring him that he should be more apt at imitating Cæsar's studies than his soldiership, and himself bestowed Virgil in his portmanteau.

A good lady now stepped forth, and seeming somewhat scandalized that, as she said, "no serious truth had been spoken at this peculiar season," she concluded a technical exhortation by giving Eliot a pair of stockings, into which she had wrought St. Paul's description of the gospel armour. "The Scripture," she feared, "did not often find its way to the camp; and she thought a passage might be blessed, as a single kernel of wheat, even sowed among tares, sometimes produced its like."

Eliot thanked her, said "it was impossible to have too much of the best thing in the world; but he hoped she would have less solicitude about him,when he assured her that his mother had found place for a pocket Bible in his portmanteau."

A meek−looking creature now stole up to Mrs. Lee, and putting a roll of closely−compressed lint. into her hand, said, "tuck it in with his things, Miss Lee. Don't let it scare you I trust he will dress other people's wounds, not his own, with it. My! that will come natural to him. It's made from the shirt Mr. Eliot stripped from himself, and tore into bandages for my poor Sam, that time he was scalt. Mr. Eliot was a boy then, but he has the same heart now."

Mrs. Lee dropped a tear on the lint, as she stowed it away in the closely−packed portmanteau.

"There comes crazy Anny!" exclaimed the children; and a woman appeared at the door, scarcely past middle age, carrying in her hand a pole, on which she had tied thirteen strips of cloth of every colour, and stuck them over with white paper stars. Her face was pale and weatherworn, and her eye sunken, but brilliant with the wild flashing light that marks insanity. The moment her eye fell on Eliot, her imagination was excited "Glory to the Lord!" she cried "glory to the Lord! A leader hath come forth from among my people! Go on, Eliot Lee, and we will gird thee about with the prayers of the widow and the blessings of the childless! This is comfort! But you could not comfort me, Eliot Lee, though you spoke like an angel that time you was sent to mewith the news the boys was shot. I remember you shed tears, and it seemed to me there was a hissing in here (she put her hand on her head) as they fell. My eyes were dry I did not shed one tear, though the doctor bid me. I cried them all out when he (she advanced to Eliot, and lowered her voice), the grand officer in the reg'lars, you know, decoyed away my poor Susy, the prettiest and kindest creature that ever went into Westbrook meeting; fair as Bessie Lee, and far more plump and rosy to be sure Susy was but a servant−girl, but " she raised her voice to a shriek, "I shall never lay down my head in peace till they are all driven into the salt sea, where my Susy was buried."

"We'll drive them all there," said Eliot, soothingly, laying his hand on her arm "every mother's son of them, Anny now be quiet, and go home, Anny."

"Yes, sir thank you, sir, yes, sir!" said she, calmed and courtesying again and again "oh, I forgot, Mr. Eliot!" she drew from her bosom an old rag, in which she had tied some kernels of butter−nuts "give my duty to General Washington, and give him these butternut meats it's all I have to send him I did give him my best they were nice boys, for all wer'n't they, Bob and Pete?" And whimpering and trailing her banner after her, the poor bereft creature left the house.

A loud official rap was heard at the door, and immediately recognised as the signal of the min− ister's approach. We must claim indulgence while we linger for a moment with this reverend divine, for the race of which he was an honoured member is fast disappearing from our land. Peace be with them! Ill would they have brooked these days of unquestioned equality of rights, of anti−monopolies, of free publishing and freer thinking, of universal suffrage, of steam−engines, rail−roads, and spinning−jennies, all indirect contrivances to raze those fortunate eminences, by mounting which little men became great, and lorded it over their fellows: but peace be with them! How should they have known (till it began to tremble under them) that the height on which they stood was an artificial, not a natural elevation. They preached equality in Heaven, but little thought it was the kingdom to come on earth. They were the electric chain, unconscious of the celestial fire they transmitted.

We would give them honour due; and to them belongs the honour of having been the zealous champions of their country's cause, and of having fought bravely with the weapons of the church militant.

Our good parson Wilson was an Apollo "in little;" being not more than five feet four in height, and perfectly well made, a fact of which he betrayed the consciousness, by the exact adjustment of every article of his apparel, even to his long blue yarn stockings, drawn over the knee, and kept sleek by the well−turned leg, without the aid ofgarters. On entering Mrs. Lee's parlour, he gave his three−cornered hat, gold−headed cane, and

buck−skin−gloves to little Fanny, who, with the rest of the children, had at his approach slunk into a corner (they need not, for never was there a kinder heart than parson Wilson's, though somewhat in the position of vitality enclosed in a petrefaction), and then giving a general bow to the company, he went to the glass, took a comb from his waistcoat−pocket, and smoothed his hair to an equatorial line around his forehead; he then crossed the room to Mrs. Lee with some commonplace consolation on his lips; but the face of the mother spoke too eloquently, and he was compelled to turn away, wipe his eyes, and clear his throat, before he could recover his official composure. "Mr. Eliot," he then began, "though a minister of the gospel of peace, I heartily approve your going forth in the present warfare, for surely it is lawful to defend that which is our own; no man has a right to that for which he did not labour; to cities which he built not; to olive−yards and vineyards which he planted not."

"I don't know about olive−yards and vineyards," interposed the major, "never having seen such things; but I'm thinking we can eat our corn and potatoes without their help that have neither planted nor gathered them."

The parson gave an acquiescent nod to the major's emendation of his text, and proceeded: "Ihave wished, my young friend, to strengthen you in the righteous cause in which you are taking up arms; and, to that end, besides the prayers which I shall daily offer for you and yours at the throne of divine grace, I have made up a book for you (here he tendered a package, large enough to fill half the portmanteau of our equestrian traveller), consisting of extracts selected from three thousand eight hundred and ninety−seven sermons, preached on the Sabbaths throughout my ministry of forty−eight years, besides occasional discourses for peace and war, thanksgivings and fasts, associations and funerals. As you will often be out of reach of preaching privileges, I have provided here a word in season for every occasion, which I trust you may find both teaching and refreshing after a weary day's service."

Eliot received the treasure with suitable expressions of gratitude. The good man continued: "I could not, my friends, do this for another; but you know that, speaking after the manner of men, we look upon this dear youth as the pride and glory of our society."

"And I'm thinking, reverend sir," said the major, with that tone of familiarity authorized by age (but stared at by the children), "I'm thinking you'll not be called on again for a like service; for after Eliot Lee is gone, there's not another what you can raly call a man in the parish. To begin with yourself, reverend sir; you've never been afighting character, which I take to be, humanly speaking, a necessary part of a man; then there's myself, minus a leg; and Master Hale here, who I respect you for all, Master Hale never was born to be handy with a smarter weapon than a ferule; then comes blind Billy, and limping Harris, and, to bring up the rear, Deacon Allen and the doctor." Here the major chuckled: "They both say they would join the army if 'twas not as it is; but they have been dreadful near−sighted since the war broke out. That's all of 'mankind,' as you may say, that's left in the bounds of Westbrook. Oh, I forgot Kisel poor Kisel! Truly, he seems to have been made up of leavings. Kisel would not make a bad soldier either, if it were one crack and done. He is brave at a go−off, but he can't bear the sight o'blood; and if he shoots as crooked as he talks, he'd be as like to shoot himself as anybody else. But sometimes the fellow's tongue does hit the mark in a kind of providential manner. By the Lor Jiminy, I mean! there he comes, on Granny Larkin's colt!"

The person in question now halted before Mrs. Lee's door, mounted on an unbroken, ragged, party−coloured animal, such as is called, in country phrase, "a wishing horse," evidently equipped for travelling. His bridle was compounded of alternate bits of rope and leather; a sheepskin served him for a saddle, behind which hung on either side a meal−bag, filled with all his worldly substance.His own costume was in keeping; an over−garment, made of an old blanket, a sort of long roundabout, was fastened at the waist with a wampum belt, which, tied in many a fantastical knot, dangled below his knees; his undergarments were a pair of holyday leather breeches, and yarn stockings of deep red; a conical cap, composed of alternate bits of scarlet and blue cloth, covered his head, and was drawn close over his eyebrows. Nature had reduced his brow to the narrowest precincts; his face was concave; his eyes sparkling, and in incessant motion; his nose thin and sharp; a pale, clean−looking skin, and a mouth with more of the characteristics of the brute than the human animal, complete the portrait of Kisel, who,

leaping like a cat from his horse, appeared at the door, screaming out, in a cracked voice, "Ready, Misser Eliot?"

While all were exchanging inquiring glances, and the children whispering, "Hush, Kisel don't you see Dr. Wilson?" Eliot, who comprehended the strange apparition at a glance, came forward and said

"No, Kisel; I am not ready."

"Well, well all same Kisel can wait, and Beauty too hey!"

"No, no, Kisel," replied Eliot, kindly taking the lad's hand, "you must not wait you must give this up, my good fellow."

"Give it up! Diddle me if I do no, I toldyou that all the devils and angels to bargain should not stop me, no you go, I go that's it, hey!"

Here Major Avery, who sat near the door, his mouth wide open with amazement, burst into a hoarse laugh, at which Kisel, his eyes flashing fire, gave him a smart switch with his riding−whip (a willow wand) over the face. The good−humoured man, deeming the poor lad no subject for resentment, passed his hand over his face as if a moscheto had stung him, saying "Well, now, Kisel, that was not fair, my boy; I was only smiling that such a harlequin−looking thing as you should think of being waiter to Mr. Eliot. He might as well take a bat, or a woodpecker."

Eliot did not need his poor friend should be placed in this ludicrous aspect to strengthen the decision which he had already expressed to him; and drawing him aside beyond the irritation of the major's gibes, he said "It is impossible, Kisel I cannot consent to your going with me."

"Can't, hey! can't! can't!" and for a few moments the poor fellow hung his head, whimpering; then suddenly elevating it, he cried, "Then I go 'out consent I go, anyhow;" and springing back to the door, he called out "Miss Lee, hear me Miss Bessie, you too, and you, parson Wilson, for I speak gospel. When I boy, all boys laugh at me, knock me here, kick there who took my part? Misser Eliot, hey! When they tied me to old Roan, Beauty's mother, head to tail, wholicked the whole tote of 'em? Misser Eliot. I sick, nobody care I live or die Misser Eliot stay by me all night. When everybody laugh at me, plague me, hate me, I wish me dead, Misser Eliot talk to me, make me feel good, glad, make me warm here." He laid his hand on his bosom "He gone, I can't live! but I'll follow him I'll be his dog, fetch, carry, lay down at his feet. S'pose he sick, Miss Lee? everybody say I good in sickness S'pose, Miss Bessie, he lie on the ground, bleeding, horses trampling, soldiers flying, hey! I bind him up, bring water, carry him in my arms if he die, I die too!"

The picture Kisel rudely sketched struck the imaginations of mother and daughter. They knew his devotion to Eliot, and that in emergencies he had gleams of shrewdness that seemed supernatural. They were too much absorbed in serious emotions to be susceptible of the ludicrous; and both joined in earnestly entreating Eliot not to oppose Kisel's wishes. Dr. Wilson supported their intercession by remarking, "that it seemed quite providential he should have been able to prepare for such an expedition." The major took off the edge of this argument by communicating what he had hastily ascertained, that Kisel had bartered away his patrimony for "Granny Larkin's" wishing horse, yclept Beauty; but he added two suggestions that had much force with Eliot, particularly the last; for if there was a virtue that had supremacy in his well−orderedcharacter, it was humanity. "The lad, Mr. Lee," he said, "may be of use, after all. It takes a great many sorts of folks to make a world, and so to make up an army. There's a lack of hands in camp, and his may come in play. Kisel is keen at a sudden call and besides," he added, in a lower voice to Eliot, "it's true what the creatur says, when you are gone he'll be good for nothing like a vine when the tree it clung to is removed, withering on the ground. Say you'll take him, and we'll rig him out according to Gunter."

Thus beset, Eliot consented to what half an hour before had appeared to him absurd; and the major bestirring himself, from his own and Mrs. Lee's stores soon rectified Kisel's equipment in all important particulars, to suit either honourable character of volunteer soldier or volunteer attendant on Mr. Eliot Lee. This done, nothing remained but the customary devotional service, still performed by the village pastor on all extraordinary occasions. On this, Doctor Wilson's feelings over−powered his technicalities. His prayer, sublimed by the touching language of Scripture, melted the coldest heart, and raised the most dejected. After bestowing their farewell blessing the neighbours withdrew, all treasuring in their hearts some last word of kindness from Eliot Lee, long remembered, and often referred to.

The family were now left to a sacred service more informal, and far more intensely felt. Eliot, locking his mother and sister in his arms, and the little ones gathered around him, with manly faith commended them to God their Father; and receiving their last embraces, sprang on to his horse conscious of nothing but confused sensations of grief, till having passed far beyond the bounds of Westbrook, he heard his companion lightly singing "I cries for nobody, and nobody cries for Kisel!"

CHAPTER VI.

"I do not, brother, Infer, as if I thought my sister's state Secure, without all doubt or controversy; Yet, where an equal poise of hope and fear Does arbitrate the event, my nature is, That I incline to hope rather than fear."

Milton.

Eliot Lee to his Mother.

" Town, 1778.

"I have arrived thus far, my dear mother, on my journey; and, according to my promise, am beginning the correspondence which is to soften our separation.

"My spirits have been heavy. My anxious thoughts lingered with you, brooded over dear Bessie and the little troop, and dwelt on our home affairs.

"I feared Harris would neglect the thrashing, and the wheat might not turn out as well as we hoped; that the major might forget his promise about the husking bee; that the pumpkins might freeze in the loft (pray have them brought down, I forgot it!); that the cows might fail sooner than you expected; that the sheep might torment you.

In short, dear mother, the grief of parting seemed to spread its shadows far and wide. If Master Hale could have penetrated my mental processes, he would have deemed his last admonition, to deport myself in thought, word, and deed, like a scholar, a soldier, and a gentleman, quite lost upon me. I was an anxious wretch, and nothing else. Poor Kisel did not serve as a tranquillizer. His light wits were throwing off their fermentation, in whistling, laughing, and soliloquizing: and this, with Beauty's shambling gait, neither trot, canter, nor pace, but something compounded of all, irritated my nerves. Never were horse and rider better matched. Together, they make a fair centaur; the animal not more than half a horse, and Kisel not more than half a man; there is a ludicrous correspondence between them; neither vicious, but both unbreakable, and full of all manner of tricks.

"Our land at this moment teems with scenes of moral and poetic interest. We made our first stop at the little inn in R . The landlord's son was just setting off to join the quota to be sent from−that county. The father, a stout old man, was trying to suppress his emotion by bustling about, talking loud, whistling, hemming, and coughing. The mother, her tears dropping like rain, was standing at the fire, feeling over and over again the shirts she was airing for the knapsack. 'He's our youngest,' whispered the old man to me, 'andmammy is dreadful tender of him, poor

boy!' 'Not mammy alone,' thought I, as the old man turned away to brush off his starting tears. The sisters were each putting some love−token, socks, mittens, and nutcakes into the knapsack, which they looked hardy enough to have shouldered, while one poor girl sat with her face buried in her handkerchief, weeping most bitterly. The old man patted her on the neck 'Come, Letty, cheer up!' said he; 'Jo may never have another chance to fight for his country, and marrying can be done any day in the year.' He turned to me with an explanatory whisper; "Tis tough for all Jo and Letty are published, and we were to have the wedding thanks−giving evening.'

"All this was rather too much for me to bear, in addition to the load already pressing on my heart; so without waiting for my horse to be fed, I mounted him and proceeded.

"My next stop was in H . There the company had mustered on the green, in readiness to begin their march. Some infirm old men, a few young mothers, with babies in their arms, and all the boys in the town, had gathered for the last farewell. The soldiers were resting on their muskets, and the clergyman imploring the benediction of Heaven on their heads. 'Can England,' thought I, 'hope to subdue a country that sends forth its defenders in such a spirit, with arms of such a temper?' Oh, why does she not respect in her children the transmitted character of their fathers!

"I arrived at Mrs. Ashley's just as the family were sitting down to tea. She and the girls are in fine spirits, having recently received from the colonel accounts of some fortunate skirmishes with the British. The changed aspect of her once sumptuous tea−table at first shocked me; but my keen appetite (for the first time in my life, my dear mother, I had fasted all day) quite overcame my sensibilities; the honest pride with which my patriotic hostess told me she had converted all her table−cloths into shirts for her husband's men, and the complacency with which she commended her sage tea, magnified the virtues of her brown bread, and self−sweetened sweetmeats would have given a relish to coarser fare more coarsely served.

"I have been pondering on the character of our New−England people during my ride. The aspect of our society is quiet, and, to a cursory observer, it appears tame. We seem to have the plodding, safe, self−preserving virtues; to be industrious, frugal, provident, and cautious; but to want the enthusiasm that gives to life all its poetry and almost all its charms. But it is not so; there is a strong under−current. Let the individual or the people be roused by a motive that approves itself to the reasoning and religious mind, a fervid energy, an all−subduing enthusiasm bursts forth, not like an accidental and transient conflagration,but operating, like the elements, to great effects, and irresistibly. This enthusiasm, this central fire, is now at its height. It not only inflames the eloquence of the orator, kindles the heart of the soldier, the beacon−lights and strong defences of our land; but it lights the temple of God, and burns on the family altar. The old man throws away his crutch; the yeoman leaves the plough in the half−turned furrow; and the loving, quiet matron like you, my dear mother, lays aside her domestic anxieties, dispenses with her household comforts, and gives the God−speed to her sons to go forth and battle it for their country. The nature of the contest in which we are engaged illustrates my idea. Its sublimity is sometimes obscured by the extravagance of party zeal. We have not been goaded to resistance by oppression, nor fretted and chafed, with bits and collars, to madness; but our sages, bold with the transmitted spirit of freedom, sown at broadcast by our Pilgrim fathers, have reflected on the past and calculated the future; and coolly estimating the worth of independence and the right of self−government, are willing to hazard all in the hope of gaining all; to sacrifice themselves for the prospective good of their children. This is the dignified resolve of thinking beings, not the angry impatience of overburdened animals.

"But good−night, dear mother. After this I shall have incidents, and not reflections merely, to send you. The pine−knot, by the light of whichI have written this, is just flickering its last flame. 'I cannot afford you a candle,' said my good hostess when she bade me good−night; 'we sold our tallow to purchase necessaries for the colonel's men poor fellows, some of them are yet barefooted!'

"I shall enclose a line to Bessie perhaps she will show it to you; but do not ask it of her. Tell dear Fan I shall remember her charge, and give the socks she knit to the first 'brave barefooted soldier' I see. Sam must feed

Steady for me; and dear little Hal must continue, as he has begun, to couple brother Eliot with the 'poor soldiers' in his prayers. Again farewell, dear mother. Your little Bible is before me; my eye rests on the few lines you traced on the title−page; and as I press my lips to them, they inspire holy resolutions. God grant I may not mistake their freshness for vigour. What I may be is uncertain; but I shall ever remain, as I am now, dearest mother,

"Your devoted son, "Eliot Lee."

Eliot found his letter to his sister a difficult task. He was to treat a malady, the existence of which the patient had never acknowledged to him. He wrote, effaced, and re−wrote, and finally sent the following:

Letter

"My sweet sister Bessie, nothing has afflicted me so much in leaving home as parting from you.I am inclined to believe there can be no stronger nor tenderer affection than that of brother and sister; the sense of protection on one part, and dependance on the other; the sweet recollections of childhood; the unity of interest; and the communion of memory and hope, blend their hearts together into one existence. So it is with us is it not, my dear sister? With me, certainly; for though, like most young men, I have had my fancies, they have passed by like the summer breeze, and left no trace of their passage. All the love, liking (I cannot find a word to express the essential volatility of the sentiment in my experience of it) that I have ever felt for all my favourites, brown and fair, does not amount to one thousandth part of the immutable affection that I bear you, my dear sister. I speak only of my own experience, Bessie, and, as I well know, against the faith of the world. I should be told that my fraternal love would pale in the fires of another passion, as does a lamp at the shining of the sun; but I don't believe a word of it do you, Bessie? I am not, my dear sister, playing the inquisitor with you, but fearfully and awkwardly enough approaching a subject on which I thought it would be easier to write than to speak; but I find it cannot be easy to do that, in any mode, which may pain you.

"I have neglected the duty I owed you; and yet, perhaps, no vigilance could have prevented the natural consequence of your intercourse with one of the most fascinating men in the world. There, it is out! and now I can write freely. I said I had neglected my duty; but I was not conscious of this till too late. The truth is, my mind has been so engrossed with political subjects, so harassed with importunate cravings and conflicting duties, that I was for a long time unobservant of what was passing under my eye. I awoke as from a dream, and found (or feared) that my sister's happiness was at stake; that she had given, and given to one unworthy, the irrequitable boon of her affections; irrequitable, but, thank Heaven, not irrecoverable. No, I do not believe one word of all the trumpery about incurable love. I will not adopt a faith, however old and prevailing, which calls in question our moral power to achieve any conquest over ourselves. For my own part, I do not think we have any power over our affections to give or withdraw them, or even to measure their amount. This may seem a startling assertion, and contradictory of what I have said above; but it is not. The sentiment I there alluded to is generated by accidental circumstances, is half illusion, unsustained by reason, unauthorized by realities not the immortal love infused by Heaven and sustained by truth; but a disease very mortal and very curable, dear Bessie, believe me. Such a mind as yours, so pure, so elevated, has a self−rectifying power. You have felt theinfluence of the delightful qualities which M undoubtedly possesses; and why should you not, for who is more susceptible to grace and refinement than yourself? Heaven has so arranged the relations of affections and qualities, that, as I have said above, we can neither give nor withhold our love the heart has no tenants at will. If M has assumed, or you have imputed to him qualities which he does not possess, your affection will be dissipated with the illusion. But if the spell still remains unbroken, I entreat you, my dear sister, not to waste your sensibility, the precious food of life, the life of life, in moping melancholy.

"'Attach thee firmly (I quote from memory) to the virtuous deeds

And offices of love to love itself,

With all its vain and transient joys, sit loose.'

"I have long had a lurking distrust of M . He has acted too cautious a part in politics for a sound heart. Let a man run the risk of hanging for it either way; but if he have a spark of generosity, he will be either a whole−souled whig or a loyal tory in these times.

"I know what M has so often reiterated. 'He had a mother in England; all his friends were on the royal side; and, on the other hand, his property was here, and might depend on the favour of the rebels; and indeed, there was so much to be said on both sides, that a man might well pause!'There are moments in men's histories when none but cowards or knaves, or (worse than either) cold−blooded, selfish wretches, would pause!

"It is possible that I misjudge him; Heaven grant it! All that I know is, that he is in New−York no longer, pausing, but the aid of General Clinton. It is barely possible that he has written; letters are not transmitted with any security in these times; but why did he not speak before he went? why, up to the very hour of his departure (as my mother says, you know I was absent), did he continue a devotion which must end in suffering and disappointment to you? There is a vicious vanity and selfishness in this, most unmanly and detestable. Do not think, dearest Bessie, that I am anxious to prove him unworthy Alas, alas! I was far too slow to believe him so; and I now only set before you these inevitable inferences from his conduct, in the hope that your illusion will sooner vanish, and you will the sooner recover your tranquillity.

"I am writing without a ray of light, except what comes from the embers on the hearth. Perhaps you will think I am in Egyptian mental darkness. No, Bessie, I must be clear−sighted when I have nothing in view but your honour and happiness. They shall ever be my care, even more than my own. But why do I separate that which is one and indivisible? Good−night, dear sister. Let me fancy you listening to me; your sweet eye fixed on me; no dejected nor averted look; your face beaming, as I have often seen it, with the tenderness so dangerous here, so safe in heaven; the hope so often defeated here, there ever brightening; the joy so transient here, there enduring! Let me see this blessed vision, and I shall sleep sweetly and sweetly dream of home.

"Ever thine, Bessie, "E. L."

Bessie read her brother's letter with mixed emotions. At first it called forth tenderness for him; then she thought he judged Meredith precipitately, harshly even; and after confirming herself in this opinion, by thinking of him over and over again in the false lights in which he had shown himself, she said, "even Eliot allows that we can neither give nor withhold our love; then how is Jasper to blame for not giving it to one so humble, so inferior as I am? and how could I withhold mine?" Poor Bessie! it is a common trick of human nature to snatch from an argument whatever coincides with our own views, and leave the rest. "If," she continued in her reflections, "he had ever made any declarations, or asked any confessions but I gave my whole heart unasked and silently." She could have recalled passionate declarations in his eye, prayers in his devotion; but her love had the essential characteristics of true passion; it was humble, generous, and self−condemning.

CHAPTER VII.

"Si tout le monde vous ressembloit, un roman seroit bientot fini!"

Moliere.

November's leaden clouds and fitful gleams of sunshine, coming like visitations of heaven−inspired thoughts, and vanishing, alas! like illusions, harmonized with the state of Bessie's mind. She was much abroad, rambling alone over her favourite haunts, and living over the dangerous past. This was at least a present relief and solace; and her mother, though she feared it might minister to the morbid state of her child's feelings, had not the resolution to

interpose her authority to prevent it. Bessie was one evening at twilight returning homeward by a road (if road that might be called which was merely a horse−path) that communicated at the distance of a mile and a half with the main road to Boston. It led by the margin of a little brook, through a pine wood that was just now powdered over with a light snow. Meredith and Bessie had always taken their way through this sequestered wood in their walks and rides, going and returning; not a step of it but was eloquent with some treasured word, some well−remembered emotion. Bessie had seated herself on a fallen trunk, an accustomed resting−place, and was looking at a bunch of groundpine and wild periwinkles as if she were perusing them; the sensations of happier hours had stolen over her, the painful present and uncertain future were forgotten, when she was roused from her dreamy state by the trampling of an approaching horse. Women, most women, are cowards on instinct. Bessie cast one glance backward, and saw the horse was ridden by a person in a military dress. A stranger in this private path was rather an alarming apparition, and she started homeward with hasty steps. The rider mended his horse's pace, and was soon even with her, and in another instant had dismounted and exclaimed "Bessie Lee! It is you, Bessie I cannot be mistaken!"

Bessie smiled at this familiar salutation, and did not refuse her hand to the stranger, who with eager cordiality offered his; but not being in the least a woman of the world, it was plain she explored his face in vain for some recognisable feature. "No, you do not remember me that is evident," he said, with a tone of disappointment. "Is there not a vestige, Bessie, of your old playmate, in the whiskered, weather−beaten personage before you?"

"Herbert Linwood!" she exclaimed, and a glow of glad recognition mounted from her heart to her cheek.

"Ah, thank you, Bessie, better late than never; but it is sad to be forgotten. You are much less changed than I, undoubtedly; but I should have known you if nothing were unaltered save thecolour of your eye; however, I have always worn your likeness here," he gallantly added, putting his hand to his heart, "and in truth, you are but the opening bud expanded to the flower, while I have undergone a change like the chestnut, from the tassel to the bearded husk." Bessie soon began to perceive familiar tones and expression, and she consoled Herbert with the assurance that it was only her surprise, his growth, change of dress, that prevented her from knowing him at once. They soon passed to mutual inquiries, by which it appeared that Herbert had come to Massachusetts on military business. The visit to Westbrook was a little episode of his own insertion. He was to return in a few weeks to West Point, where he was charmed to hear he should meet Eliot.

"I am cut off from my own family," he said, "and really, I pine for a friend. I gather from Belle's letters that my father is more and more estranged from me. While he thought I was fighting on the losing side, and in peril of my head, his generous spirit was placable; but since the result of our contest has become doubtful, even to him, he has waxed hotter and hotter against me; and if we finally prevail, and prevail we must, he will never forgive me."

"Oh, do not say so he cannot be so unrelenting; and if he were, Isabella can persuade him she can do any thing she pleases."

"Yes, a pretty potent person is that sister ofmine. But when my father sets his foot down, the devil I beg your pardon Bessie, and Belle's too I mean his metal is of such a temper that an angel could not bend him."

"Isabella is certainly the angel, not its opposite."

"Why yes, she is, God bless her! But yet, Bessie, she is pretty well spiced with humanity. If she were not, she would not be so attractive to a certain friend of ours, who is merely human."

Bessie's heart beat quicker; she knew, or feared she knew, what Herbert meant; and after a pause, full of sensation to her, she ventured to ask "if he heard often from New−York?"

"Yes, we get rumours from there every day nothing very satisfactory. Belle, in spite of her toryism, is a loving sister, and writes me as often as she can; but as the letters run the risk of being read by friends and foes, they are about as domestic and private as if they were endited for Rivington's Gazette."

"Then," said Bessie, quite boldly, for she felt a sensible relief, "you have no news to tell me?"

"No no, nothing official," he replied, with a smile; "Belle writes exultingly of Meredith having, since his return to New−York, come out on the right side, as she calls it and of my father's pleasure and pride in him, Of course she says not a word of her own sentiments. I hear from an old friend of mine, who was brought in a prisoner the other day, that Meredith has been devoted to her ever since his return. They were always lovers after an April−day fashion, you know, Bessie, and I should not be surprised to hear of their engagement at any time should you?"

Fortunately for poor Bessie, her hood sheltered the rapid mutations of her cheek; resolution or pride she had not, but a certain sense of maidenly decorum came to her aid, and she faintly answered, "No, I should not." If this were a slight departure from truth, every woman (every young one) will forgive her, for it was a case of self−preservation. Linwood was so absorbed in the happiness of being near her, of having her arm in his, that he scarcely noticed how that arm trembled, and how her voice faltered. He afterward recalled it.

Herbert's visit to the Lees was like a saint's day to good Catholics after a long penance. He had in his boyhood been a prime favourite with Mrs. Lee she was delighted to see him again, and thought the man even more charming than the boy. She made every effort to show off her hospitable home to Linwood in its old aspect of abundance and cheerfulness; and, in spite of war and actual changes, she succeeded. She had the skilful housewife's gift "to make the worse appear the better," far more difficult in housewifery than in metaphysics. Herbert enjoyed, to her kind heart's content, the result of her efforts. The poor fellow's appetite had been so long mortified with the sorry fareof the American camp, that no Roman epicurean ever relished the dainties of an emperor's table (such as canaries' eyes and peacocks' brains) more keenly than he did the plain but excellent provisions at Lee farm; the incomparable bread and butter, ham, apple−sauce, and cream, the nuts the children cracked, and the sparkling cider they drew for him. We are quite aware that a hero on a sentimental visit should be indifferent to these gross matters, but our friend Herbert was no hero, no romantic abstraction, but a good, honest, natural fellow, compounded of body and spirit, each element bearing its due proportion in the composition.

Bessie yielded to the influence of old associations, and, as her mother thought, was more light−hearted, more herself, than she had been for many a weary month. "After all," she said, anxiously revolving the subject in her mind, "it may come out right yet. Bessie cannot help preferring Herbert Linwood, so good−humoured and open−hearted as he is, to Meredith, with his studied elegance, his hollow phrases, and expressive looks. Herbert's heart is in his hand; and hand and heart he'll not be too proud to offer her; for he sees things in their true lights, and not with the world's eye."

Mrs. Lee was delicate and prudent; but she could not help intimating her own sentiments to Bessie. From that moment a change came over her. Her spirits vanished like the rosy hues from the sunset clouds. Herbert wondered, but he hadno time to lose in speculation. He threw himself at Bessie's feet, and there poured out his tale of love and devotion. At first he received nothing in return but silence and tears; and, when he became more importunate, broken protestations of her gratitude and ill desert; which he misunderstood, and answered by declaring "she owed him no gratitude; that he was but too bold to aspire to her, poor wretch of broken fortunes that he was; but, please Heaven, he would mend them under her auspices."

She dared not put him off with pretences. She only wept, and said she had no heart to give; and then left him, feeling much like some poor mariner, who, as he is joyously sailing into a long−desired port, is suddenly enveloped in impenetrable mist.

Herbert was not of a temper to remain tranquil in this position. He knew nothing of the "blessing promised to those that wait," for he had never waited for any thing; and he at once told his perplexities to Mrs. Lee, who, herself most grieved and mortified, communicated slight hints which, by furnishing a key to certain observations of his own, put him sufficiently in possession of the truth. Without again seeing Bessie, he left Westbrook with the common conviction of even common lovers in fresh disappointments, that there was no more happiness for him in this world.

Mrs. Lee uttered no word of expostulation or reproach to Bessie; but her sad looks, like the oldmother's in the ballad, "gaed near to break her heart."

There are few greater trials to a tender hearted, conscientious creature like Bessie Lee, than to defeat the hopes and disappoint the expectations of friends, by opposing those circumstances which, as it seems to them, will best promote our honour and happiness. "Eliot," said Bessie, in her secret meditations, "thinks I am weakly cherishing an unworthy passion my mother believes that I have voluntarily thrown away my own advantage and happiness thank Heaven, the wretchedness, as well as the fault, is all my own."

Many may condemn Bessie's unresisting weakness; but who will venture to graduate the scale of human virtue? to decide in a given case how much is bodily infirmity, and how much defect of resolution. Certain are we, that when fragility of constitution, tenderness of conscience, and susceptibility of heart, meet in one person, the sooner the trials of life are over the better.

CHAPTER VIII.

"A name which every wind to Heaven would bear,

Which men to speak, and angels joy to hear."

Another letter from Eliot broke like a sunbeam through the monotonous clouds that hung over the Lees.

Letter

"My Dearest Mother,

I arrived safely at headquarters on the 22d. Colonel Ashley received me with open arms. He applauded my resolution to join the army, and bestowed his curses liberally (as is his wont on whatever displeases him) on the young men who linger at home, while the gallant spirits of France and Poland are crossing the ocean to volunteer in our cause. He rubbed his hands exultingly when I told him that it was your self−originating decision that I should leave you. 'The only son of your mother that is, the only one to speak of' (forgive him, Sam and Hal), 'and she a widow!' he exclaimed. 'Let them talk about their Spartan mothers, half men and demimonsters; but look at our women−folks, as tender and as timid of their broods as hens, and as bold and self−sacrificing as martyrs! You come of a good stock, my boy, and so I shall tell the gin'ral.He's old Virginia, my lad; and looks well to blood in man and horse.'

"The next morning he called, his kind heart raying out through his jolly face, to present me to General Washington. If ever I go into battle, which Heaven of its loving mercy grant, I pray my heart may not thump as it did when I approached the mean little habitation, now the residence of our noble leader. 'You tremble, Eliot,' said my colonel, as we reached the door−step. 'I don't wonder I always feel my joints give a little when I go before him. I venerate him next to the Deity; but it is not easy to get used to him as you do to other men.'

"When we entered, the general was writing. If Sam wishes to know whether my courage returned when I was

actually in his presence, tell him I then forgot myself forgot I had an impression to make. The general requested us to be seated while he finished his despatches. The copies were before him, all in his own hand. 'Every t crossed, and every i dotted,' whispered the colonel, pointing to the papers. 'He's godlike in that; he finishes off little things as completely as great.' I could not but smile at the comparison, though it was both striking and just. When the general had finished, and had read the letters of introduction from Governor Hancock and Mr. Adams, which I presented, 'You see, sir,' said my kind patron, 'that my young friend here is calculating to enterthe army; I'll answer for him, he'll prove good and true; up to the mark, as his father Sam Lee was before him. He, that is, Sam Lee, and I, fit side by side in the French war; I was no flincher, you know, sir, and he was as brave as Julius Cæsar, Sam was; so I think my friend Eliot here has a pretty considerable claim.'

"'But, my good sir,' said the general, 'you know we are contending against hereditary claims.'

"'That's true, sir; and thank the Lord, he can stand on his own ground; he shot one of the first guns at Lexington, and got pretty well peppered too, though he was a lad then, with a face as smooth as the palm of my hand.'

"'Something too much of this,' thought I; and I attempted to stop my trumpeter's mouth by saying 'I had no claims on the score of the affair at Lexington; that my being there was accidental, and I fought on instinct.'

"'Ah, my boy,' said the colonel, determined to tell his tale out, 'you may say that there's no courage like that that comes by natur, gin'ral; he stood within two feet of me, as straight as a tombstone, when a spent ball bounding near him, he caught it in his hands just as if he'd been playing wicket, and said, "you may throw down your bat, my boys, I've caught you out!" was not that metal?'

"General Washington's countenance relaxed as the colonel proceeded (I ventured a side glance),and at the conclusion he gave two or three emphatic and pleased nods; but his grave aspect returned immediately, and he said, as I thought, in a most frigid manner, 'the request, Mr. Lee, of my friends of Massachusetts, that you may receive a commission in the service, deserves attention; Colonel Ashley is a substantial voucher for your personal merit. Are you aware, sir, that a post of honour in our army involves arduous labour, hardships, and self−denial? Do you know the actual condition of our officers that their pay is in arrears, and their private resources exhausted? There are among them men who have bravely served their country from the beginning of this contest; gentlemen who have not a change of linen; to whom I have even been compelled to deny, because I had not the power to divert them from their original destination, the coarse clothes provided for the soldiers. This is an affecting, but a true view of our actual condition. Should the Almighty prosper our cause, as, if we are true to ourselves, he assuredly will, these matters will improve; but I have no lure to hold out to you, no encouragement but the sense of performing your duty to your country. Perhaps, Mr. Lee, you would prefer to reflect further, before you assume new obligations?'

"'Not a moment, sir. I came here determined to serve my country at any post you should assign me. If a command is given me, I shall be gratefulfor it: if not, I shall enter the ranks as a private soldier.'

"General Washington exchanged glances with the colonel, that implied approbation of my resolution, but not one syllable dropped of encouragement as to the commission; and it being evident that he had no leisure to protract our audience, we took our leave.

"I confess I came away rather crest−fallen. I am not such a puppy, my dear mother, as to suppose my single arm of much consequence to my country, but I felt an agreeable, perhaps an exaggerated consciousness, that I deserved not applause, but some token of encouragement. However, the colonel said this was his way; 'he never disappoints an expectation,seldom authorizes one.'

"'Is he cold−hearted?' I asked.

"'The Lord forgive you! Eliot,' he replied. 'Cold−hearted! No, his heat does not go off by flashes, but keeps the furnace hot out of which the pure gold comes. Lads never think there is any fire unless they see the sparks and hear the roar.'

"'But, sir,' said I, 'I believe there is a very common impression that General Washington is of a reserved, cold temperament '

"'The devil take common impressions. They are made on sand, and are both false and fleeting. Wait, Eliot you are true metal, and I will venture your impressions when you shall know our noble commander better. Cold, egad,' he half mutteredto himself; 'where the deuse, then, has the heat come from that has cemented our army together, and kept their spirits up when their fingers and toes were freezing?"'

"Give me joy, my dear mother; a kiss, Bessie; a good hug, my dear little sisters; and a huzza, boys! General Washington has sent me a lieutenant's commission, and a particularly kind note with it. So, it appears, that while I was thinking him so lukewarm to my application, he lost no time in transmitting it to Congress, and enforcing it by his recommendation. Our camp is all bustle. Soldiers, just trained and fit for service, are departing, their term of enlistment having expired. The new quotas are coming in, raw, undisciplined troops. The general preserves a calm, unaltered mien; but his officers fret and fume in private, and say that nothing effective will ever be achieved while Congress permits these short enlistments."

"Thanks to you, dear mother; my funds have enabled me to purchase a uniform. I have just tried it on. I wish you could all see me in it. 'Every woman is at heart a rake,' says Pope; that every man is at heart a coxcomb, is just about as true. My new dress will lose its holyday gloss before we meet again, but the freshness of my love for you will never be dimmed, my dear mother; for Bessie, and for all the little band, whose bright faces are even now before my swimming eyes.

"Yours devotedly, "Eliot Lee. "P. S. My poor jack−o'−lantern, Kisel, is of course of no use to me, neither does he give me much trouble. He is a sort of mountebank among the soldiers, merry himself and making others merry. If he is a benefactor who makes two blades of grass grow where but one grew before, Kisel certainly is, while he produces smiles where rugged toil and want have stamped a scowl of discontent."

In this letter to his mother, Eliot enclosed one to Bessie; reiterating even more forcibly and tenderly what he had before said. It served no purpose but to aggravate her self−reproaches.

CHAPTER IX.

"Come not near our fairy queen."

Before mid−winter, Linwood joined Eliot Lee at West Point, and the young men renewed their acquaintance on the footing of friends. There was just that degree of similarity and difference between them that inspires mutual confidence and begets interest. Herbert, with characteristic frankness, told the story of his love, disappointment and all. Eliot felt a true sympathy for his friend, whose deserts he thought would so well have harmonized with Bessie's advantage and happiness; but this feeling was subordinate to his keen anxiety for his sister. This anxiety was not appeased by intelligence from home. Letters were rare blessings in those days scarcely to him blessings. His mother wrote about every thing but Bessie, and his sister's letters were brief and vague, and most unsatisfactory. The winter, however, passed rapidly away. Though in winter quarters, he had incessant occupation; and the exciting novelty of military life, with the deep interest of the times, to an ardent and patriotic spirit, kept every feeling on the strain.

Eliot had that intimate acquaintance with nature that makes one look upon and love all its aspects, as upon the

changing expressions of a friend's face; and as that most interests us in its soul−fraught seriousness, so he delighted even more in the wild gleams of beauty that are shot over the winter landscape, than in all its summer wealth. To eyes like his, faithful ministers to the soul, the scenery of West Point was a perpetual banquet.

Nature, in our spring−time, as we all know (especially in this blessed year of our Lord 1835), rises as slowly and reluctantly from her long winter's sleep as any other sluggard. On looking back to our hero's spring at West Point, we find she must have been at her work earlier than is her wont; for April was not far gone when Eliot, after looking in vain for Linwood to accompany him, sauntered into the woods, where the buds were swelling and the rills gushing. At first his pleasure was marred by his friend not being with him, and he now for the first time called to mind Linwood's frequent and unexplained absences for the last few days. Linwood was so essentially a social being, that Eliot's curiosity was naturally excited by this sudden manifestation of a love of solitude and secrecy.

He however pursued his way; and having reached the cascade which is now the resort of holyday visiters, he forgot his friend. The soil under his feet, released from the iron grasp of winter, was soft and spongy, and the tokens of spring were around him like the first mellow smile of dawn. The rills that spring together like laughingchildren just out of school (we borrow the obvious simile from a poetic child), and at their junction form "the cascade," were then filled to the brim from their just unsealed fountains. Eliot followed the streamlet where it pursues its headlong course, dancing, singing, and shouting, as it flings itself over the rocks, as if it spurned their cold and stern companionship, and was impatiently running away from the leafless woods to a holyday in a summer region. He forced his way through the obstructions that impeded his descent, and was standing on a jutting point which the stream again divided, looking up at the snow−white and feathery water, as he caught a glimpse of it here and there through the intersecting branches of hemlocks, and wondering why it was that he instinctively infused his own nature into the outward world: why the rocks seemed to him to look sternly on the frolicking stream that capered over them, and the fresh white blossoms of the early flowering shrubs seemed to yearn with a kindred spirit towards it, when his speculations were broken by human voices mingling with the sound of the waterfall. He looked in the direction whence they came, and fancied he saw a white dress. It might be the cascade, for that at a little distance did not look unlike a white robe floating over the gray rocks, but it might be a fair lady's gown, and that was a sight rare enough to provoke the curiosity of a young knight−errant. So Eliot, quickeninghis footsteps, reached the point where the streamlet ceases its din, and steals loiteringly through the deep narrow glen, now called Washington's Valley. He had pressed on unwittingly, for he was now within a few yards of two persons on whom he would not voluntarily have intruded. One was a lady (a lady certainly, for a well−practised ear can graduate the degree of refinement by a single tone of the voice), the other party to the tête−à−tête was his truant friend Linwood. The lady was seated with her back towards Eliot, in a grape−vine that hung, a sylvan swing, from the trees; and Linwood, his face also turned from Eliot, was decking his companion's pretty hair with wood anemones, and (ominous it was when Herbert Linwood made sentimental sallies) saying very soft and pretty things of their starry eyes. Eliot was making a quiet retreat, when, to his utter consternation, a lady on his right, till then unseen by him, addressed him, saying, "she believed she had the pleasure of speaking to Lieutenant Lee." Eliot bowed; whereupon she added, "that she was sure, from Captain Linwood's description, that it must be his friend. Captain Linwood is there with my sister, you perceive," she continued; "and as he is our friend, and you are his, you will do us the favour to go home and take tea with us."

By this time the tête−à−tête party, though sufficiently absorbed in each other, was aroused, and both turning their head, perceived Eliot. The lady said nothing; Linwood looked disconcerted,and merely nodded without speaking to his friend. The lady rose, and with a spirited step walked towards a farmhouse on the margin of the Hudson, the only tenement of this secluded and most lovely little glen. Linwood followed her, and seemed earnestly addressing her in a low voice. By this time Eliot had sufficiently recovered his senses to remember that the farmhouse, which was visible from West Point, had been pointed out to him as the temporary residence of a Mr. Grenville Ruthven. Mr. Ruthven was a native of Virginia, who some years before had, in consequence of pecuniary misfortunes, removed to New−York, where he had held an office under the king till the commencement of the war. His only son was in the English navy, and the father was suspected of being at heart a royalist. His

political partialities, however, were not so strong but that they might be deferred to prudence: so he took her counsel, and retired with his wife and two daughters to this safe nook on the Hudson, till the troubles should be overpast.

Eliot could not be insensible to the friendly and volunteered greeting of his pretty lady patroness, and a social pleasure was never more inviting than now when he was famishing for it; but it was so manifest that his presence was any thing but desirable to Linwood and his companion, that he was making his acknowledgments and turning away, when the young lady, declaring she would not take "no" for an answer, called out, "Stop, Helen pray, stop come back, Captain Linwood, and introduceus regularly to your friend; he is so ceremonious that he will not go on with an acquaintance that is not begun in due form."

Thus compelled, Miss Ruthven stopped and submitted gracefully to an introduction, which Linwood was in fact at the moment urging, and she peremptorily refusing.

"Now, here we are, just at our own door," said Miss Charlotte Ruthven to Eliot, "and you must positively come in and take tea with us." Eliot still hesitated.

"Why, in the name of wonder, should you not?" said Linwood, who appeared just coming to himself.

"You must come with us," said Miss Ruthven, for the first time speaking, "and let me show your friend how very magnanimous I can be."

"Indeed, you must not refuse us," urged Miss Charlotte.

"I cannot," replied Eliot, gallantly, "though it is not very flattering to begin an acquaintance with testing the magnanimity of your sister."

Helen Ruthven bowed, smiled, and coloured; and at the first opportunity said to Linwood, "your friend is certainly the most civilized of all the eastern savages I have yet seen, and, as your friend, I will try to tolerate him." She soon, however, seemed to forget his presence, and to forget every thing else, in an absorbing and half−whispered conversation with Linwood, interrupted only by singing snatches of sentimental songs, accompanyingherself on the piano, and giving them the expressive application that eloquent eyes can give. In the meanwhile Eliot was left to Miss Charlotte, a commonplace, frank, and good−humoured person, particularly well pleased at being relieved from the rôle she had lately played, a cipher in a trio.

Mr. and Mrs. Ruthven made their appearance with the tea−service. Mr. Ruthven, though verging towards sixty, was still in the unimpaired vigour of manhood, and was marked by the general characteristics, physical and moral, of a Virginian: the lofty stature, strong and well−built frame, the open brow, and expression of nobleness and kindness of disposition, and a certain something, not vanity, nor pride, nor in the least approaching to superciliousness, but a certain happy sense of the superiority, not of the individual, but of the great mass of which he is a component part.

His wife, unhappily, was not of this noble stock. She was of French descent, and a native of one of our cities. At sixteen, with but a modicum of beauty, and coquetry enough for half her sex, she succeeded, Mr. Ruthven being then a widower, in making him commit the folly of marrying her, after a six weeks' acquaintance. She was still in the prime of life, and as impatient as a caged bird of her country seclusion, or, as she called it, imprisonment, where her daughters were losing every opportunity of achieving what she considered the chief end of a woman's life.

Aware of her eldest daughter's propensity to convert acquaintances into lovers, and looking down upon all rebels as most unprofitable suiters, she had sedulously guarded against any intercourse with the officers at the Point.

Of late, she had begun to despair of a favourable change in their position; and Miss Ruthven having accidentally renewed an old acquaintance with Herbert Linwood, her mother encouraged his visits from that admirable policy of maternal manœuvrers, which wisely keeps a pis−aller in reserve. Helen Ruthven was one of those persons, most uncomfortable in domestic life, who profess always to require an object (which means something out of a woman's natural, safe, and quiet orbit) on which to exhaust their engrossing and exacting desires. Mr. Ruthven felt there was a very sudden change in his domestic atmosphere, and though it was as incomprehensible to him as a change in the weather, he enjoyed it without asking or caring for an explanation. Always hospitably inclined, he was charmed with Linwood's good−fellowship; and while he discussed a favourite dish, obtained with infinite trouble, or drained a bottle of Madeira with him, he was as unobservant of his wife's tactics and his daughters' coquetries as the eagle is of the modus operandi of the mole. And all the while, and in his presence, Helen was lavishing her flatteries with infinite finesse and grace. Her words, glances, tones of voice even, might have turned a steadier head than Linwood's. Her father, good,confiding man, was not suspicious, but vexed when she called his companion away, just, as he said, "as they were beginning to enjoy themselves," to scramble over frozen ground or look at a wintry prospect! or to play over, for the fortieth time, a trumpery song. Helen, however, would throw her arms around her father's neck, kiss him into good−humour, and carry her point; that is, secure the undivided attentions of Herbert Linwood. Matters were at this point, after a fortnight's intercourse, when Eliot entered upon the scene; and, though his friend Miss Charlotte kept up an even flow of talk, before the evening was over he had taken some very accurate observations.

When they took their leave, and twice after they had shut the outer door, Helen called Linwood back for some last word that seemed to mean nothing, and yet clearly meant that her heart went with him: and then

So fondly she bade him adieu,

It seemed that she bade him return."

The young men had a long, dark, and at first rather an unsocial walk. Both were thinking of the same subject, and both were embarrassed by it. Linwood, after whipping his boots for ten minutes, said, "Hang it, Eliot, we may as well speak out; I suppose you think it deused queer that I said nothing to you of my visits to the Ruthvens?"

"Why, yes, Linwood to speak out frankly, I do."

"Well, it is, I confess it. At first my silence was accidental no, that is not plummet and line truth; for from the first I had a sort of a fear no, not fear, but a sheepish feeling, that you might think the pleasure I took in visiting the Ruthvens quite inconsistent with the misery I had seemed to feel, and, by Heavens, did feel, to my heart's core, about that affair at Westbrook."

"No, Linwood whatever else I may doubt, I never shall doubt your sincerity."

"But my constancy you do?" Eliot made no reply, and Linwood proceeded: "Upon my soul, I have not the slightest idea of falling in love with either of these girls, but I find it exceedingly pleasant to go there. To tell the truth, Eliot, I am wretched without the society of womankind; Adam was a good sensible fellow not to find even Paradise tolerable without them. I knew the Ruthvens in New−York: I believe they like me the better, apostate as they consider me, for belonging to a tory family; and looking upon me, as they must, as a diseased branch from a sound root, they certainly are very kind to me, especially the old gentleman a fine old fellow, is he not?"

"Yes I liked him particularly."

"And madame is piquant and agreeable, and very polite to me; and the girls, of course, are pleased to have their hermitage enlivened by an old acquaintance."

Linwood's slender artifice in saying "the girls,"when it was apparent that Miss Ruthven was the magnet, operated like the subtlety of a child, betraying what he would fain conceal. Without appearing to perceive the truth, Eliot said, "Miss Ruthven seems to restrict her hospitality to old acquaintance. It was manifest that she did not voluntarily extend it to me."

"No, she did not. Helen Ruthven's heart is in her hand, and she makes no secret of her antipathy to a rebel per se a rebel; however, her likes and dislikes are both harmless she is only the more attractive for them."

Herbert had not been the first to mention Helen Ruthven; he seemed now well enough pleased to dwell upon the subject. "How did you like her singing, Eliot?" he asked.

"Why, pretty well; she sings with expression."

"Does she not? infinite! and then what an accompaniment are those brilliant eyes of hers."

"With their speechless messages, Linwood?" Linwood merely hemmed in reply, and Eliot added, "Do you like the expression of her mouth?"

"No, not entirely there is a little spice of the devil about her mouth; but when you are well acquainted with her you don't perceive it."

"If you are undergoing a blinding process," thought Eliot. When the friends arrived at their quarters, and separated for the night, Linwood asked and Eliot gave a promise to repeat his visit the next evening to the glen.

CHAPTER X.

"He is a good man.

"Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?"

From this period Linwood was every day at the glen, and Eliot as often as his very strict performance of his duties permitted. He was charmed with the warm−hearted hospitality of Mr. Ruthven, and not quite insensible to the evident partiality of Miss Charlotte. She did not pass the vestibule of his heart to the holy of holies, but in the vestibule (of even the best of hearts) vanity is apt to lurk. If Eliot therefore was not insensible to the favour of Miss Charlotte, an every−day character, Linwood could not be expected to resist the dazzling influence of her potent sister. A more wary youth might have been scorched in the focus of her charms. Helen Ruthven was some three or four years older than Linwood, a great advantage when the subject to be practised on combines simplicity and credulity with inexperience. Without being beautiful, by the help of grace and versatility, and artful adaptation of the aids and artifices of the toilet, Miss Ruthven produced the effect of beauty. Never was there a more skilful manager of the blandishments of her sex. She knew how to infuseinto a glance "thoughts that breathe," how to play off those flatteries that create an atmosphere of perfume and beauty, how to make her presence felt as the soul of life, and life in her absence a dreary day of nothingness. She had little true sensibility or generosity (they go together); but selecting a single object on which to lavish her feeling, like a shallow stream compressed into a narrow channel, it made great show and noise. Eliot stood on disenchanted ground; and, while looking on the real shape, was compelled to see his credulous and impulsive friend becoming from day to day more and more inthralled by the false semblance. "Is man's heart," he asked himself, "a mere surface, over which one shadow chaseth another?" No. But men's hearts have different depths. In some, like Eliot Lee's (who was destined to love once and for ever), love strikes a deep and ineradicable root; interweaves itself with the very fibres of life, and becomes a portion of the undying soul.

In other circumstances Eliot would have obeyed his impulses, and endeavoured to dissolve the spell for his friend; but he was deterred by the consciousness of disappointment that his sister was so soon superseded, and by his secret wish that Linwood should remain free till a more auspicious day should rectify all mischances. Happily, Providence sometimes interposes to do that for us which we neglect to do for ourselves.

As has been said, Linwood devoted every leisure hour to Helen Ruthven. Sometimes accompanied by Charlotte and Eliot, but oftener without them, they visited the almost unattainable heights, the springs and waterfalls, in the neighbourhood of West Point, now so well known to summer travellers that we have no apology for lingering to describe them. They scaled the coal−black summits of the "Devil's Peak;" went as far heavenward as the highest height of the "Crow's Nest;" visited "Bull−Hill, Butter−Hill, and Break−neck," places that must have been named long before our day of classic, heathenish, picturesque, and most ambitious christening of this new world.

Helen Ruthven did not affect this scrambling "thorough bush, thorough brier," through streamlet, snow, and mud, from a pure love of nature. Oh, no, simple reader! but because at her home in the glen there was but one parlour there, from morning till bedtime, sat her father there, of course, must sit her mother; and Miss Ruthven's charms, like those of other conjurers, depended for their success on being exercised within a magic circle, within which no observer might come. She seemed to live and breathe alone for Herbert Linwood. A hundred times he was on the point of offering the devotion of his life to her, when the image of his long−loved Bessie Lee rose before him, and, like the timely intervention of the divinities of the ancient creed, saved him from impending danger.This could not last much longer. On each successive occasion the image was less vivid, and must soon cease to be effective.

Spring was advancing, and active military operations were about to commence. A British sloopof−war had come up the river, and lay at anchor in Haverstraw Bay. Simultaneously with the appearance of this vessel there was a manifest change in the spirits of the family at the glen a fall in their mercury. Though they were still kind, their reception of our friends ceased to be cordial, and they were no longer urged, or even asked, to repeat their visits. Charlotte, who, like her father, was warm and true−hearted, ventured to intimate that this change of manner did not originate in any diminution of friendliness; but, save this, there was no approach to an explanation; and Eliot ceased to pay visits that, it was obvious, were no longer acceptable. The mystery, as he thought, was explained, when they incidentally learned that Captain Ruthven, the only son of their friend, was an officer on board the vessel anchored in Haverstraw Bay. This solution did not satisfy Linwood. "How, in Heaven's name," he asked, "should that affect their intercourse with us? It might, to be sure, agitate them; but, upon my word, I don't believe they even know it;" and, in the simplicity of his heart, he forthwith set off to give them information of the fact. Mr. Ruthven told him, frankly and at once, that he was already aware of it, andHelen scrawled on a music−book which lay before them, "Do you remember Hamlet? 'ten thousand brothers!' " What she exactly meant was not plain; but he guessed her intimation to be, that ten thousand brothers and their love were not to be weighed against him. Notwithstanding this kind intimation, he saw her thenceforth unfrequently. If he called, she was not at home; if she made an appointment with him, she sent him some plausible excuse for not keeping it; and if they met, she was silent and abstracted, and no longer kept up a show of the passion that a few weeks before had inspired her words, looks, and movements. Herbert was not destined to be one of love's few martyrs; and he was fast reverting to a sound state, only retarded by the mystery in which the affair was still involved. Since the beginning of his intercourse with the family, his Sunday evenings had been invariably spent at the glen; and now he received a note from Miss Ruthven (not, as had been her wont, crossed and double−crossed), containing two lines, saying her father was ill, and as she was obliged to attend him, she regretted to beg Mr. Linwood to omit his usual Sunday evening visit! Linwood had a lurking suspicion he was just beginning to suspect that this was a mere pretext; and he resolved to go to the glen, ostensibly to inquire after Mr. Ruthven, but really to satisfy his doubts. It was early in the evening when he reached there. The cheerfullight that usually shot forth its welcome from the parlour window was gone all was darkness. "I was a rascal to distrust her!" thought Linwood, and he hastened on, fearing good Mr. Ruthven was extremely ill. As he approached the house he perceived that, for the first time, the window−shutters were closed, and that a bright light gleamed through their crevices. He put his hand on the latch of the door to open it, as was his custom, without rapping; but no longer, as if instinct with the hospitality of

the house, did it yield to his touch. It was bolted! He hesitated for a moment whether to knock for admittance, and endeavour to satisfy his curiosity, or to return as wise as he came. His delicacy decided on the latter course; and he was turning away, when a sudden gust of wind blew open one of the rickety blinds, and instinctively he looked through the window, and for a moment was riveted by the scene disclosed within. Mr. Ruthven sat at a table on which were bottles of wine, olives, oranges, and other most rare luxuries. Beside him sat a young man his younger self. Linwood did not need a second glance to assure him this was Captain Ruthven. On a stool at her brother's feet sat Charlotte, her arm lovingly resting on his knee. Mrs. Ruthven was at the other extremity of the table, examining, with enraptured eye, caps, feathers, and flowers, which, as appeared from the boxes and cords beside her, had just been opened.

But the parties that fixed Linwood's attention were Helen Ruthven and a very handsome young man, who was leaning over her chair while she was playing on the piano, and bestowing on him those wondrous glances that Linwood had verily believed never met an eye but his! What a sudden disenchantment was that! Linwood's blood rushed to his head. He stood as if he were transfixed, till a sudden movement within recalling him to himself, he sprang from the steps and retraced his way up the hill−side: the spell that had wellnigh bound him to Helen Ruthven was broken for ever. No man likes to be duped, no man likes to feel how much his own vanity has had to do with preparing the trap that insnared him. Linwood, after revolving the past, after looking back upon the lures and deceptions that had been practised upon him, after comparing his passion for Helen Ruthven with his sentiments for Bessie Lee, came to the consoling conclusion that he had never loved Miss Ruthven. He was right and that night, for the first time in many weeks, he fell asleep thinking of Bessie Lee.

On the following morning Linwood confided to Eliot the denœument of his little romance. Eliot was rejoiced that his friend's illusion should be dispelled in any mode. After some discussion of the matter, they came to the natural conclusion that a clandestine intercourse had been for some time maintained by the family at the glen withthe strangers on board the sloop−of−war, and that there were reasons for shaking Linwood and Eliot off more serious than Linwood's flirtation having been superseded by a fresher and more exciting one.

In the course of the morning Eliot, in returning from a ride, at a sudden turn in the road came upon General Washington and Mr. Ruthven, who had just met. Eliot was making his passing salutation when General Washington said, "Stop a moment, Mr. Lee, we will ride in together." While Eliot paused, he heard Mr. Ruthven say, "You will not disappoint me, general, Wednesday evening, and a quiet hour not with hat and whip in hand, but time enough to drink a fair bottle of 'Helicon,' as poor Randolph used to call it there are but two left, and we shall ne'er look upon its like again. Wednesday evening remember." General Washington assented, and the parties were separating, when Mr. Ruthven, in his cordial manner, stretched out his hand to Eliot, saying, "My dear fellow, I should ask you too; but the general and I are old friends, and I want a little talk with him, by ourselves, of old times. Besides, no man, minus forty, must have a drop of my 'Helicon;' but come down soon and see the girls, they are Helicon enough for you young fellows, hey?"

As Mr. Ruthven rode away, "There goes," said General Washington, "as true−hearted a man asever breathed. We were born on neighbouring plantations. Our fathers and grandfathers were friends. Our hearts were cemented in our youth, or at least in my youth, for he is much my elder, but his is a heart always fusible. Poor man, he has had much ill−luck in life; but the worst, and the worst, let me tell you, my young friend, that can befall any man, was an ill−starred marriage. His wife is the daughter of a good−for−nothing Frenchman; bad blood, Mr. Lee. The children show the cross I beg Miss Charlotte's pardon, she is a nice girl, fair Virginia stock; but Miss Helen is very like her mother. The son I do not know; but his fighting against his country is primâ facie evidence against him."

The conversation then diverged to other topics. There was in Eliot that union of good sense, keen intelligence, manliness, and modesty, that excited Washington's esteem, and drew him out; and Eliot had the happiness, for a half hour, of hearing him whom of all men he most honoured, talk freely, and of assuring himself that this great man did not, as was sometimes said of him,

"A wilful stillness entertain,

With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion

Of wisdom;"

but that his taciturnity was the result of profound thought, anxiously employed on the most serious subjects.

Late in the afternoon of the same day, Linwoodreceived a note from Helen Ruthven, enclosing one to General Washington, of which, after entreating him to deliver it immediately, she thus explained the purport. "It contains a simple request to your mighty commander−in−chief, to permit me to visit my brother on board his vessel. I know that Washington's heart is as hard as Pharaoh's, and as unrelenting as Brutus's; still it is not, it cannot be in man to refuse such a request to the daughter of an old friend. Do, dear, kind Linwood, urge it for me, and win the everlasting gratitude of your unworthy but always devoted friend, Helen Ruthven."

"Urge it!" exclaimed Linwood, as he finished the note, "urge General Washington! I should as soon think of urging the sun to go backward or forward; but I'll present it for you, my 'devoted friend, Helen,' and in merely doing that my heart will be in my mouth."

He obtained an audience. General Washington read the note, and turning to Linwood, asked him if he knew its purport.

"Yes, sir," replied Linwood, "and I cannot," he ventured to add, "but hope you will find it fitting to gratify a desire so natural."

"Perfectly natural; Miss Ruthven tells me she has not seen her brother for four years." Linwood felt his honest blood rush to his face at this flat falsehood from his friend Helen. Washington perceived the suffusion and misinterpreted it. "You think it a hard case, Mr. Linwood; it is so, but there are many hard cases in this unnatural war. It grieves me to refuse Helen Ruthven the child of my good friend." He passed his eye again over the note, and there was an expression of displeasure and contempt in his curling lip as he read such expressions as the following: "I cannot be disappointed, for I am addressing one who unites all virtues, whose mercy even surpasses his justice." "I write on my knees to him who is the minister of Providence, dispensing good and evil, light and blessing, with a word." General Washington threw down the note, saying, "Miss Ruthven should remember that flattery corrupts the giver as well as the receiver. I have no choice in this matter. We have an inflexible rule prohibiting all intercourse with the enemy."

He then wrote a concise reply, which Linwood sent to the lady in a blank envelope.

"Ah!" thought Helen Ruthven, as she opened it, "this would not have been blank three weeks ago, mais n'importe. Mr. Herbert Linwood, you may run free now; I have nobler prey in my toils." She unsealed General Washington's note, and after glancing her eye over it, she tore it into fragments and dispersed it to the winds, exclaiming, "I'll risk my life to carry my point; and if I do, I'll humble you, and have a glorious revenge!"

She spent a sleepless night in contriving, revolving, and dismissing plans on which, as she fancied,the destiny of the nation hung, and, what was far more important in her eyes, Helen Ruthven's destiny. She at last adopted the boldest that had occurred, and which, from being the boldest, best suited her dauntless temper.

The next morning, Tuesday, with her mother's aid and applause, she effected her preparations; and having fortunately learned, during her residence on the river, to row and manage a boat, she embarked alone in a little skiff, and stealing out of a nook near the glen, she rowed into the current and dropped down the river. She did not expect to escape observation, for though the encampment did not command a view of the Hudson, there were

sentinels posted at points that overlooked it, and batteries that commanded its passage. But rightly calculating on the general humanity that governed our people, she had no apprehensions they would fire on a defenceless woman, and very little fear that they would think it worth while to pursue her, to prevent that which she dared to do before their eyes and in the face of day.

Her calculations proved just. The sentinels levelled their guns at her, in token not to proceed; and she in return dropped her head, raised her hands deprecatingly, and passed on unmolested.

At a short distance below the Point there is a remarkable spot, scooped out by nature in the rocky bank, always beautiful, and now a consecrated shrine a "Mecca of the mind." On the memorable morning of Miss Ruthven's enterprise, the welcome beams of the spring sun, as he rose in the heavens, casting behind him a soft veil of light clouds, shone on the gray rocks, freshening herbage, and still disrobed trees of this lovely recess. From crevices in the perpendicular rocks that wall up the table−land above, hung a sylvan canopy; cedars, studded with their blue berries, wild raspberries, and wild rose−bushes; and each moist and sunny nook was gemmed with violets and wild geraniums. The harmonies of nature's orchestra were the only and the fitting sounds in this seclusion: the early wooing of the birds; the water from the fountains of the heights, that, filtering through the rocks, dropped from ledge to ledge with the regularity of a water−clock; the ripple of the waves as they broke on the rocky points of the shore, or softly kissed its pebbly margin; and the voice of the tiny stream, that, gliding down a dark, deep, and almost hidden channel in the rocks, disappeared, and welled up again in the centre of the turfy slope, stole over it, and trickled down the lower ledge of granite to the river. Tradition has named this little green shelf on the rocks "Kosciusko's Garden;" but as no traces have been discovered of any other than nature's plantings, it was probably merely his favourite retreat, and as such is a monument of his taste and love of nature.

The spring is now enclosed in a marble basin,and inscribed with his name who then lay extended beside it: Kosciusko, the patriot of his own country, the friend of ours, the philanthropist of all, the enemy only of those aliens from the human family who are the tyrants of their kind. An unopen book lay beside him, while, gazing up through the willows that drooped over the fountain, he perused that surpassing book of nature, informed by the spirit and written by the finger of God a Book of revelations of his wisdom, and power, and goodness.

Suddenly his musings were disturbed by approaching footsteps; and looking up, he saw Linwood and Eliot winding down the steep pathway between the piled rocks. He had scarcely exchanged salutations with them, when the little boat in which Helen Ruthven was embarked shot out from behind the dark ledge that bounded their upward view of the river. They sprang forward to the very edge of the sloping ground. Helen Ruthven would most gladly have escaped their observation, but that she perceived was impossible; and making the very best of her dilemma, she tossed her head exultingly, and waved her handkerchief. The young men instinctively returned her greeting. "A gallant creature, by Heaven!" exclaimed the Pole; "God speed you, my girl!" And when Linwood told him who she was, and her enterprise, so far as he thought fit to disclose it, he reiterated, "Again then, I say, God speed her! The sweetest affections of nature should be free as this gushing rill, that the rocks and the earth can't keep back; I am glad when they throw off the shackles imposed by the cruel but inevitable laws of war." They continued to gaze after the boat till it turned and disappeared with the river in its winding passage through the mountains.

On Wednesday morning it appeared that the sloop−of−war had changed her position, and approached as nearly to West Point as was possible without coming within the range of its guns. "I am convinced," said Linwood to Eliot, taking up the thread of conversation where they had dropped it the day before, "I am convinced there is a plot brewing."

"I am apprehensive of it too. Our obvious duty, Linwood, is to go to General Washington, and tell him all we know of the Ruthvens."

"My service to you! no, he is the wariest of human beings, and has grounds enough for suspicion without our prompting. Can't he put this and that together the old man's pressing invitation, Helen's flight, and the movement of the vessel?"

"Ah, if his suspicions were excited, as ours are, by previous circumstances, these would suffice; but he has entire confidence in his old friend; he is uninformed of the strong tory predilections of the whole family; and, though he does not likeHelen Ruthven, he has no conception of what we have tolerable proof, that she has the talents of a regular bred French intriguer. Besides, as the fact of your having seen those men at the glen proves the practicability of their visiting it again, the general should certainly be apprized of it."

"No, Eliot, I'll not consent to it this is my game, and I must control it. It is a violation of the Arab bread−and−salt rule, to communicate that which was obtained by our friendly intimacy at the glen."

"I think you are wrong, Linwood; it is a case where an inferior obligation should yield to a superior one."

"I don't comprehend your metaphysical reasoning, Eliot; I govern myself by the obligations I feel."

"By the dictates of your conscience, my dear fellow? so do I; therefore I shall go immediately to the general, with or without you."

"Not with me no, I'll not tell him what I know, that's flat; and as to being questioned and cross−questioned by him, heavens and earth! when he but bends his awful brow upon me, I feel as if my heart were turning inside out. No, I'll not go near him. Why can't we write an anonymous letter?"

"I do not like anonymous letters my course appears plain to me, so good morning to you."

"One moment, Eliot remember, not a word of what I saw through the window at the glen."

"Certainly not, if you insist." Eliot then went to the general's markee, and was told he would see him in two hours. Eliot returned at the precise moment, and was admitted. "You are punctual, Mr. Lee," said the commander, "and I thank you for it. A young man should be as exact in military life as the play requires the lover to be! 'he should not break a part of the thousandth part of a minute.' Your business, sir?"

Eliot was beginning to disclose it, when they were interrupted by a servant, who handed General Washington a note. A single involuntary glance at the superscription assured Eliot it was from Linwood. General Washington opened it, and looked first for the signature, as one naturally does at receiving a letter in an unknown hand. "Anonymous!" he said; and refolding without reading a word of it, he lighted it in a candle, still burning on the desk where he had been sealing letters, and suffered it to consume; saying, "This is the way I now serve all anonymous letters, Mr. Lee. Men in public life are liable to receive many such communications, and to have their minds disturbed, and sometimes poisoned, by them. They are the resort of the cowardly or the malignant. An honest man will sustain by his name what he thinks proper to communicate."

"There is no rule of universal application to theversatile mind of man," thought Eliot, and his heart burned to justify his friend; when the general reminding him they had no time to lose, he proceeded concisely to state his apprehensions and their grounds. Washington listened to him without interruption, but not without an appaling change of countenance. "I have heard you through, Mr. Lee," he said; "your apprehensions are perhaps natural; at any rate, I thank you for frankly communicating them to me; but, be assured, your suspicions have no foundation. Do you think such vile treachery could be plotted by a Virginian, my neighbour, my friend of thirty years, my father's friend, when all the grievous trials of this war have not produced a single traitor? No, no, Mr. Lee, I would venture my life my country, on the cast of Ruthven's integrity. If I do not lightly give my confidence, I do not lightly withdraw it; and once withdrawn it is never restored."

Eliot left Washington's presence, half convinced himself that his suspicions were unfounded. It never occurred to Washington or to Eliot that there might be a conspiracy without Mr. Ruthven being a party to it, and the supposition that he was so invalidated all the evidences of a plot.

In the afternoon Kisel asked leave to avail himself of a permit which Eliot had obtained for him, to go on the opposite side of the river to a little brook, whence he had often brought a mess of trout for the officers' table; for our friend Kisel was skilled in the craft of angling, and might have served Cruikshank for an illustration of Johnson's definition of the word, "a fishing−rod, with a bait at one end and a fool at the other;" but happily, as it proved, our fool had some "subtlety in his simplicity." Eliot gave him the permission, with directions to row up to the glen when he returned, and await him there.

Eliot determined to go to the glen, and station himself on the margin of the river, where, in case (a chance that seemed to him at least possible) of the approach of an enemy's boat, he should descry it in time to give Washington warning. He went in search of Linwood, to ask him to accompany him; but Linwood was nowhere to be found. He deliberated whether to communicate his apprehensions to some other officer. The confidence the general had manifested had nearly dissipated his apprehensions, and he feared to do what might appear like officiousness, or like a distrust of Washington's prudence; that virtue, which, to remain, as it then was, the bulwark of his country's safety, must continue unsuspected.

Eliot in his anxiety had reached the glen while it was yet daylight; and, careful to escape observation, he stole along the little strip of pebbly beach where a mimic bay sets in, and seated himself on a pile of rocks, the extreme point of a hill that descends abruptly to the Hudson. Here the river,hemmed in by the curvatures of the mountains, has the appearance of a lake; for the passage is so narrow and winding through which it forces its way, that the eye scarcely detects it. Eliot for a while forgot the tediousness of his watch in looking around him. The mountains at the entrance of the Hudson into the highlands, which stand like giant sentinels jealously guarding the narrow portal, appeared, whence he saw them, like a magnificent framework to a beautiful picture. An April shower had just passed over, and the mist was rolling away like the soft folds of a curtain from the village of Newburgh, which looked like the abode of all "country contentments," as the setting sun shone cheerily on its gentle slopes and white houses, contrasting it with the stern features of the mountains. Far in the distance, the Catskills, belted by clouds, appeared as if their blue heads were suspended in the atmosphere and mingling with the sky, from which an eye familiar with their beautiful outline could alone distinguish them. But the foreground of his picture was most interesting to Eliot; and as his eye again fell on the little glen sleeping in the silvery arms of the rills between which it lies "can this place," he thought, "so steeped in nature's loveliness, so enshrined in her temple, be the abode of treachery! It has been of heartlessness, coquetry, duplicity ah, there is no power in nature, in the outward world, to convert thebad blessings it has; blessings manifold, for the good."

The spirit of man, alone in nature's solitudes, is an instrument which she manages at will; and Eliot, in his deepening seriousness and anxiety, felt himself answering to her changing aspect. The young foliage of the well−wooded little knoll that rises over the glen had looked fresh and feathery, and as bright as an infant awaking to happy consciousness; but as the sun withdrew its beams, it appeared as dreary as if it had parted from a smiling friend. And when the last gleams of day had stolen up the side of the Crow's Nest, shot over the summit of Break−neck, flushed the clouds and disappeared, and the wavy lines and natural terraces beyond Cold Spring, and the mass of rocks and pines of Constitution Island. were wrapped in sadcoloured uniform, Eliot shrunk from the influence of the general desolateness, and became impatient of his voluntary watch.

One after another the kindly−beaming homelights shot forth from hill and valley, and Eliot's eye catching that which flashed from Mr. Ruthven's window, he determined on a reconnoitre; and passing in front of the house he saw Washington and his host seated at a table, served with wine and nuts, but none of those tropical luxuries that had been manifestly brought to the glen by the stranger−guests from the sloop−of−war. Eliot's heart gladdened at seeing the friends enjoyingone of those smooth and delicious passages that sometimes vary the ruggedest path of life. That expression of repelling and immoveable gravity, that look of tension (with him the bow was always

strained) that characterized Washington's face, had vanished like a cloud; and it now serenely reflected the social affections (bright and gentle spirits!) that, for the time, mastered his perplexing cares. He was retracing the period of his boyhood; a period, however, cloudy in its passage, always bright when surveyed over the shoulder. He recalled his first field−sports, in which Ruthven had been his companion and teacher; and they laughingly reviewed many an accident by flood and field. "No wonder," thought Eliot, as in passing he glanced at Ruthven's honest, jocund face; "no wonder Washington would not distrust him!"

Eliot returned to his post. The stars had come out, and looked down coldly and dimly through a hazy atmosphere. The night was becoming obscure. A mist was rising; and shortly after a heavy fog covered the surface of the river. Eliot wondered that Kisel had not made his appearance; for, desultory as the fellow was, he was as true to his master as the magnet to the pole. Darkness is a wonderful magnifier of apprehended danger; and, as it deepened, Eliot felt as if enemies were approaching from every quarter. Listening intently, he heard a distant sound of oars. He was all ear. "Thank Heaven!" he exclaimed, "it is Kisel a single pair of oars, and his plashy irregular dip!" In a few moments he was discernible; and nearing the shore, he jumped upon the rock where Eliot stood, crying out exultingly, "I've dodged 'em, hey!"

"Softly, Kisel; who have you dodged?"

"Them red birds in their borrowed feathers. Cheat me? No. Can't I tell them that chops, and reaps, and mows, and thrashes, from them that only handles a sword or a gun, let 'em put on what ev'yday clothes they will?"

"Tell me, Kisel, plainly and quickly, what you mean."

A command from Eliot, uttered in a tone of even slight displeasure, had a marvellous effect in steadying Kisel's wits; and he answered with tolerable clearness and precision: "I was cutting 'cross lots before sunset with a mess of trout, long as my arm shiners! when I stumbled on a bunch of fellows squatted 'mong high bushes. They held me by the leg, and said they'd come down with provisions for Square Ruthven's folks; and they had not got a pass, and so must wait for nightfall; and they'd have me stay and guide 'em across, for they knew they might ground at low water if they did not get the right track. I mistrusted 'em. I knew by their tongues they came from below; and so I cried, and told 'em I should get a whipping if I didn't get home afore sundown; and one of 'em held a pistol to my head, loaded, primed, andcocked, and told me he'd shoot my brains out if I didn't do as he bid me. 'Lo'd o' massy!' says I, 'don't shoot 'twon't do any good, for I hant got no brains, hey!' "

"Never mind what you said or they said; what did you do?"

"I didn't do nothing. They held me fast till night; and then they pushed their boat out of a kind o' hiding−place, and come alongside mine, and put me into it, and told me to pilot 'em. You know that sandy strip a bit off t'other shore? I knew my boat would swim over it like a cob, and I guessed they'd swamp, and they did; diddle me if they didn't!"

"Are they there now?"

"There! not if they've the wit of sucking turkeys. The river there is not deep enough to drown a dead dog, and they might jump in and pull the boat out."

A slight westerly breeze was now rising, which lifted and wafted the fog so that half the width of the river was suddenly unveiled, and Eliot descried a boat making towards the glen. "By Heaven! there they are!" he exclaimed; "follow me, Kisel;" and without entering the house, he ran to the stable close by. Fortunately, often having had occasion, during his visits at the glen, to bestow his own horse, he was familiar with the "whereabouts;" and in one instant General Washington's charger was bridled and at thedoor, held by Kisel; while Eliot rushed into the house, and in ten words communicated the danger and the means of escape. General Washington said not a word

till, as he sprang on the horse, Ruthven, on whose astounded mind the truth dawned, exclaimed, "I am innocent." He replied, "I believe you."

Washington immediately galloped up the steep imbowered road to the Point. Eliot hesitated for a moment, doubting whether to attempt a retreat or remain where he was, when Mr. Ruthven grasped his arm, exclaiming, "Stay, for God's sake, Mr. Lee; stay, and witness to my innocence." The imploring agony with which he spoke would have persuaded a more inflexible person than Eliot Lee. In truth, there was little use in attempting to fly, for the footsteps of the party were already heard approaching the house. They entered, five armed men, and were laying their hands on Eliot, when Mr. Ruthven's frantic gestures, and his shouts of "He's safe he's safe he's escaped ye!" revealed to them the truth; and they perceived what in their impetuosity they had over looked, that they held an unknown young man in their grasp instead of the priceless Washington! Deep were the oaths they swore as they dispersed to search the premises, all excepting one young man, whose arm Mr. Ruthven had grasped, and to whom he said, "Harry, you've ruined me you've made me a traitor in the eyes of Washington thebasest traitor! He said, God bless him! that he believed me innocent; but he will not when he reflects that it was I who invited him who pressed him to come here this evening the conspiracy seems evident undeniable! Oh, Harry, Harry, you and your mad sister have ruined me!"

The young man seemed deeply affected by his father's emotion. He attempted to justify himself on the plea that he dared not set his filial feeling against the importance of ending the war by a single stroke; but this plea neither convinced nor consoled his father. Young Ruthven's associates soon returned, having abandoned their search, and announced the necessity of their immediate return to the boat. "You must go with us, sir," said Ruthven to his father; "for, blameless as you are, you will be treated by the rebels as guilty of treason."

"By Heaven, Harry, I'll not go. I had rather die a thousand deaths on the gallows, if I must I'll not budge a foot."

"He must go there is no alternative you must aid me," said young Ruthven to his companions. They advanced to seize his father. "Off off!" he cried, struggling against them. "I'll not go a living man."

Eliot interposed; and addressing himself to young Ruthven, said, "Believe me, sir, you are mistaking your duty. Your father's good name must be dearer to you than his life; and his good name is blasted for ever if in these circumstances he leaves here. But his life is in no danger none whatever he is in the hands of his friend, and that friend the most generous, as well as just, of all human beings. You misunderstand the temper of General Washington, if you think he would believe your father guilty of the vilest treachery without damning proof." Young Ruthven was more than half convinced by Eliot, and his companions had by this time become impatient of delay. Their spirit had gone with the hope that inspired their enterprise, and they were now only anxious to secure a retreat to their vessel. They had some little debate among themselves whether they should make Eliot prisoner; but, on young Ruthven's suggestion that Lieutenant Lee's testimony might be important to his father, they consented to leave him one of them expressing in a whisper the prevailing sentiment, "We should feel sheepish enough to gain but a paltry knight when we expected a checkmate by our move."

In a few moments more they were off; but not till young Ruthven had vainly tried to get a kind parting word from his father. "No, Harry," he said, "I'll not forgive you I can't; you've put my honour in jeopardy no, never;" and as his son turned sorrowfully away, he added, "Never, Hal, till this cursed war is at an end."

Early next morning Eliot Lee requested an audience of Washington, and was immediatelyadmitted, and most cordially received. "Think God, my dear young friend," he said, "you are safe, and here. I sent repeatedly to your lodgings last night, and hearing nothing, I have been exceedingly anxious. Satisfy me on one point, and then tell me what happened after my forced retreat. I trust in Heaven this affair is not bruited."

Eliot assured him he had not spoken of it to a human being not even to Linwood; and that he had enjoined strict secrecy on Kisel, on whose obedience he could rely.

"Thank you thank you, Mr. Lee," said Washington, with a warmth startling from him, "I should have expected this from you the generous devotion of youth, and the coolness and prudence of ripe age a rare union."

Such words from him who never flattered and rarely praised, might well, as they did, make the blood gush from the heart to the cheeks. "I am most grateful for this approbation, sir," said Eliot.

"Grateful! Would to Heaven I had some return to make for the immense favour you have done me, beside words; but the importance of keeping the affair secret precludes all other return. I think it will not transpire from the enemy, they are not like to publish a baffled enterprise. I am most particularly pleased that you went alone to the glen. In this instance I almost agree with Cardinal de Retz, who says, 'he held men in greater esteem for what they forbore to do thanfor what they did.' I now see where I erred yesterday. It did not occur to me that there could be a plot without my friend being accessory to it. I did not err in trusting him. This war has cost me dear; but, thank Heaven, it has not shaken, but fortified, my confidence in human virtue!" Washington then proceeded to inquire into the occurrences at the glen after he left there, and ended with giving Eliot a note to deliver to Mr. Ruthven, which proved a healing balm to the good man's wounds.

Our revolutionary contest, by placing men in new relations, often exhibited in new force and beauty the ties that bind together the human family. Sometimes, it is true, they were lightly snapped asunder, but oftener they manifested an all−resisting force, and a union that, as in some chymical combinations, no test could dissolve.

CHAPTER XI.

"Our will we can command. The effects of our actions we cannot foresee."

Montaigne.

Herbert Linwood to his Sister.

"July 30th, 1779. "Dearest Belle,

I write under the inspiration of the agreeable consciousness that my letter may pass under the sublime eye of your commander−in−chief, or be scanned and sifted by his underlings. I wish to Heaven that, without endangering your bright orbs, I could infuse some retributive virtue into my ink to strike them blind. But the deuse take them. I defy their oversight. I am not discreet enough to be trusted with military or political secrets, and therefore, like Hotspur's Kate, I can betray none. As to my own private affairs, though I do not flatter myself I have attained a moral eminence which I may challenge the world to survey, yet I'll expose nothing to you, dear Belle, whose opinion I care more for than that of king, lords, and commons, which the whole world may not know without your loving brother being dishonoured thereby: so, on in my usual 'streak o' lightning style,' with facts and feelings.

"You have before this seen the official account of our successful attack on Stony Point, and have doubtless been favoured with the additional light of Rivington's comments, your veritable editor. These thralls of party editors! The light they emit is like that of conjurers, intended to produce false impressions.

"Do not imagine I am going to send you a regular report of the battle. With all due deference to your superior mental faculties, my dear, you are but a woman, and these concernments of 'vile guns' must for ever remain mysteries to you. But, Belle, I'll give you the romance of the affair 'thy vocation, Hal.'

"My friend Eliot Lee has a vein of quixotism, that reminds me of the inflammable gas I have seen issuing from a cool healthy spring. Doctor Kissam, you know, used to say every man had his insanity. Eliot's appears in his affection for a half−witted follower, one Kisel; the oddest fellow in this world. His life is a series of consecutive

accidents, of good and bad luck.

"On the 10th he had been out on the other side of the river, vagrantizing in his usual fashion, and returning late to his little boat, and, as we suspect, having fallen asleep, he drifted ashore at Stony Point. There he came upon the fort, and a string of trout (which he is seldom without) serving him as a passport, he was admitted within the walls, His simplicity, unique and inimitable, shielded himfrom suspicion, and a certain inspiration which seems always to come direct from Heaven at the moment of his necessity, saved him from betraying the fact that he belonged to our army, and he was suffered to depart in peace. The observations he made (he is often acute) were of course communicated to his master, and by him made available to our enterprise. Eliot and myself were among the volunteers. He, profiting by Kisel's hints, guided us safely through some 'sloughs of despond.' With all his skill, we had a killing scramble over pathless mountains, and through treacherous swamps, under a burning sun, the mercury ranging somewhere between one and two hundred, so that my sal volatile blood seemed to have exhaled in vapour, and my poor body to be a burning coal, whose next state would be ashes.

"Our General Wayne (you will understand his temper from his nom de guerre, 'mad Anthony') had ordered us to advance with unloaded muskets and fixed bayonets. He was above all things anxious to avoid an accidental discharge, which might alarm the garrison. At eight in the evening we were within a mile and a half of the fort, and there the detachment halted; while Wayne, with Eliot and some other officers, went to reconnoitre. They had approached within gunshot of the works, when poor Kisel, who away from Eliot is like an unweaned child, and who had been all day wandering in search of him, suddenly emerged from thewood, and in a paroxysm of joy discharged his musket. Wayne sprang forward, and would have transfixed him with his bayonet, had not Eliot thrown himself before Kisel, and turned aside Wayne's arm: some angry words followed, but it ended in the general leaving Kisel to be managed by Eliot's discretion. The general's displeasure, however, against Eliot, did not subside at once.

"When the moment for attack came, I felt myself shivering, not with fear, no, 'franchement' (as our old teacher Dubois used to say on the few occasions when he meant to tell the truth), franchement, not with fear, but with the recollection of my father's last words to me. The uncertain chances of a fierce contest were before me, and my father's curse rung in my ears like the voices that turned the poor wretches in the Arabian tale into stone. Once in the fight, it was forgotten; all men are bulldogs then, and think of nothing past or to come.

"They opened a tremendous fire upon us; it was the dead of night, Belle, and rather a solemn time, I assure you. Our commander was wounded by a musket ball: he fell, and instantly rising on one knee, he cried, 'Forward, my brave boys, forward.' The gallant shout gave us a new impulse; and we rushed forward, while Eliot Lee, with that singular blending of cool courage and generosity which marks him, paused and assisted the general's aid in bearing him on, in compliance with the wishhe had expressed (believing himself mortally wounded), that he might die in the fort. Thank God, he survived; and being as magnanimous as he is brave, he reported to the commander−in−chief Eliot's gallantry and good conduct throughout the whole affair, and particularly dwelt on the aid he had given him, after having received from him injurious epithets. In consequence of all this, Eliot is advanced to the rank of captain. Luck is a lord, Belle; I would fain have distinguished myself, but I merely, like the rest, performed my part honourably, for which I received the thanks of General Washington, and got my name blazoned in the report to Congress.

"I hear that Helen Ruthven is dashing away in New−York, not, as I expected, after her romantic departure hence, as the honourable Mrs. O . Well! all kind vestals guard her! Heaven knows she needs their vigilance. Rumour says, too, that you are shortly to vow allegiance to my royalist friend. God bless you! my dear sister. If it were true (alas! nothing is more false) that matches are made in Heaven, I know who would be your liege−lord. Another match there was, that in my boyhood my boyhood! my youth, my maturity, I believed Heaven had surely made. It is a musty proverb, that. Farewell, Belle; kiss my dear mother for me, and tell her I would not have her, like the old Scotch woman, pray for our side, 'right or wrong,' but let her pray for the right side, and then her poor son will be sure to prosper. Oh, would that I could, without violating my duty to my country, throw myself at

my father's feet. His loyalty is not truer to King George, than mine to him.

"Dearest Belle, may Heaven reunite us all.

"Yours, H. Linwood. "P. S. Kind love, don't forge it, to Rose."

A day or two after Herbert's letter was despatched, Eliot received a summons from Washington; and on his appearing before him, the general said, "I have important business to be transacted in New−York, Captain Lee. I have despatches to transmit to Sir Henry Clinton. My agent must be intrusted with discretionary powers. An expedition to New−York, even with the protection of a flag of truce, is hazardous. The intervening country is infested with outlaws, who respect no civilized usages. My emissary must be both intrepid and prudent. I have therefore selected you. Will you accept the mission?"

"Most gratefully, sir but "

"But what? if you have scruples, name them."

"None in the world, sir; on my own account I should be most happy, but I should be still happier if the office might be assigned to Linwood. It would afford him the opportunity he pines for, of seeing his family."

"That is a reason, if there were no other, why Captain Linwood should not go. Some embarrassmentmight arise. Your friend has not the coolness essential in exigencies."

Eliot well knew that Washington was not a man with whom to bandy arguments, and he at once declared himself ready to discharge, to the best of his ability, whatever duty should be imposed on him; and it was settled that he should depart as soon as his instructions could be made out.

Eliot soon after met Linwood, and communicated his intended expedition. "You are always under a lucky star," said Linwood; "I would have given all I am worth for this appointment."

"And you certainly should have it if it were mine to bestow."

"I do not doubt it, not in the least; but is it not hard? Eliot, I am such a light−hearted wretch, for the most part, that you really have no conception how miserable my father's displeasure makes me. I don't understand how it is. The laws of Heaven are harmonious, and certainly my conscience acquits me, yet I suffer most cruelly for my breach of filial obedience. If I could but see my father, eye to eye, I am sure I could persuade him to recall that curse, that rings in my ears even now like a death−knell. Oh, one half hour in New−York would be my salvation! The sight of Belle and my mother would be heaven to me! Don't laugh at me, Eliot," he continued, wiping his eyes, "I am a calf when I think of them all."

"Laugh at you, Linwood! I could cry with joy if I could give my place to you; as it is, I must hasten my preparations. I have obtained leave to take Kisel with me."

"Kisel! heaven forefend, Eliot. Do you know what ridicule such a valet−de−place as Kisel will call down on your head from those lordly British officers?"

"Yes, I have thought of that, and it would be sheer affectation to pretend to be indifferent to it; but I can bear it. Providence has cast Kisel upon my protection, and if I leave him he will be sure to run his witless head into some scrape that will give me ten times more trouble than his attendance."

"Well, as you please; you gentle people are always wilful." After a few moments' thoughtful silence, he added, "How long before you start, Eliot?"

"The general said it might be two hours before my instructions and passports were made out."

"It will be dark then, and," added Linwood, after a keen survey of the heavens, "I think, very dark."

"Like enough; but that is not so very agreeable a prospect as one would infer from the tone of your voice."

"Pardon me, my dear fellow; it was New−York I was thinking of, and not any inconvenience you might encounter from the obscurity of the night Your passports are not made out?"

"Not yet."

"Do me a favour, then let Kisel ride my gray. I cannot endure the thought of the harlequin spectacle you'll furnish forth, riding down the Broadway with your squire mounted on Beauty; besides, the animal is not equal to the expedition."

"Thank you, Linwood. I accept your kindness as freely as you offer it. You have relieved me of my only serious embarrassment. Now get your letters ready; any thing unsealed (my orders are restricted to that) I will take charge of, and deliver at your father's door."

"My father's door!" exclaimed Linwood, snapping his fingers with a sort of wild exultation that made Eliot stare, "oh, what a host of images those words call up! but as to the letters, there is no pleasure in unsealed ones; I sent a bulletin of my health to Belle yesterday; I have an engagement that will occupy me till after your departure; so farewell, and good luck to you, Eliot." The friends shook hands and parted.

The twilight was fading into night when Eliot was ready for his departure. To his great vexation Kisel was missing; and he was told he had ridden forward, and had left word that he would await his master at a certain point about three miles on their way. The poor fellow's habits were so desultory that they never excited surprise, though they would have been intolerable to one less kind−tempered than Eliot Lee. He found him at the point named. He had reined his horse up against the fence, and was awaiting his master, as Eliot saw, for he could just descry the outline of his person lying back to back to the horse, his legs encircling the animal's neck.

"Sit up, Kisel," said his master, in an irritated tone; "remember you are riding a gentleman's horse that's not accustomed to such tricks. And now I tell you, once for all, that unless you behave yourself quietly and reasonably, I will send you adrift."

Kisel whistled. He always either replied by a whistle or tears to Eliot's reproof, and the whistle now, as usual, was followed by a fit of sulkiness. The night was misty and very dark. Kisel, in spite of sundry kind overtures from his master, remained doggedly silent, or only answered in a muttered monosyllable. Thus they travelled all night, merely stopping at the farmhouses to which they had been directed to refresh their horses. On these occasions Kisel was unusually zealous in performing the office of groom, and seemed to have made a most useful transfer of the nimbleness of his tongue to his hands.

The dawn found them within the enemy's lines, at twenty miles distance from the city of New−York, and in sight of a British post designated in their instructions where they were to stop, exhibit their flag of truce, show their passports, and obtain others to the city. "Now, Kisel," said Eliot, "youmust have done with your fooleries; you will disgrace me if you do not behave like a man; pull up your cap do not bury your face so in the collar of your coat sit upright."

Kisel threw the reins upon his horse's neck, affected to arrange his cap and coat, and in doing so dropped his whip. This obliged him to dismount and go back a few yards, which he did as if he had clogs at his heels. In the meantime Eliot spurred on his horse, and rode up to the door where the enemy's guard was stationed. His passports were examined, and returned to him countersigned. He passed on; and the guard was giving a cursory glance at the attendant, when it seemed to strike him there was some discrepance between the description and the actual person. "Stop, my man," said he, "let's have another glance. 'Crooked, ill−made person;' yes, crooked enough 'sandy hair;' yes, by Jove, sandy as a Scotchman's 'gray eyes, small and sunken;' gray to be sure, but neither small nor sunken."

"Well, now," said Kisel, with beseeching simplicity, and looking eagerly after Eliot, who was watering his horse at a brook a few rods in advance of him; "well, now, I say, don't hender me smallness is according as people thinks. My eye ant so big as an ox's, nor tant so small as a mole's; and folks will dispute all the way 'twixt the two: so what signifies keeping captain waiting?"

"Well, well, it must be right go on. I don'tknow, though," muttered the inquisitor, as Kisel rode off at a sharp trot "d n these Yankees, they'd cheat the devil. The passport said, 'a turnup nose' this fellow's is as straight as an arrow. Here, halloo, sirs, back." But Kisel, instead of heeding the recall, though seconded by his master, galloped forward, making antic gestures, laughing and shouting; and Eliot, bitterly repenting his indiscretion in bringing him, retraced his steps. He found the inspector's faculties all awakened by the suspicion that he had been outwitted. "My friend," said Eliot, reproducing his passports, "this detention is unnecessary and discourteous. You see I am, beyond a question, the person here described; and I give you my honour that my companion is the attendant specified. He is a fellow of weak wits, as you may see by his absurd conduct, who can impose on no one, much less on a person of your keenness."

"That is to say, if he is he. But I suppose you know, sir, that a wolf can wear a sheep's clothing. There are so many rebels that have connexions in the city, outside friends to his majesty, that we are obliged to keep a sharp look−out."

"Certainly, my friend: all that you say is perfectly reasonable, and I respect you for doing your duty. But you must be satisfied now, and will have the goodness to permit me to proceed."

The man was conciliated; and after making an entry in his note−book, he again returned the passports. Eliot put spurs to his horse; and as the man gazed after him, he said, "A noble−looking youth. The Almighty has written his passport on that face; but that won't serve him now−a−days without endorsements. That other fellow I doubt. Well, I'll just forward these notes I have taken down to Colonel Robertson, and he'll be on the look−out."

In the meantime Eliot followed Kisel at full speed; but, after approaching him within a few yards, he perceived he did not gain an inch on him; and, apprehensive that such forced riding might injure Linwood's horse, or, at any rate, that the smoking sides of both the steeds would excite suspicion, he reined his in, and wondered what new demon had taken possession of Kisel; for, while he now rode at a moderate pace, he had the mortification of seeing that Kisel exactly, and with an accuracy he had never manifested in any other operation, measured his horse's speed by his master's, so as to preserve an undeviating distance from him. Thus they proceeded till they approached Kingsbridge, where a British picket was stationed. Here Kisel managed so as to come up with his horse abreast to Eliot's. The horse seemed to take alarm at the colours that were flying from the British flagstaff, and reared, whirled around, and curvetted, so as to require all his rider's adroitness to keep on his back. Meanwhile the passports were being examined, and they were suffered to proceed without a particular investigation.

They had passed the bridge, and beyond observation, when Eliot, who was still in advance of his attendant, turned suddenly round with the intention of trying the whole force of a moral battery; but he was surprised by a coup de main that produced a sudden and not very agreeable shock to his ideas.

His follower's slouched and clownish attitude was gone; and in its place an erect and cavalier bearing. His head was raised from the muffler that had half buried it his cap pushed back, and from beneath shone the bright laughing eye of Herbert Linwood.

"Now, Eliot, my dear fellow," he said, stretching out his hand to him, "do not look so, as if you liked the knave less than the fool."

"If I do look so, Linwood, it is because fools are easier protected than knaves. It is impossible to foresee what may be the consequence of this rash business."

"Oh, hang the consequence. I wish you would get over that Yankee fashion of weighing every possible danger; you are such a cautious race."

"Granted, Linwood, we are; and I think it will take all my caution to get us out of a scrape that your heroism has plunged us into."

The first shaft of Linwood's petulance had glanced off from the shield of his friend's good−temper, and he had not another. "I confess," he said, in an altered voice, "that the boldness is worse than questionable that involves others in our own danger. But consider my temptations, and then try, my dear fellow, to pardon my selfishness. I have lived three years in exile I, who never before passsed a night out of my father's house. I am suffering the wretchedness of his displeasure; and am absolutely famishing for the faces and voices of home. I could live a week upon the ticking of the old hall−clock."

"But what satisfaction can you expect, Linwood? You have always told me you believed your father's displeasure was invincible "

"Oh, I don't know that. His bark is worse than his bite. I cannot calculate probabilities. One possibility outweighs a million of them. I shall at any rate see my sister my peerless, glorious sister, and my mother. And, after all, what is the risk? If you did not detect me, others will not, surely."

"You did not give me a chance."

"Nor will I them. The only catastrophe I fear is the possibility of General Washington finding me out. But it was deused crabbed of him not to give me the commission. He ought to know that a man can't live on self−sacrifice."

"General Washington requires no more than he performs."

"That is true enough; but is it reasonable torequire of children to bear the burdens of men? of common men to do the deeds of heroes?"

"I believe there is no limit, but in our will, to our moral power."

"Pshaw! and I believe the moral power of each individual can be measured as accurately as his stature. But we are running our heads into metaphysics, and shall get lost in a fog."

"A New−England fog, Linwood?"

"They prevail there," he answered, with a quizzical smile. "But we are wandering from the point. I really have taken all possible precautions to keep my secret. I obtained leave for four days' absence on the pretext that I was going up the river on my private business. The only danger arises from my having been compelled to make a confidant of Kisel."

"That occurred to me. How in the name of wonder did you manage him?"

"Oh, I conjured in your name. I made him believe that your safety depended on his implicitly obeying my directions; so I obtained his holyday suit (which you must confess is a complete disguise), and sent him on a fool's errand up the river."

The friends entered the city by passing the pickets at the Bowery. They were admitted without scruple: letting animals into a cage is a very different affair from letting them out. At Linwood's suggestion they crossed into Queen−street. That great mart, now stored with the products ofthe commercial world, and supplying millions from its packed warehouses, was then chiefly occupied by the residences of the provincial gentry. Linwood had resumed his mufflers and his clownish air; but the true man from the false exterior growled forth many an anathema as he passed house after house belonging to the whig absentees his former familiar haunts now occupied, and, as he thought, desecrated by British officers, or resident royalists whose loyalty was thus cheaply paid.

"Look not to the right nor left, I pray you, Linwood," said Eliot; "you are now in danger of being recognised. We are to stop at Mrs. Billings's, in Broad−street."

"Just above my father's house," replied Linwood, in a sad tone. They rode on briskly; for they perceived that Eliot's American uniform and grotesque attendant attracted observation. They had entered Broad−street, and were near a large double house, with the carving about the doors and windows that distinguished the more ambitious edifices of the provincialists. Two horses, equipped for their riders, stood at the door, and a black servant in faded livery beside them. The door opened; and a gentleman of lofty stature, attended by a young lady, came forth. She patted the animal that awaited her, and sprang into the saddle. "It must be Isabella Linwood!" thought Eliot, turning his asking eye to his companion, who, he now perceived, had reined in his horse towards the flagging opposite that where the parties who had attracted his observation were. "He is right and careful for once," thought Eliot. That Eliot would have thought it both right and inevitable to have indulged himself in a nearer survey of the beautiful young lady, we do not doubt; but as he again turned, her horse suddenly reared his hind legs in the air. Her father screamed there were several persons passing no one dared approach the animal, who was whirling, floundering, and kicking furiously. Some, gazing at Miss Linwood, exclaimed, "She'll be dashed to pieces!" and others, "Lord, how she sits!" She did sit bravely; her face colourless as marble, and her dark eyes flashing fire−Eliot and Linwood instinctively dismounted, and at the risk of their lives rushed to her rescue; and, at one breath's intermission of the kicking, stood on either side of the animal's head. She was an old acquaintance and favourite of Linwood, and with admirable presence of mind (inspiration he afterward called it) he addressed her in a loud tone, in his accustomed phrase, "Jennet Jennet, softly softly!" The animal was quieted; and, as Linwood afterward affirmed, spoke as plainly to him with her eye as ever human voice spoke. At any rate, she stood perfectly still while Eliot assisted the young lady to dismount. The people now gathered round; and at the first burst of inquiry and congratulation, Herbert disappeared. "Thank God. you are not hurt, Belle!"exclaimed her father, whose voice, though choked with emotion, was heard above all others. "What in Heaven's name possessed Jennet? she never kicked before; and how in the world did you quiet her, sir?" turning to Eliot. "It was most courageously done!"

"Miraculously!" said Miss Linwood; her face, as she turned it to Eliot, beaming with gratitude. There are voices that, at their first sound, seem to strike a new chord that ever after vibrates; and this first word that Eliot heard pronounced by Isabella Linwood, often afterward rung in his ears like a remembered strain of sweet music. There were persons present, however, not occupied with such high emotions; and while Eliot was putting in a disclaimer, and saying, if there were any merit attending arresting the horse, it was his servant's, diligent search was making into the cause of the animal's transgression, which soon appeared in the form of a thorn, that, being entangled in the saddle−cloth, had pierced her side.

The first flow of Mr. Linwood's gratitude seemed to have been suddenly checked. "Papa has seen the blue coat," thought Isabella; "and the gushings of his heart are turned to icicles!" And infusing into her own manner the warmth lacking in his, she asked what name she should associate with her preservation.

"My name is Lee."

"A very short one. May we prefix Harry orCharles?" alluding to two distinguished commanders in the American army.

"Neither. Mine is a name unknown to fame. Eliot."

"Eliot Lee! Herbert's friend! Bessie's brother! Papa, you do not understand. Mr. Lee is the brother of your little pet, Bessie Lee, and," she added, "Herbert's best friend."

Her father coloured; and civilly hoped Miss Bessie Lee was well.

"Well! that is nothing," exclaimed Miss Linwood. "We hope all the world is well; but I must know where Bessie is what she is doing how she is looking, and a thousand million et ceteras. Papa, Mr. Lee must come home with us."

"Certainly, Isabella, if Mr. Lee chooses."

Thus bidden, Mr. Lee could only choose to refuse, which he did; alleging that he had no time at his own disposal.

Isabella looked pained, and Mr. Linwood felt uncomfortable; and making an effort at an amende honorable, he said, "Pray send your servant to me, sir; I shall be happy to express my obligations to him."

"Heaven smiles on Herbert!" thought Eliot; and he replied eagerly, "I will most certainly send him, sir, this evening, at eight o'clock." He then bowed to Mr. Linwood, took Isabella's hand, which she again graciously extended to him, and thanking her for her last kind words "Best bestlove to Bessie; be sure you don't forget it," he mounted his horse and was off.

"Send him!" said Mr. Linwood, reiterating Eliot's last words. "I'll warrant him! trust a Yankee for not letting slip a shilling."

"He is quite right, papa. If he cannot obtain the courtesy due to the gentleman in return for the service he has rendered, he is right to secure the reward of the menial. You were savage, sir absolutely savage. Mr. Lee will think we are barbarians heathens any thing but Christians."

"And so am I, and so will I be to these fellows. This young man did only what any other young man would have done upon instinct; so don't pester me any more about him. You know, Belle, I have sworn no rebel shall enter my doors."

"And you know, sir, that I have not sworn; oh, no! but resolved, and my resolve is the feminine of my father's oath, that you shall hang me on a gallows high as Haman's, before I cease to plead that our doors may be opened to one rebel at least."

"Never, never!" replied her father, shutting his hall−door after him as he spoke, as if all the rebel world were on the other side of it.

CHAPTER XII.

"Oui, je suis sûr que vous m'aimez, mais je ne le suis pas que vous m'aimiez toujours."

Moliere.

When Eliot rejoined his friend at the appointed rendezvous, Mrs. Billings's, Herbert listened most eagerly to every particular of Eliot's meeting with his father and sister, and thanked him over and over again for so thoughtfully smoothing the way for his interview with them in the evening. "Oh, Eliot," he said, "may you never have such a hurricane in your bosom as I had when I stood by my father and Belle, and longed to throw myself at his feet, and take my sister into my arms. I believe I did kiss Jennet what the deuse ailed the jade? she is the gentlest creature that ever stepped. Never doubt my self−control after this, Eliot!" Eliot's apprehensions were not so easily removed. He perceived that Herbert was in a frame of mind unsuited to the cautious part he was to act. His feelings had been excited by his rencounter with his father and sister, and though he had passed through that trial with surprising self−possession, it had quite unfitted him for encountering the "botheration" (so he called it) that awaited him at Mrs. Billings's.

"We are in a beautiful predicament here," he said; "our landlady, who is one of your "cute Yankees,' will not let us in till she has sent our names and a description of our persons to the Commandant Robertson's: this, she says, being according to his order. Now this cannot be I will not implicate you thus far I have proceeded on my sole responsibility, and if any thing happens, I alone am liable for the consequences. Are your instructions to stop at this house positive?"

"Yes; and if they were not, we might not be better able to evade this police regulation elsewhere. I will see my countrywoman 'hawks won't pick out hawks' e'en,' you know they say; perhaps one Yankee hawk may blind another."

A loud rap brought the hostess herself to the door, a sleek lady, who, Eliot thought, looked as if she might be diplomatized, though a Yankee, and entitled to the discretion of at least forty−five years.

"Mrs. Billings, I presume?"

"The same, sir will you walk in?"

"Thank you, madam. Kisel, remain here while I speak with the lady." Mrs. Billings looked at the master, then at the man, then hemmed, which being interpreted, meant, "I understand your mutual relations," and then conducted Eliot to her little parlour, furnished with all the display she could command, and the frugality to which she was enforced, a combination not uncommon in more recent times. A carpet covered the middleof the floor, and just reached to the stately chairs that stood like grenadiers around the room, guarding the uncovered boards, the test of the house−wife's neatness. One corner was occupied by a high Chinese lackered clock; and another by a buffet filled with articles, like the poor vicar's, "wisely kept for show," because good for nothing else; and between them was the chest of drawers, that so mysteriously combined the uses which modern artisans have distributed over sideboards, wardrobes, The snugness, order, and sufficiency of Mrs. Billings's household certainly did present a striking contrast to the nakedness and desolation of our soldier's quarters, and the pleased and admiring glances with which Eliot surveyed the apartment were quite unaffected.

"You are very pleasantly situated here, madam," he said.

"Why, yes; as comfortably as I could expect."

"You are from Rhode Island, I believe, Mrs. Billings?"

"I am happy to own I am, sir;" the expression of hostility with which the lady had begun the conference abated. It is agreeable to have such cardinal points in one's history as where one comes from known an indirect flattery, quite unequivocal.

"I have been told, madam," continued Eliot, "that you were a sufferer in the royal cause before you left your native state?"

"Yes, sir, I may say that; but I have never regretted it."

"The lady's loyalty is more conspicuous than her conjugal devotion," thought Eliot, who remembered to have heard that, with some other property, she had lost her husband.

"No, madam," he replied, "one cannot regret sacrifices in a cause conscientiously espoused."

"Your sentiments meet my views, sir, exactly."

"But your sacrifices have been uncommon, Mrs. Billings; you have left a lovely part of our country to shut yourself up here."

"That's true, sir; but you know one can do a great deal from a sense of duty. I am not a person that thinks of myself; I feel as if I ought to be useful while I am spared." Our self−sacrificing philanthropist was driving a business, the gains of which she had never dreamed of on her steril New−England farm.

"I am glad to perceive, Mrs. Billings, that your sacrifices are in some measure rewarded. You have, I believe, the best patronage in the city?"

"Yes, sir; I accommodate as many as I think it my duty to; my lodgers are very genteel persons and good pay. Still, I must say, it is a pleasure to converse with one's own people. The British officers are not sociable except among themselves."

"I assure you our meeting is a mutual pleasure,Mrs. Billings. May I hope for the accommodation of a room under your roof for a day or two?"

"I should be very happy to oblige you, sir. It appears to me to be a Christian duty to treat even our enemies kindly; but our officers I mean no offence, sir look down upon the rebels, and I could not find it suitable to do what they would not approve."

"As to that, Mrs. Billings, you know we are liable to optical illusions in measuring heights that nearest seems most lofty." Eliot paused, for he felt he had struck too high a note for his auditor; and lowering his pitch, he added, "you are a New−England woman, Mrs. Billings, and know we are not troubled by inequalities that are imaginary."

"Very true, sir."

"If you find it convenient to oblige me, I shall not intrude on your lodgers, as I prefer taking my meals in my own room." This arrangement obviated all objection on the part of the lady, and the matter was settled after she had hinted that a private table demanded extra pay. Eliot perceived he was in that common case where a man must pay his quid pro quo, and acknowledge an irrequitable obligation into the bargain: he therefore submitted graciously, acceded to the lady's terms, and was profuse in thanks.

Looking over the mantel−piece, and seeming to see, for the first time, a framed advertisement suspended there, "I perceive, madam," he said, "thatyour lodgers are required to report themselves to the commandant; but as my errand is from General Washington to Sir Henry Clinton, I imagine this ceremony will be superfluous; somewhat like going to your servants for leave to stay in your house. After obtaining it from you, madam, the honoured commander−in−chief?"

"That would be foolish."

"Then all is settled, Mrs. Billings. As my man is a stranger in the city, you will allow one of your servants to take a note for me to Sir Henry Clinton?"

"Certainly, sir."

Thus Eliot had secured an important point by adroitly and humanely addressing himself to the social sympathies of the good woman, who, though ycleped "a 'cute calculating Yankee," was just that complex being found all the world over, made up of conceit, self−esteem, and good feeling; with this difference, that, like most of her country people, she had been trained to the devotion of her faculties to the provident arts of getting along.

In conformity to the answer received to his note, Eliot was at Sir Henry Clinton's door precisely at half past one, and was shown into the library, there to await Sir Henry.

The house then occupied by the English commander−in−chief, and afterward consecrated by the occupancy of Washington, is still standing at the southwestern extremity of Broadway, having beenrespectfully permitted by its proprietors to retain its primitive form, and fortunately spared the profane touch of the demon of change (soi−disant improvement) presiding over the city corporation.

In the centre of the library, which Eliot found unoccupied, was a table covered with the freshest English journals and other late publications: among them, Johnson's political pamphlets, and a poetic emission of light from the star just then risen above the literary horizon Hannah More. Eliot amused himself for a half hour with tossing these over, and then retired to an alcove formed by a temporary damask drapery, enclosing some bookcases, a sofa, and a window. This window commanded a view of the Battery, the Sound, indenting the romantic shores of Long Island, the generous Hudson, pouring into the bay its tributary waters, and both enfolding in their arms the infant city, ordained by nature to be the queen of our country. "Ah!" thought Eliot, as his eye passed exultingly over the beautiful scene, and rested on one of his majesty's ships that lay anchored in the bay, "How long are we to be shackled and sentinelled by a foreign power! how long before we may look out upon this avenue to the ocean as the entrance to our independent homes, and open or shut it, as pleases us, to the commerce and friendship of the world!"

His natural revery was broken by steps in the adjoining drawing−room the communicating doorwas open, and he heard a servant say, "Sir Henry bids me tell you, sir, he shall be detained in the council−room for half an hour, and begs you will excuse the delay of dinner."

"Easier excused than endured!" said a voice, as soon as the servant had closed the door, which Eliot immediately recognised to be Mr. Linwood's. "I'll take a stroll up the street, Belle a half hour is an eternity to sit waiting for dinner!"

"If Dante had found my father in his Inferno," thought Isabella, "he certainly would have found him waiting for dinner!"

The young lady, left to herself, did what we believe all young ladies do in the like case walked up to the mirror, and there, while she was readjusting a sprig of jessamine with a pearl arrow that attached it to her hair, Eliot, from

his fortunate position, contemplated at leisure her image. The years that had glided away since we first introduced our heroine on her vist to Effie, had advanced her to the ripe beauty of maturity. The freshness, purity, and frankness of childhood remained; but there was a superadded grace, an expression of sentiment, of thought, feelings, hopes, purposes, and responsibilities, that come not within the ken of childhood. Form and colouring may be described. Miss Linwood's hair was dark, and, contrary to the fashion of the times (she was no thrall of fashion), unpowdered, uncurled, and unfrizzed, and so closely arranged in braids as to define (that rare beauty) the Grecian outline of her head. Her complexion had the clearness and purity that indicates health and cheerfulness. "How soon," thought Eliot, as he caught a certain look of abstraction to which of late she was much addicted, "how soon she has ceased to gaze at her own image; is it that she is musing, or have her eyes a sibylline gaze into futurity!" Those eyes were indeed the eloquent medium of a soul that aspired to Heaven; but that was not, alas! above the "carking cares" of earth.

We must paint truly, though we paint the lady of our love; and therefore we must confess that our heroine was not among the few favoured mortals whose noses have escaped the general imperfection of that feature. Hers was slightly the least in the world but incontrovertibly of the shrewish order; and her mouth could express pride and appalling disdain, but only did so when some unworthy subject made these merely human emotions triumph over the good−humour and sweet affections that played about this, their natural organ and interpreter.

Her person was rather above the ordinary height, and approaching nearer to embonpoint than is common in our lean climate; but it had that grace and flexibility that make one forget critically to mark proportions and dimensions, and to conclude, from the effect produced, that they must be perfect. We said we could describe form and colour; but whoshall describe that mysterious changing and all−powerful beauty of the soul, to which form and colour are but the obedient ministers? who, by giving the form and dimensions of the temple, can give an idea of the exquisite spirits that look from its portals?

Eliot was not long in making up his mind to emerge from his hiding−place, and was rising, when he was checked by the opening of the library door, and the exclamation, in a voice that made his pulses throb "Nymph, in thy orisons be all my sins remembered!"

"All, Jasper?" replied Miss Linwood, starting from her meditations, and blushing as deeply as if she had betrayed them "all thy sins; I should be loath to charge my prayers with such a burden."

"Not one committed against you, Isabella," replied Meredith, in a tone that made it very awkward for Eliot to present himself.

"It would make no essential difference in my estimation of a fault whether it were committed against myself or another."

"Perhaps so!"

Miss Linwood took up one gazette, and Meredith another. Suddenly recollecting herself "Oh, do you know," she said, "that Eliot Lee is in town?"

"Now," thought Eliot, "is my time."

"God forbid!" exclaimed Meredith. Miss Linwood looked at him with an expression of question and astonishment, and he adroitly added, "Of course, if he is in town he is a prisoner, and I am truly sorry for it."

"Spare your regrets he comes in the honourable capacity of an emissary from his general to ours."

"It is extraordinary that he has not apprized me of his arrival you must be misinformed."

Isabella recounted the adventure of the morning, and concluded by saying, "He must have some reason for withholding himself you were friends?"

"Yes, college friends boy friendship, which passes off with other morning mists a friendship not originating in congeniality, but growing out of circumstances a chance."

"Chance friendship!" exclaimed Isabella, in a half suppressed tone, that was echoed from the depths of Eliot's heart. He held his breath as she continued "I do not understand this the instincts of childhood and youth are true and safe. I love every thing and everybody I loved when I was a child. I now dread the effect of adventitious circumstances the flattering illusions of society the frauds that are committed on the imagination by the seeming beautiful." Isabella was perhaps conscious that she was mentally giving a personal investment to these abstractions, for her voice faltered; but she soon continued with more steadiness and emphasis, and a searching of the eye that affected Meredith like an overpowering light "chance friendship! This chance friend−Jasper. "On my honour you have not the slightest ground for them," he said.

She proceeded. "Miss Linwood is in some respects a superior young person she has not the the the talent of Helen Ruthven nor the the the grace of Lady Anne (no wonder the perplexed diplomatist hesitated for a comparative that should place Isabella Linwood below these young ladies); but, as I said, she is a superior young person a remarkable looking person, certainly; at least, she is generally thought so. I do not particularly like her style tenderness and manageableness, like our dear Anne's, are particularly becoming in a female. Miss Linwood is too lofty one does not feel quite comfortable with her. On the whole, I consider it quite fortunate you did not form an attachment in that quarter prudence must be consulted not that I would be swayed by prudential considerations certainly not no one thinks more than I do of the heart; but when, as in your case, Jasper, the taste and affections accord with a wise consideration of of "

"Fortune, my dear mother?"

"Yes, Jasper, frankly, fortune I esteem it a remarkably happy circumstance. Your own fortune may or may not be large. The American portion of it depends upon contingencies, and therefore it would have been rash for you to have encumbered yourself with a ruined family; for, as I am informed, the Linwoods have but just enough to subsist decentlyupon from day to day. It is true, they keep up a respectable appearance. Anne, by−the−way, tells me they get up the most delicious petits soupers there. It is amazing what pride will do! what sacrifices some people make to appearances!"

"There must be something else than mere table luxuries to make these suppers so attractive to my cousin."

"Undoubtedly; for as to that, you know, we have every thing that money can purchase in this demisavage country; to be sure, Anne might have a foolish, girlish liking for Miss Linwood, but then I am quite confident I hesitate, for if there is any thing on which I pride myself, it is being scrupulous towards my own sex in affairs of the heart; but I betray nothing, for though you are perfectly free from coxcombry, you are not blind, and you must have seen "

"Not seen, but hoped, my dear mother," replied Meredith, with a smile that indicated assurance doubly sure.

"Hope is the fitting word for you but your hope may be my certainty. I betray no secrets. Anne has not been confidential, but the dear child is so transparent "

"She seems, however, to have been rather opaque in this Linwood attachment."

"Yes, I confess myself baffled there you may have opened a vein of coquetry, Jasper. I knownot what it means, but it can mean nothing to alarm us. It is very odd, though there is nothing there to gratify her, and every thing

here. This very evening Governor Tryon called with the young prince, to propose to get up a concert for her. By−the−way, a pretty youth is Prince William! he left this bouquet for Lady Anne. The honourable Mr. Barton and Sir Reginald were here too, and the Higbys and there she is, mewed up with that old fretful Mr. Linwood. She must think, Jasper, you are not sufficiently devoted to her."

"She shall not think so in future."

"Hark, there is the carriage! I sent her word that I was not well. In truth, her absence has teased me into a headache, and my own room will be the best place for me." Thus concluding her tedious harangue, the lady made a hasty retreat; and before Lady Anne had exchanged a salutation with Meredith, and thrown aside her hat and cloak, her aunt's maid appeared with a message from this "frank" lady, importing her sense of Lady Anne's kindness in coming home, and informing her that prudence obliged her to abstain from seeing her niece till morning.

"I am very sorry!" said Lady Anne, heaving a deep sigh, sinking down in the arm−chair her aunt had just left, resting her elbow on it, and looking pensively in the fire.

"You need not be so deeply concerned, my kind cousin; my mother is not very ill," said Meredith,with difficulty forbearing a laugh at the disparity between the cause and the effect on his apparently sympathizing cousin.

"Ill!" exclaimed Lady Anne, starting, "I did not suppose that she was ill."

"Then why, in the name of Heaven, that deep sigh?"

"There are many causes of sighs, cousin Jasper."

"To you, Lady Anne, so young, so gifted, so lovely, so beloved."

"That should be happiness!" she replied, covering her face with her hands to hide the tears that, in spite of all the anti−crying tendencies of her nature, gushed from her eyes.

"Those dimpled hands," thought Meredith, "hiding so childishly her melting face, might move an anchoret; but they move not me. I am too pampered to know that I have been loved by Isabella Linwood, with all the bitter, cursed mortification that attends it, is worth a world of such triumphs as this. Poor Bessie I remember too! but, allons, I will take the good 'the gods provide,' since I cannot have that which they deny. Cousin "

"Did you speak to me, Jasper?"

"Now, by my life," thought Meredith, "my words are congealed they will not flow to such willing ears."

"I am playing the fool," exclaimed Lady Anne,suddenly rising and dashing off her tears. "Good night, Jasper I have betrayed myself no, no, I did not mean that pray forget my weakness I am nervous this evening for the first time in my life, and I know nothing of managing nerves good night, Jasper!"

Meredith seized her hand and held her back. "Indeed, my sweet coz, you must not go now."

"Must not go! Why not?" she replied, excessively puzzled by the expressive smile that hovered on his lips.

"Why not! Because you are too much of an angel to shut your heart so suddenly against me after allowing me a glimpse at the paradise within."

"What do you mean?" she asked, now beginning, from Meredith's manner, and from the welltutored expression of his most sentimental eyes, to have some dim perception of his meaning, and to be disconcerted by it.

"Dear Anne, did you not, with your own peculiar, enchanting ingenuousness, say you had betrayed yourself? Never was there a sweeter a more welcome treachery." He fell on his knee, and pressed her hand to his lips.

"For the love of Heaven, Jasper," she cried, snatching her hand away, "tell me what I have said or done."

"Nothing that you should not, dearest cousin; your betrayal, as you called it, was, I know, involuntary, and for that the dearer."

"Are you in earnest, Jasper?"

"In earnest! most assuredly; and do you, Lady Anne, like all your sex, delight in torturing your captives? your captive I certainly am, for life."

The truth was now but too evident to Lady Anne; but she was so unprepared for it, her mind had been so wholly preoccupied, that it seemed to her the marvellous result of some absurd misunderstanding. At first she blushed, and stammered, and then, following her natural bent, laughed merrily.

To Meredith, this appeared a childish artifice to shelter her mortification at having made, in military phrase, a first demonstration. His interest was stimulated by this slight obstacle; and rallying all his powers, he began a passionate declaration in the good set terms "in such cases made and provided;" but Lady Anne cut him off before he had finished his peroration. "This is a most absurd business, Jasper; I entreat you never to speak of it again. Aunt, or somebody, or something, has misled you misled you certainly are. I never in my life thought of you in any other light, than as a very agreeable cousin, nor ever shall. I am very sorry for you, Jasper; but really, I am not in fault, for I never, by word or look, could have expressed what I never felt. Good night, Jasper." She was running away, when she turned back to add, "Pray, say nothing of this to my aunt, and let us meet to−morrow as we havealways met before." She then disappeared, and left Meredith baffled, mortified, irritated, and most thoroughly awakened from his dreams. Her face, voice, and manner, were truth itself; and rapidly reviewing their past intercourse, and carefully weighing the words that had misled him, he came to the conclusion that he had been partly misguided by his mother, and partly the dupe of his previous impressions. The measure of his humiliations was filled up.

But his vanity survived the severe and repeated blows of that evening. Vanity has a wonderful tenacity of life: it resembles those reptiles that feed greedily on every species of food, the most delicate and the grossest, and that can subsist on their own independent vitality.

CHAPTER XXXV.

"Heart! what's that?

"Oh, a thing servant−maids have, and break for John the footman."

If Meredith could have borne off his charming heiress−cousin, his love for Isabella might have gone to the moon, or to any other repository of lost and forgotten things. But, balked in that pursuit, it resumed its empire over him. He passed a feverish, sleepless night, revolving the past, and reconsidering Isabella's every word and look during their interview of the preceding evening; and finally, he came to a conclusion not unnatural (for few persons give others credit for less of a given infirmity than they themselves possess), that Isabella's vanity had been wounded by the conviction that she had been, for a time, superseded by Bes ie Lee; and that the ground he had thus lost

might, by a dexterous manœuvre, be regained. Engrossed with his next move, he appeared at breakfast−table as usual, attentive to his mother, and polite to Lady Anne, who, anxious to express her good−will, was more than ordinarily kind; and Mrs. Meredith concluded that if matters had not gone as far as she had hoped, they were going on swimmingly. The breakfast finished, Lady Anneran away from her aunt's annoying devotions to the Linwoods, and Meredith retired to his own room to write, after weighing and sifting each word, the following note to Isabella. He did not send it, however, till he had taken the precaution to precede it by a written request to Lady Anne (with whom he had found out too late that honest dealing was far the safest) that she would, on no account he asked it for her own sake communicate to any one their parting scene of the preceding evening. His evil star ruled the ascendant, and Lady Anne received the note too late.

To Miss Linwood.

"Montaigne says, and says truly, that 'toutes passions que se laissent, gouster et digerer ne sont que mediocres;' but how would he how shall I characterize a passion which has swallowed up every other passion, desire, and affection of my nature has grown and thriven upon that which would have seemed fatal to its existence!

"Isabella, these are not hollow phrases; you know they are not; and be not angry at my boldness; I know your heart responds to them, and, though I was stretched on the rack to obtain this knowledge, I thank my tormentors. Yes, by Heaven! I would not exchange that one instant of intoxicating, bewildering joy, when, even in the presence of witnesses, and such witnesses! you confessed you had loved me, for ages of a common existence. Thank Heaven, too, the precious confession was not through the hackneyed medium of words. Such a sentiment is not born in your bosom to die. I judge from my own inferior nature. I have loved on steadily, through absence, coldness, disdain, caprice (pardon me, my proud, my adored Isabella), in spite of the canker and rust of delay after delay; in spite of all the assaults of those temptations to which the young and fortunate are exposed. Can I estimate your heart at a lower rate than my own?

"As to that silly scene last evening, though it stung me at the moment, and goaded me to an unmeaning impertinence, yet, on a review of it, do you not perceive that we were both the dupes of a little dramatic effect? and that there is no reality in the matter, except so far as concerns the lost wits of the crazed girl, and the very natural affliction of her well−meaning brother, whose unjust and hasty indignation towards me, being the result of false impressions, I most heartily forgive.

"As to poor Bessie Lee, I can only say, God help her! I am most sincerely sorry for her; but neither you nor I can be surprised that she should be the dupe of her lively imagination, and the victim of her nervous temperament. I ask but one word in reply. Say you will see me at any hour you choose; and, for God's sake, Isabella, secure our interview from interruption."

In half an hour, and just as Meredith was sallyingforth to allay his restlessness by a walk in the open air, he met his messenger with a note from Miss Linwood. He turned back, entered the unoccupied drawing−room, and read the following:

"I have received your note, Jasper; I do not reply to it hastily; hours of watchfulness and reflection at the bedside of my friend have given the maturity of years to my present feeling. I have loved you, I confess it now; not by a treacherous blush, but calmly, deliberately, in my own hand−writing, without faltering or emotion of any sort. Yes, I have loved you, if a sentiment springing from a most attachable nature, originating in the accidental intercourse of childhood, fostered by pride, nurtured by flattery, and exaggerated by an excited imagination, can be called love.

"I have loved you, if a sentiment struggling with doubt and distrust, seeking for rest and finding none, becoming fainter and fainter in the dawning light of truth, and vanishing, like an exhalation in the full day, can be called love.

"You say truly. Bessie Lee is the dupe of a too lively imagination, and the victim of a nervous temperament. To these you might have added, an exquisitely organized frame, and a conscience too susceptible for a creature liable to the mistakes of humanity. Oh, how despicable, how cruel, was the vanity that could risk the happiness of such a creature for its own gratification! I have weptbitterly over her; I should scarcely have pitied her, had she been the unresisting slave and victim of a misplaced and unrequited passion.

"After what I have written, you will perceive that you need neither seek nor avoid an interview with me; that the only emotion you can now excite, is a devout gratitude that our former interviews were interrupted, and circumstances were made strong enough to prevail over my weakness.

"Isabella Linwood. "P. S. I have detained my messenger, and opened my note to add, that your cousin has just come in, and with a confidence befitting her frank nature, has communicated to me the farce with which you followed up the tragedy of last evening."

Meredith felt, what was in truth quite evident, that Isabella Linwood was herself again. He threw the note from him in a paroxysm of vexation, disappointment, and utter and hopeless mortification; and covering his face with his hands, he endured one of those moments that occur even in this life, when the sins, follies, and failures of by−gone years are felt with the vividness and acuteness of the actual and present, and memory and conscience are endued with supernatural energy and retributive power.

What a capacity of penal suffering has the All−wise infused into the moral nature of man, even the weakest!

"The mind is its own place, and in itself,

Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."

Meredith was roused by the soft fall of a footstep. He started, and saw Helen Ruthven, who had just entered, and was in the act of picking up the note he had thrown down. She looked at the superscription, then at Meredith. Her lustrous eyes suffused with tears, and the tears formed into actual drops, and rolled down her cheeks. "Oh, happy, most happy Isabella Linwood!" she exclaimed. Meredith took the note from her and threw it into the fire. Miss Ruthven stared at him, and lifted up her hands with an unfeigned emotion of astonishment. After a moment's pause, she added, "I still say, most happy Isabella Linwood. And yet, if she cannot estimate the worth of the priceless kingdom she sways, is she most happy? You do not answer me; and you, of all the world, cannot." Meredith did not reply by word; but Miss Ruthven's quick eye perceived the cloud clearing from his brow; and she ventured to try the effect of a stronger light. "I cannot comprehend this girl," she continued; "she is a riddle an insolvable riddle to me. A passionless mortal seems to me to approach nearer to a monster than to a divinity deserving your idolatry, Meredith. She cannot be the cold, apathetic, statue−like person she appears "

"And why not, Miss Ruthven?"

"Simply because a passionless being cannot inspirepassion and yet and yet, if she were a marble statue, your love should have been the Promethean touch to infuse a soul. Pardon me pity me, if I speak too plainly; there are moments when the heart will burst the barriers of prudence there are moments of desperation, of self−abandonment. I cannot be bound by those petty axioms and frigid rules that shackle my sex I cannot weigh my words I must pour out my heart, even though this prodigality of its treasures 'naught enriches you, and makes me poor indeed!' "

Helen Ruthven's broken sentences were linked together by expressive glances and effective pauses. She gave to her words all the force of intonation and emphasis, which produce the effect of polish on metal, making it dazzling, without adding an iota to its intrinsic value. Meredith lent a most attentive ear, mentally comparing the while Miss Ruthven's lavished sensibilities to Isabella's jealous reserve. He should have discriminated between

the generosity that gives what is nothing worth, and the fidelity that watches over an immortal treasure; but vanity wraps itself in impenetrable darkness. He only felt that he was in a labyrinth of which Helen Ruthven held the clew; and that he was in the process of preparation to follow whithersoever she willed to lead him.

We let the curtain fall here; we have no taste for showing off the infirm of our own sex. We were willing to supply some intimations that mightbe available to our ingenuous and all−believing young male friends; but we would not reveal to our fair and true−hearted readers the flatteries, pretences, false assumptions, and elaborate blandishments, by which a hackneyed woman of the world dupes and beguiles; and at last (obeying the inflexible law of reaping as she sows) pays the penalty of her folly in a life of matrimonial union without affection a wretched destiny, well fitting those who profane the sanctuary of the affections with hypocritical worship.

While the web is spinning around Meredith, we leave him with the wish that all the Helen Ruthvens in the world may have as fair game as Jasper Meredith.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

"Adventurous I have been, it is true,

And this fool−hardy heart would brave nay, court,

In other days, an enterprise of passion;

Yea, like a witch, would whistle for a whirlwind.

But I have been admonished."

Our humble story treats of the concerns of individuals, and not of historical events. We shall not, therefore, embarrass our readers with the particulars of the secret mission on which Eliot Lee had been sent to the city by the commander−in−chief. He needed an agent, who might, as the exigency should demand, be prudent or bold, wary or decided, cautious or gallant, and self−sacrificing. He had tested Eliot Lee, and knew him to be capable of all these rarely−united virtues. Eliot had confided to Washington his anxieties respecting his unfortunate sister, and his burning desire to go to the city, where he might possibly ascertain her fate. Washington gave him permission to avail himself of every facility for the performance of his fraternal duty, consistent with the public service on which he sent him. His sympathies were alive to the charities of domestic life. While the military chieftain planted and guarded the tree that wasto overshadow his country, he cherished the birds that made their nests in its branches.

Eliot was instructed to seek a hiding−place in the city at a certain Elizabeth Bengin's, a woman of strong head and strong heart, whose name is preserved in history as one who, often at great personal risk, rendered substantial service in the country's cause. Dame Bengin and her parrot Sylvy, who seemed to preside over the destinies of the shop, and did in fact lure many a young urchin into it, were known to all the city. The dame herself was a thick−set, rosy little body, fair, fat, and forty; her shop was a sort of thread and needle store: but as the principle of division of labour had yet made small progress in our young country, Mistress Bengin's wares were as multifarious as the wants of the citizens. Mrs. Bengin's first principle was to keep a civil tongue in her own and in Sylvy's head, she "holding civility (as she often said and repeated) to be the most disposable and most profitable article in her shop." It was indeed seriously profitable to her, for it surrounded her with an atmosphere of kindness, and enabled her, though watched and suspected by the English, to follow her calling for a long while unmolested.

She gave Eliot an apartment in a loft over her shop, to which, there being no apparent access, Eliot obtained

egress and ingress by removing a loose board that, to the uninstructed eye, formed a part of the ceiling of the shop.

From this hiding−place Eliot sallied forth to execute his secret purposes, varying his disguises, which were supplied by Mrs. Bengin, as caution dictated. As all sorts of persons frequented the shop, no attention was excited by all sorts of persons coming out of it. Eliot's forced masquerading often compelled him to personate various characters during the day, and at evening, with simply a clock over his own uniform, and a wallet over his arm, like those still used by country doctors, and precisely, as Dame Bengin assured him, like that carried by the "doctor that attended the quality," he made his way, sheltered by the obscurity of the night, to Mrs. Archer's, where he was admitted by one of the children, whose acute senses caught the first sound of his approaching footsteps. Eliot, in spite of remonstrances from his prime minister, Mrs. Bengin, had persisted in appearing in his own dress at Mrs. Archer's. In vain the good dame speculated and soliloquized; she could not solve the mystery of this only disobedience to her counsel. "To be sure," she said, "it makes a sight of difference in his looks, whether he wears my tatterdemalion disguises, wigs, scratches, and what not, or his own nice uniform, with his own rich brown hair, waving off his sunshiny forehead a bright, pleasant, tight−built looking youth he is, as ever I put my two eyes upon; and if he were going to see young ladies, I should not wonder that he did not want to put his light under a bushel;but, my conscience! to keep up such a brushing and scrubbing my loft is not so very linty either just to go before the widow Archer to be sure, she is a widow; but then, there never was a man yet that dared to have any courting thoughts of her, any more than if she were buried in her husband's grave; and this is not the youth to be presuming."

Dame Bengin knew enough of human nature to have solved the mystery of Eliot's toilet, if she had been apprized of one material fact in the case. At Mrs. Archer's, watching at Bessie's bedside, Eliot always found Miss Linwood; and though the truest, the most anxious, and tender of brothers, he was not unconscious of her presence, nor unconscious that her presence mingled with his sufferings for his sister a most dangerous felicity. His fate was inevitable; he at least thought it so; and that fate was an intense and unrequited devotion to one as unattainable to him as if she were the inhabitant of another planet. He did not resist his destiny by abating on minute of those hours that were worth years of a drawing−room intercourse. In ordinary circumstances, Isabella's soul would have been veiled from so new an acquaintance; but now, constantly under the influence of strong feeling and fresh impulses, and a most joyous sense of freedom, her lofty, generous, and tender spirit glowed in her beautiful face, and inspired and graced every word and movement.

Her devotion to Bessie was intense; not simply from compassion nor affection, but remembering, that in her self−will she had insisted, in spite of her father's disinclination, and her aunt's most reasonable remonstrances, on Bessie's visit to the city, she looked upon herself as the primary cause of her friend's misfortunes, and felt her own peace of mind to be staked on Bessie's recovery. What a change had the discipline of life wrought in Isabella's character! the qualities were still the same; the same energy of purpose, the same earnestness in action, the same strength of feeling, but now all flowing in the right channel, all having a moral aim, and all governed by that religious sense of duty, which is to the spirit in this perilous voyage of life what the compass is to the mariner.

Of Bessie's recovery there seemed, from day to day, little prospect. One hopeful circumstance there was. The intelligent physician consulted by Mrs. Archer had frankly confessed that his art could do nothing for her, and had advised leaving her entirely to the energies of nature. Would that this virtue of letting alone were oftener imitated by the faculty! that nature were oftener permitted to manifest her power unclogged, and unembarrassed by the poisons of the drug−shop!

Bessie was as weak and helpless as a new−born infant, and apparently as unknowing of the world about her. With few and brief exceptions, she slept day and night. Her face was calm, peaceful,and not inexpressive, but it was as unvarying as a picture. Her senses appeared no longer to be the ministers of the mind; she heard without hearing, and saw without seeing, and never attempted to speak. At times, her friends despaired utterly, believing that her mind was extinct; and then again they hoped it was a mere suspension of her faculties, a rest preluding restoration.

While fear and hope were thus alternating, a week passed away. Eliot's mission was near being accomplished. The evening of the following day was appointed for the consummation of his plans. The boats, with muffled oars and trusty oarsmen, were in readiness, and the plan for the secret seizure of a most important personage so well matured, that it was all but impossible it should be baffled. The most brilliant result seemed certain: and well−balanced as Eliot's mind was, it was excited to the highest pitch when a communication reached him from headquarters, informing him that Washington deemed it expedient to abandon the enterprise of which he was the agent; and he was directed, if possible, to cross the Hudson during the night, and repair to the camp near Morristown. And thus ended the hope of brilliant achievement and sudden advancement; and he went to pay his last visit to his sister for the last time to see Isabella Linwood!

She met him with good news lighting her eyes, "Bessie is reviving!" she said; "she has pressed my hand, and spoken my name!"

"Thank God!" replied Eliot, approaching the bedside. For the first time Bessie fixed her eye on him as if conscious at whom she was looking; then, as he bent over her, she stretched out her arms, drew his face to hers, and kissed him, feebly murmuring, "dear Eliot!"

The effort exhausted her, and she reverted to her usual condition. "This must be expected," said Miss Linwood, replying to the shade of disappointment that passed over Eliot's brow; "but having seen such a sign of recovery, you will leave her with a light heart?"

Eliot smiled assentingly; a melancholy smile enough. "You still," she continued, "expect to get off to−morrow evening?"

"No, my business in the city is finished, and I go this very night."

"To−night! would to Heaven that Herbert were going with you!"

"Not one regret for my going!" thought Eliot, and he sighed involuntarily. "You seem," resumed Isabella, "very suddenly indifferent to Herbert's fate you do not care to know, before you go, how our plans are ripening?"

"Indifferent to Herbert's fate! to aught that concerns you, Miss Linwood!"

"A commonplace compliment from you, Captain Lee well, as it is the first, I'll forgive you not so would Herbert, for making him secondary in a matter where he is entitled to the honour, as he has the misery of being principal. Poor fellow! his adversities have not taught him patience, and Rose tells me he is very near the illness he has feigned, and that if he does not get off by to−morrow night, he will fret himself into a fever."

"Have you made Lady Anne acquainted with your project?"

"Yes, indeed! and her quick wit, loving heart, and most ingenious fingers, have been busy in contriving and executing our preparations. She is wild enough to wish to be the companion of Herbert's flight this is not to be thought of but I have promised her that she shall see him once more. Lizzy Bengin will go with us to the boat, where, if Heaven prosper us, he will be by eight to−morrow evening. And then, Captain Lee, should you persuade General Washington to receive and forgive him, we shall be perfectly happy again."

"Perfectly happy!" echoed Eliot, in a voice most discordant with the words he uttered.

"Oh, pardon me! I did not mean that. It is cruel to talk to you of happiness while Bessie is in this uncertain condition and most unjust it is to myself, for I never shall be happy unless she is restored, and mistress of herself again."

"Ah, Miss Linwood, that cannot be. In her best days she had not the physical and mental power required to make her 'mistress of herself;' no, it can never be. If it were not for my mother, who I know would wish Bessie restored to her, even though she continue the vacant casket she now is, I should, with most intense desire, pray God to take her to himself there alone can a creature so sensitive and fragile be safe and at peace!"

"You are wrong I am certain you are wrong. There is a flexibility in our womanly nature that is strength in our weakness. Bessie will perceive the delusion under which she has acted and suffered, and which had dominion over her, because, like any other dream, it seemed a reality while it lasted. Yes, her affections will return to their natural channels to bless us all." Eliot shook his head despondingly. "You are faithless and unbelieving," continued Isabella; and then added, smiling and blushing, "but I reason from experience, and therefore you should believe me."

This was the first time that Meredith had been alluded to. The allusion was intrepid and generous; and if a confession of past weakness, it was an assurance of present, conscious, and all−sufficient strength. That Eliot at least thought so, was evident from the sudden irradiation of his countenance; a brightness misinterpreted by Isabella, who immediately added, "I have convinced you, and you will admit I was not so very rash in saying that we should all again be perfectly happy."

Eliot made no reply; he walked to the extremity of the room, paused, returned, gazed intently yet abstractedly at his sister, then at Isabella, and then mechanically took up his hat, laid it down, and again resumed it.

Isabella was perplexed by his contradictory movements. "You are not going so soon?" she said. He did not reply. "Shall I call my aunt?" she added, rising.

Eliot seized her hand, and withheld her. "No, no, not yet Miss Linwood, I am playing the hypocrite it is not alone my anxiety for my sister that torments me that made your prediction of happiness sound to me like a knell." He paused, and then yielding to an irresistible impulse, he impetuously threw himself at Isabella's feet. "Isabella Linwood, I love you love you without the presumption of the faintest, slightest hope before we part for ever, suffer me to tell you so."

"Captain Lee, you astonish me! you do not mean "

"I know I astonish you, but I will not offend you. Is it folly rashness obtrusiveness, to pour out an affection before you, that expects nothing in return, asks nothing but the satisfaction of being known, and not offensive to you?"

"Oh, no, no; but you may regret "

"Never, never. From this moment I devote my heart I dedicate my existence to you; insomuch as God permits me to love aught beneath himself, I will love you. I must now part from you for ever; but wherever I go your image will attend me that cannot be denied me it shall defend me from temptation, incite me to high resolves, pure thoughts, and good deeds."

"Such homage might well make me proud," replied Isabella, "and I am most grateful for it; but your imagination is overwrought; this is a transient excitement it will pass away."

"Never!" replied Eliot, rising, and recovering in some degree the steadiness of his voice; "hear me patiently; it is the only time I shall ever ask your indulgence. I am not now, nor was I ever, under the dominion of my imagination or my passions. I have been trained in the school of exertion, of self−denial, and self−subjection; and I would not, I could not love one who did not sway my reason, who was not entitled to the homage of my best faculties. I have been moved by beauty, I have been attracted by the lovely I have had my fancies and my

likings what man of two−and−twenty has not? I never loved before; never before felt a sentiment that, if it were requited, would have made earth a paradise to me; but that unrequited, unsustained but by its own independent vitality, I would not part with for any paradise on this earth."

The flush of surprise that first overspread Isabella's face had deepened to a crimson glow. If a woman is not offended by such language as Eliot's,she cannot be unmoved. Isabella's was a listening eye. It seemed to Eliot, at this moment, that its rays touched his heart and burned there. She passed her hand over her brow, as one naturally does when the brain is becoming a little blurred in its perceptions. "This is so very strange, so unexpected," she said, in the softest tone of that voice, whose every tone was music to her lover's ear "in one short week it cannot be!"

Isabella but half uttered her thoughts: she had been misled, as most inexperienced observers are in similar cases, by the tranquillity of Eliot's manner; she respected and liked him exceedingly; but she thought him unexcitable, and incapable of passion. She had yet to learn that the strongest passions are reducible to the gentlest obedience, and may be so subjected as to manifest their power, not in irregular and rebellious movements, but only in the tasks they achieve. She did not now reflect or analyze, but she felt, for the first time, there was that in Eliot Lee that could answer to the capacities of her own soul.

"This is, undoubtedly, unexpected to you," resumed Eliot, "but should not be strange. When I first saw you I was struck with your beauty; and I thought, if I were a pagan, I should imbody my divinity in just such a form, and fall down and worship it that might have been what the world calls falling in love, but it was far enough from the all−controlling sentiment I now profess to you.Our acquaintance has been short (I date farther back than a week); but in this short period I have seen your mind casting off the shackles of early prejudices, resisting the authority of opinion, self−rectified, and forming its independent judgments on those great interests in which the honour and prosperity of your country are involved. I have gloried in seeing you willing to sacrifice the pride, the exclusiveness, and all the little idol vanities of accidental distinctions, to the popular and generous side.

"Nay, hear me out, Isabella; I will not leave you till you have the reasons of my love; till you admit that I have deliberately elected the sovereign of my affections; till you feel, yes, feel, that my devotion to you can never abate." He hesitated, and his voice faltered; but he resolutely proceeded: "Other shackles has your power over woman's weakness enabled you to cast off."

"Oh, no no; do not commend me for that they fell off."

"Be it so: they could not fetter you, that is enough."

"Then," said Isabella, somewhat mischievously, "I think you like me for, what most men like not at all my love of freedom and independence of control."

"Yes, I do; for I think they are essential to the highest and most progressive nature; but I shouldnot love it if it were not blended with all the tenderness and softness of your sex. The fire that mounts to Heaven from the altar, diffuses its gentle warmth at the fireside. Think you, that while you have been tending my sister, I have been unmindful of your kindly domestic qualities, or blind to the thousand womanly inventions by which I see you ministering to the happiness of these unfortunate children? Have you thought me insensible to your intervention for my poor boy, Kisel, though God, in much mercy to him, willed it should be bootless? I do homage to your genius, talent, and accomplishment, but I love your gracious, domestic, home−felt virtues. I am exhausting your patience." Isabella had covered her face; over−powered with the accumulated proof that Eliot had watched her with a fond lover's eye. After a slight hesitation, he proceeded to obey a most natural, if it be a weak longing. "Allow me, if you can, one solace, one blessed thought to cheer a long life of loneliness and devotion. I am bold in asking it; but, tell me, had I known you earlier, had no predilection forestalled me, had no rival intervened, do you think it possible that you should have returned my love?"

Some one says that all women are reared hypocrites trained to veil their natures; Isabella Linwood, at least, was not. She replied, impulsively and frankly, "Most certainly I should."

Eliot again fell at her feet. He ventured to take her hand, to press it to his lips, to wet it with his tears. "I am satisfied," he said; "now I can go; and the thought that I might, under a happier star, have been loved by Isabella Linwood, shall elevate, guide, and sooth me, in all the chances and changes of life."

While Eliot was uttering these last words, and while Isabella was absorbed in the emotions they excited, the door was softly opened, and Lizzy Archer, flitting across the room, said in a low voice, "Oh, Captain Lee! what shall we do? there are horrid soldiers watching at both our doors for you mamma is out, and I could not sleep I never sleep when you are here, for fear something will happen I heard their voices at the side door; and when I came through the hall, I heard others through the street door what shall we do? Cousin Belle, pray think you can always think in a minute."

But "Cousin Belle's" presence of mind had suddenly forsaken her; and as Eliot's eye glanced towards her, he saw she was pale and trembling. A hope shot into his mind, a thought of the possibility that if he were not now severed from her, that which she had generously admitted might have been, might still be. To exclude this new−born hope seemed to him like the extinction of life. He rapidly revolved the circumstances in which he was placed. He had done, in the affairintrusted to him, all, and even more than his commander expected; it had failed of consummation through no fault of his; he was in the American uniform, and thus captured, he might claim the rights of a prisoner of war; the temporary loss of his presence in camp would be unimportant to the cause; and remaining for a time within reach of Isabella Linwood might result in good, infinite good, and happiness to himself. He wavered; but the fixed habit of rectitude prevailed, the duty of the soldier over the almost irresistible inclinations of the man: he shut out the temptation, and only considered the means of escape. "Dear Lizzy," he said, "if I could find my way to your skylight I have observed the descent would not be dangerous from there to the back building, and so down on the roofs of the other offices."

"But," said Lizzy, for the little creature seemed to have considered the whole ground, "if there should be soldiers too at the back gate?"

"I will avoid them, Lizzy, by going into the next yard to yours, then over two or three walls, till I find it safe to emerge into the street."

"I can lead you to the skylight. I am very glad I am blind, so I shall not need any light; for that would show you to the soldiers, who are standing by the side windows of the hall−door. Oh, dear, I hope they won't hear my heart beat; but it does beat so!"

There were other hearts there that beat almostaudibly besides poor Lizzy's; but there was no time to indulge emotions. Eliot kissed his unconscious sister; and then grasping the hand Isabella extended to him, he would have said, "Farewell for ever!" but his voice was choked, and the last ominous word was unpronounced. His little guide led him noiselessly up the stairs, through the entries, and to the skylight; and then fondly embracing him and promising to give his farewells to "mother and Ned," she parted from him, and stood fixed and breathless, listening till she believed he had eluded those who were lying in wait for him, when she returned to give full vent to her feelings on Isabella's bosom, and to find more sympathy there than she wotted of.

We shall not follow our hero through his "imminent dangers and hair−breadth' scapes." Suffice it to say, he did escape; and having passed the Hudson in the same little boat that brought "Harmann Van Zandt" to the city, he eluded the British station at Powles Hook, passed their redoubts, and at dawn of day received at the camp at Morris−town the warm thanks of Washington, who estimated conduct by its intrinsic merit, and not, according to the common and false standard, by its results.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

"Good sir, good sir, you are deceived; it is no man at all!"

At any other juncture, Mr. Linwood would have been restless and unappeasable under the privation of Isabella's society; but now, in his interest and sympathy in Herbert's affairs, and in his fondness for Lady Anne, he found full employment for his thoughts and feelings. Lady Anne persisted in considering herself Herbert's betrothed; and in spite of her aunt, who, as her niece affirmed, had become insupportably cross and teasing, she persevered in spending all her evenings with the Linwoods. The charm that love imparts to those who are connected with the object of a concentrated affection, was attached to Herbert's father and mother. Lady Anne felt the most tender anxieties for her lover; but, sustained by the buoyancy of youth, and a most cheerful and sanguine disposition, she was uniformly bright and animated. Her sparkling eye and dimpled cheek were happiness to Mr. Linwood; the old love cheerfulness as the dim eye delights in brilliant colours.

Mrs. Archer, who was always, in Mr. Linwood's estimation, the next best to Isabella, devoted her evenings to him. She saw, or fancied she saw, that Bessie's countenance expressed a pleased consciousness of Isabella's presence; at any rate, she knew that there was another countenance always lighted up by it. Accordingly, she repaired every evening to Mr. Linwood, and played rubber after rubber, performing her tiresome duty with such zest and zeal, that Mr. Linwood pronounced her a comfortable partner and respectable antagonist "a deal more than he could say for any other woman."

While the surface of this little society remained as usual, there was a strong under−current at work. Herbert, after his explanation with Lady Anne, was resolved to leave no effort unmade to effect his escape from durance, and put himself in the way of those brighter hours that youth and health whispered might come. His first step was taken the morning after his parting with Lady Anne. He enclosed the permit for his visits at home, sent to him by Sir Henry Clinton, to that gentleman, with an acknowledgment of his kindness, but without assigning any reason for declining to avail himself of it farther. He was careful not to involve his honour by any pretences in relation to that obligation; it was off his hands, and he thanked Heaven he was now free to use whatever stratagem would avail him. He feigned illness. He knew Rose would be sent to inquire after him; and he also knew that, when told he was ill, she would, by force or favour, obtain access to him. Fortunately, she was admitted without hesitation;for Cunningham, conscious of the bad odour he was in on account of his ill−treatment of the American prisoners, deemed it his best policy to inflict no gratuitous hardship on the son of Mr. Linwood. Rose, once admitted, became first counsellor and coadjutor; and with the aid of the young ladies at home, a project was contrived, of which this noble creature was to be the main executer. Herbert's illness, of course, continued unabated; and Rose repeated her visits daily, and made her last, as she hoped, the evening succeeding Eliot's escape. "Lock me in," she said to the turnkey, "and leave me a quarter of an hour or so. I want to coax Mr. Herbert to take a biscuit; he'd die on your dum stuff." Rose had, in fact, brought to Linwood, daily, more substantial rations than biscuit, and thus enabled him to gratify his appetite without endangering his reputation as an invalid. He was in bed when Rose entered, and out of it the moment the turnkey closed the door "Oh, Rose, God bless you! Is all arranged?" he asked.

"Every thing, Mr. Herbert, snug as a bug in a rug. The young ladies came with me to Mrs. Lizzy's, and she is to be at Smith's house with them precisely at seven. It is now half past six. Mrs. Lizzy's boat, with the muffled oars, that's got off many a prisoner before you, is now waiting for you."

"And are my sister and Lady Anne going to Smith's house without any male attendant?"

"Dear, yes! they are wrapped in cloaks nobody will know them; and Mrs. Lizzy is as good a guard as horse, foot, and dragoon; there's not a thimbleful of danger, Mr. Herbert, and they fear none, bless their hearts! To be sure, Miss Belle is no great of a soldier in common, and Lady Anne will scream like all natur' at a mouse; but love is a

great help to courage in young parsons."

While Rose was making these communications, to which Herbert eagerly listened, she was doffing an extra set of linsey−woolsey garments, and transferring them to her young master, who somewhat delayed their adjustment, by putting his feet first into the "cursed petticoat," as he profanely termed it. That most respectable feminine article arranged to Rose's satisfaction, she put over it a shortgown, and a checked handkerchief over all. "Now for the beauties," she said, drawing from her pocket a wig and mask, and holding them up in either hand, "Miss Belle made one, and Lady Anne t'other."

The mask, if it might be so called, was well coloured, and bore a tolerable likeness to Rose. Linwood was enchanted. "Which," he exclaimed, "which did Lady Anne make, Rose?"

"The mask."

Linwood seized it, kissed it, and exclaimed, "Admirably, admirably done!"

"It was not half the trouble the wig was," said Rose.

"Oh, that is capital too, Rose."

"But you don't carry on so about it. Land's sake! However, I suppose you love Miss Belle as well, only it an't a kind of love that breeds antics."

"True, Rose; you may be sure I shall never love anybody better than I do my sister."

Rose was satisfied, and proceeded to tie on the mask, and adjust the fleecy locks. "It's a main pity," she said, "to cover your pretty shining hair with what looks like nigger's wool, as they call it."

"Not a bit not a bit, Rose. I know some wool that covers a far better head than mine more capable, more discerning; and God never created a nobler heart than beats under one black skin."

"Pooh! Mr. Herbert." Rose's pooh was a disclaimer; but as she put it in, she brushed a tear from her eye; then tying a mobcap and black silk bonnet over the wig, and throwing over his shoulders her short blue broadcloth cloak, and hiding his white hands in her mittens, she laughed exultingly, declaring she "should not herself know him from herself." "Now you're readied," she said, "settle down as you walk be prudent, Mr. Herbert look before you leap. Don't answer them dum fellows, when you go out, a word more than yes or no I never do. Do your endeavours, and the Lord will help you. He helps them as helps themselves hark! there comes the fellow."

Before the turnkey opened the door she was in bed, her head enveloped in the bedclothes; and Herbert stood, her basket on his arm, apparently waiting. No suspicion was excited, nor questions asked. They went out, and the door was relocked. Rose raised her head to listen to their receding footsteps. The footsteps ceased, and she heard Cunningham's (the provost−marshal's) voice, "Well, wench," he said, addressing, as she knew, her counterfeit, "how goes it with your young master?"

"Now the Lord o'mercy help him!" she exclaimed; "he used to mimic Jupe if he only can me."

She did not hear Herbert's reply; but she heard Cunningham say, as if responding to it "Poorlier, hey? I've got something here that will bring back his stomach respects to your master mind, wench." Again she heard Herbert's footsteps recede, and Cunningham enter her cell, and shut and lock the door.

Cunningham's name was a terror to the whigs, and to all that cared for them. The man's excessive cruelty and meanness may be inferred from the extravagant allegations current at the time; that he was in the habit of putting the American prisoners of war to death, in order to sequester the rations allowed them. He had recently reason for apprehensions that an inquiry would be instituted into his conduct by the commander−in−chief, who certainly did not authorize unnecessary cruelties, if he neglected to take cognizance of them.

Rose's head was well muffled in the bedclothes, when Cunningham, coming up to the bed, said, "How goes it, Mr. Linwood; bile uppermost yet? Come,lift up your head, and speak, man can't you give an answer to a civil word? Come, come, I'm not Tom nor Sam, to be put off this way next thing you'll bolt, and I shall have it to answer for; but they sha'n't say I did not do the good Samaritan by you. You won't eat you won't hear to the doctor the d l is in you, man; why don't you rise up? Here's a dose you must take, any how it's what they give in all cases, calomel and jalap come, man, if fair means won't do, foul must." The patient continued obstinate, and Cunningham set down the dose, which was mixed in a huge coffee−bowl, beside a basket of vials, containing sundry nauseous medicines, designed for the poor prisoners, as if bad food were not poison and torture enough for them. A contest began, in which Cunningham had reason to be astonished at the strength of the invalid. In the scramble, Rose's head was disengaged from the bedclothes; the truth was revealed, and she sprang on him like a tiger on its prey. The cowardly wretch shrunk back, and drew a knife, crying out, "You d d nigger!" Rose wrested it from him, and her spirit disdaining the assassin's weapon, she thrust it into the wall, exclaiming "Now we're even!"

He sprung towards the door she pulled him back, threw him down, put her knee on his breast, and by the time he had made one ineffectual struggle, and once bellowed for help, she had added laudanum, castor−oil, and ipecacuanha to the calomeland jalap; and holding his nose between the thumb and finger of one hand, she presented the overflowing bowl to his lips with the other. When she had convinced him of her potentiality, by making him gulp down one swallow, she mercifully withdrew the draught, saying, "If you offer to move one inch, or make a sound, I'll pour it down your throat to the last drop." She then released him from her grasp, and while he was panting and shuddering, she turned her back, muttering something of stringing him up in her clothes. The "clothes," which she quickly disengaged from their natural office, proved to be her garters. As she stretched them out, trying their strength, "My own spinning, twisting, and knitting," said she; "they'll bear the weight of twenty such slim pieces as you."

"Are you going to hang me?" gasped out Cunningham.

"Hang you? Yes; but not harm you, if you're quiet, mind. But I'd choke you twice over to give Mr. Herbert time: so mind and keep your breath to cool your porridge." She then turned him over, bound his hands behind him with one garter, and made a slip−noose with the other, while he, like a reptile in the talons of a vulture, crawled and squirmed with a hopeless resistance. "There's no use," said Rose; "you're but a baby in my hands it's the strong heart makes the strong arm." She then set him upright on Herbert's bed, putthe noose around his neck, and made the other end fast to an iron hook in the wall. This was just achieved, when a hurried footstep was heard, followed by a clattering at the door, and a call for "Master Cunningham! Master Cunningham!" Rose placed her foot against the foot of the bedstead; Cunningham understood the menace, and suppressed the cry on his lips. The calls were reiterated. Cunningham cast one glance at Rose; her foot was fixed, her lips compressed, and her eyes glaring with a resolution stern as fate. Cunningham felt that the alternative was silence or death, and his face convulsed between the impulse to respond and the effort to keep quiet. The knocking and screaming were repeated; and then finding them ineffectual, the person went off to seek his master elsewhere. Other sounds now roused Rose's generous spirit, and tempted her to inflict the vengeance so well deserved; but hers was not the mind to be swayed by opportunity "convenience snug."

The apartment adjoining Linwood's was spacious, and crammed with American prisoners. There was a communicating door between them, through which could be distinctly heard any sound or movement louder than usual. Loring, in his customary evening round, had entered this apartment. Loring was Cunningham's coadjutor,

and is described by Ethan Allen, who had himself notable experience in that prison, as "the most meanspirited, cowardly, deceitful, and destructive animalin God's creation." Rose heard Loring command the prisoners to get to their beds, in his customary phrase (we retrench a portion of its vulgarity and profanity): "Kennel, d n ye kennel, ye sons of Belial!"

At this brutal address to persons whom Rose honoured as a Catholic honours the saints, her blood boiled within her. She hastily withdrew her foot from the bedpost, and strided to the extremity of the narrow apartment; then turning and stretching her arm towards Cunningham, she said, with an energy that made his blood curdle, "It is not for me to 'venge them, but God will. Their children shall be lords in the land, and sound out their fathers' names with ringing of bells and firing of cannon, when you, and Loring, and all such car'on, have died and rotted like dogs, as ye are."

The sounds in the adjoining apartment after a while subsided, and with them Rose's ire. She seated herself to await the latest hour when she could retire from the prison, and elude the suspicion of the sentinel, the only person whose vigilance she had to encounter.

The footsteps had ceased from the passages, and sleep seemed, like rain, to have fallen on the just and the unjust the keepers and their prisoners. Cunningham, seeing Rose preparing to take her departure, begged her, in the most abject manner, before she went, to release him from his frightful position.

"No, no," she obstinately replied to his supplications, "ye shall hang in iffigy, to be seen and scorned by your own people; but one marcy I'll do you; if you'll hold your tongue, I'll not let out, while the war lasts while the war lasts, remember, that you were strung up there by a 'd n nigger' a nigger woman!"

It appeared that Cunningham was glad to accept this very small mercy, by the report that afterward prevailed, that he had only escaped a fitting end through the forbearance of Mr. Herbert Linwood.

Rose passed unmolested through the passage and the outer door, which, being locked on the inside, and the key in the wards, opposed no obstacle to her retreat. The sentinel in the yard saw and recognised her; but not being the same who was on guard when the first Dromeo passed, he merely inferred that Rose had been permitted to remain longer than usual; and kindly opening the gate, he responded civilly to her civil "good−night."

Rose went home, not however to enjoy the quiet sleep which should have followed so good a piece of work as she had achieved, but to suffer, and see others suffer, the most distressful apprehensions.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

"Let the great gods,

That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,

Find out their enemies now."

Isabella and Lady Anne, cloaked and hooded, repaired to Dame Bengin's some half hour, as may be remembered, before the time appointed for their meeting with Linwood. This forerunning of the hour was to allow them to take advantage of Rose's escort. It did not pass without a censure from their wary coadjutor. "You lack discretion, young ladies," she said; "and I lacked it too when I let you in partners in this business. My father used to say, 'if you want to go safe over a tottering plank, always go alone.' However, we must make the best of it now: so just take this box of ribands, and stand at the farther end of the counter, and seem to be finding a match. It is nothing strange for ladies to be tedious at that."

The young ladies obeyed, but Lady Anne fretted in an under voice at the delay; and Isabella ventured a remonstrance, to which Dame Bengin, an autocrat in her own domain, replied, "She must go her own way; that full twenty minutes were left to the time appointed for the meeting at Smith's house, and time was money to her."

"I wish to Heaven I could wring that parrot's neck," whispered Lady Anne; "I do believe the people answer to its call." The parrot kept up a continuous scream of "Come in! come in!" that might have tormented nerves less excitable than our friend's were at this moment.

"I surmise we are going to have a storm," said an old woman, who had stepped in for a pennyworth of cochinia for her grandchildren; "its always a sign of a storm when Sylvy keeps up such a chattering at night−fall." Lizzy Bengin went to the door, and looked anxiously at the gathering clouds.

"Come in! come in!" cried Sylvy; and, as if obedient to her summons, trotted in, one after another, half a dozen urchins. One wanted "a skein of sky−blue silk for aunt Polly: not too light, nor too dark; considerable fine, and very strong; not too slack nor too hard twisted." Lizzy Bengin looked over half a dozen papers before she could meet the order of her customer.

"Pray send the whole to aunt Polly," cried Lady Anne; "I will pay you, Bengin." The boy stared, the dame seemed not to hear her, and bade the boy run home and tell aunt Polly she hoped the skein would suit.

"Twopence worth of button−moulds−just this size, ma'am." The indefatigable Mrs. Bengin explored the button−mould box.

"Mammy wants a nail of silk, a shade lighter than the sample." Mrs. Bengin looked over her pile of silks.

"Come in! come in!" still cried Sylvy, certainly not the silent partner of the house.

"Aunty wants a dust of snuff, and she'll pay you to−morrow."

"How much is a drawing of your best bohea, Mrs. Bengin?"

"Mrs. Lizzy, uncle John wants to know if you've got any shoes about little Johnny's size?"

While Mrs. Bengin, who was quite in the habit of securing the mint, anise, and cummin of her little trade, was with the utmost composure satisfying these multifarious demands, the minutes seemed ages to our impatient friends; Isabella took out her watch. The dame perceived the movement, and seemed to receive an impulse from it, for she was dismissing the shoe inquirer with a simple negative, when in came a black girl, with a demand for "spirits of camphire."

"What's the matter, Phillis?"

"Madam Meredith has got the hystrikes."

"Then she has my note," whispered Lady Anne.

While the camphire was pouring out, a sturdy sailor−boy entered. "Ah, is that you, Tom Smith? A hand of tobacco you're wanting? Well, first come first served just be taking in Sylvy, while I'm getting a cork to suit the vial." Mrs. Bengin seemed suddenly fluttered by a look from Tom,and she bade the servant run home sans cork. The moment Phillis had passed the threshold, Lizzy said, "Speak out, Tom, there are none but friends here!"

"It's too late, Lizzy Bengin, you're lost!"

The inquiries and replies that followed were rapid. The amount of Tom's intelligence was, that some combustibles had been discovered near the magazine, and that as strange persons had recently been observed going to and coming from Lizzy's shop, it was believed that a plot had been there contrived; the commandant had issued an order for her apprehension, and men were by this time on their way to seize her.

Lizzy Bengin had so often been suspected, and threatened, and eluded detection, that she did not now believe her good fortune had deserted her. She heard Tom through, and then said, "My boat is ready and I'll dodge them yet."

Isabella ventured to ask, with scarcely a ray of hope, "if they might still go with her?"

"Yes, if you're not afeared, and will be prudent. Shut the shutters, Tom lock the door after us, and keep them out as long as possible, that we may gain time. Throw my books into the loft don't let 'em rummage and muss my things, and look to Sylvy." Her voice was slightly tremulous as she added, "If any thing happens to me, Tom, be kind to Sylvy!"

By this time her cloak and hood were on, and they sallied forth. Dame Lizzy's valour was too well tempered by discretion to have permitted her to consent to the attendance of the young ladies, if she had not, after calculating the chances, been quite sure that no danger would be thereby incurred. She believed that her pursuers, after being kept at bay by her faithful ally Tom, would be at a loss where next to seek her. The place appointed for meeting Linwood was a little untenanted dwelling, near the water's edge, called "Smith's house." There he was to doff his disguise, and there, should there be any uproar in the streets, the young ladies could remain till all was quiet. Isabella and Lady Anne were in no temper to consider risks and chances. Life, to the latter, seemed to be set on the die of seeing Herbert once more. Isabella felt a full sympathy with this most natural desire, and an intense eagerness to be immediately assured of her brother's escape; so, clinging close to their sturdy friend, they hastened forward.

The old woman's interpretation of Sylvy's cries proved a true one. A storm was gathering rapidly. Large drops of rain pattered on the pavement, and the lightning flashed at intervals. But the distance to the boat, lying in a nook just above Whitehall, was short, and the moon, some seven nights old, was still unclouded. They soon reached "Smith's house," and heard the joyful signal−whistle previously agreed on.

"He is here!" exclaimed Isabella.

Lady Anne's fluttering heart was on her lips, but she did not speak. Herbert joined them.

"Now kiss and part," cried Lizzy Bengin. The first command was superfluous; the second it seemed impossible to obey. It was no time for words, and few did they mingle with the choking sighs of parting, but these few were of the marvellous coinage of the heart, and the heart was stamped upon them. The storm increased, and the darkness thickened. "Come, come; this won't do, young folks," cried their impatient leader; "we must be off we've foul weather to cross the river, and then to pass the enemy's stations before daylight the hounds may be on our heels too we must go."

All felt the propriety, the necessity of this movement. Lady Anne only begged that they might go to the water's edge, and see the boat off. Dame Bengin interposed no objection; that would only have caused fresh entreaties and longer delay, and they set forward. The distance to the boat was not above a hundred yards; they had reached the shore, Mrs. Bengin was already in the boat, and Herbert speaking his last word, when they heard the voices of pursuers, and the next flash of lighting revealed a file of soldiers rushing towards them. Lady Anne shrieked; Lizzy Bengin screamed, "Jump in, sir, or I'll push off without you."

"Go," cried Isabella, "dear Herbert, go."

"I will not I cannot, and leave you in the hands of these wretches."

"Oh, no! do not do not, Herbert," entreated Lady Anne, "take me with you." This was enough and irresistible. Herbert clasped his arm around her, and leaped into the boat.

"Come with us, Isabella," screamed Lady Anne.

"For God's sake, come, Belle," shouted Herbert. Isabella wavered for an instant. Another glare of lightning showed the soldiers within a few feet of her, looking, in that lurid light, fierce and terrible beyond expression; Isabella obeyed the impulse of her worst fears and leaped into the boat; and Lizzy, who stood with her oar fixed, instantly pushed from the shore. Curses burst from the lips of their balked pursuers.

"We'll have them yet," exclaimed their leader. "To the Whitehall dock, boys, and get out a boat!"

Our boat's company was silent. Herbert, amid a host of other anxieties, was, as he felt Lady Anne's tremulous grasp, bitterly repenting this last act of a rashness which he flattered himself experience had cured, and Isabella was thinking of the beating hearts at home.

Dame Bengin, composed, and alone wholly intent on the present necessity, was the first to speak. "Don't be scared, little lady," she said; "sit down quiet don't touch his arm he'll need all its strength. Do you take the tiller, Miss Linwood mind exactly what I tell you I know every turnin the current don't lay out so much strength on your oars, Captain Linwood keep time to the dip of mine that will do!"

Dame Bengin, with good reason, plumed herself on her nautical skill. Her father had been a pilot, and Lizzy being his only child, he had repaired, as far as possible, what he considered the calamity of her sex, by giving her the habits of a boy. Her childhood was spent on the water, and nature and early training had endowed her with the masculine spirit and skill that now did her such good service. The courage and cowardice of impulse are too much the result of physical condition to be the occasion of either pride or shame.

The wind was rising, the lightning becoming more vivid and continuous, and the pelting cold rain driving in the faces of our poor fugitives. The lightning gloriously lit up a wild scene; the bay, a "phosphoric sea;" the little islands, that seemed in the hurly−burly to be dancing on the crested waves; and the shores, that looked like the pale regions of some ghostly land. Still the little boat leaped the waves cheeringly, and still no sound of fear was heard within it. There is something in the sublime manifestations of power in the battling elements, that either stimulates the mind of man, "stirs the feeling infinite," and exalts it above a consciousness of the mortality that invests it, or crushes it under a sense of its own impotence. Our little boat's company were a groupfor a painter, if a painter could kindle his picture with electric light. Lizzy Bengin, her short muscular arms bared, and every nerve of body and mind strained, plied her oars, at each stroke giving a new order to her unskilled but most obedient coadjutors. Isabella's head was bare, her dark hair hanging in masses on each side her face, her poetic eye turning from "heaven to earth and earth to heaven," her face in the lurid light as pale as marble, and like that marble on which the sculptor has expressed his own divine imaginings in the soft forms of feminine beauty. Lady Anne sat at Herbert's feet, her eye fixed on his face, passively and quietly awaiting her fate, not doubting that fate would be to go to the bottom, but feeling that such a destiny would be far more tolerable with her lover, than any other without him. This dependance, "love overcoming the fear of death," inspired Herbert with preternatural strength. His fine frank face beamed with hope and resolution, and his eye, as ever and anon it fell on the loving creature at his feet, was suffused with a mother's tenderness.

In the intervals of darkness they guided the boat by the lights on the shores, and towards a light that, kindled by a confederate of Lizzy Bengin's for Herbert's benefit, blazed steadily, in spite of the rain, a mile below Powles Hook.

They were making fair headway, when they perceived a sail−boat put off from Whitehall.They were pursued, and their hearts sunk within them; but Lizzy Bengin soon rallied, and her inspiring voice was heard, calculating the chances of escape. "The storm," she said, "is in our favour no prudent sailor would spread a sail in such a gusty night. The wind is flawy too, and we can manage our boat, running first for one point and then for another, so as to puzzle them, and in some of their turns, if they have not more skill than any man has shown since my father's day, they'll capsize their boat."

We dare not attempt to describe the chase that followed; the dexterous manœuvring of the little boat, now setting towards Long Island, now back to the city, now for Governor's Island, now up, and then down the river. We dare not attempt it. Heaven seems to have endowed a single genius of our land with a chartered right to all the water privileges for the species of manufacture in which we are engaged, and his power but serves to set in desperate relief the weakness of his inferiors. The water is not our element, and we should be sure to show an "alacrity in sinking."

Suffice it to say, it seemed that the efforts of our little boat's crew must prove unavailing; that after Dame Bengin's sturdy spirit had yielded to her woman's nature, and she had dropped her oars, and given the common signals of her sex's weakness in streaming tears and wringing hands, Herbert continued laboriously to row, till Lady Anne, fainting, dropped her head on his knee, and Isabella entreated him to submit at once to their inevitable fate. Nothing indeed now remained but to run the boat ashore, to surrender themselves to their pursuers, to obtain aid for Lady Anne, and secure protection to her and Isabella. The resolution taken, the boat was suddenly turned; the sail−boat turned also, but too suddenly; the wind struck and capsized it. The bay was in a blaze of light when the sail dipped to the water intense darkness followed no shriek was heard.

After the first exclamations burst from the lips of our friends, not a sound proceeded from them, not a breath of exultation at a deliverance that involved their fellow−beings in destruction. The stroke of Herbert's oars ceased, and the fugitives awaited breathlessly the next flash of lightning, to enable them to extend their aid, if aid could be given. The lightning came and was repeated, but nothing was to be seen but the boat drifting away at the mercy of the waves.

A few moments more brought them to land, where, beside their beacon−light, stood an untenanted fisherman's hut, in which they found awaiting them a comfortable fire and substantial food. These "creature comforts," with rest and rekindled hope, soon did their work of restoration. And the clouds clearing away, and the stars shining out cheerily, Lizzy Bengin, aware that her presence rather encumbered and endangered the companions of her flight than benefited them, bade them a kind good−night, and sought refuge among some of her Jersey acquaintance, true−hearted to her, and to all their country's friends.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"Good to begin well, better to end well."

What was next to be done was as puzzling to our friends as the passage of that classic trio, the fox, the goose, and the corn, was to our childish ingenuity. Duty and safety were involved in Linwood's return to the American camp with all possible expedition. General Washington was at Morristown, and the American army was going into winter quarters in its immediate vicinity. Thither Linwood must go, and so thought Lady Anne must she. "Fate," she said, "had seconded her inclinations, and to contend against their united force was impossible; why should she not give her hand to Herbert at once and be happy, instead of returning to vex and be vexed by her disappointed aunt? After they had made sure of happiness and Heaven's favour, for Heaven would smile on the union of true and loving hearts, let the world gossip to its heart's content about Linwood running off with an heiress; he who was so far above a motive so degrading and soul−sacrificing, could afford the imputation of it, and would soon outlive it." There was both nature and truth in her reasoning, and it met with her lover's full and irrepressible

sympathy; with Isabella's too, but not with her acquiescence.

Poor Isabella! it was hard for one who had her keen participation in the happiness of other to oppose it, and to hazard by delay the loss of its richest materials. There was an earnest seconding of their entreaties, too, from a voice in the secret depths of her heart, which whispered that Eliot Lee was at Morristown; but what of that? ay, Isabella, what of that? Once at Morristown, her return to the city might be indefinitely delayed; innumerable obstacles might interpose, and to return to her father was an imperative and undeferable duty. To permit Lady Anne to proceed without her would be to expose her to gossip and calumny. Isabella's was the ruling spirit; and after arguments, entreaties, and many tears on the lady's part, the lovers deferred to the laws of propriety as expounded by her; and it was agreed that Linwood should escort the ladies to the outskirts of the Dutch village of Bergen, which could not be more than two or three miles distant; that there they should part, and thence the means of returning to the city without an hour's delay might easily be compassed.

Accordingly, two hours before daylight, they set forth, following, through obscure and devious footpaths, the general direction of Bergen. Miranda truly says, "it is the good−will to the labour that makes the task easy." Lady Anne had no goodwill to hers, and her footsteps were feeble and faltering. The day dawned, the sun rose, and as yet they saw no landmarks to indicate the vicinity of Bergen. Herbert feared they had missed their way; but without communicating his apprehensions, he proposed the ladies should take shelter in a log−hut they had reached, and which he thought indicated the proximity of a road, while he went to reconnoitre.

He had been gone half an hour, when Isabella and Lady Anne were startled by the firing of guns. They listened breathlessly. The firing was repeated, but unaccompanied by the sound of voices, footsteps, or the trampling of horses.

"It is not near," said Isabella to her little friend, who had clasped her hands in terror; "Herbert will hear it and return to us, and we are quite safe here."

"Yes; but if he is taken murdered, Isabella? Oh, let us go and know the worst."

"It would be folly," replied Isabella, "to expose ourselves, and risk the possibility of missing Herbert; but if you will be quiet, we will creep up to that eminence," pointing to a hill before them; "if it is cleared on the other side, we may see without being seen."

They forthwith mounted the hill, which presented a view of an open country, traversed by several cross−roads. The point where they intersected, a quarter of a mile distant, at once fixed their gaze. A party of some thirty Americans, part mounted and part on foot, were engaged in a hot contest with more than an equal number of the enemy.Lady Anne grasped Isabella's arm, both were silent for a moment, when a cry burst from Lady Anne's lips, "It is it is he!"

"Who? where what mean you?"

"Your brother, Isabella! there, the foremost! on the black horse!"

"It is he! God have mercy on us! and there is Eliot Lee!"

Lady Anne's eye was riveted to Linwood. "There are three upon him," she screamed; "fly, fly! Oh, why does he not fly?"

"He fights bravely," cried Isabella, covering her eyes. "Heaven aid you, my brother!"

"It's all over," shrieked Lady Anne.

Isabella looked again. Herbert's horse had fallen under him. "No, no," she cried; "he lives! he is rising!"

"But they are rushing on him they will cut him to pieces!"

Isabella sprang forward, as if she would herself have gone to his rescue, exclaiming "My brother, Herbert Oh, Eliot has come to his aid! God be praised! See, Anne! look up. Now they fight side by side! Courage, courage, Anne! Mercy upon us, why does Eliot Lee turn back?"

"Oh, why does not Herbert turn too? if he would but fly while he can!"

"Ah, there he comes!" exclaimed Isabella, without heeding her companion's womanly wish, "urging forward those men from behind the wagons On, on, good fellows! Ah, that movement is working well see, see; the enemy is disconcerted! they are falling back! thank God, thank God! See what confusion they are in; they are running, poor wretches; they are falling under that back fire!"

The flying party had taken a road which led to an enclosed meadow, and they were soon stopped by a fence. This opposed a slight obstacle, but it occasioned delay. The Americans were close upon them; they turned, threw down their arms, and surrendered themselves prisoners.

Shortly after, Eliot Lee, his face radiant with a joy that fifty victories could not have inspired, stood at the entrance of the log−hut, informing the ladies that Linwood had confided them to his care; Linwood himself having received a wound, which, though slight, unfitted him for that office, and rendered immediate surgical aid desirable to him. His friend had bidden him say to Miss Linwood that they had wandered far from Bergen; and that as they could not now get there without the danger of encountering parties of the enemy, nothing remained but to accept Captain Lee's protection to Morristown.

"Do you hesitate now, Isabella?" asked Lady Anne, impatiently.

"No, my dear girl, there is now no choice for us."

"Thank Heaven for that. Nothing but necessity would conquer you, Isabella." The necessity met a very willing submission from Isabella; andshe was half inclined to acquiesce in a whispered intimation from Lady Anne, "that it was undoubtedly the will of Heaven they should go to Morristown." They were soon seated in a wagon, and proceeding forward, escorted by Eliot and a guard, and hearing from him the following explanation of his most fortunate meeting with Linwood.

Eliot Lee had been sent by Washington, with wagons, and a detachment of chosen men, to afford a safe convoy for some important winter−stores that had been run across from New−York to the Jersey shore for the use of the officers' families at Morristown. In the meantime, a vigilant enemy had sent an intimation of the landing of these stores, and of their destination, to the British station at Powles Hook, and a detachment of men had been thence despatched with the purpose of anticipating the rightful proprietors.

Eliot, on his route, encountered one of the enemy's videttes, whom he took prisoner, and who, to baffle him, told him the stores were already at Powles Hook. Eliot, warily distrusting the information, proceeded, and directly after, and just as he came in view of the enemy's party, he met Herbert issuing from the wood. A half moment's explanation was enough. The vidette was dismounted, Herbert put in his place, armed with his arms, and a golden opportunity afforded (to which the brave fellow did full justice), to win fresh laurels wherewith to grace his return to the dreaded, and yet most desired, presence of his commander.

CHAPTER XL.

"Our profession is the chastest of all. The shadow of a fault tarnishes our most brilliant actions. The least inadvertence may cause us to lose that public favour which is so hard to gain."

The quotation from a public reprimand of Washington to a general officer, which forms the motto to this chapter, contains the amount of his reproof to Linwood in their first and private interview. Even this reproof was softened by the generous approbation his general expressed of the manliness and respectful submission with which he had endured the penalty of his rashness. Linwood's heart was touched; and, obeying the impulse of his frank nature, he communicated the circumstances that had mitigated his captivity, and gave a sort of dot and line sketch of his love−tale to the awe−inspiring Washington. Oh the miracles of love! But let not too much power be ascribed to the blind god. Linwood's false impressions of Washington's impenetrable sternness were effaced by his own experience, the most satisfactory of all evidence. He found that this great man, like Him whom he imitated, was not strict to mark iniquity, and was, whenever he could be so without the sacrifice of higher duties, alive to social virtues and affections.

"Well, my young friend," he said, as Linwood concluded, "you certainly have made the most of your season of affliction, and now we must take care of these generous companions of your flight. Our quarters are stinted; but Mrs. Washington has yet a spare room, which they must occupy till they can return with safety to the city, and choose to do so."

Linwood thought himself, and with good reason, requited a thousand fold for all his trials. His only embarrassment was relieved, and he had soon after the happiness of presenting his sister and Lady Anne Seton to Mrs. Washington, a most benign and excellent woman, and of confiding them to the hospitalities of her household. Eliot and Linwood's gallantry, in their rencounter with the enemy, was marked, and advanced them in the opinion of their fellow−officers; but the signal favour it obtained from the ladies of Morristown, must have been in part a collateral consequence of the immense importance, to their domestic comfort, of those precious stores which our friends had secured for them.

Their sympathy in the romantic adventures of the young ladies was manifested in the usual feminine mode, by a round of little parties: from stern necessity, frugal entertainments, but abounding in one luxury, so rare where all others now abound, that it might be thought unattainable; the highest luxury of social life what is it?

With the luggage of our heroines came encouraging accounts from Mrs. Archer of Bessie Lee's progress, assurances of Mr. Linwood's unwonted patience, and hints that it would be most prudent for her young friends to remain where they were till the excitement, occasioned by their departure, had subsided. Still Isabella was so thoroughly impressed with the filial duty of returning without any voluntary delay, that at her urgent request, measures were immediately taken to effect it; but obstacle after obstacle intervened. Sir Henry Clinton was about taking his departure for the south, and he put off from time to time giving an official assurance of an act of oblivion in favour of our romantic offenders. The rigours of that horrible winter of 1780, still unparalleled in the annals of our hard seasons, set in, and embarrassed all intercommunication.

It must be confessed, that Isabella bore these trials with such gracious patience, that it hardly seemed to be the result of difficult effort. It was quite natural that she should participate in the overflowing happiness of her brother and friend. And it was natural that, being now an eyewitness of the struggles, efforts, endurance, and entire self−sacrifice of the great men that surrounded her, her mind, acute in perception, and vigorous in reflection, should be excited and gratified. There are those who deem political subjects beyond the sphere of a woman's, certainly of a young woman's mind. But if our young ladies were to give a portion ofthe time and interest they expend on dress, gossip, and light reading, to the comprehension of the constitution of their country, and its political institutions, would they be less interesting companions, less qualified mothers, or less amiable women?

"But there are dangers in a woman's adventuring beyond her customary path." There are; and better the chance of shipwreck on a voyage of high purpose, than expend life in paddling hither and thither on a shallow stream, to no purpose at all.

Isabella's mind was not regularly trained; and, like that of most of her sex, the access to it was through the medium of her feelings. Her sympathies were not limited to the few, the "bright, the immortal names" that are now familiar as household words to us all. She saw the same virtues that illustrated them conspicuous in the poor soldiers; in that class of men that have been left out in the world's estimate, and whose existence is scarcely recognised in its past history. The winter of 1780 was characterized by Washington as "the decisive moment, the most important America had seen!" The financial affairs of the country were in the utmost disorder. The currency had so depreciated, that a captain's pay would scarcely furnish the shoes in which he marched to battle. The soldiers were without clothes or blankets, and this in our coldest winter. They had been but a few days in their winter quarters before the flour andmeat were exhausted; and yet, as Washington said in a letter to Congress, after speaking of the patient and uncomplaining fortitude with which the army bore their sufferings, "though there had been frequent desertions not one mutiny." Happy was it for America that, in the beginning of her national existence, she thus tested the virtue of the people, and, profiting by her experience, was confirmed in her resolution to confide her destinies to them!

Something above the ordinary standard has been claimed for our heroine; but it must be confessed, after all, that she was a mere woman, and that the mainspring of her mind's movements was in her heart. How much of Isabella's enthusiasm in the American cause was to be attributed to her intercourse with Eliot Lee, we leave to be determined by her peers. That intercourse had never been disturbed by the cross−purposes, jarring sentiments, clashing opinions, and ever−annoying disparities, that had so long made her life resemble a troubled dream. Eliot's world was her world; his spirit answered to hers. During that swift month that had flown away at Morristown, how often had she secretly rejoiced in the complete severance of the chain that had so long bound her to an "alternate slave of vanity and love!" how she exulted in her freedom freedom! the voluntary service of the heart is better than freedom.

There were no longer any barriers to Isabella and Lady Anne's return to the city. The day wasfixed; it came; and while they were packing their trunks, and thinking of the partings that awaited them, Lady Anne's eyes streaming, and Isabella's changing cheek betraying a troubled heart, a letter was handed to Lady Anne. She looked at the superscription, threw it down, then resumed it, broke the seal, and read it. Without speaking, she mused over it for a moment, then suddenly disappeared, leaving her affairs unarranged, and did not return till Isabella's trunk was locked, and she was about wrapping herself in her travelling furs. She reproved her little friend's delay, urged haste, suggested consolation, and offered assistance. Lady Anne made no reply, but bent over her trunk, where, instead of arrangement, she seemed to produce hopeless confusion. "How strange," she exclaimed, "that Thérése should have sent me this fresh white silk dress!"

"Very strange; but pray do not stay to examine it now."

"Bless Thérése! Here is my Brussels veil, too!"

"My dear child, are you out of your senses? Our escort will be waiting pray, pray make haste."

"And pray, dear Belle, don't stand looking at me you fidget me so. Oh, I forgot to tell you Captain Lee asked for you he is in the drawing−room go down to him please, dear Belle." As Lady Anne looked up, Isabella was struck with the changed expression of her countenance; it wasbright and smiling, the sadness completely gone. But she did not stay to speculate on the change, nor did she, it must be confessed, advert to Lady Anne for the next fifteen minutes. Many thoughts rushed through her mind as she descended the stairs. She wondered, painfully wondered, if Eliot would allude to their memorable parting at Mrs. Archer's; "if he should repeat what he then said, what could she say in reply?" When she reached the drawing−room door, she was obliged to pause

to gain self−command; and when she opened it she was as pale as marble, and her features had a stern composure that would have betrayed her effort to any eye but Eliot's; to his they did not.

Eliot attempted to speak the commonplaces of such occasions, and she to answer them; but his sentences were lame, and her replies monosyllables; and they both soon sunk into a silence more expressive of their mutual feelings.

"Lady Anne said he asked for me well, it was but to tell me the cold has abated! and the sleighing is fine! and he trusts I shall reach the city without inconvenience! What a poor simpleton I was to fancy that such sudden and romantic devotion could be lasting. A very little reality a little everyday intercourse, has put the actual in the place of the ideal!"

If Isabella had ventured to lift her eye to Eliot's face at this moment, she would have read in the conflict it expressed the contradiction of her falsesurmises; and if her eye had met his, the conflict might have ceased, for it takes but a spark to explode a magazine. But Eliot had come into her presence resolved to resist the impulses of his heart, however strong they might be. He thought he should but afflict her generous nature by a second expression of his love, and his grief at parting. There had been moments when a glance of Isabella's eye, a tone of her voice a certain indescribable something, which those alone who have heard and seen such can conceive, had flashed athwart his mind like a sunbeam, and visions of bliss in years to come had passed before him; but clouds and darkness followed, and he remembered that Miss Linwood was unattainable to him that if it were possible by the devotion of years to win her, how should he render that devotion, pledged as he was to his country for a service of uncertain length, and severed as he must be from her by an impassable barrier of circumstances? As he had said to Isabella, he had been trained in the school of self−subjection, and never had he given such a proof of it as in these last few moments; the last he expected ever to enjoy or suffer with her. Both were so absorbed in their own emotions that they did not notice the various entrances and exits of the servants, who were bustling in and out, and arranging cake and wine on a sideboard, with a deal of significance that would have amused unconcerned spectators. A louder, more portentous bustle followed, the door was thrown wide open, and both Eliot and Isabella were startled from their reveries by the entrance of Mrs. Washington, attended by a gentleman in clerical robes, and followed by Linwood and Lady Anne, in the bridal silk and veil that Thérése, with inspiration worthy a French chambermaid, had forwarded.

"One word with you, Miss Linwood," said Mrs. Washington, taking Isabella apart. "This dear little girl, it seems, was left independent of all control by her fond father. The honourable scruples of your family have alone prevented her surrendering her independence into your brother's hands. She has this morning received a letter from her aunt, written in a transport of rage, at her son's unexpected marriage with a Miss Ruthven. I fancy it is a Miss Ruthven of the Virginia family Grenville Ruthven's eldest daughter?"

"Yes yes it is, madam," replied Isabella, with a faltering voice. The emotion passed with the words.

"Lady Anne's aunt," resumed Mrs. Washington, "declares her intention of immediately returning to England, and renounces her niece for ever. Lady Anne and your brother have referred their case to me; she saying, with her usual playfulness, that she has turned rebel, and put herself under the orders of the commander−in−chief, or rather, he being this morning absent, under mine. I have decided according to my best judgmentThere seems to be no sufficient reason why they should defer their nuptials, and endure the torments and perils of a protracted separation. So, my dear Miss Linwood, you have nothing to do but submit to my decision take your place there as bride's−maid you see your brother has already stationed his friend, Captain Lee, beside him as groom's−man Colonel Hamilton is waiting our summons to give away the bride."

At a signal from his mistress, a servant opened the door to the adjoining room, and Hamilton entered, his face glowing with the sympathies and chivalric sentiment always ready to gush from his heart when its social spring was touched. Isabella had but time to whisper to Lady Anne, "Just what I would have prayed for had I dared to

hope it," when the clergyman opened his book and performed his office. That over, Mrs. Washington, as the representative of the parents, pronounced a blessing on the bridal pair; and that no due ceremonial should be omitted, the bridal cake was cut and distributed according to established usage; accompanied by a remark from Mrs. Washington, that it must have been compounded by some good hymeneal genius, as it was the only orthodox plum cake that had been or was like to be seen in Morristown, during that hard winter.

Now came partings, and tears, and last kind words, and messages that were sure to find their way to Mr. Linwood's heart, and a bit of wedding−cakefor mamma, who would scarcely have believed her son lawfully married unless she had tasted it; and last of all, an order for a fine new suit for Rose, in compensation for that so unceremoniously dropped at "Smith's house."

At last, Isabella, in a covered sleigh, escorted by a guard, and attended by her brother and Eliot Lee on horseback, set off for the place appointed for her British friends to meet her, and there she was transferred to their protection.

What Eliot endured, as he lingered for a moment at Isabella's side, cannot be expressed. She felt her heart rising to her eyes and cheeks, and by an effort of that fortitude, or pride, or resolution, which is woman's strength, by whatever name it may be called, she firmly said, "Farewell!"

Eliot's voice was choked. He turned away without speaking; he impulsively returned and withdrew the curtain that hung before Isabella. She was in a paroxysm of grief, her head thrown back, her hands clasped, and tears streaming from her eyes. What a spectacle what a blessed spectacle for a self−distrusting, hopeless lover!

"Isabella!" he exclaimed, "we do not then part for ever?"

"I hope not," she replied.

The driver, unconscious of Eliot's returning movement, cracked his whip, the horses started on their course, and the road making a sudden turn, the sleigh instantly disappeared, leaving Eliot feeling as if he had been translated to another world a world of illimitable hope, immeasurable joy.

" 'I hope not.' " Could Isabella have uttered a more commonplace reply? and yet these words, with the emotion that preceded them, were a key to volumes were pondered on and brooded over, through summer and winter ay, for years.

"Ah, n'en doutons pas! à travers les temps et les espaces, les àmes ont quelquefois des correspondances mysterieuses. En vain le monde réel èlève ses barrières entre deux êtres qui s'aiment; habitans de la vie idéale, ils s'apparaissent dans l'absence, ils s'unissent dans la mort."

CHAPTER XLI.

"Boy, fill me a bumper now join in the chorus,

There's happiness still in the prospect before us;

In this sparkling glass all hostility ends,

And Britons and we will for ever be friends.

Derry down, derry down."

Old Song.

More than three years from the date of our last chapter had passed away. The European statesmen were tired of the silly effort to keep grown−up men in leading−strings, and their soldiers were wearied with combating in fields where no laurels grew for them. The Americans were eager, the old to rest from their labours, and the young to reap the fruit of their toils; and all good and wise men contemplated with joy the reunion of two nations who were of one blood and one faith. King George, firm or obstinate to the last, had yielded his reluctant consent to the independence of his American colonies; and the peace was signed, which was welcomed by all parties, save the few American royalists who were now to suffer the consequences that are well deserved by those who learn unwillingly, and too late, that their own honour and interest are identified with their country's.

The 25th of November, 1783, was, as we areannually reminded by the ringing of bells and firing of cannon, a momentous day in this city of New−York. It was the time appointed for the evacuation of the city by the British forces, and the entrance of the American commander−in−chief with his army. To the royalists who had remained in the garrisoned city, attached from principle, and fettered by early association, to the original government, this was a day of darkness and mourning. With their foreign friends went, as they fancied, all their distinction, happiness, and glory. We may smile at their weakness, but cannot deny them our sympathy. Such men as Sir Guy Carleton (Sir Henry Clinton's successor), who made even his enemies love him, had a fair claim to the tears of his friends; and others were there whose names grace the history of our parent land, and names not mentioned that were written on living hearts, and which made partings that day

"Such as press the life from out young hearts."

Though on the very verge of winter, the day was bright and soft. The very elements were at peace. At the rising of the sun, the British flag on the Battery was struck. Boats were in readiness at the wharves to convey the troops, and such of the inhabitants as were to accompany them, down to Staten Island, where the British ships were awaiting them. At an early hour, and before the general embarcation, a gentleman, much muffled,and evidently sedulously avoiding observation, was seen stealing through the by−streets to a boat, to which his luggage had already been conveyed, and which, as soon as he entered it, put off towards the fleet. He looked soured and abstracted, eager to depart, and yet not joyful in going. His attitude was dejected, and his eyes downcast, till some sound that betokened an approach to the ship roused him, when suddenly looking up, he beheld, leaning over the side of the vessel, an apparition that called the blood and the spirit to his face. This apparition was his wife Mrs. Jasper Meredith. There she stood, bowing to him, and smiling, and replying adroitly to such congratulations from the officers of the ship as, "Upon my word, Mrs. Meredith, you leave the country with spirit your husband should take a leaf out of your book."

Meredith entered the ship. His wife took him by the arm and led him aside. "One word to you, my dear love," she said, "before that cloud on your brow bursts. I have known from the first your secret intention, and your secret preparations to go off with the fleet, and leave me here to get on as I could. I took my measures to defeat yours. You should know, before this time of day, that I am never foiled in what I undertake "

"No, by Heaven, never."

"There's no use in swearing about it, my love; nor will there be any use," she added, changing her tone of irony to a cutting energy, "in doingwhat, as my husband my lord and master you may do, in raising a storm here, refusing to pay my passage, and sending me back to the city. Officers gentlemen, you know, all take the part of an oppressed wife you would be put in Coventry, and make your début in England at great disadvantage. So, my dear, make the best of it; let our plans appear to be in agreement. It is in bad taste to quarrel before spectators we will reserve that to enliven domestic scenes in England."

"In England! my mother declares she will never receive you there; and I am now utterly dependant on my mother."

"I know all that; I have seen your mother's letters." Meredith stared. "Yes, all of them; and in them all she reiterates her governing principle, that 'appearances must be managed.' I shall convince her that I am one of the managers, and the prima donna in this drama of appearances."

Meredith made no reply. He saw no eligible way of escape, and he was, like a captive insect, paralyzed in the web that enclosed him. "You are convinced, I perceive, my dear;" continued his loving wife, "be kind enough to give me a few guineas; I paid my last to the boatmen, and it is awkward being without money."

Meredith turned from her, and walked hurriedly up and down the deck; then stopped, and took out his pocket−book to satisfy her demand; but his purpose was suspended by his eye falling accidentallyon the card, on which, ten years before, he had recorded Effie's prediction. The card was yellow and defaced; but like a talisman, it recalled with the freshness of actual presence the long but not forgotten past the time when Isabella Linwood's untamed pulses answered to his when Bessie Lee's soft eye fell tenderly upon him when he was linked in friendship with Herbert when the lights of nature still burned in his soul while as yet his spirit had not passed under the world's yoke, and crouched under its burden of vanity, heartlessness, and sordid ambition. His eye glanced towards his wife, he tore the card in pieces, and honest, bitter tears flowed down his cheeks.

Bessie Lee, thou wert then avenged! Avenged? Sweet spirit of Christian forgiveness and celestial love, we crave thy pardon! Bessie Lee, restored to her excellent mother, and to her peaceful and now most happy home at Westbrook, was enjoying her renovated health and "rectified spirit." The vigorous mind of Mrs. Archer, and Isabella's frank communication of her own malady and its cure, had aided in the entire dissipation of Bessie's illusions, and no shadow of them remained but a sort of nun−like shrinking from the admiration and devotion of the other sex. She lived for others, and chiefly to minister to the sick and sorrowful. She no longer suffered herself; but the chord of suffering had been so strained that it was weakened, and vibrated at the least touch of the miseries of others. The satirist who scoffs at the common fact of devotion succeeding love in a woman's heart, is superficial in the philosophy of our nature. He knows not that woman's love implies a craving for happiness, a dream of bliss that human character and human circumstances rarely realize, and a devotedness and self−negation due only to the Supreme. The idol falls, and the heart passes to the true God.

"All things on earth shall wholly pass away,

Except the love of God, which shall live and last for aye."

That love of God, that sustaining, life−giving principle, waxed stronger and stronger in Bessie Lee as she went on in her pilgrimage. Her pilgrimage was not a long one; and when it ended, the transition was gentle from the heaven she made on earth to that which awaited her in the bosom of the Father.

We return to the shifting scenes in New−York. The morning was allotted to the departure of the British. "Rose," said Mr. Linwood, "give me my cloak and fur shoes, and I will go through the garden to Broadway, and see the last of them God bless them!"

"And my cloak and calêche, Rose," said Mrs. Linwood; "it is a proper respect to show our friends that our hearts are with them to the last it should be a family thing. Come, Belle; and you, Lady Anne, come too."

"With all my heart, dear mamma; but pray pray do not call me Lady Anne. I have told you, again and again, that I have renounced my title, and will have no distinction but that which suits the country of my adoption that which I may derive from being a good wife and mother the true American order of merit."

"As you please, my dear child; but it is a singular taste."

"Singular to prefer Mrs. Linwood to Lady Anne! Oh, no, mamma."

Mrs. Linwood received the tribute with a grateful smile, and afterward less frequently forgot her daughter−in−law's injunction. Her affections always got the better of her vanity after a slight contest. "Rose," continued Lady Anne, "please put on little Herbert's fur cap, and take him out to see the show too. Is not that a pretty cap, mamma? I bought it at Lizzy Bengin's."

"Lizzy Bengin's! Has Lizzy returned?"

"Yes, indeed; and re−opened her shop in the same place, and hung up her little household deity Sylvy again, who is screaming out as zealously as ever 'Come in, come in.' Lizzy, they say, is to have a pension from Congress."

"The d l she is!" exclaimed Mr. Linwood; "well, every thing is turned topsy−turvy now. Come, are we not all ready? where lags Belle?"Isabella entered in a very becoming hat and cloak, adjusted with more than her usual care, and her countenance brilliant with animation.

"Upon my word, Miss Belle," said her father, passing his hand over her glowing cheek, "you are hanging out very appropriate colours for this mournful occasion."

"The heart never hangs out false colours, papa."

"Ah, Belle, Belle! that I should live to see you a traitor too; but I do live, and bear it better than I could have expected."

"Because, papa, it no longer seems to you the evil it once did does it?"

"Yes, I'll be hanged if it don't, just the same; but then, Belle, I'll tell you what it is that's kept the sap running warm and freely in this old, good−for−nothing trunk of mine. My child," the old man's voice faltered, "you have been true and loyal to me through all this dark time of trial and adversity; you have been a perpetual light and blessing to my dwelling, Belle; and Herbert if a man serves the devil, I'd have him serve him faithfully Herbert, in temptation and sore trials, has been true to the cause he chose up to the mark. This it is that's kept me heart−whole. And, Belle, if ever you are a parent, which God grant, for you deserve it, you'll know what it is to have your very life rooted in the virtue of your children, and sustained by that yes, as mine is, sustained and made pretty comfortable too, even though my king has to succumb to these rebel upstarts, and I have to look on and see every gentleman driven out of the land to give place to these rag−tag and bobtails."

"But, papa," said Isabella, anxious to turn her father's attention from the various groups gathering in the street, and who, it was evident, were only waiting, according to the previous compact, for the last British boat to leave the wharf, to give utterance to their joyous "huzzas;" "but, papa, you have overlooked some important items in your consolations."

"I have not mentioned them; but they are main props. Anne, God bless her! and that little dog," he shook his cane lovingly at his grandson, who crowed a response, "though he was born under Washington's flag, and sucks in independence and republicanism with his mother's milk, the little rascal."

In spite of Mr. Linwood's habitual vituperation, it was evident that his cup of happiness was full to overflowing, and that there was in it only a few salutary bitter drops, without which there is no draught commingled for human lips.

Mrs. Archer with her children now joined her friends, and they were all grouped under a fine old locust that stood just without the wall of Mr. Lin wood's garden, and was among the few trees that retained any foliage at this advanced season.

The last foreign regiment were passing fromBroadway to the Battery, in the admirable order and condition of British troops: their arms glittering, the uniform of the soldiers fresh and unsullied, and that of the officers, who had seen little service to deface and disarrange it, in a state of preservation rather indicating a drawing−room than a battlefield. Mr. Linwood gazed after them, and said, sorrowfully, "We ne'er shall look upon their like again."

"I hope not," muttered Rose to herself, in the back−ground; "this a'n't to be the land for them that strut in scarlet broadcloth and gold epaulets, and live upon the sweat of working people's brows. No, thank God and General Washington."

"Ah," said Mrs. Archer, "there is good old General Knyphausen turning the key of his door for the last time. Heaven's blessing will go with him, for he never turned it upon a creature that needed his kindness." The good old German crossed the street, grasped Mr. Linwood's hand, kissed the hands of the ladies, and without speaking, rejoined his suite and passed on.

"Who are those young gallants, Isabella," asked Mr. Linwood, "that seem riveted to the pavement at Mrs. 's door?"

Isabella mentioned their names, and added, "Miss is there, a magnet to the last moment a hard parting that must be."

No wonder it was deemed a "hard parting," if half that is told by her contemporaries of Miss 's beauty and auxiliary charms be true; a marvellous tale, but not incredible to those who see her as she now is, after the passage of more than fifty years, vivacious, courteous, and bright−eyed.

While Lady Anne was deepening the colour on Isabella's cheek by whispering, "Better a coming than a parting lover!" our old friend Jupiter, arm in arm with his boon companion "the gen'ral," was passing.

"Where are you going in such haste, Jupe?" asked his ex−master, in reply to Jupiter's respectful salutation.

"I am 'gaged to 'black Sam' to dine with General Washington, sir."

Mr. Linwood had been told that a fête was in preparation at "black Sam's," the great restaurateur of his day, for General Washington and his friends. He was ready to believe almost any extravagance of the levelling Americans; but the agrarianism that made Jupiter a party at the festive board with the commander−in−chief rather astounded him. "By the Lord!" he whispered to Isabella, "Herbert shall come home and eat his dinner."

"You mean, Jupe," said Miss Linwood, without directly replying to her father, "that you are engaged to wait on General Washington, at black Sam's?"

"Sartin, Miss Isabella; did not I'spress myself so?"

"Not precisely, Jupe; but I understood you so."

Jupiter drew near to Miss Linwood, whom he, in common with others, looked upon as the presiding genius of the family, to unfold a wish that lay very near his heart. But Jupe was a diplomatist, and was careful not to commit himself in the terms of a treaty. "Miss Belle," he said, "I hear Mrs. Herbert Linwood has got a nice char'ot sent over from England, and if she wants a coachman, I don't know but I might like to come back to the old place."

"Very well, Jupe, I will speak to my sister, and we will consider of it."

"Do, Miss Belle, and I'll 'sider of it too. I have not 'finitly made up my mind to stay in New−York. They say there's to be such bustle and racket here, building ships and stores, and all this space," pointing to the still vacant space between Broadway and the river, "all this space to be covered with housen bigger than them burnt down. I'm afraid there'll be too much work and 'fusion for me; 'tant genteel, you know, Miss Belle, and I think of 'tiring to the manor."

"That will be wisest, Jupe; New−York will no longer be a place for idlers of any degree."

Jupiter, all complacency in a classification which sorted him with those whom he styled the genteel, bowed and passed on.

Music was now heard from the extremity of the Battery. All had embarked save the band. The band, that had been the pride and delight of the inhabitants, through winter and summer, now struck up, for the last time, "God save the king!" Every sound was hushed, and white handkerchiefs were waved from balconies, windows, and doors. Mr. Linwood uncovered his head, and the tears trickled down his cheeks. As the music ceased, Edward Archer, who stood with his arm over his sister's shoulder, said, "Oh, Lizzy, how we shall miss the band!"

"Miss them! No, Ned; not when we get back to dear breezy Beech Hill, and hear the birds, and smell the flowers, and have none to hurt us nor make us afraid."

The last boat put off from the wharf, and at the next instant the "star−spangled banner" was unfurled from the flagstaff, and every bell in the city poured forth its peal of welcome to the deliverer of his country, who was seen, at the head of a detachment of his army, approaching the city through the Fields, then the general designation of all that portion of New−York beyond the British palisades which traversed Broadway at Chambers−street.

Those who are familiar with the location of this our noble street of Broadway, the pride of the metropolis, can imagine the thrilling effect of the moment on the spectators. They saw the flag of an independent empire waving on the Battery; beyond, the bay, glittering in the meridian sun; and, floating on the bay, the ships that were to convey their latemasters for ever from the land that had rejected them. At the upper extremity of the street appeared General Washington, the spotless patriot, the faultless military chieftain, the father of his country; "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen:" he on whom every epithet of praise has been exhausted, and whose virtues praise never yet reached. With him were his companions in arms and glory, and following him his soldiers, their garments worn and soiled, and their arms broken and defaced. It mattered not. The period of toils and hardship, of hope and fear, of seed−time, was past the harvest was to come, the abundant harvest to them, their children's children, and the stranger within their gates.

The procession drew near to Wall−street, where it was to turn; a few paces lower down was the locust−tree where our friends were grouped. As the cavalcade approached, Mr. Linwood began to show signs of fidgeting. Isabella's arm was in his: "Let us go in, sir," she said.

"Presently, my dear, presently; I'll have one look at Washington. By George of Oxford! a noble figure of a man! Ah, but for him, the rebels would never have carried the day."

"For him, and the Lord on their side!" involuntarily added Rose, who had advanced to give her little charge a chance at a glance at his father.

"The Lord on the side of such a ragged regiment of ragamuffins? High sons of liberty, forsooth!" replied Mr. Linwood, chuckling at the wretched appearance of the American soldiers.

"They are extremely ragged," said Mrs. Linwood; "such a contrast to our army."

"They are, God bless them!" said Isabella, "and sacred, in my eyes, as the garments of the saints, are these outward signs of their brave toils."

"Oh," exclaimed Mrs. Herbert Linwood, "I see my husband! and there, Belle, is Colonel Lee, on the very horse General Putnam gave him. I wish his poor man Kisel, of whom I have so often heard him speak, had lived to amble after him this day. 'Poor fool!' Eliot will always have 'one part in his heart that's sorry yet for thee.' "

Isabella's eye had followed the direction of her sister's; her cheek became suddenly pale, and she reiterated her wish to her father to return into the house.

"In a minute, my dear child, in a minute; let's first see them wheel into Wall−street. Who is that Colonel Lee you spoke of, Anne?"

"Eliot Lee, sir. Did not Belle tell you how he was sent with the detachment from the northern army to the south, and how he behaved with such gallantry at the taking of Cornwallis, that he received a colonelcy immediately after from Congress did you not tell, Belle?" she added, archly smiling at her sister.

The turn into Wall−street was now to be made, and the officers riding ahead came nearly parallelto our friends. General Washington seeing, and instantly recognising, Isabella Linwood and her sister, saluted them. Mr. Linwood instinctively doffed his hat, and bowed low to the commander of the rebel army. Eliot Lee's eye met Isabella's, and returned its brightest beam to the welcome that flashed from hers. Herbert kissed his hand to his friends, and stretched his arms to his boy. Rose lifted the little fellow high in the air; he was inspired with the animation of the scene, and the word that was then shouted forth from a thousand tongues, the first he ever uttered, burst from his lips "Huzza!"

The following, and many successive evenings, Eliot Lee passed with the Linwoods. Those of our kind readers whose patience has brought them to the close of these volumes, will not be surprised that our heroine, after her conquest over a misplaced, and, as it may strictly be termed, an accidental passion, should return with her whole heart his love who deserved, if man could deserve it, that treasure.

Did the course of their true love run smooth? Yes, true love though it was, it did. The bare fact that his daughter Isabella, who seemed to him fit to grace a peerage, was to wed the portionless son of a New−England farmer, was at first startling to Mr. Linwood. But, as few men are, he was true to his theories; and when Isabella,quoting his own words on a former occasion, frankly confessed that she had given her heart to Eliot Lee, and "that meant her respect, honour, esteem, and all that one of God's creatures can feel for another," he replied, fondly kissing her, "Then God's will be done, my child, and give your hand too!"

We are aware that the champions of romance, the sage expounders of the laws of sentiment, maintain that there can be but one love. We will not dispute with them, though we honestly believe, that in the capacities of loving, as in all other capacities, there be diversities of gifts; but we will concede that such a sentiment as united Isabella and Eliot Lee can never be extinguished; and therefore can never be repealed. It blended their purposes, pursuits, hopes, joys, and sorrows; it became a part of their spiritual natures, and independent of the accidents of life.

As the cause of humanity and the advance of civilization depend mainly on the purity of the institution of marriage, I shall not have written in vain if I have led one mind more highly to appreciate its responsibilities and estimate its results; its effect not only on the happiness of life, but on that portion of our nature which is destined to immortality: if I persuade even one of my young countrywomen so to reverence herself, and so to estimate the social duties and ties, that she will not give her hand without her heart, nor her heart till she isquite sure of his good desert who seeks it. And, above all, I shall not have written in vain if I save a single young creature from the

barter of youth and beauty for money, the merely legal union of persons and fortunes multiplying among us, partly from wrong education and false views of the objects of life, but chiefly from the growing imitation of the artificial and vicious society of Europe.

It is only by entering into these holy and most precious bonds with right motives and right feelings, that licentious doctrines can be effectually overthrown, and the arguments of the more respectable advocates of the new and unscriptural doctrine of divorce can be successfully opposed.

We boldly then advise our young friends so far to cultivate the romance of their natures (if it be romance to value the soul and its high offices above all earthly consideration), as to eschew rich old roué bachelors, looking−out widowers with large fortunes, and idle, ignorant young heirs; and to imitate our heroine in trusting to the honourable resources of virtue and talent, and a joint stock of industry and frugality, in a country that is sure to smile upon these qualities, and reward them with as much worldly prosperity as is necessary to happiness, and safe for virtue.

(*)NOTE TO VOLUME SECOND.

a One of the thousand pleasing anecdotes related of La Fayette at his last visit to America, was, that a rich iron−merchant in one of our large cities was presented to him, and after the customary courtesies, took out his watch and showed it to La Fayette, asking him if he remembered it. La Fayette seemed to have an indistinct reminiscence of some circumstance connected with the watch. "You do not remember, sir," said the merchant, "that at a certain time and place" (specifying both), "you stopped at a blacksmith's shop to have your horse shod. The smith and his family were ill, and in a most wretched condition. He was obliged to be upheld while he shod the horse. You told him you had no money to spare, and gave him this watch. He pledged it afterward redeemed it, and here it is, still in his possession!"

As the circumstance related of La Fayette in our text has no connexion with historical events, we trust our friends of the legal profession will not prove an alibi against us.

THE END.