Letters Found in the Ruins of Fort Braddock

John Gardiner Calkins Brainard

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LETTER I.

Fort Braddock, April 3, 1821. Dear Jim,

IT is now spring—the buds are bursting through all the wilderness about me; but the cold rains which are constantly descending, make my condition so cheerless, that I write to you merely to pass the time. Why I was doomed to spend my winter here so solitary, or when I shall have the good luck to shift my quarters, for any other spot, is past my skill to divine. Any other spot—the Arkansas, the Rio Colorada, the Council Bluffs, the Yellow Stone, any place but this. Was I dangerous to government, that they should have contrived for one poor subaltern, this Siberian banishment, where I am ingeniously confined, not by a guard placed over me, but by having the command of about five and twenty men, that the spring discovers in a uniform of rags.

I did suppose that I was more profitably employed in another part of the state of New−York, on that noble boundary of lake, and river, and cataract, where I thought that my services had not only insured me a continuance in the army list, but entitled me to promotion.

I came here five months ago, with a dashy suit of new regimentals, a bright epaulette, and as tall a white feather as there was between the straits of Mackinaw and the heights of Abraham. With this dear−bought equipage, I meant to have figured, if not in the vicinity of New−York or Boston, at least in some neighbourhood of gentilty, where I might have gone to balls, lived at a tavern, figured in full panoply before the ladies, and passed my winter like a military man. But you know not why I complain, or even where I am, for the map is a blind guide to this part of the country.

You have seen the flourishing condition of this and the neighbouring states. The towns, the villages, the cultivated farms, the roads, the wealth, and the spread of an industrious population, that has converted, so suddenly, what was termed this western wilderness, into a delightful and animated landscape. It should seem like the changing scenes in a theatre, or the operation of magic. No tide like this, however, has set in to vary the prospect within many a pathless mile of Fort Braddock. I verily believe that the whole western world, to the Pacific itself, will be filled up with turnpike gates every three miles, and set out into school districts, before any serious encroachment will be made on this forbidden region. It will remain as it was when Lord Amherst found it, and he found it as it was a thousand years before, when it must have been a sort of city of refuge for the Indians, where the avenger of blood could not pursue, or where he could not find them if he did.— And yet, Jim, when I first came here, my head was so full of romance from reading the Scotch novels and poetry, that I admired it for its wild and rugged scenery, and complimented myself with having a taste for the sublime. From the top of a rock as high as St. Helena, I can see the waters of Champlain, and the course of the Sorelle, till it loses itself at a distance among the northern hills. The borders of Vermont are covered with evergreen, except where they glitter with snow, and the view to the westward is intercepted by mountains still higher than the precipice on which I stand. The hill sides are covered with gigantic trees, which seem intended to give shade to the mammoth. And yet the fowl fly beneath me, and I sometimes conceit that the noise of the thunder comes from below. The road, difficult at all times, was so impassible in winter, that I should be agreeably surprised, even by the enemy; and the conversation of a Dutch teamster savors to me much of literature, as it would of humanity to Robinson Crusoe. How do you think I pass my time? I have the reveille and tattoo beat till the rocks echo. I drill and discipline my twenty−five men, and march them in echelon, as if they were the army of the Rhine, and make them cry "all's well," as loud as if they mounted guard on the rock of Gibraltar. I draw my rations in kind, but Uncle Sam's alcohol is rather too much for me. The Postmaster−General has no knowledge of this part of the country; and I strongly suspect that the Adjutant−General himself has forgotten it. Indeed, this seems the place that Cowper wished for—"a lodge in some vast wilderness," where, to say nothing of the "rumors of oppression and deceit," I seriously believe, though a soldier, that the noise

"Of unsuccessful or successful war

Will never reach me more."

I should have deserted long since, but for a source of amusement, to me perfectly accidental. You must know that this fort is ancient, and has been garrisoned at a time when its solitude did notform so strong a contrast to the rest of the country; the graves of the soldiers of those who were for the time connected with the garrison, are often

found; and the instruments of civilized and savage warfare are frequently dug up together. The remains of larger works and temporary barracks, excite curiosity and give rise to conjectural disjointed stories among the scattered inhabitants, and anecdotes are told, in which times, places, and persons, are strangely confounded.

From these tales, sometimes marvellous, and generally inconsistent, as they are differently related by the Dutch and the Yankees, the Negroes and the Indians, I should have neither patience nor curiosity to extract an intelligible narrative, had not chance furnished me with the means, at a time when I had no other amusement.

It happened that in clearing out one of the ditches where the parapet was lowest, serjeant Gap struck with his spade something that sounded hollow. It was a trunk, which contained a few articles of little value, and a collection of papers, letters, several from men of whom I had heard and read; and among others, a pretty connected account of events in which I felt an interest, because they related to persons, many of whom had been, in other circumstances, on the spot where I now am. As I have leisure, I think of writing it off, with the addition of some hints contained in the letters, and some alteration in the order of the narrative, though not in the events. You can then read it to your mess at the cantonment, and pay me by sending the National Intelligencer that has the army list. Direct to the nearest Post Office, at Mumblety−peg, near. Rattlesnake Falls, and I will see that it reaches your old friend,

PUTNAM BUNKER, Jr. Lt. comd'g. at Fort Braddock.

LETTER II.

I received your letter, marred and soiled from the distance and difficulty of the way; but it contained, safe and sound, the printed enclosure that I sent for, by which I learn my prospect of promoion, and the chance of shifting my quarters. Oh! if my good luck should send me, a military traveller, among the unexplored regions west of the Mississippi! what a book! and in military style too! will I make! What a chance to make a fortune did Lewis and Clark let slip; and what a chance for immortality did Commodore Porter lose, when he suffered his attention to be withdrawn from his book by so slight a matter as an action from the Phœbe and Cherub. In expectation of such a chance, I have already prepared my travels in part, as I presume is often the case with travellers of zeal and industry; for all the figures of speech, poetic quotations, and descriptions of the sky and weather, (whereof we have here a fac simile of all sorts,) may as well be done in preparatorio, as any other way—so that I shall find little else remaining than to fill up the blanks, as a lawyer does a writ.

You claim the slight attention of a little incident here in digging up some mutilated papers, as a promise from me to send you a connected summary of the Braddock Manuscript. Alas! these documents are so sadly rubbed and worn, that it is with difficulty I can join them. The dates of months and years, as is common in most old letters and papers, were worn out, and without books, as I am here, what a figure I should make in supplying the chronology. The mess at Sacket's Harbour, you know, used to laugh at me, because I could never remember the year when America wasdiscovered; and I cannot tell to this day, without cyphering, the year when I was born—and yet I must attempt an order in the connexion, and of course to supply dates. I do not mean to compare my efforts to any thing great; but you remember laughing when we were at Philadelphia, at the ribs and bones of good new white oak, that were supplied in the skeleton of the mammoth. My materials are in the style of Mather's Magnalia—what think ye of such new wine as mine in such old bottles? But to the matter in hand—you are pleased to express curiosity, which I write only to gratify.

The course of the mail, and the state of the roads, postage, distance, must excuse any want of punctuality in my communications, But I think I may say, you shall in time have what little there is of it. The conclusion of this fragment I ean hardly make out myself, and some spots, as you will notice, are a little obscure. An antiquary would be assisted, no doubt, by an old muster roll, which I found among the papers, many of the names on which are marked "D'd;" and his conjectures might be aided by an examination of the skeletons dug up about here, in the very bones of which are the heads of Indian arrows.

Among other things in the old box, was a sword belt, worked in crewel, with the name of Miles Standish, which I mean to send to Squantum, at the next celebration of the landing at Plymouth— or perhaps wear it myself at a meeting of the Tammany Society, in the face and eyes of the Sachems and Sagamores, of whom this great Indian−hunter killed so many. To give the thing somewhat an air, I shall now and then quote a line or so of modern poetry—not to show my learning, for the subalterns of those days were as much more learned than the same grade in Uncle Sam's late army, asthe clergy of those days surpassed, in the same particular, their worthy successors in these degenerate and money−saving times.

I shall now make out the story as near as I can, and send it from time to time, as the best opportunities offer. Please to give me your undivided attention.

THE BRADDOCK MANUSCRIPT.

"And what is Friendship but a name."

More than a century ago, in the evening of a day in September, three students in the college which was then at Saybrook, and which is now known at New−Haven by the name of Yale College, were seated in a room in the only building which that institution had then to boast of. Something like a commencement was at hand, and these young men had parts to perform at the approaching public exhibition, when they were to receive the honours of that infant seminary. The Rev. Mr. Devonport, with his cap and band had already arrived in town; the rector, Williams, was expected from Wethersfield, in the first boat down the Connecticut river; the Rev. Mr. Saltonstall, the Clergyman at New−London, afterwards the Ambassador to the Dutch settlement at Manhattan, now New−York, and shortly after the Governor of this colony, was expected to accompany his Excellency Governor Winthrop, from New−London; and most of the clergy from the churches then gathered, it was thought would

attend. The word splendid is a relative term—it was used by our ancestors, and was good English as long ago as the time of Richard the lion−hearted. They expected a splendid commencement at Saybrook. The native stock of female beauty for which that town,even to the present day, is famous, was to be increased on the occasion by the great−grandmothers of the present generation, then in the bloom of youth, who came, some on foot and some in canoes, from the shores of the river. The more highborn and wealthy came on horseback, and generally rode double; they were dressed in cloth of their own manufacture, made up by themselves in the fashion of the day, with long waists, short sleeves, their stockings were blue, and their shoes were not morocco. Yet the manuscript speaks of bright eyes, rosy cheeks, smiling lips, pearly teeth, and all the witchery of female charms. This sad taste on the part of the writer, considering the unimproved state of the female costume, can only be accounted for by the fact, that these classic beaux themselves wore, (except on public days,) checked shirts and butternut−coloured coats, with long backs, full skirts, and large pewter buttons. It is even said that in those days of simplicity, one of the lay members of the corporation rode with beetle rings in the place of stirrups.

At the meeting I have mentioned, this display was in expectancy. The conversation of these young men related in part to their approaching separation, and the course of life they would pursue. They read to each other several compositions. One of them by the name of Dudley, from the vicinity of Boston, whom his parents had always intended for a military man, and who was soon to enter into the small but active naval service of the times, had prepared an oration in Greek upon civilizing the Indians.

Another, whose name was Van Tromp, whose Dutch parents had owned the very spot where Fort Braddock now stands, and had lived in its vicinity, had written a piece of pastoral poetry on thepleasures of retirement, which, as he was quite homesick for this charming retreat, was said to be very feeling. His parents were dead, and he was to return with a considerable property and much family influence to his large but wild estate, which was then known by the Dutch name of Hardzscoggin. At the early age of twenty he was to be master of his own conduct—and with ample means for the times, was to be the head man among servants and dependants, and the new settlers in his neighbourhood.

The remaining member of the trio, was a reserved youth, who had formed no intimacy during his stay at the college, but with these two companions. He had never, until now, spoke of his origin or his prospects; his name was Du Quesne. He made, upon this occasion, rather a melancholy disclosure to his companions, that he knew little or nothing of his parentage; that he had been constantly supplied by a gentleman in New−York, with a quarterly payment of money, which was remitted from France by some unknown hand, accompanied by letters not signed, which directed the plan of his education. He was to return to New−York and attempt the study of law. He had always been better dressed than the other students, and wore, by express direction, one of the most rare and extravagant ornaments of the day—a large gold watch of curious and expensive workmanship.— Great care had been taken to supply him with additional books and private instructions upon several branches of science not professedly taught in the college. A turn of mind rather melancholy, inclined him to study, and made him a scholar.— He not only learned the dead languages, which were then better understood than at present, but he spoke French, and had a good acquaintance withpolite literature. He read, in his turn a little essay, which he proposed to speak, on the uncertainty of fortune, and the vicissitudes of human life, some of which, it afterwards appeared, he was doomed to experience. The unsettled state of this new country, and their approaching separation for a distance of time and space which they could not determine, was then the topic of conversation; they spoke of their pilgrimage as lonely, and dwelt with the enthusiasm of young men upon the great benefits that might result from union and mutual assistance. They seemed each to feel the want of support, and expressed their confidence; this ended, before their separation for the night, in solemn pledges for future friendship, which they engaged should be of so serious and practical a kind that if any one of them should at any time in their lives be involved in difficulty, or need assistance, the others should immediately, on notice, be bound to render it, at the expense of every hazard, whether of person or of property. Upon the strength of this compact, they parted in better spirits.

It is said that the commencement was celebrated with more parade than was expected—for, in addition to the dignities of church and state, whose attendance was as punctual as usual, the celebrated Captain Mason, on his return from an Indian victory, on his way to Stonington, stopped at the town and honoured the company with his presence. It is of this very occasion he speaks in a manuscript account of his campaign, which is still extant, in which he commends the good conduct of Lt. Gardiner, who then commanded the garrison on the platform, where, to use his own language, he was "formally received and nobly entertained with many great guns."

LETTER III.

"Ah! who can tell how hard it is to climb
The steep where Fame's proud temple shines afar?"

The scholars were dismissed from Saybrook, and each betook himself to his home, and entered upon the course of life which his friends or his fortune had prescribed for him. Du Quesne, with whom we must at present continue, repaired to New−York, where, upon his being admitted to the bar, as in due time he was, his mysterious supply of money was withheld, and he was left without relatives or connexions, to make the usual slow and uncertain progress in the business of his profession. He was of a temperament much too sensitive for his own comfort, in a calling which, at that time at any rate, however it may be at present, exposed him to personal altercation, contradiction, and that sharp and harsh collision which tries and strengthens the passions of the heart, at least as much as it does the faculties of the mind.

He had a natural and easy eloquence, and more taste and learning than most of his associates.— His attention to his business was strict, but it was forced, and his occasional success embittered his enemies more than it conciliated his friends. He even conceited at times, that the courts before which he practiced had their favourites, and that he was not in the number. Sometimes neglected, always opposed, and often mortified, he yet patiently persevered—though he soon found himself the object of personal enmity, and was convinced of attempts to defeat his progress. He resolved to exert his industry to acquire the means of support in some place in the new settlements, as remote as was consistent with personal security, where land was cheap, and where independence might be easilypurchased. This vision of comfort he cherished in secret, and resorted to it in his day dreams as his standing consolation. But his enemies were too active, and shortened the period which was necessary to his success. Some bills and papers relating to claims in a suit to a large amount, and which were entrusted to him, were missing, as he found when he was preparing his cases. He searched in vain—his anxiety amounted to distress —he feared to ask for any accommodation, for it was attended with the risk of disclosure. Those who had artfully accomplished their object, by involving him in this embarrassment, were little likely to show him favour. There was no alternative —after weeks of agony the term began—the suits were defeated—the was personally liable for the loss, and industriously exposed to censure. His employers were advised to their remedy against him, and the least of his troubles was the constant expectation of being arrested.

One morning very early, with an agitated mind, he crossed the river to the Jersey shore, for the sake of relieving or indulging his melancholy, and having to himself a few moments of solitude and security. There was a retired spot at no great distance from the shore, sheltered by trees, and surrounded with rural beauty, which seemed to invite the solitary, and offer its quiet scenery to soothe the angry passions, and imperceptibly substitute feelings of a softer kind. And yet, this is the very spot, which from that day to this, has been the battle−ground of wounded honour. How often has it witnessed the worst of passions, and how rich has been the blood that has at times been shed there! To this spot he was unconsciously approaching, when he was roused by the near report of fire arms. He quickened his pace in thedirection of the noise, and on coming to a natural lawn among the trees, discovered a man upon the ground, apparently wounded, and just fallen.— Three others were hastening through the thicket, and evidently bent on a hasty escape. The nature of this transaction was evident. He called upon the fugitives in vain—he followed them some distance, till they were out of his sight, and returned, when he found there was no hope of assistance, towards the wounded man. He stopped in his way only to take up a pistol which lay on the ground about ten paces distant from the object of his attention. On reaching the wounded man, what was his astonishment to find his own most bitter enemy and rival lay speechless and dying. He looked up with an expression unutterable, when he saw who it was that came to his assistance, made a violent attempt to speak, gasped and died. At this moment Du Quesne was stooping to raise the body, already lifeless, when several men who had been alarmed by the same noise which drew him to the place, rushed hastily upon him, and, as he began artlessly to ask them for help, secured him as their prisoner, and charged him with the murder.

His surprise made his answers incoherent, and his agitation, to their eyes, was evidence of his guilt. In this state of mind he was re−conveyed to the city, taken before a magistrate, and charged with the fact. On the examination it appeared that the pistol found in his possession had been recently discharged; the lock was sprung,

and the smell and marks of newly burnt powder were strong about it. A surgeon had extracted a ball from the dead man, which exactly corresponded to the calibre of the pistol. It was likewise in proof, that there had been a bitter enmity between the deceased and the accused.

"You are a lawyer, Mr. Du Quesne," said the magistrate, "and know that you can answer or not to the charge. What say you, is there any reason why you should not be fully committed for trial? The offence is not bailable you know."

"And if it was," said Du Quesne, "I have no bail."

"Do you choose," continued to magistrate, "to attempt any defence or explanation? It will be evidence against you, you know, and not in your favour. But you are agitated—take a moment's time."

This moment's time helped to compose the prisoner's spirits. He cast his eye round a room filled with boys and men, black and white, ragged, dirty and vulgar. It occurred to him how absurd it was, in the presence of such an audience, to say to a Dutch Justice, that his morning walk was one of sentiment, and that the scenery and silence operated upon his mind to cross the river.

He contented himself with a simple declaration of his innocence, which he knew the Justiee did not believe, and mustering his self−possession, said, that he was without evidence and without friends. He uttered this last word with a voice and in a manner that would have outdone the best of actors. A tear slid upon his long and drooping eye−lash, and fell upon the floor—it was succeeded by another— his face was fixed, and the last word, friends, had recalled to his mind some strong recollections.

The Justice was looking fully at him, and felt for his distress. He had no great opinion of the deceased, and as far as morals were concerned, could excuse the man who met his adversary in an honourable way. He went up to him and led him to the further corner of the room—

"My worthy friend," said he, "confess the whole; I'll help you, if I can—he was a good−for−nothing fellow, and I have no doubt was fairly killed—come, tell me what you have got to say."

"Mr. Van Erp," said the prisoner, "upon my soul's safety, I am not guilty."

"Oh, I know that," said the Justice, "it is no great crime in a fair way to dispose of such a fellow, especially in such a case—but don't deny the fact; you may confide."

"Yes I do confide, when I tell you I did not do it."

"What! not shoot him?"

"No, I did not."

"Be it so," said the Justice, incredulously shaking his head, "you are a lawyer, and have heard the evidence, and you know I must commit you— delay is useless."

The Squire, as he was termed, made out the mittimus himself, (for in this country the magistrates have no clerks,) and Du Quesne was followed to the gaol by the rabble that had attended his trial. The gaol then stood on the East River, near the centre of that busy spot, where there are so many slips and grocers—where the streets are so dirty and the passing so difficult. The building itself was made partly of stone and partly of logs; and the gaoler's house, in which the keeper and family lived, was a part of the building. The gaoler too was a man of some distinction, and by virtue of his office was a member of the city corporation. In one of the cells of this establishment was our high−minded and aspiring friend locked up, and left to his meditations. It was some time before he could regain his self−possession, and his busy thoughts then suggested to him the certainty of his fate, the shortness of the interval, and the agonizing reflections with which that intervalmust be marked. The gallows would be the last object before his closing eyes at night, and the first thought which the mild beam of morning would bring along with it. His very slumbers were disturbed with dreams—dreams of the throng of faces which would surround the place of his execution, vacant, vulgar and unfeeling—dreams of the cart, the hangman, and the coffin on which he should sit, and of the awful dialogue with his ghostly confessor about his future state—the dread memento of the sheriff, "you have half an hour to live," and the grave ready dug at the foot of the scaffold. The dreams would awake him only to the consciousness that all was true. When awake, he meditated on his hopes of acquittal. The law on duelling was very severe, and the common law called it murder. The statute, however, in those sad times, unlike those of modern and more impartial days, was unequally administered. Some who had friends could transgress with impunity, while others were left to the rigoar of the law. It was easy for the judge to show that the law was plain, and that conviction was inevitable. It was equally satisfactory to hear him put analogous cases, and show that the man, who on sudden provocation would be guilty only of manslaughter, if he

should exercise a noble forbcarance, and give his adversary a chance for his life, would commit a crime still less, when he killed his man in a fair and honourable duel.

But our friendless prisoner knew very well that very little ingenuity from the bench would be exercised in his favour. The most impartial direction would be that the law should take its course.

Nearly five years had elapsed since his residence at Saybrook. To this last peaceful period of his life his thoughts naturally recurred, and dwelt onthe only friendship with which his days had been sweetened. Dudley was probably on the ocean; and would hear of his misfortunes only to bewail his death.

He knew well where Van Tromp lived, but could not see how he could assist. Yet his presence, his influence, and perhaps his council, if not to avert, might relieve his sufferings. There was at that time a regular communication kept up between the Dutch settlement at New−Amsterdam, and the French Posts on the Canada line, by the way of the North River and Lake Champlain. To be sure, as the residence of Van Tromp was out of the way, and the country wild, the arrival of a letter was uncertain. Yet as he had nothing else to do, he determined, if only to feed his hopes, to write letter after letter, by every return of the carrier, and by every opportunity of sending to that vicinity.

His letters were nearly of the same tenor, all conversant about the same thing. The only one preserved is the following:—

Gaol at New−Amsterdam, .

My dear and only friend—I am here confined as a criminal, on a capital charge, and am to be tried in about ten months, with no hope of being acquitted. To you it is not necessary that I should go into detail; I know your confidence in me to be such, that you will believe me when I say, that I am perfectly innocent; for I would not call you to the rescue of the guilty. My only solace now is, that I can repose upon your friendship with perfect security, and rely on your exertions as fully as on my own. My thoughts are too distracted to devise any mode of assistance; I leave that to you.Yet use your influence, and though it may all be in vain, let me, if possible, see you once more.

CARLOS DU QUESNE.

LETTER IV.

"Speed, Malise, speed! the dun deer's hide,
On fleete foot was never tried."

A war between the French and English settlers; on their respective frontiers, was at this time on the out−break, as it was termed. Several log houses of remote adventurers had been burned. The Indian tribes had been enlisted upon the one side and the other, and news was constantly coming in to the Blasted Tree, (as Van Tromp's proprietary or land patent was termed,) of Indian scalps and massacres.

One evening as he sat alone, thinking of the approaching troubles, and devising plans of security, a Negro domestic came into the room, and presented to him the letter of Du Quesne. He read it over with the utmost interest. Troubled as he was to provide for the security of his numerous dependents, and exposed as he was to sudden inroads of the hostile Indians, he remembered his promise of support, and resolved to redeem his pledge. At any other time he would have gone himself; but to be absent at present would be desertion, and might be followed by the ruin of the settlement. Those who had settled in the neighbourhood, had families which they could not leave, and were of a capacity not adequate to the undertaking. The members of his household were of a motly character, and yet those only could he employ. Of them, there was but one on whose desperate spirit of enterpriseand perfect fidelity he could rely; but he doubted his prudence, and most of all his means. There seemed no alternative. "Shadrach," said he calling to the Negro, who soon made his appearance, "look for Weshop, and ask him here."

Van Tromp resumed his meditations, and tried and rejected a thousand contrivances for his friend's escape, when the door again opened, and the Indian warrior made his appearance. His hair was cut close, except a tuft of jetty black, which stood upright on the top of his head. The skin of a rattlesnake was twisted round his neck, his feet were guarded with mocasins, ornamented with beads, and a wampum belt was over his shoulders. He wore round his waist an Indian cincture, and had his bow in his hand, and his tomahawk in his girdle. He was what they termed a friendly Indian, and lived occasionally in this family, not as a domestic, much less a slave, for to a state of servitude, it is doubtful whether a genuine North American Indian was ever reduced, or is indeed capable of being reduced. The motions of this being were more free than those of the master of the mansion. He went and came at any hour, and consulted his own wishes as to the frequency of his visits, or the length of his absence. He had been rescued from his enemies, on one occasion, by Mr. Van Tromp and the men of his plantation, and ever afterwards displayed, in its full force, the principle of Indian gratitude. His fixed features seldom betrayed the working of his passions, or any vicissitudes of feeling. Upon this occasion he continued standing, because it suited his convenience, and listened with his characteristic silence and indifference, to the nature of his commission.

Van Tromp wrote some letters to gentlemen ofinfluence, requesting their interference in postponing a trial, till every means could be used in discovering the truth, and assured his friend that he would soon come to his assistance.

The Indian took time thoroughly to comprehend his employment. Whether he there devised any better plan than the one proposed, is not certain; but it is certain he never delivered the letters, not even the one for Du Quesne. A stranger even might think loud in Weshop's presence, without the least dauger that his confidence would be betrayed; and might talk to him a week without obtaining an exchange of privacy. This trait was not peculiar to him; the red man never whistles and sings in the wood; his steps are noiseless, and his presence unexpected; indeed, to the first settlers of the country, alarming.

The messenger now made immediate preparation for his journey. He had just eaten, yet he set himself to despatch another enormous meal, to which he was urged, not by appetite, but by calculation, and loading himself with provisions, departed so sluggish and dull, that he seemed little likely to reach the end of his journey, much less to return. No one questioned him, and no one missed him.

What were his adventures through the wilderness was never known, and his route was conjectured only from his subsequent conduct. It was about twelve days afterwards, he presented himself sudden in one of the streets of New−Amsterdam near the government house, just before the hour when a meeting was to be held of the governor

and his council. His entrance into the town had not been observed, and he had the advantage of claim−to have come from any quarter or any tribe. The Indians, partly civilized, who lived in the neighbourhood, were seen daily, but a genuine inhabitant of the wilderness is always, in a populous place, an interesting spectacle, particularly (as upon the present occasion) to the boys and the rabble.

Weshop stood with his bow in his hand, and his bundle of arrows at his back, stowed in a long basket or quiver made of splinters; his face gave no expression of wonder or curiosity. Hundreds were gazing at him, as he leaned against the railing that led to the door of the State House, and were surprised that he took no notice of the spectacle which to him must be so new. He preserved his impenetrable stupidity, and was the only one of the multitude who appeared indifferent, even at the idle gaze of which he was the object. They tempted him to show his skill with his bow, but an owl in the day time could not be duller at taking a hint. The Council at length convened; the Governor made his appearance, and was followed by Weshop into the house. He knew the Governor by the respect that was shown him as he passed. The door−keeper would have stopped the intruder, but it happened that the subject of the present meeting involved some Indian difficulties, and the Governor's Dutch fancy had already converted Weshop into an Indian Ambassador, the rather on account of his silence and gravity, which the whole Dutch Council greatly admired. The governor took some merit to himself for the discrimination with which he could detect the diplomatic character.— The wary Indian made a few signs, which the Council, after the Governor's hint, could at once interpret, and which they agreed were full as intelligible as any language which a foreign Ambassador should venture to use. They complimented the natural sagacity of the Indian character, whichhad directed them to choose an envoy not likely to commit himself by talking, or betray himself by passion. The Secretary of the Council, who was a learned man, took occasion to remark, that in regard to the establishment of a boundary with the Indians, it would probably end in a question between the status ante bellum and the usi possidetus. Enough seemed done for the first interview. Weshop was recommended to the jailor, not as a prisoner, but as a guest; for none of the council thought of inviting his sansculotte excellency to dinner; and there was no eating house at the public expense, but the jail. It is bardly proper to say that the deportment of Weshop won upon the jailor, so as to gain his confidence, but it certainly checked every hint at precaution. He was accommodated in the chimney corner, where he eat by himself, and smoked a Dutch pipe that Governor had given him. He went out but once or twice during the afternoon, and wandered then no further than the jail door, where he stood smoking when the jailor locked up the rooms, after furnishing the prisoners with their evening meal.

The jailor and his family were in the habit of retiring early. They gave Weshop a blanket, and left him in the kitchen to repose before the fire.

LETTER V.

Du Quesne was awakened in the night by the slow and careful unlocking and opening of his dungeon, and in the light of the setting moon, which shone through the grates, an Indian stood before him with his bow in his hand and his tomahawk in his girdle. He had been dreaming of bebeingexecuted, and his first waking thought was, that he had fallen into the hands of a new tormenter of another world.

He was on the point of crying out; when the Indian took him by the shoulder and pointed to the door. He was wide awake in an instant. There was a sense of honor which urged him to await a public vindication of his innocence, but the conviction that his own honesty would be no security against the attempts of his enemies, and the strong circumstances against him decided his resolution. He arose and followed his deliverer. The moon had gone down, the night was dark, and the streets quiet. After they had gained a little distance from the prison, the Indian directed him to stand by the side of building, while he went himself, as it afterwards appeared, to drop the gaol keys in a direction different from their route and to set adrift on the East River, one of the small boats, which, as the tide was coming in, would float towards the Narrows, and mislead pursuit. He then returned, and led the way up the island in silence, at a rate so rapid, that elate with liberty and buoyant with hope as Du Quesne was, he could hardly keep pace with him. The Indian travelled with the certainty of a man familiar with every street and turn, til he arrived at a marshy piece of ground on the North River, at some distance from the city, where a bark canoe lay floating among the rushes. The wind was strong from the south, but though it was fair for their purpose, the size and frailty of the boat, with what he knew of the danger of the navigation, would have made him hesitate had there been any alternative. He was directed to lay himself down in the boat while the Indian pushed it from the shore, and raised a small pine mast on which was spread a blanket in the from of a sail. Heput his skiff before the wind, and urged its motion with a rude oar or paddle, with which, at the same time, he directed its course. The waters were very rough, and though his pilot was evidently a bold one, the job in hand required skill as well as courage. The motion of the boat through the water was so varying as to furnish no means of judging what progress they made. He was insensible of his danger, but more sensible to the joy of his recent escape.—Morning discovered them in that part of the river which forms the entrance into the Tappan Sound. The shores were covered with wood to the very edge, and the land on either side rose into mountains, which grew dim in the distance, till they mingled with the clouds. Accustomed as Du Quesne had been for weeks, to no other prospect than what was to be seen from the loop−holes of his dungeon, so many natural beauties gradually displaying by the rising sun, till they were shown in perfection, filled him with joy.—He worshipped in silence and with thanksgiving, and the thoughtful look of his new friend, seemed to pronounce an impressive Amen.

This noble river, for a great part of its length, discovered at that time, no appearance of art or improvement, except, that now and then, a heavy built Dutch vessel, moved slowly on its surface, keeping up the only intercourse between the few spare settlements on the banks. Still the features of the scenery were interesting and grand. The savage put into a solitary bay, where his canoe was concealed by the jutting rock, but where, without being perceived, he could observe for some distance, those who sailed up and down the river. It was impossible for Du Quesne to conjecture the motives which would be so powerful with his deliverer, as to induce all this labor, nor could hewell imagine whither he was going, or where his journey was likely to end. The Indian seemed to understand the turn of his thoughts, and quickly produced a scrap of paper, on which was written, in his proper hand, the name of Derick Van Tromp. This satisfied his anxious inquiries, and he saw, at once, not merely the name, but the conduct of a friend.—His guide began smoking his pipe; they spent the whole day without food or sleep, watching every movement on the river, till evening returned, when they again set forward. Their progress was now more slow and laborious, for want of a favorable wind. The Indian was anxious to arrive at a particular point, for a reason that appeared when they reached it. This was one of the several places, where, on his way down the river, he had deposited a part of his load of provision, and this unlooked for repast was the more grateful to Du Quesne, from his long fast, to which he was not used. It was thus that they continued their voyage till they came to a part of the river near Sandy Hill, from which they were to proceed by land. Here at one of his depots, Weshop rested a day and night; both which he spent in eating and sleeping, as preparatory to the fatigues that remained. On the morning of the 2d day they abandoned the canoe. and set forward on foot through the woods.

The activity and vigilance of the guide, were now constant; he examined the ground for what he called the signs to detect footsteps in the grass, altered his course at the slightest noise, and every now and then examined the bark of the tree, which seemed to serve him as a compass. The Indian is artful and patient, when he lays in wait, and cautious and observing, when he fears an ambush. Weshop obtained from a friendly Indian, seasonable intelligence that those tribes under theinfluence of the French themselves, had already begun their attack on the frontier; and he knew that an Indian war to those in the immediate vicinity of it, is a state of constant exposure to the greatest perils and sufferings without a single moment of security. The war cry is usually unexpected; and fire, murder, and robbery, steal without warning, upon their victim. Weshop directed his course to the south bay of Lake George, where they at length arrived. A canoe was in readiness as before, and the two travellers after many hardships, reached a point on the western shore of Champlain, then known by the name of Sunkettypaug. During this long journey, they bad given one another some occasional uneasiness without intending it; owing to the strong contrast of their characters. One had been educated to speak, the other to be silent; one was made for display, the other for concealment.

One bright November morning, when our travellers were pursuing their way among the highlands west of Champlain, which seem in some degree to connect the Green Mountains in Vermont with the northern part of the first range of the Alleghanies, they arrived at a high opening between the mountains, which goes by the name of Wind Gap. The prospect to the north was commanding, and rich with various colours—the uniform green of the pine and hemlock, was mixed with the blood red of the maple, and the yellow birch to which the frost had changed their natural hue. They both paused at the same time. One seemed admiring the coloured beauty of the landscape, which blended the distance with the rich tints of the sky, whose gold, and red, and purple, it seemed to vie with, or rather to reflect, as the moon and the inverted trees are seen in a sheet of water. The other gazed anxiously in one direction, till a slight but unusual joy gladdened his features. He pointed the way he was looking, and asked "do you see that smoke?" It was some time before his companion, assisted by his guide, could answer "yes." "There (replied he) our journey ends. I have prayed the Great Spirit for many days that when I should come to this spot, I might see a smoke and not a blaze."

It was near sundown when they arrived at the residence of Van Tromp, which seemed for the time to be the rendezvous of the surrounding country. Every thing betokened confusion, and sudden alarm. The first object that caught attention, was the numerous group of men, women, and children, of all colours, of many nations, dressed in every variety of garb and fashion; Indians, Negroes and whites, speaking as many tongues as are taught in a German University. Their horses and cattle, too, had been driven to the place for safety; and they had brought such moveables as they could manage to transport. They seemed to have been newly assembled, and were variously employed; some in cooking their evening meal, some in fixing their fire−arms, some in tending cattle, and some in building additional barracks and huts for their present accommodation. They were generally cheerful, and seemed glad to have reached a spot of comparative security. For this purpose, the place itself seemed well selected. It was elevated, and of a triangular form; one side made by the right side of the Chazy, another by a steep and continued ledge which commanded the valley or bottom land to a great distance, and the remaining side defended artificially by a high breast work, flanked with bastions, and protected in front by a ditch, faced with a rude abbatis.—Within, wereseveral low buildings; made of logs and stone, in separate square blocks, and sometimes connected by a continued roof. Most of the rooms were tight and comfortable, and some of them were decently furnished. There were several rows of barracks in the fort, and others on the outside, near the foot of the walls, which answered only a present purpose, and were to be left in case of invasion. The garrison was made up of men well armed, and whose habits of life rendered them the best marksmen in the world.

LETTER VI.

Through the assemblage of armed men at the garrison, Weshop held his way, without stopping to make inquiries: for his eye conjectured the meaning of all that he saw. He went directly to Van Tromp's room, and found him alone. With a motion of the hand, which native feeling rendered graceful, he introduced to one another, these long separated friends, who fairly rushed into each other's arms, and shed tears of joy at so unexpected a meeting. Du Quesne who felt at the moment happier, perhaps, than he had ever been before, pointed in silence to the Indian as his deliverer; and Van Tromp, was astonished at the success of his achievement, and additionally grateful on this emergency, because he should have the assistance of his friend. He clasped the hand of Weshop strongly, and looking full upon his quiet features, while his own were agitated with different emotions, spoke to him a few words in Indian, to which Weshop replied, for he loved to hear the sound of his native tongue, particularly from Van Tromp.

The Patroon, for so was Van Tromp commonly called, relaxed his grasp, and left the Indian to supply his wants, and consult his pleasure: adding only, "You will not go?" "No," said the warrior, "not now, perhaps never." The two friends, left to themselves, commenced that sort of conversation which was natural on the occasion, in the course of which they explained, each to the other, whatever was the subject of mutual inquiry, till Du Quesne declared that as it was the first undisturbed moment that he had enjoyed for long and long before, he would retire. "What a luxury," said he "once more to sleep in safety after all my troubles."

"But you will wait for the evening service," said the Patroon, "the drum beats in a few moments." "What, do you muster your men for exercise?" "No—our people shoot best without a manual, but we meet, men, women, and children, when the drum beats, for prayers." "What, and the Indians too? I should think they would be disorderly." "They are full as quiet as the rest. We have with us a young clergyman by the name of Elliot, from Massachusetts, who performs part of his service in their language; and there is no doubt they are benefitted by his instruction. They only require attention."

"The Indians," said Du Quesne, "seem a mysterious people, about whom little can be known, though they swarm about us in such numbers. They are savage, bloodthirsty, and implacable. I don't think they can ever be civilized." "What think you of that specimen which came to you in prison?" said Van Tromp. "Ah! that indeed—think of him? he is a wonder any where—I owe him my life. That man could redeem his tribe if they were all murderers." "He has been cultivated some," said Van Tromp, "but you may oneday see him use his tomahawk, and bow, and not wait your bidding, or ask your advice; and use the rifle too, with as little remorse as any of his countrymen. One reason why so little has ever been known about the Indians, is, that they will not communicate. They have a religion, it is certain; and I suspect they observe their articles of faith, though they seldom tell what they are, not for want of language, for if you understand their language you will find it sufficiently copious; and if you listen to their conversation, you will be convinced that the sounds are softer than those of any other tongue that is spoken. When the English undertake to write them in words, they fairly exhaust their liquids and vowels, and the reader who is acquainted with the spoken language, is as much at a loss to utter it, as if he stood at a desk of printers' types; I have heard a better speech from an Indian chief, than that Greek oration of Dudley's Peri ton Indianon, but I forget my Greek, and I could not think of the word for civilized, if it was to civilize the whole tribe. Hark, the drum beats, you will know more of these in time—let us go."

The religious service of the evening was performed, and the friends retired; Du Quesne to a repose, which after his fatigue, was as sweet as the sleep of infancy, and Van Tromp, to visit his new inmates and to go the rounds of his duty—after which, at the winding of a horn, the garrison was silent.

Meanwhile Weshop, after eating and drinking among the people, and learning the particulars of the gathering, was retiring to the kitchen where he meant to spend the night. One Jonathan Hodges, a Yankee man, had taken up his quarters with Shadrach, and the black was just saying to him, "I wonder what's become of our runaway Indian,"as the door opened. "Ah here he comes," continued the speaker, "glad to see you old friend, help yourself," as Weshop unasked was taking up their mug of cider, the remains of which he drank without stopping for breath. "Well, Weshop," said Jonathan, "what's the news; you must have been somewhere, by the strange gentleman I saw tagging at your heels—who was he, Weshop; I say, Weshop, who was he?" "Why don't you tell

him, dumbhead," said the black, ("can't get nothing out of him;) or here, help clear away these things, —never was so poor a tool in a house as an Indian."

"Come, Bearskin," said Jonathan, "clear your clam with some more cider, and give us the news. Did you see any thing of my brindle cow that I lost last June? I always thought Jim Staines shot that cow for a grudge he owed me, or I owed him."

"My name an't Bearskin, it's Weshop, I hav'nt seen your cow." "Nobody cares for your name;" was the reply—"Blueskin, Redbird, Yellowlegs: any thing is name enough for an Indian—the name of an Indian!" and he uttered it very much as Dr. Doubty does "the form of a hat!"

Weshop motioned towards an unfinished hoe−handle that stood in the corner.

"What, going to strike!" said Jonathan, "they talk about civilizing the Indians! bless my soul— I'd rather tame that wild cat that I shot night before last." "One thing I'll say for Weshop," said the black, "he an't a talking man." "No," said Jonathan, "but to hear 'em yell in the woods, as I have done, a body would think they could talk. There is an oddity among people of different colors." "Talk to Shadrach about colors," said the Indian. "Different colors is nothing," said the black. "O no—its owing to heat, and cold, and shade, andthe sun, and moon, and the seven stars; but there is a difference among nations," said Jonathan, "though, by the way, I was never out of this." "Pray Jonathan," said Shadrach "how many nations are there?" "Ten thousand; but what is that to you? brush your master's boots, and have the guns in order for the hunting that is to be on Thursday; but put out the candle now—don't you hear the horn blowing for nine o'clock? Weshop has turned in I see, and I'll follow his example." So saying, Jonathan walked towards his bunk on one side of the kitchen, muttering something about Shadrach, Mesheck, and Abednego.

All was still, when Weshop, who awoke at the slightest noise, heard the howling of a dog the door. "Get up, Shadrach, and let in Dash." The Negro delayed some time, till the loudness of the dog's cries urged him to open the door. "Lay down, Dash," said he, as the dog bounced into the room; but he was not to be quieted. He overturned stools and benches, howled, returned to the door, and then back, till the astonished Negro exclaimed "the dog is mad." "Something is the matter," said the Indian, "where is your master?" Shadrach lighted a candle, and the Indian springing on his feet, opened the inner door, and followed by the dog, went directly to the bedroom of Van Tromp. It was empty, and the bed had not been occupied during the night. He roused Du Quesne, and told his conjectures. The newly arrived guest, with the advice of his late guide, led the way, and kept close to the dog, set out upon a search without disturbing the garrison: attended by Shadrach and Jonathan.

A few who had been detained for the duty of a night watch, waited to prepare lanterns and horses, and soon overtook the party in advance, but asthey found themselves at a loss in the dark, it was agreed to take the dog for a guide. Weshop tied a string to his collar, and hastened along at as round a trot as the horsemen dared to venture.

After passing through woods and underbrush, they came to something like a path, which led along the brow of a steep declivity, whose sides were covered with bushes, and too dark to be seen. The turf was broken at the edge of the bank, and there were some deep prints of a horse's hoofs. Weshop let slip the dog, and followed him down the descent, supporting by the way with shrubs and stones. The result of the search was soon known. Van Tromp's horse lay dead from the fall, and he was almost senseless. He was carefully conveyed to the garrison, without unnecessary disturbance; and as Jonathan and Shadrach were again betaking themselves to rest, they wondered what he could have been doing there at that time of night.

Van Tromp had rode out of the garrison, soon after sunset, for the purpose, as those who saw him supposed, of reconnoitering the country. His departure was noticed only by a few, who might be elsewhere at his return; and the constant hurrying and shifting from place to place among the new comers, left every one to suppose, when the horn blew, that all was well, as the sentinel on his duty declared. A large black dog, was the only attendant that followed his master.

The manuscript, which is unusually brief in this spot, makes mention of a family in the neighborhood, where an elderly lady resided, and a young lady lived, too, of uncommon beauty and accomplishments; and adds, that, in peaceful times, Van Tromp, for want of more edifying company, occasionally rode that way. How that may havebeen, is rather to be conjectured from the residue of the story. The immediate result of the night's adventure was, that he was so badly bruised as to be scarcely able to turn himself in bed; and it was certain he could not attend the hunting, which was to take place three days after.

This hunting was not the common sporting chase after a fox, or a tame deer, nor did the skill which it

required, depend on leaping fences, or clearing ditches. It was not a search after "a partridge among the mountains;"—provision, until more quiet times, was to be made for nearly ninety souls, including women and children; an extent of dangerous country was to be scoured, embracing what was called the Iroquois hunting ground, and the still rougher tract beyond; and a fortnight might be consumed in the enterprise. Meanwhile the garrison would be stripped of its men, except a few for immediate service, and left to the family discipline of old and young women.

"I shall not be able to hunt with you, Du Quesne," said Van Tromp, "and you'll find it a bad job for a beginner." "I hope you'll find your hurt not serious," said he. "I shall not be able to endure it," was the reply; "but, after all, my mind torments me most. I have a dreadful apprehension, Du Quesne. This accident warus me that I may meet with others, and for fear of what may happen, must make you my confidant. What think you I took this ride for? I'll tell you. About five miles off, at a place near the lake which the Indians call Manhaddock, and in the French, Point au Fer —but no matter for the name—is a family, which, except servants and laborers, consists of a lady, and girl by the name of Dubourg. She was the daughter of a French officer, who commanded a post on the lines, I believe.

He married somewhere on the Hudson, and lost his wife, and was then ordered abroad—but pshaw! "what care you for that?" "Any thing that interests you, I care for," said Du Quesne. "O! it's no interest of mine—that is, it would be very neglectful in me to leave such a family, so helpless, at such a time; so I meant to have brought the old lady and her people here. But Du Quesne," added he, lowering his voice, "the house and buildings are burnt to the ground; and what can have become of the girl—so beautiful, I wish you could have seen her. A horrid suspicion came across my mind, as I wept over the spot. I raked the ashes, not knowing but I might find human bones."

Van Tromp made a pause of some moments, which Du Quesne did not interrupt. He proceeded. "There is one chance; the New−England troops were to assemble on the other side of the lake; and it may be, that they are there already. If so, these people may have gone down the water, to their protection. But what I mean to say—if any thing befals me, remember to find them out, and take care of them if they are living."

LETTER VII.

"A famous hunting once there did
In Chevy Chase befal."

The two succeeding days were employed by the Garrison at the Blasted Tree in busy preparations for their hunting expedition.—Provisions, blankets, runlets and knapsacks, were got ready—several horses were loaded, guns and ammunition, bows, arrows, axes, were put in order, with a viewto as much comfort, as was consistent with spending their nights in the woods. They arranged themselves in three bodies, which were to keep the same general direction, at no greater distance from one another, if practicable, than would admit of their meeting at night. Indeed, for the two first nights, they appointed their rendezvous, and as they did so, they talked of Buffaloe paths and prairies, and beaver ponds, and wolf dens, and Indian names which are no where to be found on the map.

It was expressly forbidden to blow a horn or a bugle except in case of imminent danger. Du Quesne and Weshop, were to head one party, Jonathan and Shadrach another, and the third was to be directed by some of their sturdy neighbours. Thus equipped, our adventurers sallied forth at daybreak on their perilous and fatiguing duty.

The incidents of this hunt made a lasting impression on the memories of all who survived it; and Shadrach in after days, charmed many a breathless listener, as he smoked his pipe in the chimney corner, and told this hunting story. The manuscript is less minute. It seems that the game was abundant, consisting principally of the moose and common deer, the bear and the buffaloe—sometimes the wolf or the wild cat would fall in the way of the hunters.

During this time, the parties sometimes met and were sometimes separated. Weshop and Du Quesne were apart from the rest, but kept near one another, from a sense of duty on the part of the Indian, and of dependance on the part of Du Quesne, who missed his way, when he missed his guide, and was in constant danger of losing him self in the woods.

The attention of Weshop, was suddenly arrested by the actions of a small spaniel dog that kept at his heels—and then by a slight rustling noise inthe thicket. He made a sign to Du Quesne not to stir, and crept softly among the bushes, where he saw several of the hostile Indians, and had convincing proof that there were many of them in the neighbourhood.

He perceived the nature of his danger, and guessed the extent of it. Without being discovered, he made good his retreat to Du Quesne, and with his finger on his lip, led his noiseless way to a place where the heavy timbered upland joins the edge of a large natural meadow that extended farther than the eye could reach, and was covered with a coarse jointed grass, which grew thick, and in most places, taller than a man's head.—Weshop explained the danger, and said they must take means to notify and assemble their party, and instantly retreat for the garrison. "But tell them," added he, "to avoid the direct course, for between the Lion's Tail (which was the name given to the extremity of a long ridge of hills,) and the beaver ponds, that pass will be guarded. I would rather risque the run than the ambush."

It is proper to observe, that when a party of the settlers and a party of the Indians discovered each other in the woods, the weaker was pursued by the stronger, without any hope of mercy if they were overtaken, and with little chance that the pursuers would relinquish their object until the flying enemy should gain a place of safety. Day after day sometimes, would the hurried and fearful march be kept up, usually in Indian file, from the difficulty of the way, and the necessary caution of leaving as few signs as possible, by which the pursuers could discover their course. This was termed running the Indians, or being run by the Indians, depending as a lawyer would say, on who was the party Plaintiff, and who was the party Defendant.

Our two wary hunters moved with extreme caution through the high grass, lest the waving motion of the top should detect them as with all their caution, it probably did. It was not till they came to the buffalo path, that Weshop directed his friend to blow his bugle, and himself set up the Indian cry of alarm, which he continued as he went, to give a hint of the direction he was taking. The hunters began to fall in from different quarters, and the horns and bugles were heard in several directions. It was determined that they should attempt their flight in three divisions, and by different routes, so as to divide, and perhaps confuse their pursuers. Du Quesne and his party

were under the guidance of Weshop, who set off again at a brisk trot for the head of the lake. "Quick, quick, said the Indian, "the woods will soon be on fire, and this day the grass will flash like gunpowder. See the smoke there and there; we must get out of the grass; don't wait for it to kindle." He kept near the eastern border that he might have it in his power to escape being burnt alive; but all his speed and caution were nearly in vain. The fire was now seen darting its streams to the top of the pines and hemlock, and leaping with the activity that belongs to that element, from one dry tree to another, till the woods were in a blaze—seizing the tallest trees that crowned the little head−lands, and breaking them, as if by manual force. It caught the grass in several places at once. Without stopping to consume the fuel before them, the long pointed flames, darted and kindled as they touched. The wind rose with the fire, and the wild animals who seek in these spots their food and shelter, were seen and heard with cries and bellowings, to fly before it.

It often happens, that the deer are overtaken at full speed, and consumed by the flames before they reach the upland, while the waves of this fiery deluge pass over them.

The hunting party had already turned to the east short of reaching the place of their destination: and had scarcely gained a dry ridge, when the whole plain was one continued sea of fire. A strong current of air was raised by the heat, which occasioned a roar much resembling heavy thunder. The senses of Du Quesne were confounded. He dared hardly turn his eyes to this dreadful conflagration, which threatened to consume the spot on which he stood. He trod close to the steps of Weshop, who was now certain that the hostile Indians were on his track, and whose only hope rested on gaining the lake. Every nerve was strained; partly from the heat, and partly from exertion, Du Quesne was ready to fall, when he sprained his ancle and dropped.

"Leave me, Weshop," said he, as the sweat poured from his body, "escape if you can, but lay me in the bushes, and depart, perhaps they may pass me by." Weshop cast on him one look of agony, as he said "a man who falls in the run is never heard from again." He took him by the arm, and sometimes carried him on his shoulders, till they found themselves cut off from their party, and surprised and taken by a party of the pursuing Indians.

As Du Quesne moved with difficulty, his fate was for a moment uncertain; but the encampment of the enemy happened to be near, and Weshop was compelled to assist his companion in keeping up with the party.

They arrived about nightfall, at a spot near the left bank of the Saranac, where that stream whichis full of falls and rapids, passes between high hills, and is bounded by a country which corresponds with the troubled motion of its waters. Several wigwams were disposed under the shelter of a rocky height, the face of which was nearly perpendicular, and whose top was thinly covered with savin bushes that seemed looking down as they bent over the brink. The warriors immediately betook themselves to eating and sleeping; some in the wigwams, and some round loose fires which were already kindled, where the squaws, and shantops and pappooses (as the larger and smaller children are called,) stood ready to welcome their friends.

Weshop and Du Quesne were secured in one of those natural caverns or openings in the rock, which are common in this vicinity, and which the Indians with a little labour often convert into places of residence—they generally resort to them in times of danger as affording shelter and safety.

The narrow entrance was strongly secured and they were left to conjecture their approaching fate. Du Quesne bewailed the continual misfortunes in which he seemed to have involved himself, and those with whom he had been and was connected, and compared his present misery with his more tolerable imprisonment at New Amsterdam, from which his fellow sufferer had released him.

"What," said he, "will these wretches do with us? shall we be tortured and murdered, Weshop? I have heard they roast their prisoners—I have heard even worse than that!" Weshop slowly replied, "they can get pay for a white man, if they carry him to the next French town, but me," said he firmly, "they will burn."

"Oh!" said Du Quesne in horror, "God forbid —tell them, I beg of you, if they carry me as a prisoner among civilized men to wait till I can sendyour ransom. You shall be ransomed if it takes all the property at Blasted Tree, if it costs the evacuation of the whole country, if it costs my life; certainly they can ask no more,"—and he groaned with anguish.

"'Twill do no good," was the answer. "I once escaped before; may be they won't save you." He paused, and then continued. "Do not the white men say, that the good are happy as soon as they die?"

"Yes."

"We believe it takes seven days, to go to the country of good spirits, after that I expect to see you and know you, if you should be alive, but I can't make you see me, nor know me."

Du Quesne was unable to reply.

Weshop seemed more inclined to talk than usual. His notions were wild and fanciful, but his manner was calm and serious: and particularly was it affecting, to one who was likewise endeavoring to prepare himself for the same awful trial. In the course of the next day, Du Quesne was surprised to see him produce his tomahawk, which he had artfully contrived to secure to his arm, by a fold of his blanket, so that it escaped the notice of his enemies.

The Indians who held them prisoners, were only a detachment of those who had surprised the hunting party. Most of them, as it afterwards appeared, had made directly for the garrison, where this division was soon to join them. It was led by a warrior named Tantidock, whose business it was to execute or otherwise dispose of such as were made captive, according to the sentence of the sagamores, or elders. This Indian came into the cave towards the evening of the second day. His appearance showed he had been preparing for someunusual occasion. The expression of triumph in his features was made more ferocious, by stains and streaks of different coloured paints with which his face was disfigured or adorned according to the taste of the beholder. His head was decked with feathers, and his nose, ears, ancles, and wrists with rings and shells, and strings of beads. He told Weshop, with an appearance of great satisfaction, that at midnight he would lead him out to his tormentors. The warrior heard his sentence with seeming indifference, and even reproached his enemy with weakness and cowardice. Every sensation of anguish was now felt by Du Quesne, in the extreme. He had no consolation to bestow, for he felt that he needed much, and he watched over Weshop in bewildered silence. The "stoic of the woods" lay stretched upon the straw, where he slept till awakened by the approach of his midnight visitor. Tantinock had a tomahawk in one hand, and a pine knot burning in the other. He stood over his prisoner as he rose, and making signs for him to follow, led the way from the cavern.

The small cavity in the rock where they were, communicated outward by a very narrow passage, or cleft in the ledge, with room for but one person to walk at once. Du Quesne cast a look upon the departing hero, but it was not answered, and he was about to turn his eyes, when just as Weshop entered the passage, the broad glare of the torch light showed the tomahawk in his hand. He struck with his whole force a single blow, which needed not repeating. The weapon sunk into the head of the foremost Indian who fell instantly dead. Weshop put his finger to his lip, as he returned to Du Quesne, with a look that showed him to be, at that instant, perfectly happy. "Turn to the right," said he, "as soon as we get out; don't be afraid,but jump down the rocks to the gap in the bank where the canoes are. I must move a little towards the fires with the torch." Du Quesne instantly obeyed. His ancle was now strong, and his agony of mind for the last two nights had prepared him to welcome any danger, and defy any hazard. He turned round the corner of the ledge, jumped, and sprang, and fell several times, rose, and exerted all his might, reckless of danger, to reach the narrow landing place, where he knew such was Weshop's activity, that his friend, unless taken, would be found.

Some of the ridges of the rock which fell towards the river in different tiers, or strata, were so high and difficult that he appeared to have fallen, with occasional intermission, the whole way. Weshop reached the spot nearly at the same moment. The snow was falling very thick and fast, so that an object could not be distinctly seen but a small distance off. Weshop had left his torch in the cleft of a tree burning, and now contrived himself to get off with a canoe, and stave holes with his tomahawk through the bottom of several others. Du Quesne remembered his old posture, and dropped in the bottom of the boat, which his active pilot soon conducted to the middle of the stream. The river was little less than a succession of rapids and falls, which made their progress as dangerous as it was speedy. The little barge of birch and splinters held its onward way, like the charmed egg−shell of the Lapland witches. The noise was now heard of the Indians, now gathered on the bank of the river, firing the few fire−arms that they had, and raising their cries above the roar of the waters and the storm; but the motion of the boat could not be perceived, and the rushing of a frigate through the waves would have been drowned by the violenceof the storm, and the dash of the torrent; and the boat shot over the rapids with the boundless velocity of an arrow from the string. There was a desperate plunge soon to be taken over a fall below. Du Quesne was directed to make himself fast to the boat with a cord, that in any event they might not be separated from their only hope. The precaution was not in vain. The boat in the dark plunged over the fall, and fell so swift as to rob him of his breath. He fell down−right without knowing where the descent would stop, till he found himself plunged in the river and covered nearly to drowning, by water, under which he felt himself drawn by the rope. The boat had turned sideways and had filled—so that the slightest weight would have sunk it but for the current that pressed it forward. Weshop told him to hold on, and both clung to the canoe till they came to the edge of a shelving shore

where the water eddied round a point, and the Indian touched the bottom with his feet. Their united efforts drew the skiff on shore, emptied it, and launched it again buoyant upon the stream. The Indian kept it steady while Du Quesne got in, and then sprung lightly over the stern, and continued his course till he reached the peaceful bosom of lake Champlain. They were now far southward of the Chazy, and made no doubt the garrison was so beleaguered that any attempt to join it, would expose them to certain capture. Du Quesne knew so as to describe to Weshop, nearly the place where the New−England troops were to rendezvous.

"We must cross the lake and find 'em," said the Indian, as he stood balancing in the stern.

"Van Tromp wants 'em. The enemy is around him so that there's no coming out or going in. The Oneidas and Mohawks will burn and murder everyliving soul: without help, they will leave nothing but ashes, so let us push for the New−England troops."

Our adventurers accordingly continued their course across the lake, where for the present we must leave them; for the connexion of events require that we should now shift our scenery to another, and distant part of the country, and leave for a space our northern friends, that we may bring up to the same period, the fortunes of Dudley;— who it will be remembered was in the league of friendship at Saybrook college.

LETTER VIII.

"My name was Robert Kidd,
And God's laws I did forbid,
And thus wickedly I did—as I sail'd."

The appearance of the sky indicated one of those autumnal storms which render navigation dangerous on the coast of New−England, when a ship of a size and appearance more large and imposing than was usually seen in those waters, was crossing Long−Island Sound, and making for Gardiner's Bay. She came round the point, and anchored under the land, as near the shore as was safe, in a place so sheltered by the woods and the projection of land towards the sand−bar, as not to be readily seen from the Sound. Two boats put off from the vessel, one of which steered towards the southern part of the bay, and the other directly for the shore. This last was filled with men who repaired to a rude cabin, which stood in the edge of the wood, not far from the water. Here they made preparationsfor spending the night, by kindling a fire, and bringing into the hut refreshments, and several other articles from the boat.

The night which had now set in, soon became pitchy dark, and the storm, which had been foreseen, began with violence. The hut was dry, and derived an air of comfort from the tempest that raged without, and the fire that blazed within. A light was kept burning at a small window, to direct the return of the other boat through the darkness, and a guard placed at the door; while the rest of the men reposed themselves around the sides of the room, except one—who appeared to exercise unlimited authority. He sometimes seated himself—sometimes stood alone by the fire, and sometimes walked back and forth in the room. He was a muscular and strong built man, of a morose lood and foreign air.

His dress was rich with lace, and somewhat resembled a British naval uniform. He had a pair of large silver mounted pistols, and a heavy eastern sabre at his side. He listened now and then till he could distinguish the dash of oars in the pauses of the storm.

"Douse the glim there, Dardy Mullins! Off with these cutter's men to the ship, and back by daylight. Tell Watson to keep his eye on the prisoner, for we are close on shore; look out, for if any body deserts, you shall walk the plank."

At this moment the door opened, and a man entered, armed like the other, except that instead of pistols, he wore a carbine or araquebuss, with a spring bayonet. The water was pouring from the spout of his three cornered hat, and his black beard grew so high on his face, and so near the fell of uncombed hair above, that his eyes looked like those of a Newfoundland dog, though far less prepossessing. He was followed by six or seven of a very motly, or weather−beaten appearance.

"Bolton," continued the first speaker, "what does he say? Can I have provision enough for another cruise?"

"Wait till I get the water out of my eyes, and I'll tell you."

So saying, he poured a liberal allowance of brandy into a tumbler, and drank it undiluted. The commander seconded the motion, as he called it; and then handed it to the sailors, who drank extempore from the neck of the bottle. Their conversation, though it throws some light on after circumstances, was not such as should be published in the Fort Braddock MS. We learnt from it however, that Lord Bellamont was about entering on the duties of governor, both of Massachusetts and New−York—that Gardiner's Bay was the commander's only place of safety—that he had a commission from the board of admiralty, and sailing orders from Lord Bellamont himself.

"Strain every nerve to get to sea again," said Kidd, "and immediately, with provision for a long voyage. Kill Gardiner's cattle and pay him—one day, rain or shine, is all I ask—the earl of Bellamont is himself suspected of assisting us, and his enemies have urged the colonies to prove their suspected loyalty by bringing my head.—There is a provincial sloop of war under one Dudley, that may suspect our haunt, and seek, in this very storm, this infernal tempting harbour."

"Why, then," sad Bolton, "did you come here?"

"Did you never know why I often come here?

This island belongs to the state or province, and is embraced in no patent, but is holden directly from king

William, like the Isle of Wight; and it belongs to the family of the Gardiners, in which itis entailed, with no law or responsibility but to the king, who dosn't know whether it is the East Indies or West. There is on it but a single family and its laborers, and we have them always under our controul. They can send for no militia, and claim no assistance; the dead peace of the spot is disturbed only by us. Here are woods, water and provisions, at our own price, and more security in these regions than is to be found elsewhere."

"Then why not stay," said Bolton, "the very expense of pursuit, will sicken the plantations; and they have Indians enough to look out for on shore, without chasing pirates at sea."

"Do you not notice, (said the captain) among the prisoners we took in the Quedah, a Frenchman that seemed a passenger from the East Indies? I seldom see a man but I remember him again. 'Tis more than twenty years ago that I knew that man in New−York, as they call it now. He was an officer in the French service, when I traded from that port with the Buccaneers. He had a wife with him, I think; any how, he was much respected; his connexions are every where, and if he should escape, then Robert Kidd sails no more. Depend on't there's danger. Fifty of my men deserted at St. Mary's when we purnt the Adventurer, and went on board the Mocha Pirate. Do you see, Bolton?"

Bolton looked him full in the face, and laying his hand on the steel hilt of his Turkish scymetar, said, "Moore lies quietly on Black Point, and though his money is within reach of his arm he can't mutter where it is."

"I know, (was the reply;) but this man can pay a ransom; he shall neither die here, nor escape."

"Then (said Bolton) I agree that we must put to sea. Hark! how the wind blows! how the armsof these old oak trees swing and break! Blow high or low, we'll be ready to−morrow night. Its now W. N. W.; it will clear off in the S. W. in a day or two; let's see, the moon changes to−morrow. What's become of that bottle? The eastern nations understand weather better than we do; no wonder with their monsoons and tornadoes. Thunder and lightning! here an't a half a drink! Molucca, (said he to a short brown coloured fellow,) Arrack! (The boy looked for another bottle.) And put some straw near the fire—there, that will do—not so close; if I burn up, I'll torment you forever."

So saying he took his laudanum, as he called it —unbelted his sword which he drew and placed at his head—and then threw himself on the straw.

"Thank heaven, I am tir'd, (said he, looking at Captain Kidd, more in earnest than in jest,) how much hard labor it takes to supply the little place of a quiet conscience. I shall sleep, though, whatever I may dream."

There is not in the whole compass of nature's music, a sound more soothing than the rushing of a heavy rain upon a tight roof just over one's drowsy head.

It seems to force upon the mind a strong conviction of comfort, and to excite feelings of gratitude for the shelter we enjoy, mixed with a slight and painful touch of pity, for the unknown but possible exposures of others. When this lullaby is joined by the chorus of waters lashed by the wind and dashed at intervals on the shore, the sense of personal danger, and the contrasted images of peril by sea, serve only to heighten this pensive pleasure. But to enjoy the beauties or the music of nature, innocence is necessary. Eden faded from the eyes of our first parents, and though thespot be left, it will never be found again by their short−sighted and sinful posterity.

The next morning the storm continued, as was expected; the boats put off from the ship to the shore, and the captain set out in his barge for the south part of the island, where the mansion house has always stood. He landed, notwithstanding the rain, in a sort of naval style; left a trusty man with the boat, and sent another forward to announce his approach. The rest followed him towards the house at a respectful distance, fully armed and with military precision. They paraded before the door, till they had leave to retire to the kitchen, and Kidd himself entered the house.

This was by no means his first visit. Mr. Gardiner, commonly called Lord Gardiner, from his being an immediate tenant of the crown, and having a separate charter or patent, which granted him certain royal privileges on his own territory, received him with civility, though with embarrassment. He knew that he sailed at first with a commission from the British Admiralty, and more than suspected the use he made of it. Kidd knew all this, but acted as if he wore king William's commission—and would resent any suspicion to the contrary. He mentioned the urgency of the service on which he was sent;—and spoke of recent orders from the admiralty. He brought some presents for Mrs. Gardiner and children, and politely requested her to retire, that he might have a moment's conversation with her husband.

In this interview he made a memorandum of the provisions he wanted, which he carried out at his own prices;

and after footing it up, paid the money down and added, that it must be delivered by sunrise the next morning at the fisher's hut, for he dared not trust his men on the island, for fear of desertion. He regretted that the weather was such that he could not entertain his friends on board— dropped a word or two about his men and guns, and politely took his leave. No military contribution was ever levied with more particularity. The Quedah was watered and supplied with provision and vegetables for a cruise; the plan of which Kidd had contrived, but the success of which he could not foresee.

LETTER IX.

The weather on the third day was fair, and the wind favorable. The ship was under weigh, and the spars were whitened with canvass at a single order. The proprietor of the Island saw her with pleasure, when she doubled the point to get out of the bay, and put before the wind in the direction of Montaug.

The infant trade of the colonies, and indeed all the navigation of the coast, had been endangered by other pirates besides this noted freebooter. Barbarous cruelties, and some shocking and unprovoked murders upon the neighboring seas, had been committed, and the colonies, particularly Massachusetts, had fitted out a few vessels to protect their trade, and if possible, capture the pirates. Dudley, who was considered an officer of much promise, had been lately promoted to the command of the Martyr sloop of war, and sent on this service He had obtained an accurate description of the Quedah, and overhauled every sail he saw, in hopes of falling in with this noted pirate. Kidd was still in sight of land, when he made out the Martyr, and bore down for her, in expectation of finding a merchantvessel. He was soon undeceived by her size and appearance, and most of all, by her standing directly for him, though the wind was in the wrong quarter. He called to Bolton—"What say —shall we fight for the fun of it, when there's nothing to get? There's nothing but Spartan coin, by the looks—there's no glory to be got. That fellow," pointing to the vessel, "would be afraid to run. Damn it, Bolton, I dare do any thing, fight or run;—what say?"

"Just as your stomach is," said Bolton, shipping a large quid of pigtail aboard his mouth, "but in three hours sailing, you'll be overhauled."

"Quarters, then,—beat to quarters; but pack all sail, put her before the wind. Helm a−port— steady there, hold her at that." A few gratuitous curses, by way of emphasis, garnished the order.

Discipline was Kidd's creed, and he supposed it was brought about only in one method. The cat o'nine tails had been freely used that very morning; the yard arm was handy, and the plank lay in the gangway, ready at a word to be run out from the vessel's side. At every springing of this dreadful trap, a living corpse was heard to plunge, and cries for help, to come with the wind, till the speed of the ship left them behind.

Kidd now put his crew to every various and rapid service, which is suddenly required in preparing for flight and battle at the same time. Different orders were given in the same breath. which were sometimes misunderstood, and sometimes, to his critical eye, too slightly and negligently executed. His orders had at first some few words of intelligible English, mixed here and there among his oaths; but he soon confined himself to his vocabulary of profanity, which he fairly exhausted more than once in French, Dutch and English.He soon saw that a battle was inevitable; for the Quedah from a long voyage, was not in so good sailing order as the vessel in pursuit, which was fast coming up.

"I did not care enough whether I fought or run, to make up my mind about it," said he to Bolton, as he suddenly assumed an air of perfect composure, "but I think we shall be saved the trouble of a council of war on that point. We must take in sail and clear for action, after the men have had their fighting rations. Let the Quarter Master bring some this way, that I may have a word over a social glass with you Mr. Bolton. I like this chance of a battle, if it was only as an apology for drinking; though you may say I'm not difficult about excuses. But, Bolton, to be serious, we must be prepared, you know, for the worst; and be the chance of our being taken what it may, there shall be none of our being betrayed."

A conversation succeeded in a tone low, but earnest in which nothing could be distinguished, except at intervals, such words—the prisoner—the plank—he knows all and it can't be helped—dead men tell no tales,

The result was soon known. Without ceremony, or even a public declaration of the design, a few men were despatched for the unhappy object of Kidd's suspicions, who brought the victim upon deck, struggling and reluctant, with his eyes bound, though his hands were free. He was led along the plank, which projected over the sides of the gangway, and which was cut from its slight lashing, so that he dropped in the water, and was left in the wake of the vessel.

There was carelessly seated on the deck of the Martyr, a young, and what ladies would call a handsome looking man, with a spy glass in hishand, which he happened at this moment to apply to his eye. I cannot stop, as the manner of some is, to tell how he looked, how his hat had fallen from his head, and left it with no other

covering than thick dark curls of chesnut hair, which the wind stirred from his high fair forehead, nor of the form that graced the rude ground−work of the quater deck. I must be, if possible, as rapid in my narration, as he was in his action, when his accidental glance, assisted by the spy glass, rested on that sight of horror which I have just described. The fair readers of this time−worn manuscript must pardon me, if I leave them to conjecture how he looked, when he sprang on his feet and with a freedom of language which in those pure days, even the profession of a seaman did not allow, exclaimed, "Good God! they've murdered a man—away, there, to his help!"

The hoarse voice of the boatswain was heard above the busy hum of the ship's crew "away, there—you first cutters, away!" and the hint was taken by the boat's crew, who, headed by an officer, were over the vessel's side, and seated at their own oars with the activity of a flock of Mother Cary's chickens.

The speed of manual exertion is no where shown to more advantage, than on board a vessel of war.

"Pull, pull," said the officer, as he stood in the stern with the tiller in his hand. A shot from the Quedah went so near his head, that he could tell from the scream that there was a flaw in the bullet. "Ah we shall engage in a minute—pull, pull away."

The men sprang to their oars for the floating victim. The long ridges of the ocean wave were dashing over him, and in his drowning ears, "deep answered unto deep." He had pulled the baudagefrom his eyes, and it now hung loose about his neck, so that he saw the effort for his relief, and was struggling with the exertion of a spent swimmer to whom hope had given preternatural power, when the barge was sweeping by him, and the man in the bow caught the handkerchief round his neck with a boat hook. The oars stopped, and the boat, with the body along side, drove through the water with the headway already acquired. The man was exhausted and lifeless to all appearance, when they took him on board and put about for the ship. By this time, the vessels were so near, that some shots had already been exchanged, and an engagement was certain.

It is said that the silent moment, before the "grim ridges of war" join in the conflict, is dreadful; and occasion has been taken, by the great captains of antiquity, to address their armies in speeches

"On the rough edge of battle ere it joined;"

and this practice, as to the length of the speeches, has been improved upon in modern times, as indeed all sorts of speech−making has been.

Upon this occasion, the prefatory words were few and unpremeditated.

"Bolton." said Kidd, "we must fight, but he'll be sorry, for damn him, if he had been worth taking, I'd have done it an hour ago. Haul up the courses and bring her to. My boys, we must sink her directly. We can't be taken—that's out of the question. Those of you, who'd rather die like heroes than be hung for pirates at Execution Dock, let's know by three cheers." Three cheers were given, and the ship was ready for action.

The Martyr, now certain of bringing her adversary to action, was holding on under full sail. Thecommander had directed a shot or two to ascertain the distance, till he saw the move of the Quedah for action, when he gave the order, to call all hands. At the shrill whistle of the boatswain, the deck was filled with men, who came, some from aloft, and some from below. The officer stepped forward and inclined his head,—every hat was off, and every eye on him.

"My lads," said he, "I shall keep you but a moment from your duty. See that inhuman wretch —'tis Robert Kidd, the devil has deserted him at last, and Providence has delivered him into our hands—the victory is our's. Now to your quarters and wait the word."

"Where shall I lay her," said the sailing−master.

"Oh! Mr. Cochlin," said Dudley, "I forgot that; lay her along side, at pistol shot. Mr. Endicott, be ready to lead away the boarders."

The sides of the Quedah had smoked and blazed with repeated discharges of her guns, which did some damage before Dudley neared his distance, and gave the word to fire. Both ships were instantly involved in smoke. The distance was so small, that musketry was used from the tops, and the decks of both vessels. Few battles have been more desperately fought. Dudley was resolved to capture, and Kidd, not to be taken. The Martyr was constantly nearing the Quedah; the fluke of her anchor caught in one of the Quedah's port−holes, and Dudley sprang forward, calling on the boarders, and heading them himself. To gain the Quedah's deck would have been no easy matter; but it happened that Kidd had been stunned by a splinter, and Bolton was killed out−right.

The boarders cleared the decks of the pirate. They were found slippery with blood, and strewed with the dead and the dying. The men ceased tofight when Kidd fell, for they apprehended little danger from capture, as many

of them had been compelled into the pirate's service, and wished an opportunity to leave it. This was understood, and they experienced as kind treatment as they hoped for. The Martyr was dreadfully injured, and lost many of her men; but the Quedah was sinking.

The prisoners, with every thing valuable which could be removed, were immediately conveyed to the other ship, which lay along side. Dudley gave orders to fall off, leaving a boat's crew to set fire to the prize, and leave her. Kidd, who had been brought to, was conveyed, with the survivors of his crew, on board the Martyr; strict attention was paid to the wounded of both parties; the sloop of war repaired as well as possible for immediate sailing; and the sad service of burying the dead, at which the captain is always present, Dudley deferred to the next day, in hope that he might possibly arrive in port before that mournful office would be necessary.

LETTER X.

"By skeleton shapes the sails are furl'd,
"And the hand that steers is not of this world."

We resume that part of the tale which relates to Dudley and Kidd.

The last boat had now left the Quedah in haste, after setting her on fire and leaving none on board but the dead. They had scarcely joined the Martyr, when a fresh breeze sprung up from the southward, and drove the Quedah before the wind, wrapped in deep red flames, in the same direction withthe victor ship, and apparently in pursuit. A current of air was raised by the heat which made her gain in this singular chase. Her sails and rigging which had not been shot away, were all set and standing, and the quick flames all fed by tar and pitch, ran along her cordage and leaped to the very top−gallant head, while the ship was yet above water and under full way; as though the dead men which were on board of her had awakened with new life, and sprung to their duty.

This appearance, as she held onward wrapped in smoke and blaze, added to her character as a pirate, was a spectacle to the crowded deck of the Martyr, where some viewed it as sublime, and some as portentous and supernatural.

The spectacle was long after recorded among the marvels, and gave rise to the tale of the Ghost Ship or Flying Dutchman, which was manned with spectres, and with all her canvass spread, sailed rapidly in a gale against the wind. It was necessary for the Martyr to bear away for fear of being run down by this dreadful fire−ship.

The prisoner of Kidd who had been so providentially saved from drowning, excited very strongly the sympathy of Captain Dudley.

"Were it not for the war with France, (said he, addressing the stranger) you should on our arrival at Boston be set immediately at liberty; but under existing circumstances, though the rescued prisoner of a pirate, you are still in my hands a prisoner of war, and your parole of honour is the only indulgence I can give you."

Dubourg, for that was his name, thanked his deliverer with a deep feeling of gratitude, and expressed a desire to continue under his protection.

"I fear (said Dudley) we shall find it impossible. My services on the water after the capture of Kidd, will no longer be required. My character in this new settlement (said he with a smile) is rather amphibious; and I shall, soon after my arrival, be despatched on a long and fatiguing land service to the borders of Lake Champlain, where the French and Indians on the frontier, threaten to disturb and destroy the New−England settlements."

"If that be your destination, (said the stranger) I will gladly follow you; strange as it may seem, my business is to visit that very spot. There, in younger life, on the western shore of that lake, was I stationed as an officer in Le Gendre's regiment, before I was ordered on other service. There I lost my wife, and left my only daughter. She was then an infant, and now, if living, a woman. I know where and with whom I left her. I have regularly heard from her, and I can find the very spot of her abode, after an absence of twenty years. I am (added he) a man of property, and if I find my daughter, shall become a citizen of that country where I spent my happiest days."

Dudley made the proposal that Dubourg should be his company across the country, and march with the troops which were to be in readiness at Tantiusque, near the northern line of the colony, to which place Dudley would repair with him, after representing his case to the Governor of the Massachusetts colony, discharging his crew, and settling his concerns as commander of the Martyr.

On their arrival at Boston, the news of the capture of the pirate was soon spread; witnesses were summoned, Dudley among the rest—and even the peaceful inhabitants of Gardiner's Island, to attend the public examination of Kidd, who was on this preliminary proof, sent home to England for trial; where, after an examination by the House of Commonshe terminated his voyages as recorded in the Newgate calender, and in the ballad of which he was the hero,

"At Execution Dock, as he sail'd."

Meanwhile the provincial troops, in this instance principally from Massachusetts, though aided by Connecticut and Rhode−Island, had taken up their line of march, and with their military 'furnishments,' accomplished a journey of difficulty, thro' a country unsettled and but little known, and encamped in safety on the eastern shore of Champlain. They were strongly posted to defend the country against an unexpected inroad from

the French and hostile Indians.

Dubourg was anxious for the safety of his daughter, and obtained from Dudley permission to cross the lake with a party of men, to convey her and the family in which she lived, out of the immediate neighbourhood of Indian hostilities, which were at this time more rife on the New−York side. As soon as he discovered their residence, he spent little time even in expressing his joy, but hurried their departure from a place of peril. He had reason to be thankful for his expeditious course; for on the night following, a detachment from the Iroquois came upon the plantation and finding it deserted, laid the whole in ashes.

The New−England troops were disposed in barracks and huts of their own construction, and as they had chosen a commanding place, which they meant to fortify strongly, they erected some small log houses, in one of which Dudley lived with Dubourg and the inmates of the removed family. The troops were well disciplined, and inured to this sort of peril and warfare. They kept by nightand day the strictest watch against their northern enemies of every character, by land or water.

It was after the regular arrangement of military duty, that a centinel at his post near the shore of the lake, where it indented the land with a little shady bay, indistinctly discerned the figures of two men He stood waiting their approach to a short distance before he should hail. One he saw was an Indian—the other was dressed in tattered clothes, and doubtless was a spy—and how many more might be in the woods behind them he could only imagine. He edged towards the side of a large tree, and cocked his gun as he cried, "Who goes there."

"Friends."

"Friends, stand, don't advance," said the centinel in alarm; then straining his voice to the utmost, he called Du—tha—n, dwelling on the last syllable like a village matron calling her suckling children, or a militia colonel on a regimental day, calls "atten—tion the whole."

Corporal Jeduthan Banks, of Marblehead, had just incurred the severities of the martial law, by stretching his martial length and "reposing his weary virtue" at the foot of an oak tree, and had just mentally joined in Sancho's benison upon the "man who first invented this selfsame thing called sleep," when he was roused by the unwelcome cry of his companion in arms.

—"As when men wont to watch

"On duty, found sleeping by whom they dread,

"Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake,"

He was instantly on the ground, where his paltoon men were directly paraded, and received the new comers at the point of the bayonet.

Du Quesne, (for he and Weshop were the intruders,) requested that they might be shown to the quarters of the chief in command.

They found him alone in a small log hut, without a fire, and with no appearance of comfort or convenience about it. A light was burning upon a large log of wood, sawed at one end, so as to resemble a horse block more than a table, though it was meant for the latter. The person who was seated at it, requires a more particular description.

Miles Standish had the only pride of birth which is pardonable in this country. He was directly descended from one of those men who ate their meal of clams near Plymouth Rock, and listened to the grace which Parson Robinson said over them. Even the puritans, who fled from the stake, called him obstinate, and considered him in matters of faith, as rather intolerant. He hated all separates, as he called them; but his greatest dislike was towards the Church of Rome, and for reasons which he pretended to be able to explain, he was not very cordial to the Church of England. The men who stoned the first Martyrs, he would say, were no worse than they who stood and held their garments. Nay, in the zeal of some of his controversial conversations, he ventured to call them worse—they were more cowardly and less sincere.

Godfrey of Bolonge, never put on his harness against the enemies of the Cross in the Holy Land, with more zeal than Miles Standish buckled on his sword against the French and Indians in this Land of Promise. He referred to the scriptural account of the march of the Israelites from the land of Egypt, and the house of bondage, and applied it literally, as did many others, to the emigration of the Puritans; and he derived his authority for much of his own conduct, from the fighting part of the character of Joshua. The Onondagas, the Tuscaroras, the Wampagoes, and the Potawatamies, were with him; but the other names for the Hittites, Perezites, Jebuzites, and Gergushites, all whom were to be exterminated. Indeed, if Father Raal, in his way from Penobscot to his Catholic

friends, had fallen into the hands of Miles Standish, he would have considered the fate of Agag as his sufficient warrant. He possessed vigorous strength, was patient of fatigue, and fixed in his purpose. A man as Southey says,

"Firm to resolve, and stubborn to endure."

He sat reading Pilgrim's Progress, which he allegorized beyond the spirit of Bunyan himself.

LETTER XI.

After hearing Du Quesne without interruption, "Are you (said he) true men and no spies?— Is it not to spy out the nakedness of the land ye are come? You, sir, must be a Frenchman, and surely, if ever I saw one, this is an Indian. Know you not that it is against such that I have come to fight? I have the authority of scripture history. It is in vain for the Keemites to attempt deceiving me, with their old shoes, and clouted, tattered garments, and moldy bread, and broken bottles."

The dialogue between them lasted some time. The engaging manners and conversation of Du Quesne interested the chieftain, though it was apparent he doubted the truth of the story, and looked on the disinterested heroism of Weshop particularly as apocryphal.

But aside from his incredulity, and some strong suspicions of design, he resolved not to cross the jake, but to keep his provincials within the boundaryof New−England. He cared as little for the Dutch as for the French.

"Let them, (said he to himself,) fight it out between themselves, and if the Indians take sides, so much the better."

Great was the joy of Du Quesne when he heard that Dudley, his long lost, and as he supposed, far distant friend, was on the spot, and the second in command. He hastened to his quarters, where he found Dubourg and his daughter. Standish was present at this cordial interview, and listened once more, but with greater confidence and interest, to the story and request. The anxiety of Dudley was extreme. He saw the emaciated form of Du Quesne, worn down by famine, fatigue and suffering—represented to himself the exposure of Van Tromp to a fate from which it might even now be too late to save him, and made up his mind.

"I will go, and that immediately, if I go alone. Major Standish, (said he) this is no matter of political or provincial interest—it is my private business, and of great emergency. Providence gives me this opportunity—perhaps the only one, of redeeming a sacred pledge; my sworn, my bosom friend is in peril. See (said he pointing to Weshop) what an example even this man has set me."

"Ah, he's a Keenite, (said Standish, wringing Weshop's hand,) worthy to be ranked with Squantum himself. In a case like this, I will not be outdone by the best heathen that ever lived. Weshop! —but come, there's no time to lose—beat to arms. I wish (added he in a lower tone to Dudley) that Weshop was a christian—he would make a better one than some white men I know of—−but now have the boats ready—I'll show you how to deal with Indians, when you catch them on fair ground, in a body. Weshop, you must lead us. Captain Dudley, we march Indian file, without music. Three ferriages will carry over as many as we want. Let the ladies stay with those who keep guard at the camp. If I don't return, I'll send for them."

During the bustle of a slight and rapid preparation, the young lady found means to set her large dark eyes on Du Quesne, and beckon him towards her.

"This, sir, (said she) is no time for ceremony, or affected delicacy. I feel interested for the safety of your friend. I shall wait here—oh! with how much anxiety!—to hear of your arrival in time to save him, and beg that as soon as it is safe, I may be immediately sent for, to join you and Mr. Dudley at the Blasted Tree. I know from your zeal you will save him—I know you will. But you have eaten nothing: these hasty men have forgotten to ask you, and you have forgotten to call. Here—I will set a table for you, and wait upon you myself."

"I must not eat without my friend."

"Who?"

"The Indian warrior that brought me here."

"Oh! Weshop. I know him, let me call him myself."

Weshop came back; but the honest fellow could not stay for a regular meal; he took a quantity of provision in his hand to eat as he went onward to the place of embarkation, saying as he left the shore —"Make haste!−make haste!"

The party, in fine order, and under strict discipline, were soon paraded, marched and wheeled to the landing.

The lake, at a narrow place, was ferried over again and again, till all but a guard for the defence of the women and the few effects that were left behind, had quit the shore. Miles Standish directed the embarkation himself, and brought upthe rear in the last boat, with his drummer, trumpeter and bugleman; and as he had an ear for music,

and a strong taste for sublime scenery, he directed them to play Old Hundred and accompanied them with his voice, in these noble words—

"When Israel, freed from Pharaoh's hand,

"Left the proud tyrant and his land—

"The tribes with joyful homage own

"Their King, and Judah was his throne."

This psalm he sung to the end, as he sat in the stern of the boat, and the bugleman swelled his cheeks in vain to overpower the loud bold tones of this vocal accompaniment.

They landed, and took up their line of march in the dark, till the moon, just past the full, shone on the rocks and woods west of Champlain.

"Who is there to mourn for Logan?"

Van Tromp and his small garrison had evidence of the misfortune that had befallen his friends, when they saw, the second day after their departure, the straggling remnants of the hunters, returning in haste and disorder. His anxiety for Du Quesne and Weshop was succeeded by a horrid conviction, when he saw his savage enemies assembling in formidable numbers near the edge of the wood on the south side, at a little more than gunshot distance. There they seemed deliberating whether to commence an immediate attack, or wait for some less hazardous mode of gaining their purpose. The latter course was adopted principally because they expected by the next night to be joined by another body. In the mean time the best preparations were made in the garrison against an Indian massacre.

The night and the next day were spent watching,and the ensuing evening witnessed the expected addition to the Indian force. An assault was now certain, and indiscriminate murder would be the probable consequence of their success. Twenty times a day had Jonathan's head, as he raised it above the breastwork, been a mark for musket balls and Indian arrows, and twice as often, through the loopholes and crevices, had he returned this mark of attention with his rifle.

"What think's become of Weshop? (said Shadrach,) I never missed him so much afore in my life."

"Poor fellow, (said Jonathan Hodges,) I guess that bag of hair is off his head by this time—'twas a mighty handy thing to catch him by."

"It makes me crawl to the heart, Jonathan—but I expect we shall be killed to−night. They may kill my master—I most hope it'll be my turn first. There's him, poor soul, hobbling about when he ought to be abed."

"Ah, Shadrach, we shall have a field bed tonight, and a bloody one too, I'm thinking."

Shadrach, in obedience to an order from Van Tromp, posted himself on the top of the house to look out. It was now night, and the full moon had been some time risen. The Indians from without commenced storming the place, and rushed towards the abattis with yells and war whoops. They attempted to cut them down and to set them on fire; but as they had been newly made of green trees drawn close together, with their roots inwards, they found themselves stopped and exposed to the sure aim of the marksmen who shot from the bastions.

They then attacked the gate, hand to hand, and the fight became furious—but the besiegers had the advantage of numbers, and it was pretty certain that they would soon make good their entrance.The assailants were animated with the hope of success, and the defenders made desperate at the fate which impended over them and theirs.

LETTER XII.

Most of the fighting men in the garrison had now drawn round this place of combat. The besiegers had foreseen this, and had placed a body of men in ambush, who were to attempt gaining the place, by scaling the steep ledge of rocks which formed the northern angle of the enclosure. This party had already risen from the bushes, and was running to that part which was defended only by the natural steepness of the ascent, when Shadrach, who was the only one that saw this manœuvre, gave the alarm; but in the confusion and horror of the moment, he had no chance of being understood. In the agony of despair, he ran to the spot alone. They were already climbing the face of the rock, and pulling themselves up by the bushes that grew out of its clefts. The large trunk of an oak tree had been placed along the top of the ledge, where it served as a sort of breast work for about twenty feet. The thoughts that he might instantly be dispatched, gave him new strength and quickened his ingenuity. He seized a stake, which he applied as a lever to the middle of the log. It moved—tottered a moment on the edge of the precipice—he plied all his strength—it fell—and Shadrach darted back with all his speed. Never, even in ancient days, was a more dreadful missile put in motion. The face of the rock was covered with assailants, and the base was crowded with others waiting to ascend. The ruin swept and crushed all before it. Those who escaped, retired and paused for a moment, but observing no one above, ventured the attempt, and a few gained the top.

Meanwhile those who defended the gate were on the point of being overpowered, when the troops under Standish and Dudley emerged from the woods. They saw how critical the moment was, and rushed to their aid. A full fire of musketry and arrows was poured in upon the savages, and bayonets, swords, and tomahawks, were immediately in contact. Weshop and Du Quesne alarmed at the dangerous situation of their friends, and personally exasperated at the enemy, were directly merged in the middle of the combat.

A conflict like this could not last long. The savages were amazed at an attack so unexpected; they fled hastily in every direction, and were followed by Standish to the woods, where he ordered the grass and bushes to be set on fire. It was instantly done, in a hundred different places. He then blew his horn to call in the men, (who might be in danger of an ambush) and entered the garrison.

The women and children had been shut up in a sort of block house, and escaped unhurt. Few who belonged to the garrison, but were wounded or killed. Van Tromp was much hurt, and Jonathan would never have found his way from the gate, had not Shadrach lifted him in his arms.

Du Quesne, in almost breathless eagerness, met him as he was staggering under his burden.

"Where is Weshop?" said he.

The African's heart was undergoing such mixed emotions of joy and sorrow, as almost choaked his utterance. He could only say—"Dead."

Du Quesne stopped, and for a moment, friends, country, all were forgot, but poor Weshop.

Almost all the garrison were by this time assembled at the gate. Weshop lay covered with hiswounds, in the midst of his foes; his bow was near him, and his bloody tomahawk was clenched in his hand. He was bitterly lamented by more than one. Du Quesne's grief could not be silent. "He lifted up his voice and wept."

Weshop was buried with military honors; his grave is still marked by a pile of large stones, on one of which there seems to have been an inscription, but it cannot now be read.

The newly arrived troops took up their quarters for the present in the garrison, for several of them were unable to march, and the new settlers had been so reduced in number, and were so many of them wounded, that they could not well be left in their present condition.

One chilly evening in November, most of the personages mentioned in the MS. were sitting in the best room of the garrison round a cheerful fire, ruminating, some on the past and some on the future, but saying little to disturb one another's thoughts. Van Tromp was still an invalid, Dubourg now and then smiled to see the attentions of his new found daughter to one whose first wounds were received in her service, and whose modest eye, when he felt an occasional twinge of pain from wounds more recent, seemed to look to her for relief. Standish was saying to Dudley, (who was thinking of something else) that the Winnebagoes and the Potawatomies would never join on the other side of the river after this, and that the French would soon be obliged to confine themselves to

the Canada line; and Du Quesne was thinking, almost to tears, of the virtues, the services, and the end of Weshop, when Shadrach entered the room with Du Quesne's watch in his hand.

"Massa Du Quesne, (said he) here's your watch —you left it when you went a hunting—I buried it the night of the battle, so it don't go. I have been trying to put it to rights, but I can't make out."

"Thank ye, Weshop, I mean Shadrach," said Du Quesne.

Du Bourg's eye was on the watch.

"Let me see it, (said he to Du Quesne) it's a very elegant one."

He took it, opened and examined it with surprise.

"Where did you get it?—pardon my inquiry."

Du Quesne told him all he knew about it or about himself.

"You see, sir, (said he) our stories are intimately connected."

"My young friend, (said Du Bourg) tell me when and where you was born."

Du Quesne told him.

"But you are unwell, sir," said he, as he took back the watch.

"Slightly, (said he)—Captain Dudley, I wish to speak with you."

"Me, sir?" said Dudley, who had been twirling his sword with the becket, as sailors call it, that was fastened to the hilt, and whose mind had been so absent that he had heard only the last request, as it was particularly addressed to him. "Me, sir? I'll wait on you, sir."

"There's a good fire in t'other room," said Shadrach, as he showed the way.

"Captain Dudley, (said Du Bourg) that young man is my lost son!—he is!—he is! Captain Dudley."

"A worthier or a nobler one (said Dudley) you could not claim. The probability of such a thing occurred to me when you told me, on board the Martyr, why you wanted to visit the banks of this lake, that you had two children in this country, though you expected to find but one left. Thisgentleman was my classmate—and more, he was my bosom friend. I know all his story."

"Sit down then, sir, I will tell you mine without being tedious. I came to this country as a captain in the 33d regiment of Royal Infantry. The regiment was never assembled that I know of. I was employed as an inspecting officer—went from port to port—was occasionally at New−York, and often at different places on the lake, and on the Hudson.

"I was married at Sandy−Hill, to a lady of the most respectable connections, but whose friends were averse to the match, owing to my commission in a marching regiment, and my liability to be ordered away. I lived in New−York with my wife until my eldest child was two years old, when I was required to join a battalion of our regiment assembled near Jake Champlain, from which it was soon to remove to Detroit, or the upper lakes.

"The little boy could not be at once removed to so great a distance, considering the hazards and difficulties of such a journey; and I provided for his immediate support at New−York, in the family where I had lived, intending to send for him when I should find my family permanently settled. This time never arrived, and I was afterwards assured of his death. I lost my wife after the birth of a daughter. I was soon obliged to go to Montreal— thence to Quebec: and instead of being ordered to Detroit, as was expected, I was embarked with a part of the regiment, and sent to the French settlements in the East Indies, where a war had unexpectedly broken out, and where troops were immediately wanted. I had only time to make provision for my infant daughter, by entrusting her to the care of the lady with whom she had alwayslived, the widow of an officer of my acquaintance, with whom, as you know, I found her.

"Upon the birth of my first child, I had written to my brother younger than myself, whom I left in France to manage my paternal estate, that I intended to call him Du Quesne, after a distinguished soldier of that country. His own name is Carlos Du Bourg. The ship in which I sailed was wrecked on the coast of Mysore; a few of us gained the shore in the boat; but the news in Europe (as I afterwards learned) was, that she was lost with all her crew. My brother succeeded to my property in France, which this son should have inherited on my death. The salique law of France, you know, would exclude the daughter. But in the management of this boy, I fear I see the hand of my brother. That watch is mine; I left it with Voorhies, my host in New−York, with an earnest request that the child might be enjoined to keep it till I should see him again."

Dudley felt assured that Du Bourg had found his son, and took upon himself to break the tidings to his friend. "Nothing more (added he) can be wanting, than the letters from France, which can be procured through

New−York."

The hour was now late, and the garrison was silent. Shadrach, who had remained a wondering listener to this strange recital, declared his resolution to awake his master, and tell him all about it.

The first light of the morning discovered the garrison in different groups. Dudley and Du Quesne—Du Bourg and his daughter—Shadrach and his master, with Miles Standish, who said it fairly put him in mind of the story of Joseph.

When these groups collected, Du Quesne presented himself to his father and sister. His feelingshad been of late too much agitated to admit of any stronger sensations than calm satisfaction, at the discovery of a family connection of so respectable a character.

The answer to Dudley's inquiries brought the letters, which Du Bourg knew to be in the hand writing of his brother; and they were accompanied with the intelligence that the gentleman who was engaged in the duel, and who had been absent from New−York ever since, had sent from the southern plantations an account of that affair, which completely exculpated Du Quesne.

LETTER XIII.

"The last boat lingers on the shore."

The mystery which had hitherto involved the life of Du Quesne was now satisfactorily cleared up. It appeared that on the reported death of Du Bourg, his brother in France, to whom the inheritance descended on failure of male heirs in the elder branch of the family, had taken effectual means to keep Du Quesne from any knowledge of his right, or even of his parentage. Though his temptation proved too strong for his resistance, yet a remaining sense of duty urged him to supply the means of education, and to present the chance of future support.

Du Quesne never changed his name. He adopted the profession of arms, and served in several campaigns with Dudley, till peaceful times restored him to his friends.

The success of Van Tromp's courtship had been promoted by every recent occurrence. He served to unite the members of a long separated family,with one between whom and themselves there had been an interchange of kind offices and mutual obligations

A general meeting of the settlers was called, at which they took into consideration the losses they had met with, the unsettled state of the country, which was growing daily more dangerous, and their increased exposure after the New−England troops should be withdrawn; and resolved to retire in a body to the southern part of Lake George. Miles Standish crossed the lake to the remnant of of his former camp, with a view of marching down the eastern side, and joining the main body near Ticonderoga Point. The vow of friendship was solemnly renewed, and on a day appointed, Dudley, at the head of his troops, took up his line of march, and escorted the whole of the wandering settlement, as in patriarchal times, with their wives and their little ones, their flocks and their herds—leaving Fort Braddock to its original solitude, which from that time to this has met with few interruptions.

Ft. Braddock,—. Dear Jim,

I have taxed your purse with some postage, and your patience with a long story. If you have discovered many imperfections in it, you must, at the same time, have considered the nature of my duties—that I have to look over the serjeant's muster roll—write despatches—enlist recruits—and keep a regular account of every thing going on in the garrison.

By great good luck the tale happens to have a moral, and such an one as from your uniform friendship for me, you will not be slow to perceive, I hereby own its application, and feel sure of thatsort of regard from you, which from different characters in this story, seems to have been so truly expressed in many ways. I insist the more on this, as I am on the eve of departing a still greater distance from you. I hardly thought that I should feel so dull at the moment when the wild wishes of my first letter are so unexpectedly gratified. My baggage is now on board the boat, and my destination is for the country west of the Mississippi. Where I may go is uncertain. Perhaps to the Columbia, or Nootka Sound—or I may cross Bhering's Straits, where men and animals once crossed to this great continent. It may be long ere we meet again—for I go perhaps "like Ajut, never to return." The whole garrison moves with me. On my way to New−York I shall recruit my wasting enthusiasm at the places where Burgoyne surrendered, and where Lake Champlain was immortalized by the victory of M'Donough. I have fired my parting salute, and the guns were answered by the echoes around me. They seemed in reply to one who had long admired the solitary beauties of the place, to listen for a moment to the roar which disturbed their repose, and then feelingly to say, as I now say to you—Farewell.