Burton; or The Sieges

J. H. Ingraham

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"Fierce War, and faithful Love,
And Truth severe by fairy Fiction dress'd."

Gray.

PREFACE.

During the last fall it was announced that the author of "Lafitte" was preparing a romance, founded on incidents in the life of Burr, to be called "The Conspirator." The appearance of the present work, bearing a different title, would seem to require some explanation.

After the original plan had been matured, the author was made acquainted with the fact that the ground he had taken was preoccupied by one calculated in all respects to do full justice to the subject. He therefore retreated from this field, and took his station in an adjoining one, discovered, during his researches into the character and history of Burr, to be equally fruitful.

The present work, therefore, instead of arraying in "fairy fiction" the events of the conspiracy, embraces an earlier period, and aims at unfolding the steps by which a chivalrous youth, his heart beating high with honour and patriotism, became, in time, the Catiline of his country.

In the page of history from which this romance is taken, we see the young aid−de−camp exhibiting the trophies of his conquests, drawn from the wreck of innocence and beauty. If we turn to a later page, we shall see the betrayer of female confidence, by a natural and easy transition, become the betrayer of the trust reposed in him by his country, and ready to sacrifice her dearest interests on the altar of youthful vanity, ripened into hoary ambition.

West Point, N. Y., July, 1837.

POSTSCRIPT.

Recent events in the Canadas, perhaps, render it necessary for the author, in justice to himself, to say, that the present work has been written sixteen months, and, as it now is, was placed in the publishers' hands a year ago.

New−York, June 1, 1838.

BOOK I. THE SIEGE OF QUEBEC.

CHAPTER I. THE MONK.

The bells of a ruined monastery in the vale of Chaudiere were chiming the hour of evening service at the close of a cold windy day in the month of November, seventeen hundred and seventy−five, when a single traveller, in the garb of a Roman Catholic priest, appeared on the skirts of a forest, that, sacred from the invading ploughshare or the axe of the woodman, stretched many leagues into the province of Maine. His steps were slow and heavy, as if he had travelled many a weary mile of the vast wilderness behind him; and, when the north wind howled at intervals through the wood, he drew his garment still closer about his person, and bore himself with a sturdier step; but, nevertheless, his slight frame and vacillating limbs did not promise to withstand for a much longer space such rude assaults.

Although faint with fasting and toilworn with long travel, yet the sound of the convent bell, as it swept past him on the wind, infused additional vigour into his limbs; and roused to renewed exertions, with an exclamation of joy he hastened forward to a slight eminence which rose in his path. From its summit he beheld a prospect that fully rewarded him for all the hardships he had endured in his lonely pilgrimage through the wilderness. Beneath him lay a secluded and pleasant valley, about a league in breadth, guarded from the wintry winds that swept the highlands, by a chain of hills, wooded to their tops with forest trees, the lingering foilage of which was dyed with every hue of the rainbow. Through its bosom the Chaudiere flowed, in a thousand romantic windings, towards a scarcely visible opening in the range of hills to the north, through which to pour its tributary waters into the St. Lawrence.

Leaning on his staff, his eyes expressive of that delight experienced by the true admirer of Nature when contemplating her lovelier features, he lingered a moment to trace the graceful meanderings of the river, now wheeling peacefully around the base of the hill on which he stood, its glassy breast unruffled by the slightest zephyr; now gurgling and rippling among protruding rocks, and now rushing with velocity to the brink of a precipice, then, with a roar that rose distinctly to his ears, plunging into a foaming basin, from which ascended a cloud of snowy vapour, catching from the beams of the setting sun, as it sailed above the valley, a thousand brilliant and varied hues. Again his eye would follow it, gliding with the stillness of a lake into the depths of a forest, in the recesses of which it was lost to the sight until it reappeared in a glen full half a league beyond, through which it rushed in a hundred cascades brilliantly white with foam and dancing spray; then, separating in a broader part of the valley, it formed numerous verdant islands, rich in summer with the greenest verdure, and clothed with woods so ornamentally disposed in clumps and groves by the hand of Nature, that art would have diminished rather than added to their picturesque beauty. On one of these islands, either of which the father of poetry might have chosen for the abode of Calypso, the traveller discovered the convent, whose vesper−bell the harbinger of civilization to his ears had infused new vigour into his frame. Besides this edifice, a few peasants' cottages sprinkled here and there through the valley, and surrounded by small enclosures of cultivated ground, the harvests long since gathered, were the only indications to him of the presence of fellow−beings.

After gazing, until twilight rendered distant objects dim and uncertain, upon the scene so unexpectedly presented to his eyes, long familiar only with the gloomy grandeur of pathless forests, occasionally relieved by the hut of their savage denizen, the traveller gathered the folds of his robe beneath his belt, and grasped his staff resolutely; then for a moment fixing his eyes upon the towers of the island convent as the last chime of the bells ceased to echo among the hills, he said, as he prepared to descend a rude path, if the scarcely visible track left by the hunter or beasts of prey may thus be denominated,

"There shall I find what I most need, a night's repose; and, if all tales be true, good and substantial cheer withal; for the reverend fathers, while they have cure of the souls of their flocks, are not wont to neglect their own bodily comforts."

Thus speaking, he set forward with an active step, and, following the precipitous path down the face of the hill, after a perilous and rapid descent gained the river at a point where it was confined in a deep channel by rugged cliffs. Entering a sheep−track on the verge of the tumultuous stream, he walked vigorously on, at one time descending precipices, at another crossing intervals strewn with autumnal leaves, with the river, broken from its confinement, gliding noiselessly by within reach of his staff. At length he entered the wood in which the stream had become lost to his eye from the brow of the hill; and as the twilight was fast thickening into night, he quickened his pace and traversed its gloomy labyrinths at a rate his former apparent fatigue did not by any means prom ise. As he emerged into the open valley through which the river flowed, studded with islands, the tower of the convent was visible half a mile distant, with a light faintly glimmering in one of its windows. The path was now more trodden, and the signs of careful husbandry were visible around him. Passing through a narrow lane bounded by evergreen hedges, a few minutes' walk conducted him to a peasant's cot, situated on the banks of the river, and nearly opposite the monastery. He paused a moment in the shadow of a tree which cast its branches over the roof, and surveyed the humble dwelling.

It was one story high, constructed of wood, neatly whitewashed, and, like most Canadian houses of the class, with a single chimney rising in the centre. A garden adjoined it, and, although not arranged with horticultural precision, it appeared to have abounded, during the proper season, with every variety of fruit and culinary vegetable peculiar to the climate; while here and there a small cluster of flowers, and the further display of floral taste in the ornamental appendages of one or two vases placed on an humble portico before the door, betrayed the presence of a passion usually found alone in higher walks of life, but which is a natural attribute of the lighthearted and romantic peasantry of the Canadian valleys. A bright fire blazed in the huge stone chimney, shedding its cheerful light throughout the apartment, and flashing, at intervals, through the window upon the person of the traveller. A young and very handsome female was arranging a small round table in the centre of the room for the evening meal, while three or four ruddy−cheeked boys, with one little girl, were watching with very decided infantile epicureanism the tedious process of the baking of half a score of brown cakes on a griddle. The table, with its snowy cloth, the shining dresser, the well−scoured white floor, and a certain tidy air reigning over the whole interior of the cottage, combined with the picturesque *mantelet* and gay headdress, *à la Fran çaise*, of the female, with the group of children, decreasing, from the eldest progressively downward, half a head in height, showed, altogether, the happy mother, the conscious beauty, and the frugal housewife.

The traveller sighed as he gazed on this humble scene of domestic happiness. "Here, at least, is the abode of peace and contentment, if such there be on earth," he said, half aloud; "the voice of criminal ambition never reaches this happy threshold. Alike ignorant of the vices and pleasures of the world, the highest aim of its inmates is faithfully to fulfil their duty to God and their neighbour. Their errors are those of thought rather than of action. Never tempted, they are guiltless. With light hearts and clear consciences they enjoy the present with thankfulness, and look to the future without dread. Why is my destiny so opposite? Why am I tortured with ambitious aspirations, and mocked, sleeping and waking, with visions of power and empire, which, when I would grasp them, elude me? Delusive temptations, pointing me to the temple's pinnacle that my fall may be far and sure! But, stand or fall, I must fulfil my destiny, and obey that restless spirit within which bids me onward. But, alas! high as I may climb, the time may come when, perchance, I shall sigh to exchange lots with the veriest hind that ever whistled behind a plough."

His half−spoken thoughts were interrupted by a footstep approaching from behind, and a manly voice at the same time saluting him respectfully in the Canadian patois.

"Good even, father! Thou art somewhat late to cross the water to−night. St. Claude locks fast at vespers, and no key but a golden one, which seldom hangs at a priest's girdle, can turn back her rusty bolt till the third cock−crowing."

The monk started slightly at the unexpected presence and address of the speaker, and then courteously replied to his salutation, at the same time fixing his eyes upon him with a keen and searching glance, as if he would read the inner man by his outward seeming.

This second individual, who was now visible by the light which shone brightly through the cottage window full upon his person, was tall and finely moulded, and clothed in the ordinary dress of the Canadian peasant. This consisted of a gray *capote*, or loose surtout, reaching to the knee, confined at the waist by a gay sash of mingled green and scarlet colours, and closely buttoned to the throat, exposing to advantage the breadth and massive proportions of his chest. His head was surmounted by the *bonnet bleu*, which he wore with a jaunting air, and moccasins of undressed moose−hide covered his feet. A short French fowlingpiece, that he carried carelessly in one hand, a string of wild game held in the other, and a large brown dog of the Newfoundland breed, which followed at his heels, completed the sum of his attendants, equipments, and costume.

"The holy fathers are at their supper now," continued the peasant, "and old Homfroy careth little to leave his snug chimney side to open gates after the stars begin to twinkle. Jaquette, I see, by the bright blaze on the hearth, has spread the table. So enter, good father, and bless my roof and grace my board, though it will ill compare with that

of thy refectory. Nevertheless, it shall ne'er be said *habitan* François Benoît let vicaire or novice pass his door or sail his ferry without first blessing and breaking bread at his board. Thou art weary, father; but a comfortable chair, one of these ducks well broiled, and a cup of Jaquette's wine, of her own vintage, to moisten it, will cheer thee up, and make thee lean less heavily on thy staff."

"Thank you, thank you, friend; I would say, my son," replied the monk, who still retained his original position beneath the tree; "but time presses, and I must cross the water before I sleep. I will, nevertheless, accept your pious offer and taste your good cheer, for I have travelled far; and afterward, with what speed you may, ferry me over to yonder island, if, as I conjecture from its position, it is where the learned Father Etienne exercises spiritual control."

"Then, father," said the peasant, observing him more closely, "thou art not of the brotherhood of St. Claude o' the Island? And, now thou hast not thy face so muffled in thy cowl, I see thou art a stranger; for each one of the priests' faces, and they are few and old, is as well known to me, saving their reverences, as my own, seeing that I have pulled an oar face to face with them all, since Jaquette and I were married, which will be five years come Michaelmas. But if thou visitest the monastery and knowst Father Etienne, he will give thee a good welcome either with Gascon wines or clerkly Latin, venison steaks or homilies, as will best chime with thy humour and his own."

As he finished speaking he advanced to the door of his dwelling, followed by the monk. They were met on the threshold by the young wife, who, hearing the voice of her husband outside, opened it for the purpose of flying into his arms; for the attitude in which she was arrested by the sight of the stranger as she was crossing the threshold, and the conscious blush which increased her beauty, sufficiently betrayed this to have been the wifely mode in which she intended to welcome him home after a whole day's absence on the hills.

"Sacré Sainte Marie, Jaquette!" exclaimed the husband, good−humouredly; "be thy wits fled because a holy priest deigns to bless us with his presence? Give me a kiss! No? Nay, then, if thou'rt so coy, wife, before a holy monk, because, forsooth, he carries youth in his eye, he shall give thee the kiss of sisterhood which is his right to bestow."

"The father, but not thee, François, in such a presence," said the blushing dame; and, as she spoke, she presented, with great simplicity and reverence, her mantling cheek to the salutation of the youthful priest, who, apparently surprised, but not disconcerted, gracefully passed his arm half round her waist, and, gently drawing her towards him, pressed, instead, her lips with his own, and with rather more warmth than beseemed his cloth and the self−denying vows of his order, enjoining upon its members to flee *oscula mulierum*.

"Beshrew me, father," said the husband, "there was much unction in that reverend salutation. I would swear, saving your reverence's presence, thou wert a Benedictine, and hadst a wife of thine own to practise on; for, verily, thou bestowest the kiss of sisterhood with such familiar grace as is not learned in St. Claude's convent walls at least."

The monk smiled, and accepted a chair which his host, while speaking, had placed for him at the table, already covered with the smoking viands constituting the usual evening meal. François, Jaquette, and the little epicures before mentioned, having also taken their accustomed places, and the dog seated himself on his haunches by the chair of the youngest with a wistful look, one of the children, impatient and hungry, thrust his little fist into the plate of cakes, when his mother cried out, reprovingly,

"Fy, fy! Martin! Where are the child's manners and religion! Dost know the holy father has not yet said grace? Wouldst eat food unblessed like a wild Indian, child?"

At this hint the child drew back abashed, casting his eyes obliquely up into the face of the holy man whose presence had placed such an ill−timed injunction upon his appetite. The priest himself appeared suddenly embarrassed; but, after a moment's pause, and at the request of François that he would say a grace over their food, he dropped his face within his cowl and muttered something scarcely audible; then, patting little Martin on his curly head, he said, cheerfully,

"Now eat away, my little man; your food is as holy as words of grace can make it."

The head and face of the monk, as he sat at the frugal board of the peasant, with his cowl thrown back, was, for the first time, plainly visible. His forehead was high, and cast in an intellectual mould; the upper portion expressed dignity and firmness, while the full arched brow indicated a man who thought much and intensely. It was the forehead of a scholar. His eyes were black and piercing; when animated they were full of dark fire, but when in repose they were softer than the soft eye of woman. His nose would have been Grecian but for a slight irregularity, perceptible only in profile. The nostrils were firm, thin, and remarkable for dilating with every emotion. His mouth, when relieved by a smile, wore an expression of great sweetness, but then a voluptuous repose dwelt upon his under lip nearly approaching to sensuality. From the flexibility of his lips, chiselled with the accuracy of sculpture, and their habitual contradictory expression the upper being short, thin, and curling with sarcasm or pressed close to the other with determination, the under round, full, beautifully formed, and glowing with the passion of the voluptuary his mouth possessed the power of expressing, in the superlative degree, every passion with which he was agitated. It was beautiful or deformed, as love or hate, scorn or pity, ruled there in their turns. It might have been the fairest feature in the face of an angel or the most fearful in that of a demon. His chin, so far as it was visible, was full, square, and massive, without being heavy, and the contour of his face was slightly angular rather than oval, to which form it inclined. His hair was dark and abundant; his complexion a pale olive, but somewhat browned by recent and unwonted exposure. His person, so far as it could be seen by the habit he wore, was slightly but elegantly formed, and rather below than above the common height. Although redeemed from effeminacy by the firm mouth and chin, the manly and strongly intellectual forehead, and the unsubdued fire of his flashing eyes, his whole appearance was so youthful that he did not seem to be more than eighteen years of age, though closer observation would have made him, perhaps, two or three years older. His address was easy, his language pure and elegant, and his bearing affable and courtly.

The honest peasant having terminated his observations on the appearance and manners of his guest, as from time to time he raised his eyes to survey him during the meal, was so struck with his extreme youth (which, united with the beauty of his features and his fine eyes, also made an impression upon the fair Jaquette deeper than she would have been willing François should have known) that he at length felt some curiosity to learn the nature of the business that called so young a priest into that remote valley, and especially to the quiet monastery of St. Claude. But François was born a degree north of New−England, and suppressed an inquiry having no better object in view than simply the gratification of his curiosity. Wishing to hold, nevertheless, some conversation with his guest, he laid his spoon beside his thrice−emptied dish, and reverently, yet with the frank and ingenuous air, as remote from servility as from forwardness, characteristic of the Canadian peasant, said,

"Thou hast eaten full fairly, father. My homely entertainment is but an ill match for an appetite sharpened on the hills by a north wind, as I wot thine has been."

"How know you I am from the hills?" inquired the monk, eying him fixedly.

"I saw thee coming down the southern ridge a full half hour ere I met thee. I took thee for an Indian hunter till thy long robe, blowing out, showed thee to be a monk. But empty thy cup, father. Jaquette, fill his reverence's cup. Nay, 'tis but a mild wine, father, made from the pippin, which we in the valley call the Chaudiere grape. Never better was made in la belle France. I have drunk Muscat, Burgundy, and Tent with old Homfroy, the porter, a part of the perquisites, as he called it, from his reverence's table on holydays, and I would not give one round cup of Jaquette's pippin−wine for a gross of such as the good fathers drink; Saint Peter forgive me if I blaspheme in

saying so!"

"The pretty Jaquette's wine is doubtless excellent, worthy François; but wine suits neither my constitution nor my habits, which are temperate. Accept my thanks for your hospitality, and, if you will, this piece of gold; and then take boat with me, for it is already late, and I have far to travel on the morrow."

"Nay, father," replied the peasant, putting aside the hand of his guest, "François Benoît never took money from priest for food or ferriage; freely thou hast had meat and drink. Leave, then, thy blessing on my roof, and I will place thee on the island in the flap of a heron's wing."

"If, then, worthy François, I may not requite your hospitality," said the monk, as the peasant took his oars from the becket in which they were used to hang along the ceiling, "my little friend Martin, in consideration of a certain disappointment caused by my presence at table, shall take the coin in token of peace between us."

As he spoke he placed the piece of gold in the hands of Martin, bade Jaquette a smiling good−night (without repeating the sisterly salutation with which he had first met her), and followed François, who with difficulty prevented his shaggy Newfoundland companion from attending him, towards the beach.

The night was clear and piercingly cold; the stars sparkled like diamonds through the frosty atmosphere, and the earth crackled beneath their feet as they crossed the sward, on which the dew became hoar as fast as it fell. The river glided past with noiseless velocity, reflecting the stars in its black, transparent bosom with wonderful precision. The skiff, already afloat, was unmoored by François, who sprung into it, followed by the monk, and pushed it into the current, the movement producing a slight decrepitating noise, as if the surface of the river was already glazed with a thin stratum of ice, yet so transparent as to be invisible.

"There will be a bridge of ice thrown across the ferry to−night, father," said François, bending, as he spoke, to his slender oar. "If the edge of this sharp frost don't get blunted before morning, a pair of skates, with a proper groove and deep in the iron, will be better for crossing from island to main than the best wherry, or, for that matter, king's war−ship, that ever sailed the salt sea. Hola! the ice crackles under the bows as if we were cutting through a pane of glass, and the air is as prickly as if it hailed needles. Thou wilt find Father Etienne's little closet, where he studies and prays, with its two stoves, a blessed change from this biting air. Methinks thou'rt clothed thinly. A good bear's hide were worth twice thy robe of broadcloth. Dost not feel the cold, father?" inquired the talkative François of the silent monk, who sat in the stern of the boat, wrapped to the eyes in his cowl and gown, and apparently buried in profound thought.

"No, my good friend; that is to say, my worthy son," he answered; "the night air is indeed piercing, and my cloth garments but slight protection. But I am accustomed to exposure, although I may not boast your Herculean frame; neither have I been nursed, like yourself, in the lap of a Canadian winter. The cold increases indeed! A few more strokes of the oar, François, and we shall reach the island."

They were now rapidly approaching a light in one of the windows of the tower, and the walls of the monastery, relieved against the sky, became distinctly visible. Shooting into the dark shadow of a huge tree overhanging the water, they had nearly gained the beach, when a second light appeared in a distant part of the convent, and, at the same time, a single stroke of a bell rung with a dull and startling sound from the tower.

"Do you see that light? What means it, Fran çois?" asked the monk, quickly.

François, who looked one way while he pulled another, rested on his sculls, and, turning his head, looked steadily for an instant in the direction of the convent, and then, resuming his oars, replied, "That light is in Father Etienne's private chamber, and the bell is a signal for the brotherhood to retire to their cells. 'Twill be a hard matter to get admittance to−night, father. After that light appears in the window, not a cat moves about the convent till

morning. It burns there all night. His reverence is a great student, and it hath been rumoured his head will yet fill a cardinal's red cap. Well, it's a great thing to be a clerkly scholar, to talk Latin and Greek like one's mother tongue, and more blessed to be a holy monk, and better still to be a cardinal. But, then, my old mother Heaven and St. Peter send her sould safe out o' the pains o' purgatory! used to tell me that all these had their troubles, and greater the man greater the sinner. So I am content to remain simple François Benoît, husband of Jaquette, and father of four rosy boys and girls, and ferryman to St. Claude: the Virgin be thanked for all blessings!"

François devoutly crossed himself as he concluded; and the boat, at the same time, grating upon the beach, he sprung out and secured it, saying,

"Here we are, father. I will see thee safe under old Homfroy's charge, and then hasten back to Jaquette and the little ones, for the ice will soon get too stiff for my wherry to cut through."

They had landed on a gentle slope, beneath a large oak which far overhung the water, and, as the monk discovered, directly in front of the principal entrance to the convent. From the imperfect survey of the edifice he was enabled to take as he followed the rapid strides of the athletic waterman to a wicket constructed in a large double door, or, more properly, gate of the main building, he saw that it was a long quadrangular structure of brick, much dilapidated, with the ornamental superaddition of an octagonal tower, surmounted by a cross, rising from the roof at each extremity, both, however, now falling into ruin. The pile was situated in the midst of a lawn, surmounted by a natural park of majestic forest trees, and on the broadest part of the island, which was, nevertheless, at this point so contracted that there remained only a narrow esplanade between it and the river. It was remarkably destitute of any, even the commonest architectural ornaments with which the gentry and better classes in the province were accustomed at that period to decorate the exterior of their dwellings. Altogether, it struck the monk as gloomy and severe in its aspect, and not unsuited to be the abode of men whose supposed austere and ascetic habits were in keeping with an exterior so forbidding.

His observations were at length interrupted by the voice of François in altercation with the porter of the convent for admission, while his knuckles, which he made use of to enforce his appeal, rung in the elastic atmosphere, as he struck against the door, like oak ringing upon oak.

"Hoh, Homfroy! Wilt thou not answer? Open, open! Wouldst thou have a holy father stand the outer side o' thy gate in an air that would turn each hair of thy gray beard into an icicle? Open, I say, thou surly old dog, or, by the head of St. Peter, I will break down thy wicket with my oars, and then crack thy sulky pate! It's a priest, I say, a reverend and holy monk, who craves admittance. If he don't keep thee back in purgatory a twelvemonth for every minute thou keepest him without, then never trust me. Wilt not unbolt, old graybeard? Open, I say!"

"Chut st, chut st! good François! Have I said I will not open?" cried the old man at length, in a cracked and deprecating, yet sufficiently ill−humoured voice. "I did but stay to don my fur bonnet and wrap my quilted gown about my old limbs. The rheumatics are very bad on me o' nights now. Misericorde! I can catch my death through a keyhole, and it's a broad door thou wouldst have me open! Thou art over hasty, lad, thou art over hasty."

While speaking he was slowly and reluctantly undoing the fastenings on the inner side, and, as he concluded, he turned the lock; then shielding his shrinking but well−wrapped person behind the half−opened door, he said hastily,

"Enter, father, enter speedily! Go thy ways, François," he added, attempting to close the gate as the peasant was following the monk, "I will not move bar nor bolt to let thee out. Then enter, if thou wilt; but this night, at least, thou shalt not sleep in thine own couch! Misericorde!" he groaned, while he busied himself in securing the door with its heavy chains and bolts, "this doing and undoing of bolts and bars, these changes from a warm snug room to the cold air of these wintry nights, and this handling of cold iron, which sticks to my fingers and takes the skin off with it! mon Dieu! 'twill be the death of me. I'll to Father Etienne this night yet the passages are somewhat

chilly, and it waxes late but of a surety will I tomorrow, and resign the keys of mine office. If I don't resign while I have the power, grim Death will soon deprive me of it."

Thus muttering and croaking, the old porter, himself not less grim than the personage to whom he applied this epithet, hobbled back into his domicilium. This was a little room beside the door, where blazed a cheerful fire, before which, on a few coals drawn to the hearth, a posset−dish was set filled with a liquid preparation, which, judging from the pleasant odour diffused throughout the apartment, was duly seasoned with spices. A comfortable, well−stuffed armchair stood near it, as if the supervisor of the tempting compound had just deserted it.

The monk and his attendant approached the fire, the warmth of which both required. Their bodies were chilled, and their limbs and features partially benumbed by the intensity of the cold. The old porter resumed his chair, and had become absorbed in the posset−dish and its savoury contents, when the former, having expelled the cold from his limbs, requested him to inform the Father Etienne that a stranger from a distant convent desired to see him on private business of moment.

"François," said old Homfroy, without looking up, "that huge carcass of thine is now wellnigh warmed through. Take, then, this lamp, and go thou and deliver the father's message; and, peradventure, thou mayst sleep beneath thine own roof to−night."

François took up the lamp with a laugh and left the apartment. After the lapse of several minutes he returned, saying that the Father Etienne desired the stranger should be conducted to his closet. The monk, who had been traversing the porter's lodge with impatient strides during his absence, now followed him with alacrity. He led the way through a long passage paved with rough stones, at the extremity of which they ascended a narrow staircase to a gallery above, lined with chambers or cells, many of them without doors, and all apparently deserted. This gallery terminated in a narrow door giving admission into the southern tower of the monastery.

"There is the closet, father, where thou wilt find him thou hast travelled so far to see," said François, in a suppressed voice; "knock, and thou wilt find ready admittance. I will down and try my wits against old Homfroy's sullenness for a free passage forth. So I bid thee good−night, father, and crave thy blessing." As he spoke he removed his bonnet and bent on one knee reverently before the priest.

"Good−night, François, and take my blessing, such as it is," said the monk, laying his hand lightly on the head of the suppliant. Then, abruptly leaving him, he advanced to the extremity of the gallery and knocked softly at the door.

"Enter, my son," answered a deep voice within.

The monk lifted the latch, and, entering, closed the door.

François, after seeing the monk disappear within, hastily descended the stairs and returned to the porter, whom, after a little parleying, he prevailed on to undo, for the second time that night, the bolts and bars, whose every removal, he asseverated, was an additional nail in his coffin.

"Have thee good−night, honest Homfroy; Jaquette shall send thee apples for thy next posset," said the light−hearted peasant, as he issued from the portal into the cutting night air.

Homfroy did not hear the latter part of Fran çois's speech, having, in his terror of the rheumatics, closed the door upon him before he had well got over the threshold.

"Have thee good−night, is it?" he growled; "may the night freeze thee (as it's like to me) if thou bringest priest or layman more to disturb me after vesper chime. If I get not the rheumatic twinge in my left shoulder ere the sun rise, then I may shake my keys at him with the scythe and hourglass. This stranger, too," he continued, placing the keys in his girdle, "may take it into his head to choose the frosty sky to ramble abroad in instead of a warm Christian bed. The saints give him the mind to stay within till morning. By St. Homfroy! and that's my patron saint, I'll start bolt nor bar more to−night if the holy pope himself and all the cardinals were out crying to get in, or in crying to get out! the Virgin defend me that I should say so!" he ejaculated, in an under tone, devoutly making the sign of the cross with his keys upon his breast, over which his long white beard flowed in venerable profusion. Then re−entering his room, he shut the door, and once more applied himself to his posset, which was now poured out into a brown mug, and standing on a little table drawn before the fire, ready for that leisurely discussion that such grateful potations at all times demand.

CHAPTER II. THE CHEVALIER.

The closet into which the monk was admitted was of small dimensions, and octangular like the tower. Its bare walls exposed the rough surface of the material composing them, but little improved by the mason's trowel or the scale of the architect. By day it received light from a single window, placed at so great a height from the floor as to preclude the necessity of a curtain, in which luxury it was deficient. It was now lighted by a single lamp suspended by an iron chain from the ceiling to a level with the window, through which it nightly shed its cheerful beams across the water, a beacon to the belated traveller or lingering fisherman.

Beneath the lamp stood an oak table, groaning under the weight of folios, quartoes, and bulky manuscripts, a small place only being reserved on one side, within the comfortable influence of a stove, for the convenience of writing. The customary apparatus for this pursuit was displayed in the shape of a huge leaden standish, supported on lion's claws, and perforated with several deep apertures for pens; an antique black box of curious workmanship containing wafers; and a massive bronze urn, its lid punctured with innumerable holes, containing sparkling black sand, while letter paper, half−written epistles, stamps, seals, and other appurtenances of a well−furnished escritoir, lay scattered upon the table in very scholastic confusion. Besides the table and lamp, a second stove placed opposite the first, two or three substantial−looking chairs, such as are found at the present day in Canadian cottages, and a narrow cott or berth in one angle of the room, completed the domestic garniture of the apartment. Its professional features were comprised in a brazen pillar standing at the head of the cott, and supporting a small silver crucifix; a marble basin containing holy water, placed at the foot of the pillar, and a few pictures of saints in the agonies of martyrdom. A handsome, well−filled bookcase of dark−coloured wood, curiously latticed in front, of ancient and elaborate workmanship, standing on carved leopard's claws, was also placed at one side of the window, and within reach of the occupant's arm when seated at the table. The room had an air of religious and literary seclusion that captivated the monk, as, after closing the door carefully behind him on his entrance, he paused, without removing his cowl, to survey for a moment both the apartment and its inmate.

When François entered to inform him that a stranger had arrived in the convent who sought a private interview with him, the inmate of this little chamber was seated at the table with a tract before him, entitled *De Servo Arbitrio*, his mind deeply absorbed in the disputation between that archpolemist Martin Luther and the learned Erasmus. On the departure of the peasant with orders to conduct the visiter to his closet, he closed the treatise, but still retained it in his hand, with his forefinger placed habitually between the leaves, to indicate that paragraph of the controversy where he had been interrupted; and leaning his forehead upon his hand, as if mentally pursuing the broken train of argument, in this position he awaited the appearance of his visiter. When the monk entered he rose from his chair, and advanced a step to meet him, presenting to his gaze a tall and commanding person, a little inclined to corpulency, with a noble and finely−shaped head, and a clear blue eye, stern in its expression, and of that angular shape often found in men of unusual decision of character. His hair was light brown, somewhat touched by time, and arranged after the fashion of the *vicaires* or curés of the day; and, being worn away about the temples, gave additional height to a forehead naturally lofty. His brows were square and fleshy, and only

redeemed from intellectual heaviness by the lustre of the clear eye that played beneath. His mouth would have been handsome but for an habitual firm compressure of the lips, more in unison with the character of a soldier than that of a scholar or priest. Instead of the monastic habit, he wore a sort of clerical undress, consisting of a dark−coloured woollen wrapper, well lined and wadded, descending to the feet, and buttoned closely from the waist to the throat, after the fashion of the *capote* of the country.

"Bénédicité, brother!" he said, advancing with a noble dignity of manner, and addressing the monk after they had surveyed each other for a moment in silence; "I give thee welcome to my rough abode. But methinks thou art thinly clad to encounter such a night as this. Remove thy cowl, if so it please thee, and share the genial warmth of my hearth. Afterward I will learn of thee, and thou canst then tell me more at ease, the purpose of this visit."

The monk bowed courteously in reply, and, approaching the stove, began to unloose the strings of his cowl and gown, which he seemed to find some difficulty in doing, while the priest continued,

"Thou art, if my guess misleads me not, for thy garment bespeaks thee such, brother, a *professè* of the community de Hopîtal−general de Quebec; and, I doubt not, the long−expected bearer of letters from the reverend vicar−general, touching the religious and political condition of our church under the existing provincial government?"

The monk, having at length succeeded in disengaging the fastenings of his cowl and gown, without replying now hastily cast them aside, and stood before the astonished father no longer the hooded and shuffling monk, but an elegant and graceful youth, in a blue military surtout, with a short sword by his side attached to a buff belt, in which was stuck a pair of serviceable pistols.

"Reverend father, I am neither monk nor priest, but a soldier of the patriot army, which, doubtless, you have learned, ere now, is preparing to invade the Canadas," said the young stranger, in a firm, manly tone. "In proof of my words and in token of my good faith," he added, fixing his eyes with a look of intelligence on those of the priest, "I will repeat the talisman that shall beget mutual confidence between us. I have the honour, then, of addressing, not simply the monk Etienne, but the Chevalier de Levi."

"Thou hast the true credentials, young sir," said the priest, assuming the air and manners of a soldier and man of the world; "in me you see that unfortunate chief who was once the leader of a gallant army, and conqueror of those proud islanders who now hold these fair lands. In this peaceful garb," he continued, with emotion, "you behold the last general who drew blade for the Canadas. Driven by a superior force from before the walls of Quebec, which I had closely besieged, I left that citadel in the hands of the enemy, and, in despair of ever retrieving our national misfortunes, buried my disgrace in the seclusion of a religious life. But," he added, with increasing energy, pacing the apartment, "the servile oath of allegiance to the British king I have never taken, nor do my religious vows interfere with my patriotism. I have ever been ready, when the time should arrive, and, please God, that time is now at hand, to aid in the removal of the invading Britons; and, if need be, by the mass! I can still wield the sword as I have done before in the same good cause."

While the Chevalier de Levi spoke his eyes flashed with a newly−awakened military spirit, and his voice rung sharp and stern. But the momentary enthusiasm passed away as quickly as it came; and with a subdued manner, and in a tone more in keeping with his habit and present profession, he said, "May it please thee to be seated, fair sir, for I would fain learn the news of which thou art the bearer; thou art full young to be in the confidence of generals−in−chief, and the bearer of messages of invasion, as I doubt not thou art. Thou hast letters?"

"None, reverend father, or, rather, chevalier, for it were best we both drop the monk in this conference."

"Ha! how say you? no despatches? Come you not from the American leader, Arnold?" demanded the chevalier, sternly, and eying him suspiciously.

"I do, Sir Chevalier. He lies not fifteen leagues hence, with an effective force of twelve hundred men."

"So near, and with such a force!" exclaimed the chevalier, his eye rekindling; "by the mass! I feel young again. In what direction is this army?"

"South."

"South! Have you, then, effected a march through the wilderness?"

"We have, chevalier, a long and tedious one."

"'Tis nobly, gallantly done. What cannot be accomplished with such brave men! Quebec, thou shalt once more change masters! Colonel Arnold communicated with me when the expedition was first suggested; but that it should have been already so far matured is beyond my fondest hopes. When did you leave the camp?"

"Yesterday morning. Colonel Arnold sent me from thence with verbal instructions only, requiring me to use all diligence to reach this monastery, where I should find the Chevalier de Levi in the guise of the pious and learned Father Etienne, who would forward me with all expedition on my farther journey, providing both fast horses and faithful guides."

"Ha! and whither?" inquired the chevalier, eagerly, at the same time cautiously turning the key in the door of his study.

"To Trois Rivières. You are acquainted with the destination of the army, chevalier?" he interrogated, doubtingly.

"No. Your commanding officer, with whom I have corresponded heretofore on other subjects, informed me of the proposed expedition in a brief note in cipher, at the same time soliciting my co−operation and offering me a command. He merely stated that he should march some time in September, and would give me early notice of his arrival in the vicinity of St. Claude. I therefore look to you for those details of the expedition of which I am ignorant."

"There is little to narrate, save the history of a tedious march of thirty days through a dreary wilderness, the difficulties of which were increased by morasses, rapid torrents, and high and rugged mountains, where the order of march was broken up, while each soldier, hastening with the best speed which hunger, cold, and fatigue would permit, strove to gain the frontier."

"But do twelve hundred men comprise your whole force for an enterprise so great as the invasion of Canada?"

"But one division of the invading army, chevalier. General Montgomery, in person, commands the first division, which was to march into Canada by Lake Champlain simultaneously with our own. By this time Montgomery must be in the neighbourhood of Montreal, and, perhaps, master of it. I am despatched by Colonel Arnold with the information of his having arrived at the head−waters of the Chaudiere, and in less than ten days will be opposite Quebec, to effect a junction with him. The co−operation of the two armies will doubtless ensure the subjugation of the capital, and, ultimately, the whole territory of the Canadas."

"It is a noble and well−matured enterprise," exclaimed the chevalier, with animation, "and it must succeed. The garrison at Quebec is small, and cannot hold out against an energetic attack. Please God, the time has at length come when the Canadian shall no longer blush to own his country. But," he added, after surveying the officer for a moment, and remarking his youthful appearance, "methinks you are but a young soldier to be the medium of communication between two armies at a crisis so important. I am surprised," he continued to himself, half aloud, while his brow clouded, "that Colonel Arnold should have chosen a beardless boy on so dangerous a mission. I

fear, sir," he added, addressing him, "that you may prove too inexperienced for the task to which you have been appointed. By the mass! I would that your chief had chosen a more fitting messenger."

"Sir Chevalier," replied the young soldier, with spirit, "wisdom is not always found with gray hairs, nor is age the infallible test of experience. If devotion to the cause I have voluntarily embraced may be thrown into the scale against my youth, and if indifference to danger may be allowed to balance inexperience, then am I a fitting messenger."

"You have spoken well, young sir," replied the old soldier, with a smile of approbation; "but you have undertaken an enterprise which age, wisdom, courage, and even patriotism may hardly be able to accomplish. Bethink you," he added, gazing upon the animated countenance of the young adventurer, and mentally resolving to dissuade one, in whom he already felt no inconsiderable degree of interest, from pursuing a long journey, necessarily attended with danger, "bethink you, young sir, it is a score of leagues to the St. Lawrence, and your road lies through an enemy's country."

"I have measured, on foot, half that distance since yesterday's sunrise."

"The rumour of your army's approach will fly before you, and in every man who crosses your path you will encounter a foe."

"For this, too, I am prepared," was the quiet reply; "and because it is a service of danger and adventure, therefore am I here. There does not seem to me anything very appalling in the face of a foeman. I carry," he added, pointing to his pistols, "two men's lives at my belt."

"Rash and inconsiderate," said the chevalier, in a stern, displeased tone, turning away; "there is that in the hot blood of youth which unfits them as agents in schemes that require the least grain of either caution or secrecy. By the mass! I would rather trust a woman! To resent a hasty buffet or a fierce look they will sacrifice the noblest enterprises ever men set on foot. But now," he continued, abruptly addressing him, "I would have dissuaded thee from putting thyself in peril, from compassion for thy youth and a certain interest I felt in thy welfare, proposing to send one more experienced in thy stead; now I would dissuade thee, on account of thy unfitness for an emprise where coolness and discretion are in demand."

The chevalier, having thus spoken, folded his arms moodily; and, turning away towards the window, appeared to have lost all confidence in the discretion of the young officer. The blood of the latter mounted to his brow, and with an emotion between mortification and resentment, he said,

"If it had been my humour, Sir Chevalier or Sir Priest, to have fought my way to the St. Lawrence, proclaiming myself the herald of an invading army, and entering into a brawl with every boor who crossed my path, I should not have adopted this monkish guise. To prove its efficiency and my discretion," he added, smiling, and catching the eye of the chevalier as he turned round, with an apology on his tongue, "a brief hour ago I conferred the kiss of sisterhood on the ruby lips of the fair Jaquette, the buxom rib of honest François doubtless thou knowst whom I mean, good father and that in the happy husband's presence. If this disguise will baffle a husband's penetration at such a time, I think I have no fear of detection elsewhere."

"Not," said the chevalier, his good−humour restored, "not unless thy cowl fail to conceal thy beardless cheek; for, by the mass! in such a mischance thou wouldst be seized as a strolling wench in masquerade, and so equally defeat our purpose. Yet for a mere youth thou art a proper man, and might teach older heads than thine own. So thou wilt go forward, then, on this dangerous journey?"

"So will I, Sir Chevalier; and I pray you give me horse and guide, and bid me God speed."

"Then, if thou wilt, God speed thee! But I fear, nevertheless, thou wilt swing, ere many days be past, over the Prescot gate of Quebec as a rebel spy. Keep thy hood close, and let the lasses alone, and it may save thy neck. When wilt thou take horse?"

"This hour," replied the young soldier, preparing to resume his disguise.

"This hour! that metal rings well. Carry this promptness of action with thee, young man, into the world thou art just entering, and it will ensure thee success in the field or in the cabinet, or wherever thy destinies lead thee. To such energies as thine nothing will seem impossible. Whatever thou dost resolve thou wilt achieve, and the difficulties thou mayst encounter in the pursuit of an object will augment, in the same proportion, thy diligence. *Nil desperandum* is the motto of such a mind as thine. I am no necromancer, but I am deeply read in the countenances of men. They have been my books for nearly half a century, and their language is as familiar to me as the characters on this lettered page. I have studied thy face, and could tell thee what thou art; and, if life be granted thee, what thou mayst be. Ambition is the idol of thy worship, but, like Mark Antony, thou wilt set up Cleopatra beside it. Beware whom thou trustest! most of all, beware of thyself, and thy wildest dreams may yet be realized."

The old chevalier uttered these words with a prophetic energy, and his eyes kindled with enthusiasm. But, when he had ceased speaking, the unwonted excitement disappeared from his features, not gradually, as it would go from the face of youth, but, like a lamp suddenly extinguished, his countenance all at once became calm and divested of every emotion.

The young soldier fixed his dark eyes with astonishment upon the enthusiastic priest while he was speaking, and, when he had concluded, replied, with a heightened colour and flashing eye,

"Noble chevalier, I know not if you are a true prophet or no. My heart or my wishes tell me you speak truly. It is, indeed, my ambition to overtop my fellow−men; and, rather than crawl unmarked among the common herd, and fill, when all is done, a nameless grave "

"Hold! no more! Tell not the friendly wind that fans thy cheek in summer, nor whisper to the senseless blade, whose hilt thou hast now grasped so tightly, what thou wilt do! The camp is the fit school in which to tame and train such a spirit as thine. 'Twill teach thee to measure thy words by line and plumb, and that to veil thy thoughts with language foreign to their bent is the better part of wisdom. By the mass! these young soldiers are either hot or cold till stern experience, with gauntlet on fist, pummels them lukewarm. But I have forgotten thy claims on my hospitality."

"I have already supped," said his guest, as the chevalier rose to order refreshments, "and that, too, beneath a roof," he added, smiling archly, "where fair hands displayed their culinary skill."

"Then François hath played the host as well as ferryman?"

"Even so."

"And, if my memory doth not play me false, thou didst speak of having sweet lips for thy dessert. By the mass! then thou canst not well relish such fare as my poor larder affords. But, if thou hast feasted, thou hast not slept. If thou canst rest on a priest's bed, thou mayst there," he added, pointing to the cott on one side of the apartment, "woo a maiden whom weary travellers seldom woo in vain; for myself, thy stirring news hath once more roused the soldier in me, and will, for this night at least, chase sleep from my eyelids. While thou art seeking that repose so needful for thee, I will plan thy morrow's journey, and afterward prepare such despatches for my political associates as the news of this welcome invasion shall make expedient. Thou canst not ride before the dawn, when a fleet horse and a faithful guide shall await thee on the mainland. So, fair sir, to thy pillow, for thou wilt find

couch nor pillow more between this and thy journey's end."

"Then will I be chary as the jealous husband of his young wife's charms, of what favours the maiden you speak of shall bestow," said the youth, gayly, spreading, as he spoke, his monk's gown upon the floor; "I will not rob you of your couch so hospitably offered, but throw myself before this warm fire, upon this plank; 'tis a bed of down compared with the rough lodgings I have shared of late. May it please you, wake me by the earliest dawn, Sir Chevalier?" he added, stretching himself before the stove, and composing himself to rest.

"That thou mayst depend upon, young soldier," replied the chevalier, seating himself by the table and preparing his writing materials for present use.

"Every moment," he murmured to himself, as he took his pen and commenced writing, "is big with great events, and one hour too soon or late may make or mar what centuries cannot repair." In a few moments he was deeply absorbed in writing, while his guest, wrapped in his robe, slept with the quiet and deep repose of an infant.

CHAPTER III. THE ALARM.

After the fall of the chivalrous Montcalm before the walls of Quebec, and the subsequent surrender of that city to the British troops, the fate of the French dominion in the Canadas was virtually decided. Nevertheless, the French entertained hopes of reversing this decision by recapturing Quebec. The Chevalier de Levi, at that period, was an intrepid and experienced soldier in the prime of life, and distinguished as a leader. He had been trained in the European wars, was a Canadian by birth, and a zealous and enthusiastic patriot. After the death of Montcalm he assembled the remnant of the Canadian forces, and in a few weeks collected an army, composed of regular soldiers and armed peasantry, amounting, in all, to nearly twelve thousand men. With this formidable force he marched upon Quebec, but was encountered a few miles from its gates, on the twentieth of April, seventeen hundred and sixty, by the British general Murray, who, learning his intentions, had issued from the fortress with three thousand troops to offer him battle.

The hostile armies met within a few miles of Quebec, and furiously engaged. The battle was contested with the utmost obstinacy for two hours, the chevalier himself mingling in the thickest of the fight, and performing deeds of valour not unworthy a brave knight of ancient romance. General Murray was at length compelled to retire upon Quebec, with the loss of more than one thousand men, killed, wounded, and taken prisoners, leaving all his baggage and field−artillery to the victors. The loss in the chevalier's army was nearly twenty−five hundred men. Animated with his success, he followed the defeated Murray with spirit, and laid siege to the city, within which he had withdrawn. It was on the point of capitulating, when the garrison was relieved by the arrival of a fleet bringing a detachment of British soldiers. The chevalier, with an undisciplined army, was unable to contend successfully against fresh troops, and, raising the siege, made a precipitate retreat. His followers dispersed, and the fallen chief found himself at sunset deserted by every one save a single attendant, already introduced to the reader as the porter Homfroy.

Despairing of any present means of expelling the conquerors of his native country, the Chevalier de Levi retired into the monastery of St. Claude, then a thriving community, although, at the period of the disguised young officer's visit to the Father Etienne, the name assumed by the military recluse, it was only a ruined asylum for a few aged priests. Were we to weigh carefully the motives that induced the unsuccessful soldier to take this pious step, we should, perhaps, find them composed, in part, of a desire to bury his own disgrace from the world; in part of a morbid melancholy, the consequence of his defeat and disappointment, a disposition of the mind which often drives men both to the church and the cloister; but we should also find that he was governed by a deeper feeling than either of these. Aware that the priesthood were generally disaffected with the existing government, his main object was to attach himself to this body, that, by the aid of so vast an engine of political power, and under the cover of a monastic life, he might combine a conspiracy against the new government, and, when it should become

fully matured, apply the torch to the train he had laid, and spread a revolutionary flame like wildfire throughout the territory.

Such were the motives which converted the Chevalier de Levi into Father Etienne. His schemes, however, never ripened into maturity; and, though always planning and plotting with a perseverance and secrecy not unworthy of Lucius Catiline, and constantly corresponding with the disaffected in every quarter of Canada, and even with ambitious individuals in the British colonies, among whom, as has already been intimated, was the leader of the eastern division of the invading army, yet, on the day we intruded into his retirement, he was as remote from his object, so far as the restoration of the French dominion was concerned, as on the first day he assumed the religious habit. By long devotion to one sole object, from which nothing could make him swerve, aided by an active imagination and a sanguine temperament, the chevalier had become transformed from a calm and dispassionate patriot, devoting himself to his country, into a settled monomaniac. To such a mind, therefore, the threatened invasion, although it did not embrace its long−cherished and favourite project, was, nevertheless, welcome intelligence, inasmuch as it would be, at least, the instrument of overthrowing the government of his conquerors. This object effected, the restoration of the old Canadian *régime*, he was willing to confide to the course of events.

Inspired, therefore, with renewed ardour in the cause to which he had devoted his life, by these tidings of invasion, with his eyes sparkling and his hands trembling with excitement, he seated himself at the table as the young soldier threw himself upon the floor to sleep, and soon became involved in a manifold correspondence. His arguments were skilfully adapted to the circumstances and prejudices of those to whom his letters were addressed. To the disaffected priest, and there were many such throughout the Canadas, he held out the restoration of the Roman Catholic ascendency and the return of the golden days of papal regality. Before the imaginations of those Canadian gentlemen who desired a change of government, he displayed gorgeous pictures of titles and dignities, and predicted the restitution of their alienated privileges and honours; while the eyes of *one* individual, of high birth and once in power, were dazzled with the glitter of a vice−regal crown. No scheme, however wild, seemed impracticable to the mind of this visionary enthusiast. Finally, in addressing a distinguished primate, whose good sense, he was sufficiently aware, would not be blinded either by his sophistry or arguments, however plausible, and who, he was convinced, would withhold his name and influence until there remained no doubt of the re−establishment of the Catholic, or, which was virtually the same thing, the Canadian ascendency, he hinted that the American army was but a few thousand strong; that they should be supported by an active co−operation on the part of the Canadians until they had captured Quebec; "Then, if the partisan leaders are alive to their own interests, which," he continued, "I myself will undertake to be the active instrument in awakening, in the unguarded moment of victory, and by the aid of superior numbers, we can snatch the citadel from their grasp, and, please God, the flag of France will once more float above its towers." The crafty politician facetiously closed his diplomatic letter by relating the fable of the "Monkey and Cat's−paw."

He had folded, and was preparing to seal his letters, when the deep silence of the apartment, which, for the last half hour, had only been interrupted by the busy scratching of his pen and the light breathing of the sleeper, was broken by a loud and lamentable wail from the river, accompanied by the baying and howling of a dog. The next moment it was repeated still more appallingly, and soon after answered by a voice beneath the tower. The cry was a third time heard, and the voice below again answered it back, but now in a loud key of surprise and alarm, so wild and shrill that it chilled the blood of the chevalier, and started the sleeper to his feet; at the same time the bell in the turret above their heads began to ring, breaking upon the stillness of the night with its untimely clamour.

"God of heaven! what means this alarm?" cried the youth, laying his hand on his sword−hilt as he sprung to his feet.

"By the mass! I know not," replied the chevalier, disengaging the lamp from the chain by which it hung, and taking a rapier from behind his bookcase; "one would think the Philistines were upon us."

"List!" said the young soldier, as the cry was repeated in a fainter key, "there is a man drowning in the river. Hasten to his rescue."

The impatient youth seized the lamp in the hands of the chevalier, and, closely followed by him, darted through the gallery, and descended into the hall beneath. Here he was met by an old monk, one of the chevalier's household, his eyes starting from their sockets, his whole frame shaking with terror, and his pale lips trembling with a scarcely articulate exorcism.

"The matter! the cry! what means it?" almost fiercely interrogated the youth, grasping him by the shoulder.

"Salve Domine! Oh! oh! (in profundis) I had been talking a little gossip with good Homfroy, and sipping a little posset for my old body's sake; and while we were sitting there, as innocent as two young virgins, what should we hear but a cry from the water. Oh Lord! oh! I looked out, and there was the old enemy, black as pitch, with horns, and hoofs, and tail (salve Domine) and I shrieked with fear, and would have fallen into a swoon, but "

"Haste ye! haste ye, reverend fathers, there is life and death in thy speed," shouted Homfroy, as the impatient young man flung the old monk from him; "a perishing creature is struggling in the ice, midway the river."

"The ice, Homfroy!" repeated the chevalier, as he waited for him to undo the bolt.

"The ice is as thick as this bar. I looked from my window to answer the call, and saw the moon glistening on it as if 'twere polished steel."

As Homfroy spoke the last word and drew back his last bolt, they rushed past him and hastened to the shore, followed at a more moderate rate by the less agile porter and his gossip the monk, whose terrors could neither keep him within the convent nor paralyze his tongue when without. The atmosphere was still intensely cold, but the moon had risen, and now shed her clear light over forest and river, while the dewy particles upon the grass, crystallized by the frost, reflected her beams, and gave to the sward the appearance of glittering with myriads of minute diamonds. From shore to shore the river was bound in a transparent sheet of ice, and, under the action of the sharp air, the process of congelation was going forward with a celerity to be accredited only by those who have sailed upon a lake at sunset, and crossed it the succeeding sunrise in a carriole.

On arriving at the beach, the attention of the party was directed to a man, whose outline was distinctly visible by the light of the moon, sitting in a boat, which appeared to be fast bound in the ice in the middle of the river, and feebly shouting for aid; while beside him, with his fore paws upon his breast, stood a large dog, whose howls rose above the faint cries of the man.

"It is François," cried the young soldier.

He had scarcely spoken when a shriek from the opposite shore fell piercingly on his ear.

"The saints have mercy!" ejaculated the chevalier, "there is Jaquette's voice. François! poor François!"

"'Tis two good hours since François left," said Homfroy, who now joined the group, puffing and blowing with such unusual exertion, for Homfroy's figure was of Falstaffian dimensions; "it cannot be François; he is in bed long since."

But the reiterated shrieks from the mainland, and the thrilling repetition of the name of François in a voice of agony, sufficiently betrayed the sufferer, whose shouts, growing feebler every moment, had now died away into an occasional moan.

"Poor François!" said the chevalier, "he has got benumbed and frozen up in crossing, and is now past exerting himself farther. Before the ice will be strong enough to bear a man's weight he will be beyond all human aid. Something must be done, please God, and that quickly. By the mass! I haven't felt such an air since the winter of fiftyfive, when I was in the Russian wars! How is the ice?"

The young stranger, who had been actively proving its strength with Homfroy's staff, replied despondingly,

"Frail enough;" and, pressing upon it with his foot, he added, "it will not bear my own light weight; but he must not perish while there exists any means of saving him. Have you a boat on the island?"

"Malheur! a boat? No, no," replied old Homfroy, shaking his head, "a boat can do no good."

"Not a board a plank a fragment of anything?" he continued, traversing the bank in search of something to aid his philanthropic exertions, and maddened by the shrieks of Jaquette.

"There are some remains of an old boat on the bank above," cried the chevalier, eagerly. "Haste and bring them, all of ye," he added, to Homfroy and three or four monks whom the alarm had drawn from their cells. "Ca, courage! my son," he shouted to the sufferer, whose moans had now entirely ceased, "thou shalt yet lift thy voice in many a merry stave."

The young stranger, assisted by the chevalier and his companions, soon collected on the verge of the ice several broken planks from the wreck, and, with skill and celerity, he set about constructing a square frame or hurdle, strengthening it by transverse pieces well secured with cords, which the mother−wit of Homfroy instructed him to draw from a bedstead in one of the deserted cells of the monastery. With the united efforts of the whole party, some minutes were required to complete it. Launching it on the ice, the youth, with a long pole in his hand, placed himself fearlessly but cautiously upon it, and, to the surprise of the monks, by this application of a simple principle in philosophy, of increasing the surface of the weight to be supported, he was sustained where otherwise he would have broken through. With gentle force he pushed from the bank, amid the mingled blessings and prayers of the monks, and the encouraging exhortations of the chevalier.

The undulation of the ice at first filled them with apprehensions for the safety of the intrepid youth. With his person erect and immoveable, he struck out with his pole alternately on each side, changing it from hand to hand with surprising dexterity, aware that his safety and success depended upon the velocity with which he glided over the surface of the ice, and that the briefest pause thereon or the least obstruction, would be fatal both to himself and the individual for whom, with such presence of mind and insensibility to danger, he had perilled his life. The cries of the sufferer had ceased for several minutes before he left the shore, and the shrieks of Jaquette, whom he could distinguish on the bank wringing her hands and surrounded by her children and neighbours, had subsided into a low wailing. Apprehensive that his aid would arrive too late, he exerted himself to such good purpose, that, in a few seconds after leaving the land, he came swiftly alongside of the boat, into which he leaped with the glad shouts of the spectators on the island ringing in his ears, while a cry of joy from the mainland assured him that his motions were not unwatched by one who felt no common interest in his success; and the passing reflection rewarded him for all he had done.

The boat was firmly bound in the ice, which had been broken up about the bow and stern, but the fragments had again united, and showed that the sufferer had for some time ceased his exertions to extricate himself. François, for it was the lighthearted peasant, was seated on the bow−thwart of his boat, with one arm round the neck of his faithful dog, and with his face turned towards his cottage, as if he sought to die with his last look upon his beloved home, his last gaze upon the partner of his bosom and his sweet babes: alas! the home whose threshold he was never to cross more, the wife and babes he was never again to embrace! The young stranger placed his hand on his heart and temples. The pulse of life had for ever ceased to vibrate; his eyes were closed, his head rested upon one shoulder, and his countenance was as calm and peaceful as if he only slept; he seemed to have passed without

pain from the sleep of the living into the deep sleep of the dead.

"Can this be death? so calm, so placid! like one in pleasant and quiet slumber!" thought the young man as he gazed upon his serene countenance by the clear light of the moon; "desirable, indeed, must be that mode of death which leaves the dead so like the living!"

For a few seconds he gazed on the placid face of the dead François, lost in these reflections, and forgetting for a moment the circumstances in which he was placed, when a shout from the chevalier, asking if François was alive, aroused him.

He cast his eyes, without replying, towards the spot where stood Jaquette awaiting the result in deathlike silence Unused to death in any shape, and shocked at the fearful end of his late host, whose lot a brief while before he had compared with his own and envied, he uttered an impatient imprecation against the wretchedness so profusely mingled in the cup of life; and then, overcome with emotion as he thought of the blow about to fall upon the unprotected family, he remained for several seconds incapable of speaking. This tribute to his heart and to human nature was, however, but momentary.

"Hola, brave youth!" again shouted the chevalier, "how fares it with worthy François? Haste with him to the shore, or thou wilt need aid also."

"François is well," replied the young officer, evasively.

At a loss whether to convey the corpse directly to the island, and, until morning, conceal his death from Jaquette, or at once let her know the full extent of her loss, he briefly considered the two modes, and finally decided on removing him immediately to the shore, and placing the body in her charge. He therefore transferred the corpse, now become rigid as marble, to the hurdle, and pushed towards the bank. He moved with difficulty, for his body was already penetrated by the insinuating frost; his hands were nearly deprived of all sensibility, and an oppressive drowsiness, to which he knew it would be fatal to yield, had seized him. As the hurdle touched the bank before her cottage, Jaquette rushed forward and fell lifeless upon the icy body of her husband.

A number of peasants, alarmed by the shouting and the ringing of the convent bell, had already collected on the shore; these he directed to convey the body to the cottage. Several females took charge of the insensible Jaquette, and, bearing her to her dwelling, carried her into an inner room. The young soldier followed them to the cottage and remained in the outer apartment, where, the evening before, he had supped with the happy family under circumstances so opposite to the present, and superintended the laying out of the body. He gave, in a tone of authority, such directions as the event rendered necessary to the neighbours of Fran çois, who had assembled at the house of mourning until the room was filled with a wondering and horror−stricken crowd.

Although his instructions were obeyed with alacrity, they served to draw the attention of the peasants to the speaker, of whose intrepidity several of them had been witnesses. At length he observed that they whispered apart together, and that the eyes of one or two, of rougher exterior and more reckless bearing than their fellows, were directed towards him with glances of suspicion; at the same moment he discovered that his disguise, which he had hastily resumed on starting from sleep, was disarranged, and that a portion of his military dress and the butt of a pistol were visible through its folds.

He therefore waited for an opportunity to withdraw from the room and cottage unobserved, when, nastening to the shore, he recrossed the ice, now firm enough to bear his footsteps, and returned to the monastery, where he found the chevalier with his companions congregated in Homfroy's well−warmed room, impatiently awaiting tidings from the shore.

On being once more alone with the chevalier in his closet, he informed him of the death of Fran çois, and of the unlucky exposure of his profession before the peasants, and insisted on taking his leave immediately, as the appearance of an officer disguised as a monk would be food for gossip, and, perhaps, ultimately lead to unpleasant consequences, particularly if by any means it should be rumoured that an American army was approaching.

The chevalier approved of his plan; and taking from the table the letters he had written during the night, they left the monastery together, and, crossing to the mainland, proceeded towards the cottage of the deceased François.

"Remain without until I come forth," said the chevalier to his companion, placing his hand upon the latch of the door as he spoke.

In a few minutes he came out, followed by an awkward, ungainly clown, stoutly built, with square shoulders, a stolid look, and a skulking air like that of a whipped schoolboy. He appeared to be about twenty−six years of age, and was dressed in the usual garb of his class; his clothes, nevertheless, were much too small for him, and his bonnet much too large.

"Here is the guide who will direct you to the house of the vicaire Ducosse, ten leagues down the valley, to whom you will bear a letter. There," added the chevalier, in a lower tone, "you will obtain another guide. The vicaire you may safely trust. Jacques, conduct the reverend father to thy cottage, and with all diligence saddle thy two horses and mount, and, by the mass! see that thou spare neither hide nor spur. I have told thee wherefore he travels, and it is a matter on thy conscience that thou doest my bidding. So haste and make ready for thy speedy journey. Young sir," he added, addressing the disguised soldier, "I have, for the present, hushed all suspicion among the peasants within the cottage. All will now depend upon your caution. Here are certain despatches, which I pray you to place with all safety into the hands of the Father Guise, who resides at the last post on your route; you will reach it with hard riding by sunset the day after to−morrow. He will attend to their delivery according to their several superscriptions. In this paper you will find directions for your route, and here is an epistle introductory to brother vicaire Ducosse. Farewell, my young friend; God and the saints guide you on your way. Be wise, and you will be successful. Your guide, Jacques, who is a mere animal, you may always trust. His dread of the pains of purgatory, with which, as Father Etienne, I have threatened him if he be faithless or lacking in his duty, is a better guarantee for his honesty than if he were your sworn friend and brother. So good−night, for, peradventure, you are the messenger of a nation's fate." Thus speaking, and warmly grasping his hand, he separated from him and re−entered the cottage.

The monk, as we shall once more term the disguised soldier, followed his guide at a rapid pace along a narrow path which wound by the banks of the river. After a walk of half a mile they stopped before a cottage, resembling, but less picturesque, that of the unfortunate François.

"Enter, father, and warm thy limbs by the embers," said the guide, opening its only door, "and I'll get ready the nags."

"I will help you," replied the impatient traveller; "we can both get warm enough riding; the sooner we mount and are on our road, the better."

He followed his guide through a rude gate into a low stable constructed of logs, where stood two small and spirited Canadian horses, of a breed remarkable for their hardihood. They were soon caparisoned and at the door. Before mounting the peasant entered his cabin, and exchanged the bonnet he wore for a cap of furs, enveloped his body in a capote of fox−skins, and, drawing on a pair of boots and then a pair of gloves, lined with dogskin, with the fur on the outside, said he was ready to ride; at the same time, he presented the monk with similar garments as a necessary protection against the severity of the cold. He gladly accepted and enveloped himself in these comfortable Canadian defences against the rigour of their climate, and, drawing his priestly frock over all,

mounted and followed his guide, who, starting off at a gallop, rode rapidly in a northernly direction, and along a beaten path which led for many miles beside the banks of the river.

CHAPTER IV. THE OATH.

At daybreak the ensuing morning the monk and his guide were full five leagues from the monastery of St. Claude, and pursuing their journey at a rapid rate through a dense forest, along a road which led to a hamlet of a few cottages, situated on the eastern bank of the Chaudiere. As the morning dawned the cold became more intense, increased by a sharp wind that rose with the sun; and as the travellers gained the brow of a hill, from which they caught a view of the distant hamlet, it became so severe that its effect upon any portion of the skin exposed to its penetrating influence was like that of fire.

The cautious guide was so completely enveloped in his furs that there remained scarcely a crevice for his vision, choosing rather that the animal he rode should be left to his own instinct for pursuing the path than that his person should suffer by needless exposure. The monk, incautious, and evidently less experienced in the severities of a Canadian winter, as they descended the hill lifted his visor to survey the far−extended prospect of wood, vale, and river before him. He immediately cried out with pain, experiencing, as the piercing wind touched his cheek and forehead, a burning sensation, as if his skin had been exposed to the hot blast of a sirocco. Following the example of his guide, he enveloped his face in the furs, repeating the language of Milton in describing the abode of Satan:

"The parching air Burns frore (frozen), and cold performs the effect of fire."

"The hamlet thou didst see from the hill aback be where we'll get fresh nags," growled the guide through his furred hood, as they reached the plain on which the hamlet was situated, and were riding along under the protection of the forest. Not receiving any answer, he rode to the side of the monk, who had kept in advance, and continued, in the tone of one who wished to be companionable,

"By St. Claude o' the island! a fire and a cup o' wine would be none the worse for thee or I. Faith, sir, my voice sticks to my jaws."

"Vox faucibus hoesit," said the monk in reply; "this frost makes your speech classical Jacques; and that, too, without the knowledge of your wits, I'll be sworn! But Virgil was a peasant like yourself, and why may not the same base earth that has once yielded gold yield gold again?"

"Anan, father!" slowly responded the stolid peasant, "I know not what thou sayst; tho' an' thou do speak about this here land, then I can tell 'un never better soil was ploughed than be in this plain. But, most worshipful, I'se not over wise in holy things; and, by thy leave, as thou didst but now swear by thyself, may I ask 'un if or no it be a deadly sin, worthy o' purgatory, to make oath by one's self? not that thou canst so sin, holy father, or the church vicaires; no, the saints forbid! It were a good thing to be a savoury priest, and swear betimes. Save us! the godly Father Etienne rippeth out oaths on occasion like a very Turk. Canst tell me, most worshipful, if't be a deadly sin or no?"

"What may be your especial motive, honest Jacques, in seeking to be instructed in so weighty a matter?" asked the monk, gravely.

"Hark ye! holy priest," answered Jacques, in a lower voice, whipping up his jaded steed, and riding closer to the monk's ear, "I would give the best sheep, save the old wether, o' the last year's droppin', and a fat gobbler to boot to roast for thy Christmas dinner, if thou wouldst give me dispensation to swear roundly by my beard without fear o' the pains o' purgatory."

"Ha, Jacques, is it so? I fear the devil is tempting thee to sin," said the monk, solemnly; "thou needst, rather, that I should appoint fasts and penance for the good of thy soul."

"Na, na! seven thousand saints forbid," he answered, hastily, and devoutly crossing himself; "but it were a brave circumstance to swear stoutly when one is with his mates. Wilt take the sheep and fat gobbler, father?"

"Alas, my son! wouldst thou corrupt the church? Thy speech savoureth of mammon. Surely Beelzebub hath possessed thee!"

"Hout, na, most worshipful! but 'tis just thus," responded Jacques, with more animation than he had yet evinced; "I go to mass every Sabbath−day, keep saints' day and holy day, pay my tithe of grain, like a seigneur, to the vicaires (saving hay and potatoes, which holy church asketh not), confess on Newyear's eve, as I hope to do the next one, with help o' the good Virgin; nor do I take oath, save by St. Claude, or the Virgin, or the saints, and such like holy and worshipful oaths, 'gainst which there can be found no scripture, saith porter Homfroy, who is learned in holy things, tho' there be a commandment, he hath told me, 'gainst forswearing by one's self or the hairs of one's beard. It were a brave oath for a proper man, father, this swearing by one's beard!"

"Thou sayst well, Jacques! 'twere a most valiant oath, a gallant, and, withal, a fierce oath. But wherefore, save in its fitness for thy manhood, wouldst thou fortify thy speech by an oath so truculent?"

"Methinks, most worshipful, if I could swear stoutly by my beard when I get back among my mates, they'll no longer let me keep i' the corner or shove me out o' the way, as if I be not a human being and a lad o' mettle, like that loud−swearing Luc Giles, who swears by his beard like a trooper, or even a worshipful priest, bidding me do this and bidding me do that, with a ripping oath that makes the blood run cold to my fingers' ends; and, maybe, if I am not quick enough to suit his humour, comes a knock on the head, and he but a ploughman like myself! But it comes of swearing by his beard; so fearful 'tis to hear him, father!"

"But if there be such valiancy in this oath thou speakst of, worthy Jacques," observed the monk, "what should hinder thee from using a weapon thou hast seen so formidable in the mouths of others? Trust me, Jacques, that fellow's courage lieth altogether in his beard, as thou hast heard the strength of Samson did in his hair."

"By St. Claude, most worshipful!" replied Jacques, with more confidence in his tone, "thou sayst truly. I would," he added, looking on all sides cautiously, and lowering his voice, "I would not be afraid to make oath he had a chicken's liver. Wilt give me dispensation, father?"

"Why ask it, my son? I don't believe this same Luc Giles hath received it?"

"He?" exclaimed Jacques, in a tone of contempt; "not unless he got it from the devil. He is devil−born, father, fearing neither God nor man, and mocks at holy things. He did only yesterday say," continued Jacques, crossing himself with holy horror, "that there was no part of the true cross to be found; and that, if all the pieces said to be of the true cross were put together, they would build a church as big as a cathedral."

"Sacrilegious unbeliever and heretic!" exclaimed the monk.

"So I told him, and he gave me a buffet on the cheek, and bid me begone for a drivelling papist! If thou wilt give me this dispensation, most worshipful," said Jacques, perseveringly returning to the subject of his application, "by the holy St. Claude, an' if I do not swear by my beard in the face of that cock o' the roost, Luc Giles, when next he bids me for an ass do this, and for a runt do that! ay, and look at him fiercely in such a fashion that he shall go fling his oaths at other cattle, then call me coward, that's all."

"Then a good round oath by thy beard will make this cock o' the roost, whose spurs have goaded thy valiant spirit, cut his own comb?"

"Ay, will it, most worshipful," replied the belligerantly−minded Jacques, with confidence in his tone.

"Then, honest Jacques, swear by thy beard till it be gray, and I will warrant thee dispensation from purgatory if thou take oath by each particular hair," replied the monk, spurring forward his tired horse; and adding, as they trotted into the hamlet which they had beheld before them for some time, "here, now, is our resting−place; practise, if thou wilt, thy magic oath a little on the inmates of yonder hostelry, that we may speedily get food and fresh horses."

"By my beard! will I," responded Jacques, stoutly; "and see thou, most worshipful, if they stir not their clumsy limbs to good purpose."

Thus speaking, he applied whip and spur to the flanks of his pony, and, throwing himself off before the door of the inn, held the bridle of the monk's horse while he dismounted, and then began to call lustily upon the inmates.

"Hola, ho! hola! will ye make a holy man wait all day in the cold, while ye are toasting your shins before a good fire? Come forth, I say," he continued, hammering away at the door with the butt of his whip, "or, by my beard! ay, by each particular hair of my beard, will I break down thy crazy door. Stir thee, stir thee! dost hear me take oath by my beard, and movest not? Luc Giles would stir thy stumps an he swore at thee as he hath done at me. Ho! hola, ho!"

While he thus shouted, battering the door between every pause, an old woman in a dark plaid *mantelet* lined with fur, a stuffed petticoat, gay moccasins, and a particoloured headdress, such as is worn by the female peasantry of Lower Canada, and resembling, as well as their other apparel, the costume of the peasantry of Normandy, opened the door and confronted the travellers.

"Father, thy blessing!" she asked, reverently crossing her wrinkled forehead and courtesying as her eye fell on the figure of the monk; "enter, and welcome. Cowl and cassock, though they seldom bring or leave a silver cross in a waysideinn, leave a holy one, which is better in these godless times, when heretics rule the land. What!" she exclaimed, in a very different key, as the monk, passing by her to the fire, left exposed, in full view, the form of the redoubtable Jacques, who, on the first symptoms of an intention to remove the latch of the door from within, discreetly placed the monk's person between his own and the anticipated danger, for Jacques had travelled this road before, and knew with whom he had to do; "what, is't thou, thou brainless fool, who beat at a lone woman's door as if thou wert a foraging voltigeur, and swearing so loudly, too, by thy weazen−faced beard? Mercie! one would believe thou hadst one. The blessed Virgin spare thee what little wit thou hast, Jake," she added, more mildly; "but thou beest cold. Come in, come in, and warm thee, poor helpless body! Jean will take thy nags, and I will see what I can cook up for thine and the father's appetite, for the cold morn has, no doubt, given it edge enough. But, Jake," she whispered in the ear of the guide as he crossed the threshold, "on what message travels the holy man so early and at such speed, for thy nags smoke as if thou hadst not spared spur?"

"A brave monk, and a most worshipful, by my beard, mother Alice," replied Jacques, in a patronising tone, but with the straightforward simplicity of a firm believer in what he uttered; "he goeth to the great capital to shrive the pope's sublime holiness, as Homfroy calleth him."

"Out upon the fool," exclaimed the dame, indignantly; "who told thee that round lie? Dost not know, thou heathen, that the pope lives over the salt sea, and, at need, can shrive himself? Who gave thee such dolt's broth for thy gullet?"

"By my beard," responded Jacques, in defence, "so said the worshipful Father Etienne. He bid me, too, to guide him to Father Ducosse, and to tell thee, dame Alice, thou must give thy son Jean's ploughing−nags for the road, and take mine. I'll have them safe back in thy stalls by the morn."

"Hoit! and does he think I'm to lose a day's work o' the nags for naught? Did the father give thee silver, lad?" inquired the dame, with professional care of her own interest.

"Didst ever know a priest give coin, mother? He bid me tell thee thou shouldst have absolution for thy life's sins when he next rides this way, an thou properly do his bidding. And, if thou dost ask him, old mother, he'll give thee leave to swear by thy beard."

"I'd pull thy fool's beard, an Heaven had given thee one, thou brainless idiot," cried the old dame, in the height of her indignation, conscious that her chin would have done better credit to Jacques's oath than his own scantily−sown beard could have done; "I know not if thou art more fool than knave! But in, in with thee! Thou shalt have the nags, if 'twere only to be rid of thee," she said, in a mood between good−nature and ill−humour. "'Tis time the father had somewhat to break his fast."

Their meal, which she hastily prepared, was eaten with rapidity and in silence. The fresh beasts were brought to the door, and, resuming their furs, which they had laid aside as they seated themselves at the table, the travellers once more mounted their horses. The monk, as he rode past the door, bestowed with his solicited blessing a piece of money upon the hostess, accompanying it with a compliment on her fare.

"Mercie!" she cried, casting her eyes with astonishment upon his religious gown as he trotted off, followed by Jacques; "he must be the holy pope himself, to give good silver with such a free hand. It's not the way o' the ordinary fathers I've met with in my day. I've lived threescore years and better, kept open hostel fourteen o' them come Christmas, and never, till now, did I see the colour o' priests' coin; by the same token, they have often seen the colour o' mine. Well, 'tis good ringing silver," she concluded, dropping it on the stone step of the door before closing it, "and I'll keep it for luck."

The monk and his attendant, mounted on fresh horses, now rode rapidly forward, their road still winding along the banks of the Chaudiere, which were bordered for many miles with larches, oaks, sycamores, elms, and cedars, some of them of im mense size, and many retaining their dark mantles of evergreen, of which even winter could not rob them. Others, stripped of their summer foliage, flung abroad their scraggy and unsightly limbs, striking emblems of that desolation which winter, like an exulting conqueror, spreads over the smiling face of nature. The region through which they rode was diversified by extensive pasture−lands and well−stocked farms in a high state of cultivation; and, as they proceeded, it became more populous. Here and there a church tower rose in the distance, hamlets and farmhouses became more frequent, and on all sides the characteristic signs of a populous country were visible. The scenery constantly varied in its character, and often called forth expressions of admiration from the traveller, who frequently paused, breathing his horse the while, to gaze upon its sublime or picturesque features. At one time, the perspective combinations of the view changing with every mile they advanced, they wound through a deep gorge, worn by the river, here too wild and unruly to be confined by the grasp of winter, and pouring with velocity through its contracted bed, its surface broken into numerous cascades. At another time they skirted the base of lofty cliffs, wooded to their summits, and towering in savage grandeur above their heads. At another they ambled through a pleasant lane, bordered by fruit trees, with the white cottage of the *habitans* dispersed at intervals along their route; and now they traversed a narrow dell shut in by hills cultivated to their tops, or some secluded vale, in which contentment and domestic peace seemed to have taken up their abode. The river, raging among rocks or tumbling in cascades, wild with overhanging cliffs, or embellished with beautiful islands, was a feature in every change of the panorama. Even where its placid course was arrested, as it meandered through some interval, by the frost of the preceding night, its surface was as transparent as when, bearing the breast of the wild fowl or the skiff of the fisherman, it glided along between banks of summer foliage.

About an hour before noon, without having met with any obstacle or seen scarcely a human being, save occasionally a *bucheron* cleaving his winter's fuel in the forest, a few peasants labouring on their farms, a female or a group of children peeping through the windows of the closely−shut cabins, they arrived in sight of a stone house situated on the side of a hill facing the south.

"You be my journey's end, father," said Jacques, pointing to the habitation, "tho' if't be thine or no, thy worshipful wisdom knoweth best. By my beard! father, the nags smell the fodder, and move brisker the latter end o' the way than at the outset."

Indeed, the horses, with characteristic instinct, seemed to be equally aware, with Jacques, that they were approaching their journey's end, or, at least, a baiting−place; for, when the house appeared in sight they pricked up their ears, and set off at a vigorous pace, which they kept up until they arrived at the place of their destination. The house before which the wearied travellers drew up was a square stone edifice, two stories high, with a single wing, and surrounded by a piazza. A light portico protected the front entrance in winter and shaded it in summer. It was separated from the road by a court, and accessible by a gravelled walk bordered by young evergreens, among which were the pine, hemlock, and hackamatack, or red larch.

Dismounting at the gateway of the courtyard, the traveller approached the dwelling, leaving the horses in charge of Jacques. Ascending the portico, he knocked at the door with a good will, to which his half frozen condition and impatience of delay contributed not a little. His summons was answered by the creaking of a bolt, and the next moment the appearance of a middle−aged man in the open door. He was attired in a dress half clerical, half laical, such as Catholic priests are wont to wear in their own houses. His visage was thin and cadaverous, and his frame large and bony. His countenance wore a mild and benevolent, yet indolent expression, while a twinkling gray eye beneath shaggy brows betrayed humour and intelligence.

"Bénédicité!" he said, saluting the monk with grave politeness; "enter, brother, and share our genial fire, for that, I see, thou needst most; meanwhile," he added, with the ready hospitality of the Canadian clergy, "I'll have thee food prepared, and see thy beasts safely housed. 'Tis a bitter day to be abroad. Winter hath come upon us *manibus pedibusque*, as the Latin hath it, which is to say, with tooth and nail; but it becometh me not to paraphrase the tongues to thee, erudite brother, albeit the habit of holding converse daily with the specimen of Eve's kind, who ruleth my domestic matters, leadeth me to do it oftentimes incontinently; but, *scitè ac munditer condit cibos*, sayeth Plautus, which, in the vernacular, signifieth that she is a good cook. Her skill thou shalt try anon, as I perceive she hath already spread the board for the meridian repast."

"Reverend and learned curé," replied the monk, whom, while he was speaking, the host had ushered into a well−heated room, the agreeable temperature of which was preserved by a large fire blazing in the chimney and a stove placed in the centre, "I honour the wisdom of your selection in so nice and difficult a matter as the choice of a cook or *coquus* as much as I respect your learning. While I do justice to her culinary talents, which, I doubt not, do infinite credit to your judgment, I will acquaint you with the cause of my intrusion into your domicilium."

The monk, who had intuitively caught and chimed in with the humour of his host during the progress of the meal which, in passing, be it remarked, was in every respect unexceptionable related to him so much of his object as was necessary to ensure his co−operation and present aid in forwarding him in security on his way; this was further ensured through the influence of the chevalier's letter, which he at the same time gave him.

"Me hercule! worthy juvenis, or youth," exclaimed the curé, when he had completed the pe rusal of the letter, "thou hast begun young to go forth to the wars. But Saint David slew Goliath thou knowst the Vulgate, I doubt not, wherein the story is related at length? and thy years, peradventure, may likewise do honour to the valiant man of war who sent thee on this perilous message. But, touching this epistle from brother Etienne," he said, looking over the letter once more, and then carefully folding it up, "I reply in the words of Tullius Cicero, `*Dum lego, assentior*.' Thou shalt be forwarded on thy journey forthwith, for the business thou hast in hand requireth

diligence. The saints bring about that for which I long have wearied them, even the restoration of our church's dignity and power in the land, and among the rulers thereof. But thou wilt not ride now, my son," he said, seeing his guest rise from the table and prepare to resume his travelling apparel; "all too soon, all too soon after eating.

"`Post prandium stabis, Post coen'ambulabis,' saith the school−rhyme, which, in the vernacular, hath been rendered, "`After dinner sleep a while, After supper walk a mile.'

"Verily, young cavalier or brother for thou art the one or the other as I look either on thy quick eye and gallant bearing, or upon the cowl and gown, which, I cannot but observe, thou wearest after an ill and awkward fashion, I fear it is a scandal for the church's vestments to be put to such unseemly uses," he continued, sighing, and crossing himself with the wing of a chicken, with which his teeth had been busy while he was speaking. "Verily thou must not leave me yet," he added, wiping his lips with a napkin, and pledging his guest in a cup of mild wine; "I will first teach thee the *scientia popinæ*, or the art of concocting savoury messes, known and esteemed by the ancients, as thou mayst learn on reference "

"Pardon me, learned curé," interrupted the monk, enveloping his head, as he spoke, in his fur bonnet, "I would gladly be your pupil in this honourable science, seeing that the generous repast I have but now partaken of bears testimony to its utility; but, if it be possible, I must be on horseback within the hour, as my next post is twelve leagues off, and I desire to be there before morning. Therefore, father, you cannot better please me, or aid the cause you have at heart more, than by forwarding me on my journey at once. A fleet horse and a trusty guide were more acceptable than an abbot's feast."

"Thou shalt have both, *Deo volente*, my son," said the curé, promptly, his naturally indolent mind receiving impetus from the spirit of the youth; and laying his knife and fork down on his plate with a sigh, he rose and left the room. In a short time he returned, and said,

"I have saddled my own *equus* or steed for thee, my son, and sent to a worthy dame, one of my parishioners, to borrow another; a beast, though of less comeliness of form, of equal mettle; him the good woman's son will ride. The boy is but an untamed cub, and will exercise thy patience. Nathless, he will conduct thee to the convent of St. Therese, from which place thou wilt obtain another guide to the St. Lawrence."

In the course of half an hour, the lad destined to take the place of Jacques, who, be it here recorded, had feasted sumptuously with the "coquus or cook," came into the room. He was about fifteen years of age, remarkably small in stature, with a snub nose, given to upturning, lively, twinkling, mischievous gray eyes, one of which was marvellously asquint, straight yellow hair, and a red freckled face, the expression of which was mingled intelligence and cunning. His manners were forward, and indicated self−possession above his years. He was rolled up in fur tippets and muffs till he appeared as broad as he was long. He entered the room whisking his riding−switch about, and without doffing his fur bonnet, which was made of a foxskin with the brush hanging down his back, in a shrill voice and with a swaggering air, looking from a corner of his eye at the monk, he addressed the curé.

"This, then, be the priest, Father Duc, I'm to ride with to St. Therese? The devil help me, if he gabble as much Latin as thou, father, there will be but little wit spoken on the road."

"Chut st, chut st! Zacharie Nicolet, with thy malapert tongue; thou art but a young pup to bark so fiercely," cried the curé, forgetting his Latin in his displeasure.

"And thou art a toothless hound, which can neither bark nor bite," retorted the lad, with spirit.

"*Habet salem*; the lad hath the true Attic on his tongue," said the good−natured curé, whose anger was never very durable, at the same time turning round to the monk and nodding with a smile of approbation; "if I could have him

aneath my thumb a while, to teach him the humanities and the golden tongues, he might, peradventure, do honour to my instructions; as it is, he is, I opine, but game for the gallows."

Zacharie, who did not relish this speech, was about to reply with some pertness, when the monk, fixing upon him his piercing eyes with a steady gaze until he quailed beneath them, said sternly,

"A truce, boy, to this rudeness, and know better the respect due to age. If you are to be my guide to St. Therese, mount and ride; and if that saucy tongue be not more civil on the way, you will find you have to deal with a hound, to use your own figure, which can both bark and bite."

The boy, whose natural acuteness of observation led him to estimate properly the ludicrous points in the character of the simple−minded curé, although incapable of appreciating, at the same time, the excellent qualities of his head and heart, had wit enough to know, from his stern eye and voice, that the stranger was a man of different metal, and that he might, perchance, endanger his personal comfort by presuming to trifle with him. He therefore left the room somewhat crestfallen, and, mounting his horse at the gate, awaited the appearance of the monk, who remained behind to reward the services of the faithful Jacques, bargain with him for the purchase of the furs he had loaned him, and, at his request, bestow upon him his parting blessing, confirming with it, in full, the grant of dispensation for which he had petitioned on the journey.

"Thou'lt see, most worshipful," said Jacques, stroking his chin and looking straightforward with a fierce aspect, "when next thou comest our way, how bravely I'll swear by my beard! I shall not sleep the night for thinking on't. If Luc Giles don't take his fish to another market, then call me jack−fool. So good−e'en to ye, father," he continued, lifting his bonnet as the monk mounted his horse, "and the saints send ye on the way to the worshipful pope ere he die. It would be an awful circumstance for the great pope to die in his sins!" he added, devoutly crossing himself.

"God assoilzie him!" ejaculated the pious curé, mechanically, without any very definite intelligence whom his prayers were to benefit.

"Father," added Jacques, while assisting the traveller to adjust his stirrups, and covering his feet with the fur of his capote, "keep a tight rein on thy mare, and a tighter one on that Satan's brat, Zacharie Nicol. If thou wouldst keep him in his place, swear roundly at him by thy beard, or by mine own, an thou likest, seeing thine is but young, and he will keep in his proper paces, I'll warrant me. But, most worshipful," he added, in a low tone of voice, taking the rein of the monk's horse as he was about to ride off, "give not Nick the dispensation for "

"What art thou nicking at there in the father's ear, thou long−eared ass? I'll switch thy beardless chaps for thee if thou hinder the priest's journey," shouted the boy, whose quick ears caught this sacrilegious abbreviation of his name.

The confounded ex−guide immediately released his grasp on the bridle, while the monk, bidding farewell to him and his reverend host, rode briskly forward past his youthful Mercury, who, before galloping after him, turned his body half round in the saddle and shook his whip at the curé, crying, in his peculiarly shrill voice,

"If thou wilt have a scholar to teach thy Latin to, Father Duc, thou hast an ass standing beside thee whom thou mayst teach the tongues, as asses have been taught to speak ere now."

"Profane and thankless *adolescentulus*," ejaculated the curé, looking after the boy for an instant with mingled astonishment and indignation, "*ita vertere seria ludo*, the which meaneth," he added, turning to the no less shocked Jacques, whom he surveyed closely for an instant, as if the hint of the departing Zacharie had not been altogether lost, and he was estimating his capabilities for receiving the honours which the lad had so unaccountably despised, "which meaneth, my son, the making a jest of sacred things."

"By my beard!" swore Jacques, after the form of his successor had fairly disappeared in a winding of the road, "if I had the limb o' Beelzebub by the nape o' the neck, an I wouldn't make him think Luc Giles's claws griped his weasand, may I never more make oath by my beard!"

Thus delivering himself of his indignation, Jacques followed the curé into his dwelling, where we shall, for the present, leave him, either to be duly inducted into the rudiments of the humanities by the learned priest, or into the elements of cookery by the specimen of mother Eve he retained in his household, as the mental or physical propensities of the pupil should predominate.

CHAPTER V. THE STORM.

The traveller and his new guide had not measured three leagues from the hospitable mansion of Father Ducosse before the short day of the season closed. The sun, leaving behind a lurid glow, went down in a thick bank of clouds, and the general aspect of nature foreboded a storm. The approach of night, however, did not hinder their journey; but, moving forward at a round pace, they only stopped to breathe and bait their horses at the infrequent inns along their route, if a lonely peasant's cottage, whose inmates, from hospitality rather than for lucre, received and entertained the few travellers who chanced to pass that way, can be so denominated.

Towards midnight the air became milder, and the stars, which hitherto had lighted them on their way, began to fade gradually from the sky, as a thin white haze spread over it like a veil of gauze. The moon at length rose through a dense atmosphere, and soon after the whole heavens became white with a thick vapour, which totally obscured her disk, but without sensibly increasing the darkness of the night. Dark clouds along the horizon at length began to ascend towards the zenith, and the winds to sigh through the forests. On observing these increasing indications of a gathering tempest, the monk urged forward his horse, and called to his guide, who lagged behind amusing himself by striking at the branches above his head, to make better speed.

"If you use your whip, Zacharie, on your pony's back, it will be more to the purpose than your present pastime! How far now to the convent St. Therese?" he asked.

"A league and a leap, father; but why dost thou not call me `son' instead of Zacharie? You holy fathers are ever soning it, as if you'd make up for your own lacking therein by fathering every beggar's brat in the land. By my mother's honesty, 'tis a wise son knows his own father when so many holy fathers call him `son' and `my son.' "

"You speak not unadvisedly, Zacharie, and 'tis lest such relationship should be fastened on me that I omit, in your particular case, this form of speech."

"Thou hast more wisdom that I gave thy cloth credit for, father," replied the boy, at the same time, instigated by his restless spirit, making his horse caricole until he made a demivolt across the road against the monk, in a manner that would have sent him from his saddle to the ground if he had been an indifferent horseman; the catastrophe which was, no doubt, anticipated by the mischievous urchin.

"So, so, Paul! So, so!" he began, apologetically, soothing the animal, "hast thou no better manners than to thrust thy buttocks 'gainst a holy monk? By my grandmother's spectacles! thou shalt suffer purgatory unless thou mend thy manners. Oh, ciel! ouf!" he suddenly cried out with pain, as the monk's riding−whip came in contact with his face, "ai! ah! thou canst use a switch, father, as well as rosary. Malheur! Thou hast made the fire fly out o' the eyes o' me, father," he added, in a tone that had lost a large portion of its assurance, and riding cautiously beyond reach of the monk's whip, "as if they had been flints and thy switch a steel blade."

"Then husband your tricks to practise on less hasty travellers, Zacharie. Here is salve to anoint your eyes," he added, good−humouredly, and giving him a piece of money.

"Callest thou this salve?" said Zacharie, thrusting the half−crown into his cheek; "if I had eyes over my body as thick as a peacock has on his tail, thou mightst have leave to switch away at them, one at a time, if thou wouldst heal them again with such ointment."

"I believe you honest, Zacharie; for once in your life, I'll be sworn! you have spoken truth. But forward. We must get under cover before this storm comes on. How say you, a league farther?"

"A league from that wheezing, rheumatic bridge we crossed ere thou gavest me that ready cut across the blinkers. I tell thee, I like thee better for a blow given in right good−will, when on just provocation, which I will not say thou hadst not, than if thou didst mumble prayers in thy hood for my soul's benefit, as if I were a born heathen, as some monks I've seen would do, or fling hard Latin at my head like Father Duc. Were I a man, I would like to try switches with thee, ay, and steel, didst thou carry such ungodly gear beneath thy monk's habit."

"What do you mean, boy?" inquired the monk, hastily wrapping his gown closer about his person, and riding nearer his guide.

"I mean, father," replied Zacharie, edging farther off, and shaking his head mysteriously, "that I spied the hilt of a sword and the gleam of something like pistol−butts peeping aneath thy gown when thy fingers were searching for that ointment thou gavest me."

"Nay, boy, it was but my rosary and silver crucifix you saw," said the monk, drawing from his bosom and exhibiting, by the faint light, these insignia of his apparent profession; "these are our spiritual sword and pistol, my son, with which we combat the arts of the devil."

"The devil combat me, then," said the boy, incredulously, "if I am fool enough to mistake the arms of a brave soldier for those of a craven monk! But thou knowst best, father," he added, dryly.

For the next five minutes he busily occupied himself in switching the ears of his nag, and appeared to have quite forgotten the subject; and the monk, adopting the wisest course to put to sleep any suspicion that he might entertain dangerous either to his safety or the success of his mission, ceased to speak any farther upon it. He determined, however, to watch him closely on his arrival at the convent, lest he might betray the secret of his disguise, for he was convinced that the boy felt satisfied he had not been deceived, although he might pretend to admit the explanation given him.

The atmosphere continued to thicken above their heads, and the night grew sensibly darker every moment. The first approaches of the long−brewing storm were at length manifested by the occasional falling of a crystal of snow, which rapidly increased in size and numbers till the air was filled with multitudinous flakes, whitening, as they fell, their shaggy garments, their horses, the branches of the trees, and the path before them. In a few minutes the surface of the ground was perfectly white, and, the wind dying away, the snow fell in a heavy, noiseless shower, and soon nearly obliterated all traces of their path. Fearing they should lose it altogether, they galloped forward, and, amid a genuine Canadian snowstorm, which would have rendered it difficult, if not impossible, to proceed much farther through a forest, every vestige of which the snow was momently erasing, while it bewildered them by confusing and obscuring every object, they arrived at the place of their destination on the brow of a hill overhanging the river.

The convent St. Therese, into which we are about to introduce the reader, was a retreat erected by one of the religious communities of the capital as a place of safety or security during the heat of summer, the prevalence of an epidemic, the dangers of war, or any event which might render a residence in the city insecure or inconvenient. It was, as the travellers discovered on getting close to it, a quadrangular edifice of brick, one story in height, with a single square tower rising from the centre, and surrounded by a low brick wall, enclosing a lawn ornamented with forest trees. It was situated on the summit of a cliff rising boldly from the river, and at the southern extremity

of a gorge a mile in length, through which, at a profound depth, the river furiously raged over a rocky bed. Opposite the convent, separated from it by the river, rose lofty hills covered with forests, with the jagged face of a rock protruding here and there from their sides. This site was chosen rather for the romantic features of the surrounding scenery than for its capabilities of defence in case of hostile attack; yet, difficult of access, and commanding the only road leading through the defile, it was equally suited either for a religious retirement or a military fortress. The monastic community was composed, at the time of our traveller's visit, of four or five *religieuses professées*, several novices, the lady superior, and a father confessor.

"Here, father," said Zacharie, as they drew up their weary horses before a gate placed in the wall surrounding the convent, "here thou'lt find those that wear the gown as well as thou, and carry sharper weapons than that crucifix thou tellest of."

"How mean you, Sir Wisdom?" carelessly asked the monk, dismounting as he spoke, and lifting a heavy knocker, which he applied several times loudly to the solid panel of the gate to which it was affixed.

"Dost not know, then? but how shouldst thou know what I mean, being a monk," said the boy, with a touch of irony in his voice. "I speak of the demoiselles whose tongues and eyes are sharper than the two−edged sword Father Duc preaches about. Ciel! If thou couldst hear my old dam's clapper go at times, thou wouldst say ne'er convent bell rung louder or sword cut sharper. Mercie! I never see a petticoat but I plug my ears. Hearest thou not their chattering even now? That knocker in thy hand has set them to cawing, as I've heard a roost of crows when I chanced to send a rock among them."

"Hush, boy! your tongue would outwoman them all!" said the monk. Then grasping his arm as he stood beside him near the gate, he added, sternly, "While within these walls, if wise, you will keep your tongue closely within your teeth, or you will feel a heavier weight than that of my riding−switch." As he spoke a light appeared in a window of the convent, and an individual, thrusting his head forth, desired to know who disturbed the repose of the inmates at an hour so untimely.

"A black sheep o'thine own flock, Father Bonaventure," shouted Zacharie, in reply, adding, in a lower voice, "but I think he be a wolf in sheep's clothing."

"Boy," said the monk, in a decided tone, "I perceive you are aware that I am not what I seem. Beneath your assumed levity you have a sufficient share of good sense, which now may be of service to you. I have here, as you rightly guessed," he continued, placing his hand on his sword, "what will at once release me from all fear of betrayal. But do not start back. You have no cause for alarm. I shall not harm a hair of your head. I will do better, trust to your generosity for preserving the secret you possess! Have I mistaken my man?" he added, in a tone of frank and manly confidence, which, with his language, made its intended impression on Zacharie, who, with his reckless and mischievous nature, possessed a generous spirit and certain inborn sentiments of honour, rude though they were, and hidden under a heedless exterior, often allied to such wild and dauntless characters as his; and the attitude assumed by the monk at this crisis not only furnished a proof of his knowledge of human nature, but did honour to his heart.

"No, thou hast not mistaken me," replied the boy, firmly, and with a respectful courtesy in his voice and manner that surprised the monk; and then adding, in something like his usual manner, "be thou priest or soldier, monk or devil, I would not now betray thee. None shall know from me thou art other than a mumbling friar, with a beard a full yard long, hollow eyes, bony cheeks, and withered to a 'natomy. That thou carriest only rosary and crucifix I will take my gospel oath. Father Duc," he continued, in his usual manner, "should have trusted me. But he thinks me either a fool or a knave, or both; but, for that matter, I never had but little reputation for aught except evil. Thou art the first man that ever saw in me other than the horned devil himself. How thou shouldst know me in one night's ride better than the old women, priests, and habitans I've lived with all my life, is odd enough. But thou hast not misplaced thy confidence; and, for treating me like a reasonable being as thou hast done, instead of doing

thee an injury, I would fight for thee against my mother. But one thing I will frankly tell thee, father," he said, in a low tone, as a man with a lantern crossed the lawn to the gate, "that if thou hadst not placed this confidence in me, but had sought by threats and offers of violence to ensure my secrecy, then thou shouldst have swung for it after, if, as I believe, thou art a spy."

"Is it a brother who craves our hospitality this wintry night?" asked, in a sonorous, drawling voice, a corpulent person, in cowl and gown hastily thrown on awry, peering as he spoke between the bars of the gate, and thrusting the lamp through the interstices to his elbow, to examine the travellers more nearly, although their persons, wrapped in furs and whitened with a thick coat of the still falling snow, were scarcely distinguishable, and resembled to the vision of the fat priest shaggy polar bears standing upright on their hind legs as much as men.

Apparently satisfied with his scrutiny, he began with great deliberation to unlock and disengage the padlock from the bars which crossed and firmly secured the double leaves of the gate, and admitted the travellers and their horses. After closing the gate he conducted the latter to a range of brick stalls standing not far from it; and then, leaving Zacharie to attend to the comfort of the animals, he led the way, with a sort of limping gait, across the court to the door of the convent.

"The snow hath somewhat mollified the air, brother," he said, as they arrived at the door, "yet a warm brand may not be amiss. So I bade Sister Agathe, as I came forth to admit thee, to rake open the embers in the refectory; thither I will lead thee. Crooked sticks make even fire; therefore will Sister Agathe's labours soon expel the cold from thy limbs."

So saying, he preceded the traveller through the door, and entered a narrow passage, turning abruptly to the left; at the opposite extremity was an open door, through which they passed into a large apartment totally dark.

"When the candles are out all cats are gray," said the confessor, punching his guest familiarly in the ribs.

At the farther end of the room was a huge fireplace, in which, upon a pile of smoking wood, lay a few coals, the glare of which as they were at intervals blown up by the asthmatic breath of an aged female, who, with a religious habit flung in rude dishabille over her shoulders, was on her hands and knees before it, served, in conjunction with the faint light of the lantern held by the host, to increase the cheerless gloom of the large apartment instead of dissipating the darkness.

"Sister Agathe," said the priest, or father confessor, as more correctly he should be denominated, "thou hast but a cold fire for cold travellers."

"Rome was not built in a day," growled the old crone.

"Neither," he added, with some severity, "now that I view thee more closely, is thy attire becoming the presence of strangers. Hie thee to thy cell, woman, and complete thy toilet, and then see that couches are prepared in the guest's lodge. I myself will take thy place at the hearth."

"Let not thy tongue cut thy throat," retorted the woman, with asperity, as she shuffled out of the room.

"A fool's bolt is soon shot," rejoined Father Bonaventure, as she departed.

A bright blaze soon rewarded him for the unusual and lavish expenditure of wind from his capacious lungs. After the traveller and Zacharie, who had returned from the stable and was fast asleep on the hearth, had sufficiently partaken of its genial heat, the former proceeded to make known his errand to his host.

"You are, worthy father," he said, suddenly turning, and bending his eyes full upon him, "a good Catholic, and have the welfare of church and state at heart, I trust?"

"Heaven forbid it should be otherwise, brother," answered the priest with quickness, suspiciously eying his guest from the corner of one eye as he sat beside him. Then crossing his fat hands over his puncheon−like person, while he twirled his thumbs, as if perplexed at the question, he asked,

"Why, why puttest thou such a query to me, brother?"

"Are you well affected towards the present government, father?" interrogated the monk, without appearing to regard his question.

Father Bonaventure hitched his person along the bench, and eyed the monk from head to feet, as if he expected to see horns, or a hoof at the very least, while his features were agitated by a complex expression of mingled distrust and confidence. The former sentiment at length predominated, and with a voice and manner partly the effect of his fears and suspicions, and partly assumed as a feeler to fathom the purpose of his interrogator without politically committing himself, he said,

"Avoid thee, Sathanas! wouldst thou ensnare me to my own hurt?"

"Not so, father," replied the monk, smiling, and at once comprehending the ruse; "I am the bearer of weighty news from Father Etienne, whom I left last night. His name should be a key to confidence between us. I touched your pulse with a question or two, good father, for my own private satisfaction, before I opened my business."

"Verily, thou didst somewhat alarm me," replied Father Bonaventure, drawing a long breath, as if a great weight had suddenly fallen from his breast; "I thought thee an inquisitor of government, and, as I have been of late somewhat given to insurgent speech and opinions, I feared the worst. Yea, verily, `the guilty fleeth when no man pursueth.' Thou bearest with thee, brother, doubtless, some writing or token that I may confer with thee in safety touching the matter which thou wouldst open to me?"

"I do. It is the Chevalier de Levi!"

"Then thou art doubly welcome," said Father Bonaventure, moving back to his former place near his guest, and warmly grasping his hand. All distrust instantly disappeared from his jocund physiognomy, and was replaced by an air of profound mystery, nowise diminished by the significant application, as he looked at his guest, of the fore finger of his left hand to the side of a nose of the most formidable dimensions.

After a long conference in relation to the expected invasion, the monk, not having thought it prudent to undeceive his host in the opinion he entertained of his sacerdotal character, was conducted by him to a comfortable and well−furnished cell in a distant part of the convent. On taking leave of him for the night and commending him to the protection of St. Therese, the father assured him that he should be furnished in the morning with a guide and a carriole, for the snow would render such a mode of travelling necessary, to convey him to the St. Lawrence.

CHAPTER VI. THE MATINS.

The ensuing morning our traveller was roused from his short repose by the loud tolling of the convent bell for matins, and the voice of Father Bonaventure at the outside of the door of his dormitory.

"Wilt thou not up to morning prayer, brother? I will attend thee to our little oratory, where we are wont to commence the duties of the day with orisons."

"I thank you, brother, for so carefully watching over my spiritual welfare," replied the monk, rising from the bed on which he had thrown himself, without laying aside his disguise, and opening the door; "I have had brief time for sleep; yet two or three hours snatched from the twenty−four is enough for youth, though hardly sufficient for age like yours. I fear I broke in somewhat roughly on your repose last night."

"Not a whit, not a whit, brother. `It is not wise to wake a sleeping lion,' saith the old proverb, but the contrary may perchance be true of a sleeping friar. Hey, brother?" said the confessor, chuckling at his own happy conceit, and glancing at his guest for applause, rubbing the while his hands together to keep them warm by the friction.

"I will, nevertheless, try and atone for my intrusion in some degree by making a speedy departure," observed the monk.

"Not so, good brother, not so; I would have thee abide here as long as it may suit thy convenience. Thy companionship will be most welcome. It is ill biding alone among womankind; to hold colloquy with poor silly creatures like Sister Agathe, on whose dull senses wise words are cast away, like the throwing of goodly pearls before swine; and, moreover, she is deaf as a *mosquenonge*."

"Is Sister Agathe the only companion of your solitude, brother?" inquired the monk, in an indifferent tone, of Father Bonaventure, as he slowly led the way through the gallery, his locomotion somewhat retarded by the spherical honours of his outward man and a gouty halt in his left leg.

"Marry is she not!" he replied, looking back over his shoulder, his portly dimensions not permitting his guest to walk beside him in the passage. "First there is the superior (between us, brother, she would be more properly denominated the `inferior'), whose physiognomy is compounded of a squint and a twisted nose; and, moreover, she suffereth under that curse to the sex, red hair; these attractions, keeping lovers at a proper distance, drove her, at the discreet age of thirty−five, to take the veil; verily, a wise covering for such a frontispiece."

"And does this tempting specimen of the sex comprise, with Sister Agathe, all your household, brother?" asked the monk, gravely.

"By St. Therese, no, good brother! There are some half dozen religieuses who are full of the odour of sanctity; dried and withered from prayer and fasting. Hang them up in the wind, and it would whistle an *ave* through their bones. The very floor creaks *credo* when they move across it. A mouse might wear their consciences in his breast and not sin. Yet, saints ha' mercy, brother! for want of sins to confess for the kind must ever be chattering they puzzle their brains to conjure up vain imaginings, and din half−hatched iniquities into mine ears. I believe they would all turn murderers and robbers to have one good round sin to bring up to confession."

"Truly, you have a trying time of it, brother," replied the monk, in a sympathizing tone, as Father Bonaventure paused to take breath, and draw a long sigh of pitiable distress, as he poured his griefs into a brother's willing ear; "your circumstances call for the virtue of patience."

"Assuredly do they, brother," said Father Bonaventure, stopping full at the door of the chapel and taking his guest by the sleeve, "assuredly do they! There is Sister Ursule, as straight, thin, fleshless an anatomy as the breath of life ever flitted about in, comes to me with a holy smile that would turn a mug of new ale to vinegar, and says, forsooth, she must confess to me under seal, having sinned to her soul's damage and the church's scandal. And what think you," he continued, with the air of a man seriously and grievously distressed, at the same time looking his guest full in the eyes with a serio−comic expression, "what think you, brother, this great iniquity proved to be, after all?"

"I cannot well guess," replied the monk, surveying with a smile the fat, round bulk of the confessor, "unless it were that the frail Ursule cast forbidden glances on your goodly person."

"Verily, thou hast guessed it, shrewd brother; but, Heaven be thanked, Dan Cupid had no finger in her holy thoughts," he devoutly ejaculated. "When I urged her to unburden her conscience, she says to me, with much sighing and whispering, `Reverend father, while I chanced to elevate my eyes at vespers, they fell upon thy reverend whiskers" ' (here Father Bonaventure complacently stroked these not altogether uncomely appendages to his cheeks), "`and, tempted by the devil, I bethought me, in the midst of a paternoster, if holy and youthful St. Timothy's sacred cheeks had whiskers for adornment like thine own.' Mis éricorde!" added the father, fetching a deep suspiration, between a sigh and a groan, as he opened the door of the chapel and ushered in his guest, "these women will be my death. One good round sin of a godless freebooter were better worth listening to the confession of than all the milk−and−water peccadilloes of a regiment of pale−eyed religieuses, such as daily weary out my soul and wear the flesh from my poor bones."

"Of a truth, you have kept the good wine until now, good Brother Bonaventure," whispered the monk, as his eyes at that moment encountered a bevy of novices, one or two with their veils, perhaps, drawn artfully aside, and their lovely features eloquent with curiosity as their glances were directed towards the opening door, kneeling around the altar of the oratory.

"Callest thou that good wine?" responded Father Bonaventure, interrogatively, and in the same low tone of voice, following the direction of the monk's eyes with his own, "thou art no judge of grapes, brother. Marry come up! They are every soul possessed with a born devil, and give me more disquiet than so many bear−cubs turned loose within the convent walls. Alas! I fear they are given over to the power of the prince of darkness, for their hearts are prone to mischief as the sparks fly upward. If thou wilt in part ease me of my burden, brother, and, after prayers, take upon thyself the confession of the tamest of them, demure as they now look, thou wilt soon be wearied body and soul with them, and be ready to open window, and bid them fly with God's blessing, and leave thee to collect thy wits together in peace, as ere now I have prayed them to do. Good wine, is't? The ass that carries the wine drinks but water."

Thus speaking, the reverend father confessor, whose constitutional indolence, combined with the active consciences of his charges, left him, according to his own relation of his grievances, little leisure to attend to the thrift of his own body or soul, and peace neither to the one nor the other, but who, nevertheless, went good−naturedly grumbling through life, advanced with a slow pace to the altar, mumbling, as he passed them, a morning salutation to the devotees, and opened the service of the hour.

The oratory or chapel within which the monk was introduced constituted the basement story of the tower, the diameter of whose area was about eighteen feet. The ceiling, which overhead was raised several feet higher than the sides of the oratory, was overspread with a covering of crimson silk, radiating from a silver star in the centre of the dome, in folds or plaits, like an immense circular fan. Extending on every side to the extremities of the room, it fell in hangings, bordered with deep fringes, to the floor, concealing the brick sides of the tower, and presenting altogether the novelty of a silken pavilion within the walls of a convent; a unique and costly tabernacle, illustrating, even in this rural retreat, that taste and lavish expense characteristic of Roman Catholics in all ages and in all countries.

At the left of the door by which Father Bonaventure and his guest entered stood a small altar of black marble, surmounted by a white slab of the same material. Several candles burned upon it, and in the midst of them was a crucifix; the cross only a few inches in height but of massive silver, and the effigy of the Redeemer of fine gold. On the right of the altar stood a mahogany confessional−box, and on the left a low pulpit, from which the father confessor occasionally pronounced homilies to his little congregation. Before the altar, awaiting the commencement of the morning service, kneeled, in two semicircles, the females composing his limited audience. Those who kneeled nearest to the sanctuary were evidently the religieuses; sisters, in age and tenderness of conscience, to the Sister Ursule. The second row, and that farthest from the chancel, evidently consisted of that branch of Father Bonaventure's flock which, in his opinion, were given over to the delusions of sin.

They were seven in number, mystic emblems, no doubt, of the Pleiades, at least so thought the youthful monk; and fourteen bright eyes glanced round and rested upon him as he followed Father Bonaventure into the oratory, for the presence of a stranger in the convent was not of such frequent occurrence as to render the curiosity of females living so retired from the world either torpid or indifferent. In its gratification in this instance, however, they received a check from the eye and voice of a middle−aged female, with a sour visage, kneeling a little in advance of them, whose physiognomical details answered so closely to the worthy Father Bonaventure's vivid description of the lady superior, that the stranger was at no loss in fixing her identity.

The oratory had no aperture for admitting the light from without, and, except when the candles were burning during morning and evening service, or the performance of mass on saints' days, it remained, save the partial illumination of a solitary taper burning in a chased vessel of oil set before the crucifix, in a state perfectly dark. Father Bonaventure commenced the usual service of the morning with habitual readiness and indifference, hurrying through it as if anxious to bring it to a speedy termination; while the monk, who had declined his invitation to assist him on the plea of fatigue, kneeled reverently by the chancel, and, as it happened, on account of the small dimensions of the area before the altar, near the line of novices.

During the prayers his attention was drawn to the remarkably sweet and musical voice of the novice nearest to him, as she repeated, in a low tone, the customary prayers and portions of the service. Instigated by curiosity to see the lips from which such melodious accents flowed, and behold the features of one whom his youthful and romantic admiration already assured him must be surpassingly fair, he put back his cowl and partly turned his face to glance beneath her veil. The movement, gentle as it was, attracted her notice, and produced a corresponding change of her own attitude, and their eyes met.

For an instant, as if fascinated, her gaze rested full upon his dark, expressive eyes, which became softened and subdued, as such eyes are wont to be when they encounter the glance of youth and beauty; at the same time they beamed with that ardent and passionate admiration which the vanity of a beautiful woman will not allow her to misconstrue. For a moment, and for a moment only, she forgot the nun in the woman. A blush instantly suffused her cheeks, and, bending her head in confusion, she hastily veiled a face which he, nevertheless, had time to see was eminently lovely; and then resumed, with a gentle suspiration which did not escape his ear, and with renewed earnestness, her momentarily forgotten devotions.

In a few minutes afterward the services of the morning closed, and both novices and religieuses, rising from the altar, followed in slow procession the stern superior, who deigned to cast a glance neither upon the father confessor nor the monk, and disappeared through a door hitherto concealed behind the arras, and opposite to that by which Father Bonaventure and his guest had entered.

"Take thou the chair of confessional, brother," said Father Bonaventure, breathing freely, like a man relieved by the termination of irksome duties, as his flock were leaving the chapel; "the greatest sinner of them all will soon be back, if for no better purpose, at least to have an opportunity of using her tongue; shallow waters being, as thou knowst, always the most noisy."

As the last novice left the chapel, she did not fail, before dropping the folds of the tapestry from her hand, to cast a timid glance towards the stranger whose piercing eyes had so dangerously encountered her own, no less brilliant and piercing, but tempered with the softness of the gazelle's.

"Time presses, worthy brother," replied the monk, turning away his lingering gaze from the spot where the graceful figure of the novice had disappeared, and fixing it upon the very different figure of Father Bonaventure, "and I may not delay a longer space than it will consume to prepare some mode of conveyance. I will break my fast with you, and then leave your hospitable roof."

"It will be difficult journeying, brother," replied the priest; "thou hast not looked forth this morning. Come with me, though the ascent be somewhat precipitous, and I will show thee the road thou must travel; and, peradventure, when thou seest its condition, thou wilt doubtless think it an argument in favour of sojourning with me for a yet longer space. Follow, brother: the penitents may await our return; 'twill teach them patience. Patience, saith the proverb, is a good plaster."

Thus speaking, he raised the hangings and led the way through a passage between them and the bare walls to a small staircase that wound spirally to the summit of the tower. The Father Bonaventure caused his guest to mount the steps in advance, while, step after step, slowly and laboriously, he followed him towards the top.

"Fair and softly, fair and softly, good brother," he said, as his guest began to ascend with a light step, "hasty climbers get sudden falls. The more haste the worse speed, saith the proverb. No human abode should be more than one story above ground." At length the monk emerged from the dark stairway upon a small rectangle a few feet square, so completely monopolized by a bell, with its wheel, axle, and other apparatus, that there was left but little room for him, and none for the capacious dimensions of Father Bonaventure: he was content to remain at the head of the stairs, with his head thrust through the trapdoor, while his guest looked forth from the latticed window which extended quite around the belfry.

"Will you not come up, brother?" archly inquired the monk of his host, whose round face was thrust up through the aperture; "without your aid I cannot profit by my elevated station."

"I need not, I need not, brother," answered Father Bonaventure, retaining his position, and still breathing heavily; "look forth, and thou canst see what I would point out to thee; three good feet of November snow on the earth, and the road thou art to travel about as plain as the path left by a boat on the water. Hugh! this coming up stairs is dreadful. I am of opinion, brother, that man was not physically constituted to go up hill or up stairs. The effort that nature makes at such times to sustain the forced exertion of the muscles proves clearly that it is unnatural. Stairs are the devil's own invention. But what seest thou? Art satisfied that thou wilt have to be my guest yet a while longer?"

As the monk looked forth from the window the sun was just rising in cloudless radiance, but there was no warmth in his beams. The prospect he surveyed was strikingly different from that which he contemplated when first introduced to the reader, gazing down, from an overhanging hill, into the lovely valley of the Chaudiere. The face of the earth was now totally changed. The green mantle of summer and the graver robe of autumn had given way to the winding−sheet that winter had thrown over the dying year! A stratum of snow lay deep in the glen, whitening the leafless forests and enveloping the frozen river as if it had lain upon the solid earth. Not a trace of the path he had travelled the night previous, except where the absence of trees might indicate its direction, was visible to his eye. In one short night winter had laid field, forest, and river under the dominion of his hoary sceptre! Not a bird broke the silence of the morning; the flocks and herds were safely housed; and, save a hare bounding lightly over the snow, or a little flock of sparrows flitting upon its surface, not a quadruped, or a loiterer of the feathered tribe, and not a human being or living creature was visible throughout the whole scope of his vision. Stern desolation alone reigned over the inhospitable scene.

"How great the change! how infinite the contrast of the present scene," said the monk, mentally, "with that I beheld but yesterday! The glory of the summer forests, the golden harvest−field, the lowing of the kine, and the song of the happy peasant, all have departed "

"Brother," said Father Bonaventure, interrupting his train of thought, "thou seest, doubtless, what comfort awaits thee abroad. That snow lies two feet deep on the ground if it lay an inch. Neither *burline, traineau*, nor *carriole* can move the length of a rosary till the road is somewhat broken up by heavy sleds, and the sun settles the snow."

"But I can take horse, brother, as I came," said the monk, in a confident tone.

"Thou couldst not travel a mile an hour on horseback through such a snow; thou wouldst do better to take to snowshoes."

"That I will do, if there is no other alternative," persevered the guest, "for forward I must, let the difficulties be what they may. If the road is to be broken, some one must be the first to break it, and why not I as well as another? If it is passable for one man it also is for me. Look you, brother," he added, hastily, "come a step higher, and bend your eyes through the lower part of the lattice, and tell me what you see."

The father confessor raised himself till his eyes were on a level with the lower crevice of the window, and looked in the direction indicated by his guest.

"Speak, brother. What do you discern?" asked the monk, exultingly.

"By St. Therese! I spy three, nay, four men on horseback far down the glen," replied the father, looking into the face of his guest with something like surprise visible in his features; "do I see rightly, brother?"

"You see rightly," replied the monk; "four mounted men, half a league off, are travelling thither through the snow, the difficulties of which your hospitality, brother, has led you to magnify somewhat. They seem to travel at a good round pace, nevertheless. This is fortunate. If they pass by and continue on farther, I shall have my road broken before me. 'Tis a special interposition of Heaven, brother. Dost not think so?" he added, pleasantly.

"By St. Therese, 'tis a miracle!" answered Father Bonaventure in a disappointed tone; "but a miracle of Beelzebub's own making. Here I thought to keep thee at least till to−morrow or the day after. Well, God makes and the tailor shapes. 'Tis an ill wind blows nobody good. 'Tis folly to fret when grief's no comfort;" and, thus comforting himself with proverbs, Father Bonaventure prepared to descend the stairs of the tower.

"Beware, brother," said the monk, as Father Bonaventure's bald crown slowly disappeared through the scuttle; "facilis descensus Averni, as worthy Brother Ducosse would have it, not that I would intimate that your oratory is the Avernus to which Maro alludes."

"Maro Virgilius was a heathen," said the confessor, as he carefully descended the stairs, perfectly assuring himself of the safety of one foot before he put down the other, progressing something as we have seen children three years old when performing the same feat. "I marvel much Brother Ducosse should be so given to quoting heathenish sayings. He endangereth thereby his soul's wellbeing. But, brother, if thou wilt travel after I have shown thee the road, why, then, go, and the saints be with thee. 'Tis hard to make a wild goose lay a tame egg. Youth is ever more hasty than wise, and a little pot is soon hot. Go thou into the confessional," he added, as they reached the door of the chapel; "two mornings in the week do the sisters confess, and this is one of them. While thou art shriving the penitents I will be making preparations for thy departure. Heaven send thee patience this morning, brother, for, verily, thou wilt need it. But methinks thou art somewhat young to be made a father confessor; but what sayeth the proverb, `'tis not the cowl that makes the friar, nor the cap that makes the cardinal. ' "

Thus speaking, the oracular Father Bonaventure drew aside the hangings, and, thrusting the monk in, said, "Go in, and, by St. Therese, make clean hearts o' them; new brooms sweep clean."

Then hobbling away with his usual rolling gait, which the monk, as he followed him with his eyes, thought resembled more the waddling of a duck than the walk of a reverend priest, he disappeared through a door opening from the gallery, while the new confessor, putting aside the arras, found himself once more within the dimly−lighted chapel.

CHAPTER VII. THE CONFESSOR.

On entering the chapel the monk paused a moment to contemplate the circumstances in which he was so unexpectedly placed by the request of Father Bonaventure. In his first interview he had not undeceived him respecting his ostensible clerical character. When the proposal of officiating in the confessional closet in his stead was made by the father on their way into the chapel, he had resolved, if further urged upon the subject, which he did not anticipate, to escape by some subterfuge, or, if it should become necessary, disclose his disguise. But the lovely vision of the oratory, acting upon a highly romantic imagination and feelings sufficiently susceptible, at once, with the potency of a magician's wand, overthrew his well−formed resolutions, which had originated in a species of chivalric honour and a certain reverence for religion, and he determined to play the father confessor for a time if again solicited, trusting that his good fortune might place him once more within the influence of those brilliant eyes whose glances had penetrated his heart, and in the hearing of that sweet voice whose accents had captivated his senses.

Nevertheless, when he found himself alone within the chapel, where no thoughts should have intruded save those that had the Supreme Being for their object, its dim religious light, the solemn pomp of the altar, the sacred vessels dedicated to the worship of the Creator, the touching image of Him who "bowed his head and died," and the deep silence, like that of a tomb, all conspired to impress his mind with the awful character of the place, and send the blood with guilty violence to his brow. With a quick pulse and a conscious feeling of guilt he hesitated to proceed to the extent proposed by the father confessor, and for a moment trembled at his own daring impiety, and at the thought of so sacrilegious an assumption of holy duties. His step faltered, and he was half persuaded to turn back. But while he lingered, with his hand upon the silken curtain before the door by which he had entered, a slight motion of the hangings opposite, at the place where the lovely novice had disappeared, terminated his indecision. Dropping the curtain, he said abruptly, as if he would effectually silence the troublesome monitor within,

" 'Tis a masquerade and mummery all, so I'll in and take the chances Cupid sends me;" and, crossing the space before the altar, he hastily entered the confessional and closed the door.

He had scarcely concealed himself when the arras was drawn aside, and a veiled female entered the chapel. After sanctifying her brow with the holy water that stood in a vase by the entrance, with a readiness which appeared the result of habit, she approached the confessional−box, not omitting an additional sign of the cross upon her bosom as she glided past the crucifix, and silently kneeled on the low step beneath its lattice. A solitary lamp, that burned night and day, the emblem of that "light which has come into the world to save sinners," shed its pale rays through the chapel, rendering remote objects and the form of the penitent dim and indistinct.

"Father, thy blessing!" she said, in a low monotonous voice, but as unlike that of the youthful novice, thought the disappointed confessor, as the croaking of the penfrog to the melody of the night−ingale.

By a train of reasoning not unfrequently employed by young men in the affairs of the heart, the young soldier had jumped to a conclusion, for which, without sounder premises, the logic of the schools could have given him no authority, which was, that the first and only penitent must be the dark−eyed novice. His present disappointment was therefore proportionate to his confidence in the soundness of his reasoning, wherein his hopes out−weighed probability; more especially as the novice, unless some bird had carried it to her ear, or she had learned it by that refinement of instinct which the female heart in such cases wonderfully exhibits, could not have been aware of this very desirable change of father confessors. He nevertheless determined to abide by his present fate, and outgeneral dame Fortune by resorting to his own wits for improving the aspect of affairs. He therefore, in a voice disguised to imitate, so far as possible, the burlesque grunts of Father Bonaventure, in which he was materially aided by the close sides of the confessional, replied to the kneeling penitent,

"Thou hast my blessing, daughter. Relieve thy soul, and briefly. A short horse is soon curried; a short shrift and a long fast. Say on."

"I have grievously sinned, father, both in thought and deed," said the penitent, plaintively, sighing as if her heartstrings would give way, and then pausing to await the effect of her words upon her confessor.

"Confess first thy sin of thought, daughter," he said, in an encouraging tone of voice.

"Yester eve," began the penitent, readily, as if happy at the opportunity of using her tongue, arranging her veil and settling herself more easily in her kneeling posture, "yester eve, when novice Eugenie was threading my needle (for I was working at the broidery for the covering to thy escritoir, father) she said for thou knowst, father, these young novices lately come from Quebec are not discreet and maidenly in their deportment, as, without mentioning my sinful and unworthy self, those who have been a somewhat longer space of time wedded to holy church: well, as I was saying, father, these young girls are full of all manner of iniquitous thoughts, and their vain hearts follow after the devices of their evil imaginations continually; and," added she, raising her hands in holy horror, "they think about men, father! not such as thyself, who art as harmless as a dove, and whom I pray the Virgin will protect; for, alas! if thou shouldst be taken from us "

"Thy sin! thy sin of thought, daughter!" interrupted the impatient confessor, as his penitent began to lose sight of her own sins in her horror at those of others, and in her solicitude for her confessor; "this worldly−minded novice Eugenie! what has she to do with thy sins or thee?"

"As I was saying, father, novice Eugenie, worldly−minded, as thou justly sayst, was threading my needle for the broidery, for thou knowst thy escritoir "

"I know, I know, daughter; keep to thy confession," interrupted the monk, in his impatience with difficulty disguising his voice; "this novice! what said she?"

"She said, father it's a sin to repeat it, for I blush even to think of it she said, and so loud, too, that old Agathe, who was sweeping the room, could have heard her if she hadn't been deaf, that she wished that thou, even thyself, holy father! wert a youthful knight in disguise. No wonder you start, father; the saints preserve us! was such like ever heard of? May St. Therese guard her household! is my prayer," she concluded, devoutly crossing herself.

"Amen!" responded the confessor, in a voice that appeared to have come from the very bottom of Father Bonaventure's chest. "What said she further, daughter?"

"As I was saying, father, when you interrupted me," glibly continued the religieuse, "she said she wished you were a disguised knight like a certain brave young Norman warrior, Sir Walter de Lancy by name, whom she says she once read of in a sinful romaunt. This comes of reading godless romances, father; thank the Virgin, I can say I never committed that sin! She said this Walter de Lancy loved a novice no doubt just such a pert, graceless thing as this Eugenie and, for love of her, got himself admitted into the convent disguised as the holy father confessor, whom he shut up in a tower in his own castle till he had told the silly novice he loved her, and prevailed on her to run away with him and marry him, as I have no doubt, and I would say it on the cross, that novice Eugenie herself would do if she could have the opportunity. Was ever such scandal heard of, father, as this deed of that godless Norman knight?"

"Impious and daring youth! He is now, no doubt, doing penance in purgatory for a crime so unparalleled," replied the monk, in a severe tone of voice.

"I trust he is, father; such sacrilegious conduct should be punished as an example," responded the penitent, with that tempered exultation which became humility; "but, then, what think you this novice Eugenie said, father?

Well, she said she wished that Norman knight was alive now, and would come into the convent in disguise, and confess the household instead of you. The minx! no doubt, in that case, she thinks she'd be the novice. But, if thou wert the Norman, father, thou wouldst know better," she continued, in tones meant to be very insinuating, "than to be taken with such silly, and, withal, sinful children as these novices are. That thou wouldst."

"Thou sayst well, daughter," replied the confessor, in a tone of voice modelled on her own; "if I were that sacrilegious Norman of whom thou speakst "

"Not I, father, not I! the novice Eugenie," she said, hastily.

"Well, the novice Eugenie: if I were him of whom she speaks, I should make choice of one more discreet and experienced; one, I think, of about thy own age, daughter."

"I knew thou wouldst, father," she said, triumphantly. "But was't not a great sin for this novice to listen to this Norman?"

"Verily was it, daughter," answered the monk, solemnly, "and she is, no doubt, enduring at this moment painful penance with him in purgatory."

"With him, father? that can be no penance if they are together," she said, in a tone of disapprobation.

"In purgatory they neither know nor are known, my daughter," said the monk, mildly. "Now proceed in thy confession. A willing mind makes a light heel."

"When novice Eugenie said she wished you were the handsome young Norman knight, I said, father," here the voice of the penitent was lowered to a very confidential key, while her lips approached rather closer to the lattice than was customary, "that I thought thee young and handsome enough as thou wert, and I, for one, would rather have Father Bonaventure for my lover than the comeliest knight, be he Norman or whoever he be, that ever broke lance."

Here a deep sigh, partaking, as the monk thought, equally of the penitential and of the amorous, concluded the first division, or the sin in thought, of the penitent's confession.

"Sister Ursule, for, though I behold not thy face, such thy words bespeak thee to be," said the monk, shooting a random, but, as the result showed, a successful arrow, "although thy sin is great, in as much as thou hast suffered thy thoughts to wander to my poor person instead of confining them to thy crucifix, nevertheless it may be atoned for by a penance commensurate with its enormity. I enjoin, therefore, upon thee six additional paternosters and twelve ave marias over and above thy customary devotions; and, moreover, that thou come not to confession for a week to come, and never, by word or look, put me again in remembrance of this morning's confession. Now relate thy sin in deed, daughter."

"Alas, reverend father," sighed the penitent religieuse, "how can I utter my own shame! This morning, while at mass, I lifted my eyes and gazed for at least ten seconds on the face of the holy monk at present sojourning in the convent."

"*Thou*, woman?" exclaimed the monk, thrown off his guard by surprise and chagrin, while the penitent recoiled from the lattice with an incipient scream of alarm.

He immediately, however, recovered his presence of mind, which had suddenly deserted him at the bare possibility of the identity of the ancient religieuse Ursule with the lovely novice of the oratory, whose features he had indistinctly seen, and whose voice he had but once heard. But a moment's reflection convinced him of the

absurdity of such a supposition, and in the gruffest tones of Father Bonaventure he said,

"The enormity of thy offence, daughter, hath moved me, even to the giving utterance to my indignation in a strange tongue, as did the saints of old, as thou hast heard me expound to thee from scripture. But wherefore didst thou let thy thoughts, nay, thy eyes, lead thee into sin?"

"It was, father," replied the penitent, who had resumed her original attitude at the lattice, in an apologetic tone, "solely for the good of novice Eugenie, knowing her thoughts are ever world−ward. Somehow, when the strange monk kneeled so close beside her, I could not get the Norman knight out of my head, and so I naturally looked at him, and then I looked at her, and all at once, father, I saw them both turn and look at each other, and I never saw holy man look so pitifully as he looked on her bold face, as if he knew her failing. I was glad to see she had the grace to veil her head, though I had not given her credit for so much discretion. Forsooth," she added, with a toss of her head, "I shouldn't wonder if the forward chit thought it was the bold Norman knight she is ever talking about, since that godless romaunt fell into her hands, who had come and kneeled himself down beside her, as if he would look at such a silly child when there were others to pick and choose from."

"Thou sayst well, daughter," said the confessor; "and now, in regard to this second offence of thine, which thou hast done wisely to confess so readily, I enjoin thee, first, to keep all the religieuses in their rooms, and, also, all the novices, save the novice Eugenie, for one hour to come. Eugenie I command you to send forthwith to take thy place at the confessional; for she hath merited not only penance, but a severe reprimand, having not only sinned herself, but tempted thee, holy sister, to commit sin, both in thought, word, and deed. But thou art released from thine offences on the performance of the slight penances I have enjoined upon thee. Bénédicité, daughter! Go send the novice Eugenie into the oratory."

The religieuse Ursule rose from her knees, her heart lightened of a heavy burden by this free confession of her great sins and the father's forgiveness, which, like a devout Catholic, she believed to be registered in heaven. We venture to hope that we shall not be thought uncharitable towards so sincere a penitent and discreet maiden as Sister Ursule, if we hint that her heart was also, in no very slight degree, lightened, and her spirits elated, by the contemplation of the picture which her active imagination painted, in colours indifferently well laid on, as if envy herself had handled the brush, of the disgrace awaiting the offending novice Eugenie. Never did penitent hasten to perform allotted penance with the alacrity with which Sister Ursule disappeared from the chapel to fulfil that item of hers contained in the last clause of the confessor's injunction; an item, it will be remembered, especially relating to that worldly−minded, knightloving Eugenie, whose numerous sins and unnovice−like peccadilloes were a thorn in the flesh of that holy, charitable, and discreet religieuse.

CHAPTER VIII. THE NOVICE.

The silence that followed the disappearance of the religieuse Ursule on her penitential mission was passed by the young confessor in brief reflections upon the nature and tendency of his present employment. No sophistry with which he fortified himself, through questioning the genuineness of the Roman faith and ridiculing the act of confession, could aid him in silencing certain severe mental strictures upon the part he was acting in the sacred relation of a guest, and under a guise to which he was indebted for his safety and the hospitality he was abusing. Neither of these could deter him from prosecuting an amour, if a wayward impulse, having, perhaps, no definite aim or other purpose than the indulgence of a romantic temperament, could with strictness be so denominated.

"I am aware," he said, "that I am playing a part both dangerous and censurable, and which my conscience refuses to defend; but I have gone too far to recede, and my object is certainly innocent. If the scales are to be so nicely adjusted, I think the penances I have enjoined and the sins I have remitted in my assumed character will swing evenly, so far as Doomsday may decide, with those granted on confession by worthy Brother Bonaventure. But," he continued, in a gay tone, "to quote one of the good father's proverbs, `He must needs run whom the devil

drives.'"

He thus put a period to his scruples by a *coup de main* in the shape of a proverb, whose truth certainly does not admit of question, but under whose shelter more mischief has been wrought than his infernal highness, if so disposed, could repair.

"Now aid me, Cupid and shade of Walter de Lancy!" he added, as he heard a rustling behind the arras.

The next moment a graceful female figure, closely veiled, entered the chapel; and with less scrupulous observance of the forms which characterized the entrance of pious Sister Ursule, she advanced with an easy, undulating motion, and kneeled before the lattice of the confessional.

"Daughter," said the confessor, after a brief silence, during which only the gentle suspirations of the penitent were heard, while her young bosom heaved like the breast of a wild pigeon in the hands of the fowler, "daughter, thou art come to confession, I trust, with a heart suitably prepared to receive absolution; for I am informed thy indiscretions, to give them no harsher term, have been many and aggravated. But, if thou hast duly repented, I will give thee absolution, on confession, for all thy offences up to this time; for I do not desire to be rigorous with youth. Thou mayst confess, beginning with the hour of matins. But first put aside thy veil, daughter, that I may see if thy looks show thee to be sufficiently penitent."

The novice, from the mysterious yet elated manner of Sister Ursule, who could not altogether disguise her pleasure as she communicated her message, and from some ominous words dropped by her, of which she could only distinguish the sounds `Norman knight,' had anticipated from the father confessor a severe rebuke and onerous penance. But when she heard the unusually mild tones of his voice, which the monk had now learned to disguise still more by placing his lips to one of the numerous apertures of the lattice as if to the mouth of a tube, she experienced infinite relief, and, drawing aside her veil, prepared with cheerfulness and confidence to make her confession.

The removal of her veil, which is seldom worn at confession, exposed to the gaze of the young confessor, as he surveyed them through the interstices of the confessional blinds, the features of a strikingly beautiful girl, not more than sixteen years of age. Her hair was of the richest shade of auburn, and, escaping from the confinement of the virgin fillet that bound it, flowed in golden luxuriance over her faultless neck and finely−turned shoulders, the exquisite shape of which was eminently displayed by the dark−coloured and closely−fitting habit that she wore. Meeting close at the throat, where it was secured by a jet−clasp, it descended to her waist, exhibiting its fine proportions and perfect symmetry to much greater advantage than worthy Sister Ursule, or, perhaps, the inventors of this religious costume would have approved, had their carefulness in departing from the sin−alluring garments of the world partaken more of worldly wisdom. The dark colour of her attire gave, also, additional lustre to a complexion remarkably clear and brilliant. This was especially exemplified in the contrast between the sombre hue of her habit and a pair of snowy hands, soft and childlike in appearance (the taper fingers nevertheless showing those graceful proportions indicating the maturer maiden) which, protruding from the closely−cut sleeve, were demurely crossed on her bosom. Her eyes, at first, were meekly cast down, as became the circumstances and attitude of the penitent, offering to the gaze of the admiring soldier dark lashes, like silken fringes, shading and quite concealing the orbs beneath. But when, embarrassed by the silence preserved by her confessor, who, forgetful of his situation, drank in with his eyes her unconscious beauty, she timidly raised them to the lattice, they beamed with intelligence and a sweetness of expression just sufficiently mingled with passion, or, to speak with greater truth, love, to be irresistibly fascinating. They were of that peculiar shade of brown often united with auburn hair, closely allied to black, and commonly designated as such, but which is more nearly assimilated to the rich hue of the chestnut. They were full of lambent fire, and ready to kindle into flame or overflow with tenderness as the changing impulses of her soul played in their dark and dangerous depths. Her beauty was of an Oriental cast: her face oval; her forehead low, but pleasing, and falling into a nose of classic beauty. Her mouth was small and more exquisitely formed, and infinitely more fatal than Cupid's bow, who, it is fabled, stole from

beauty's lips its graceful shape.

An air of demure submission pervaded her whole manner, the existence of which was denied, however, by an arch expression playing about the corners of her mouth, and a piquant glance that her drooping eyelids could not altogether conceal.

Her beauty was the more striking from the absence of affectation, as, unconscious of observation, or, at least, of exciting admiration, she kneeled artlessly before the confessional, oblivious of those little airs which, if she had known who gazed upon her, she might have called to her aid, but to diminish rather than increase the charm created by her ingenuous loveliness.

The young confessor, in the ardour of his admiration, had wellnigh forgotten his assumed character; and, yielding to the impulse of youthful passion, was about to rush from the confessional to cast himself at her feet, when the peculiar harptones of her voice, which had so thrilled upon his senses when he first heard them in scarcely audible prayer, recalled him to the duties, now, at least, sufficiently agreeable, of his usurped station.

Raising her eloquent eyes, she said, sweetly and persuasively, "Father, I hope your silence is not from anger that I said what I did about the Norman knight, for I know that envious nun Ursule has told you of it."

"No, my daughter," replied the confessor, with difficulty addressing youth and beauty in the gruff tones of Father Bonaventure, at the same time impatient to throw off his disguise and appear before her with all the advantages of youthful eloquence and fascinating address, graces which few possessed in a more eminent degree, and of whose power over the female heart no one was more conscious. "No, Eugenie, I am not offended. But, as thou hast voluntarily renounced the world and its vanities, thou shouldst think of no other bridegroom than the church, to which thou art betrothed."

"No, no, I have not voluntarily renounced the world, father," she replied, with some warmth, her dark eye lighting up with animation; "although I love the church, I do not love it enough to relinquish all the enjoyments of life for it. May not heaven be won without such sacrifice? I would rather try my chance with others, to whom the green earth is as free as to the forest deer, than be mewed up here all my life, till I come to be such a withered spectre as nun Ursule, who, I verily believe, would forfeit her soul's salvation if she could see me this day the counterpart to herself."

This was said with feminine spirit and the pouting lip of a spoiled child.

"Then why art thou here, daughter, if against thy will?" asked the monk, becoming interested in the fate of the lovely penitent.

"Because," she replied, with feeling, "the will of others was stronger than mine. I have been here four months to−morrow, father; but, before I remain eight more, and then take the veil, I will make my escape. I never knew," she continued, with emotion, "how to compassionate poor imprisoned birds till now. I remember reading in one of my English books how a poor starling shut up in a cage continually cried, `I can't get out! I can't get out!' I know how to feel for the poor starling now, father!"

She spoke these words with a natural and touching eloquence that affected the young soldier, while the heavy drooping lid and increased lustre of her eyes betrayed the depth of her own emotion.

"And who forced thee, my child, to embrace a life for which thou hadst no inclination?" inquired the monk, with additional interest in the fate of the lovely novice.

"My guardian and uncle, the Vicomte St. Clair," she answered, with an indignant flash of her eyes and a scornful curl of her beautiful upper lip; "but I thought you knew this, father?"

"Yes, Eugenie, true; but I had forgotten. Where now is thy uncle the vicomte?"

"Gone from Quebec to France, to take possession of my grandfather's estate, which should have been my own inheritance through my father, who was the eldest son."

"And he has placed thee in this convent, that, through thy taking the veil, he may usurp thy right?"

"He has, father. He urged, remonstrated, and threatened, and I had no other alternative than to yield to his tyranny. He was my guardian on the death of my father, Colonel de Lisle, who fell by the side of the noble Marquis de Montcalm in the attack on Quebec. The fatal tidings were conveyed to my mother, then at Montmorenci. She survived him but a few weeks, leaving me an infant. The Vicomte St. Clair, whom my mother had appointed my guardian, consigned me to the care of a Madame Montmorin. She was the widow of a distinguished officer, and a friend of my mother. I resided with her until my uncle, who had been living upon my father's property in France, tempted by his cupidity and his fears of soon being dispossessed (as I was nearly of the legal age to enter upon the possession), resolved to deprive me of it. He arrived at Quebec in May last, and, by entreaties, promises, and threats, induced me to consent to enter, as a novice, the Hôtel Dieu.

"After six weeks' residence there I found means to escape; when the Vicomte St. Clair, who still remained in Quebec, learning that I had returned to the house of Madame Montmorin, came for me. Deceived by his artful language, this lady permitted me to be taken away by my uncle, who conveyed me here, bidding, in my hearing, the superior to guard me as if I were a state's prisoner. It is thus, father, I came to be an involuntary inmate of a convent. But," she added, firmly, "I will not remain here; even the assumption of the veil itself should not prevent my improving the first opportunity of escape."

Her narrative was given with a degree of animation that heightened the beauty of her features, and communicated to them the additional attribute of moral sublimity. During the recital her eyes lighted up with varied impulses: filial pride, while she spoke of her father's soldierly death; resentment, when she alluded to her wrongs; affection, when she spoke of her friends, like the changing features of an April sky reflected in a lake, were mirrored in them.

As the young soldier listened to a theme well calculated, coming from such lips, to awaken the chivalrous spirit in a youthful breast, he was scarcely able to moderate his indignation or refrain from at once declaring himself the champion of her wrongs. But while he mentally resolved, with the prompt decision of a romantic youth, to become her sworn knight in this cause, and deliver her from an oppression which both his education and sense of justice declared to be illegal and criminal, his heart at the same time entering a protest against it of at least equal strength, he decided to prepare the way with caution and safety both to himself and the interesting object of his sympathy. The confession of the nun Ursule had furnished him with a clew, by which he determined to be guided in his contemplated enterprise.

"Daughter Eugenie," he said, addressing her as she kneeled before him with a heaving bosom and a cheek still glowing with excited feelings, "my heart shares with thee thy unhappy destiny. Thou hast been speaking to Sister Ursule of Walter de Lancy, and instituting some comparison between him and Father Bonaven , that is to say, myself."

"Nay, father," she said, an arch smile mantling her lips as she spoke, "but you have already given me absolution for this; but, father, is not your voice strangely altered this morning?"

"It's the cold and snow; the snow, daughter," replied the confessor, in a voice which Father Bonaventure himself would have mistaken for his own; "but I would speak to thee of this Norman knight. Thou sayst that, in the guise of a confessor, he entered the convent and shrived the inmates?"

"Yes, reverend father," she replied, hesitatingly, "it was in Normandy; and a brave knight, and one worthy a maiden's love he was. But that was in the days of romance, father," she added, with a gentle sigh; "such things are not now known except in olden tales."

"Perhaps not, Eugenie," said the young soldier; "but what now wouldst thou give if I, thy father confessor, were to prove a knight, not so gallant and comely, perhaps, as thy Norman De Lancy, but young, and brave, and willing to go the death to free thee from thy imprisonment?"

"You a brave and gallant knight, Father Bonaventure!" repeated the novice, laughing.

"Even so, novice; what wouldst thou give?"

"I would give you, if you were as you say," replied the maiden, with a smile that doubtless would have captivated the heart of Father Bonaventure if he had been in the place of his dangerous guest, while her face beamed as if there had been liberty in the thought, "what the novice, for whose love this brave knight disguised himself, gave to him heart and hand! what more could maiden give?"

"Eugenie," said the young soldier, in his natural tones, but modulated to the gentlest and most persuasive accents, "be not alarmed at my voice. Retain, I beseech you, your presence of mind! I am neither Father Bonaventure nor a confessor, but a young soldier, your Norman knight if you will, who will place you free as the wild roe beneath the blue heavens, with his life's purchase and within the hour, if you will trust to his loyalty and honour."

As he spoke he opened the door of the confessional and stood before her. At his appearance she shrunk back with the extremity of alarm visible on her countenance. Gracefully and tenderly taking her passive hand, he threw back his cowl, and exposed youthful and handsome features instead of those of Father Bonaventure; and those same dark eyes, whose passionate fire had already lighted a flame in her heart, again met her own.

"Be not alarmed, fair Eugenie," he said to the bewildered novice, who scarcely knew whether she was awake or dreaming, at so sudden a realization of her romantic wishes; "deign to accept me as your Norman knight, and I will free you from this dreary prison."

"What guarantee have I of your good faith, Sir Cavalier?" she asked, recovering her presence of mind, and archly smiling as she withdrew her hand from that of the young soldier.

"In proof of my sincerity, lovely girl," said the youth, smiling in his turn, and speaking in a tone that carried confidence to her bosom, "I am about to confide to you my safety, and, perhaps, my life."

Thus speaking, he advanced to and carefully secured both entrances of the chapel, and then returning to her, cast aside his disguise, and, to the increased surprise of the astonished maiden, appeared before her in the gay and gallant costume of a colonial officer of rank.

"Now, Eugenie," he said, placing his foot with something like contempt upon the monk's cassock which he had cast on the ground, "you see me in my true character, as a soldier in the army of the colonies which are in arms against the oppression of the mother country. I have adopted this disguise that I may travel without interruption to Quebec, whither I am sent on a mission of importance by the commanding officer of a division of the colonial army now on its march into Canada. The Father Bonaventure only knows me as a brother priest. I am to take my departure within an hour to pursue my journey. If you will confide in me, by my honour as a soldier and a

gentleman, I will aid your escape from the convent if I have to lead you forth in the face of the whole sisterhood, the Father Bonaventure, and nun Ursule to boot," he added, smiling. "Fly with me, dearest Eugenie," he persisted, in a voice modulated by love to accents of inexpressible sweetness, and with a fascination of look and manner that was irresistible; "I feel that from this moment our destinies are inseparably linked. Speak, lovely one! Say that you will trust to my honour, as a sister would confide in a brother. I will be to you as a brother, and sacred as a sister will I regard you, until I place you under the roof of some friend in Quebec, or wherever you wish to find an asylum. Not one word from those lovely lips, not one look from those soft eyes, to tell me that I do not plead in vain?"

As the tender vine, when cast loose by the tempest from its support, at length reaches and clings around some noble trunk towards which its tendrils have been long stretched forth; as the dove, when pursued by the trained hawk, seeks shelter in the bosom of the falconer, so did the persecuted and friendless novice commit her destiny to the honour and chivalry of the handsome young soldier who suppliantly kneeled at her feet, and passionately urged his romantic suit. Just as she had yielded, with downcast eyes, stern loud voices without the convent, as if demanding admittance, accompanied by vehement knocking on the door, startled them both.

The lover hastily rose to his feet, and their eyes eloquently met. By a sort of freemasonry said to exist among lovers, more was conveyed by the magical interchange of their glances than the tongues of either could have uttered. The next moment, as if actuated by one impulse, they drew near each other, and in an instant the arms of the daring youth were encircling the yielding form of the blushing novice, and his bold lips pressed her own. With her virgin cheeks burning with shame and with heightened beauty, she bounded away from him and fled from the oratory.

He hastily resumed his disguise, and with his bosom swelling with the pride of recent conquest, and his dark eyes flashing with the triumph of a successful wooer, he hastened to ascertain the cause of the noise without. As he advanced through the gallery it increased in violence, as if the applicants held in slight veneration the sacred character of the convent, or were influenced by circumstances to whose urgency the shelter of a convent or hostel were alike welcome.

CHAPTER IX. THE SPY.

As the monk hastened through the gallery for the purpose of ascertaining the cause of the clamour, so ill suited to the peaceful character of a religious abode, he was met by Zacharie, who, in a voice tremulous with alarm, but spiced, nevertheless, with a sufficient share of his natural audacity, said, "If thou likest not a hempen cravat, monk or soldier, or whatever thou art, back with thee to some lurking−hole."

"What mean you, boy?" inquired the monk, earnestly, but without exhibiting any signs of alarm; "can you tell me the meaning of this rude uproar outside the gate?"

"That can I. There are four horsemen without who demand a spy, who, they contend, has passed this way under a monk's cowl and cassock. And they swear round oaths, one louder than the others making oath by his beard, they will give him a short shrift and a merry dance 'tween heaven and earth if they lay hands on him. Thou knowst best if thou hast interest in this matter, father."

"No trifling interest, boy, as you have guessed," said the monk, with a calm demeanour, and apparently unmoved by this announcement of danger. Nevertheless, his eyes flashed, and his lips were compressed with determination, as, fixing his gaze full upon the boy, he said, in a low and firm voice,

"Zacharie, I must not be taken. If they break into the convent, as from their earnest blows they are likely to, then we must see how one man can bear up against four."

"But thou shalt not be taken," said the lad, decidedly, catching the spirit of the monk; "I said last night I would serve thee, and I will now do it. But I shall have to lie roundly for it, father, for which thou wilt, no doubt, give me absolution!" he dryly added.

"No, no, boy, I alone must face these men," he replied, passing Zacharie with a youthful impetuosity, which, doubtless, would have drawn upon him the censure of the old Chevalier de Levi.

"Faith! that thou shalt not," responded Zacharie. "Keep close for the next five minutes; show neither cowl nor cassock, and I will so deal with them that they will give thee little trouble."

"But you will involve yourself in danger," said the monk, catching and detaining Zacharie by his capote as he was about to bound from him.

"Not so, father," he answered, confidently; "I know two of the loons well; for their uproar waked me, and I had a glimpse of them from the window while they were calling out for a spy they swore was concealed within the four walls of this convent, and so I hastened hither to give thee warning. Keep out of the way, father, and I will soon put them on a false scent. But I must vanish, for here come the women." Thenplacing his fingers in his ears, he darted away from the monk as the extremity of the cloister began to be filled with the terrified inmates, both religieuses and novices, of the convent, whom the noise had drawn from their apartments.

As Zacharie disappeared at the opposite end of the gallery, he turned the lock in the door leading from it into the hall, and thereby effectually prevented the monk's interference in his tactics. On his entrance the strangers were still hammering and shouting for admittance. Beside the great convent door, holding the key in his hand, and in great perturbation of spirit, sat Father Bonaventure himself. He was too irresolute to apply the key to the lock, although, at each repetition of the knocks and shouts, he essayed to do it. Their demands for admission, whether made with their tongues or the butts of their pistols, he answered with a faint denial, enforced by some apt proverb, of having seen or entertained either officer or spy. Nevertheless, his fears whispered to him, that if the monk whom he had left in the confessional should prove, as he now began to suspect, a spy or layman in disguise an enemy to the government he already knew him to be his presence in the convent would result in his own ruin both with church and state.

In his most palmy state of peace and quietude, Father Bonaventure was not remarkable either for energy or uncommon presence of mind. Circumstances, however, seldom called these virtues into trial, his most appalling dangers being those that threatened the much−dreaded diminution of his corporeal dignity. At this crisis he found himself in a condition of great perturbation. The entrance of Zacharie afforded him that kind and degree of relief which is experienced by the unfortunate when they find a fellow−being, however insignificant and incapable of affording affectual aid, compelled to share their misfortunes.

"Dost thou bolt that door, jackanapes?" he cried, in alarm, the last spark of his valiancy, which the assault of the marauders had left glimmering, going out as he detected this apparent conspiracy on the part of one within the besieged place; "wilt thou give me no way of 'scape from the assaults of these godless highwaymen if they batter down the door, as they are yet like to do? Verily," he added, in the depth of his misery, "verily, I am caught like a bird in the snares of the fowler!"

"Hist, father!" replied the boy; "seest thou not that the key is on the inside, and that thou canst get out if they do not let a hole into that fat paunch o' thine, which would be a charitable letting out o' much wind, and an afterward saving o' broadcloth."

"Heaven forbid!" ejaculated the monk, rising from the bench and waddling towards the door of escape with wonderful celerity, the flesh of his cheeks and sides quivering as he rolled along as if of the consistency of jelly.

"Ho, ho! ho, la, ho!" cried a boisterous voice without, while a blow followed each syllable by way of corollary, "wilt have a bullet hole bored through thy door, old Father Bonaventure? Thou hast kept us full ten minutes waiting for thee to unbolt, and, by my beard, if thou keepst good men without in the snow while thou art within in the feathers, we will blow thy door through in the cocking of an arquebus, if old cloven hoof himself stood behind it. By my beard will we, old dad!"

"By thy beard thou wilt not, Luc Giles," replied Zacharie, imitating, as closely as a bagpipe could imitate a bassoon, the hoarse voice of the speaker; "dost think thou art at an alehouse porch, that thou roarest so like a seahorse."

"By my beard!" cried the same voice, though in tones somewhat lowered, and as if addressing his comrades, "if old cloven hoof be not there himself, there spoke his firstborn, that little hopo'−my−thumb, Zacharie Nicolet. Ha! my young cub," he said, raising his voice, "art thou there?"

"Ay, thou old bear," answered Zacharie, in the same tone, "go suck thy paws; for thou'lt find no meat here."

"By the beard of St. Peter, and that was a yard long, that may be true. But see if I wring not thy neck, thou speckled hawk hatched from a hen's egg."

"Faith, Luc, an thou comest to that, thou canst not tell if thou art hawk's brood or hen's brood, if all tales be true."

"Didst ever hear a young chick cackle so bravely, boys?" said the prototype of our friend Jacques, laughing loudly. "By my beard, I always get the left hand o' thy fool's tongue, Zacharie. It's ill flinging chaff against an east wind."

"Thou hast named thy witless words most aptly, Luc," said Zacharie, laughing; "and I bid thee beware, lest I blow both thee and thy chaff far from this floor, if thou goest not about thy business."

"Not till we get the grist we came for, little Nic," answered the man, doggedly.

"If thou seekst him I guess, thou wilt not find him here, Luc Giles."

"Knowst thou aught of him, lad?" inquired Luc Giles, eagerly; "'twill be worth a score of crowns in thy bonnet if thou canst put us on the right scent. But how comest thou here, Zacharie? Hast donned cassock and turned priest, lad, hey?"

"Not I, Luc; between old mother and Father Duc, I get enough of priest and cassock at home. But, between thee and me, Luc," added the boy, lowering his voice and speaking in a confidential tone, "I guided a monk to this convent last night. It may be 'tis him thou seekst."

While he was speaking the monk advanced through the door by which Father Bonaventure had effected his retreat (which, we will mention in passing, was not stayed until he found himself, safe from ball and steel, within the chapel) and, as Zacharie ceased, he felt a hand upon his throat and a stern whisper in his ear,

"Villain, would you betray me?"

"Hands off, Sir Monk," said the boy, in the same suppressed tone, not the least disconcerted by this summary proceeding; "thou art over hasty with thy hands. Stand beside me; and, if I prove faithless," he firmly added, "then make thy blade and my bones acquainted."

The monk, reassured by the frank and resolute tones of the boy, released his grasp, and, as if mortified at his want of confidence and his hasty act, retired to the upper end of the hall, leaving him to pursue the conference with those without in his own way. At the same instant, amid a murmur of elated voices, Luc Giles said eagerly,

"It was thou, then, Zacharie Nicolet, that guided him hither? That silly donkey, Jacques, we met on the road at old Alice's hostel, said he had guided a monk to Ducosse's, and, when I would know more, he swore at me by his beard that he would not tell. But I gave his chin a tweak," added Giles, laughing hoarsely, his companions joining in his merriment, "and, by the beard o' me, I planted him a buffet over his ears, to mend his manners when in company with his betters, and so rode on. We could get nothing from old Ducosse but scraps of outlandish Latin, and pushed forward, inquiring here and there on the road, and so tracked him here. And now we've earthed the fox, by my beard! we'll have our game out of him."

"An old fox hath a long trail, Luc," said the boy; "thou wilt have to track him farther yet, and take thy game otherwheres. He delayed here but half an hour to bait, and then pushed forward in great haste alone, for fear he should get blocked up by the snow. I fear 'twill be hard to track him now," he added, in an inimitable tone of feigned disappointment; "by the cross! if I had known he were a spy, I'd have placed him under lock and key in Father Bonaventure's wine−cellar."

"Sayst thou so," exclaimed Luc Giles, in a tone of real disappointment; "then, by my mother's beard, we must ride for it! How far has he the start of us?"

"Good three hours; but the roads are heavy, and he must travel slow. With hard riding thou wilt come up with him ere night sets in. But how knowst thou he is a spy, Luc?"

"I saw him the night of Francois Benoît's death in the colonial uniform; and as we, that is, King George, which is all the same, be fighting with the colonies, I began to smell a rat. But, before I could make up my mind whether he was a spy or no, Father Etienne got him off in a monk's garb, and tried afterward to throw dust in my eyes. But 'twouldn't do! I got my mates together, took horse, and gave chace. Now, if thou sayst he has gone ahead, why we'll e'en keep on till we run down our game. The governor'd give a round hundred crowns to catch a spy. It's for no good he's skulking through the valley, I'll be sworn. Come, comrades, let us ride!"

"If I do till we take a pull at the priest's wineflagon, may I drink water all the days of my life," said, gruffly, one of the party, who had not before spoken.

"Ay, ay, Gregory is the only sensible lad among us," said another; "give us a swig o' the old daddy's juice, and then we'll ride, but not a step without."

"By my beard! you say well, comrades all," added Luc Giles. "Out with the key o' the wine tap, Bony; if thou wilt not let us into thy old rookery, have the grace to give us a little of the genuine '45 to moisten our throats, which are as dry as a sponge with this cursed hallooing at thy door. Tip us the flagon, little Zacharie, for I'll be sworn the father has it handy."

"In the name o' the blessed St. Peter, I will give thee a cup of water, and bid thee depart in peace," replied the boy, imitating the manner of Father Bonaventure, handing, as he spoke, a flagon which old Agathe, on first learning the demand, and anticipating the result, had hastily filled from a cask in an adjoining recess; "what can my sons expect but holy water from a priest's hands?"

"Callest thou this holy water, boy?" said Luc Giles, who had taken the tankard, with a gloomy brow hearing the words that accompanied it, but now spoke like a man who is unexpectedly pleased; "if the monks and priests drink such water as this, I have no objections to turning monk myself."

The flagon was passed round, eliciting that emphatic smacking of the lips which follows grateful draughts of the juice of the grape, and drawing especially from him who had been called Gregory a deep−drawn sigh, as if he mourned that he had no room beneath his jacket for another flagon.

"Zach, lad, thou art fit to be cupbearer to the pope," said Giles, returning the empty vessel; "tell old Bony we'll call and take another sprinkling of his holy water on our way back. Now, good−by, and take care of thyself, Zachie," he added, ironically; "the saints send thee safely back to thy old mother's apron−string, and tell her wean thee when thou hast cut thy teeth. Come, mates, let us ride!"

"My dam's apron−string hang thee yet," replied the boy, as they rode across the court to the convent gate; "if I have not filed thy eyeteeth for thee this day, thou braggart clown, and cheated thee under thy nose, then wilt thou cheat the hangman, which thou art not like to do. Now, Sir Monk," he continued, turning from the window and addressing the young soldier with ready self−possession, "thou mayst abide here until night, and, when the moon rises, I'll get a faithful half−breed to guide thee to the river. This Luc Giles will give up the pursuit when he can learn nothing more of his chase, and will be back here, swearing more valiantly by his black chin than thou hast heard him do but now. But the bird will be flown, and he may give Father Bonaventure the benefit of his knocks in return for flagons of holy water."

"My brave lad," said the monk, grasping his hand, and warmly acknowledging his obligations, at the same time commending his address and faithfulness, "how can I reward you?"

"The best reward thou canst bestow," said the boy, proudly, "and the only one, too, that I will accept, is to be made a soldier such as thou art."

"You are too young, Zacharie," said the officer, smiling; "would you fight against King George?"

"Ay, that would I, against any king. But I am almost as tall as thyself," he added, drawing himself up; "it were a charity to make a soldier of me, father, lest I carve men's throats without the law on my side, as thou hast who do it by the wholesale."

"What sayst thou of carving men's throats by the wholesale, thou prating manakin? A small spark makes a great fire. Soon ripe, soon rotten," cried Father Bonaventure, who, after looking in at the door, and satisfying himself that the coast was clear, now bustled into the hall. In one hand he bore an ancient firelock, which, from the shattered condition of the stock and a huge gape in the barrel, was, like the young Arab's fowlingpiece, somewhat given to bursting; it was, moreover, without a lock. In the other hand he carried a stout oaken cudgel, probably the most serviceable weapon of the two.

"The cowards are gone, ha?" he cried, brandishing his weapons, and advancing boldly up to the door. "'Sdeath! 'tis well they fled. Mars! how I wish I had been trained a soldier! I would ha' carved their flesh for 'em. Didst hear, boy? didst hear, brother? Agathe, didst hear how stoutly I told them begone, there was no spy here? and didst not see how the door shook as they leaned against it, with their quaking at my dreadful voice?"

"Thou didst quake all over, father," said Zacharie, dryly.

"Hist, lad! Verily, brother, it was with much exercise of that Christian self−denial which our faith inculcateth on such occasions, that I could refrain from attacking, with my single arm, these four men of war. 'Sdeath, I know not to what extent my natural valour might have carried me, for, of a truth, my indignation did boil within me, if I had not bethought me to take myself to prayers in the chapel against such temptations. Surely forbearance hath its reward, saith the Scripture."

"But how camest thou by that crazy old firelock, father? Is't the reward of thy forbearance?" asked Zacharie.

"I did hear a noise as if a battering−ram were levelled at the gates," replied the confessor; "and, being fortified within, I sallied forth, like David, to the defence, and did arm myself with these bloody weapons of war as I came through the gallery; and, when I arrived here, behold! the enemy had fled. If men cannot bite, they had best not show their teeth."

"'Tis a pity, father, thou didst not get here before they fled," said Zacharie; "they would then, doubtless, have been well punished for their insolence, and for the future taught how to come roaring about convent walls."

"That would'a!" said the doughty and valorous Father Bonaventure, drawing a long breath.

Then seating himself upon the settle he had lately deserted with such commendable self−denial, he placed his cudgel and firelock together across his knees, and looked towards his guest as if he desired an explanation of the affair.

It was now useless for the disguised soldier to attempt longer to conceal his real character from Father Bonaventure, whose surprise on learning it was only equalled by his astonishment at the audacity of his guest in assuming the duties of a confessor. This seemed to trouble him not a little, as from time to time he looked askance at him, gathered his obese forehead into a frown, and essayed to give utterance to his thoughts; but his purpose as frequently failed him, either from constitutional indolence, which made speaking, at least in way of reproof, an effort, or from a conviction that his spiritual weapons would be but an ill match in contest with one armed with youth, and, peradventure, sharp steel. Father Bonaventure, therefore, gave vent to his displeasure, if one so uniformly good−natured could retain in his composition for any length of time an emotion so dangerous to his bodily thrift as anger, in an occasional fierce look, a slight tremour of the lip, the vain promise of speech, and some half a dozen long−drawn sighs.

"Reverend father," said the soldier, whose penetration enabled him to discover the cause of his emotion, "it would have become me better to have confided to you last night the secret of my disguise. I am not a priest in the colonial army, as you are, doubtless, already aware, but an officer therein. I shall follow this youth's advice, and burden your hospitality until night, when I will pursue my journey, the object of which you are truly acquainted with. My secret is yet only known to yourself and this lad, for the females, doubtless, were too far from the scene of the late alarm to have heard what would have given them additional anxiety. To them you can give any explanation you list. But let them not know, father, that I am the spy those men seek, or, indeed, that I am other than what, in this disguise, I seem."

"And continue to give thee my chair in the confessional, brother!" said Father Bonaventure, with a glace of humour in his eyes as he turned them on his guest. "Make the young wolf the lambs' keeper, ha?"

"Not so, father; the lambs are safe enough for me."

"Pen them in the fold, Father Bonaventure," said Zacharie, "I'll be their watch−dog."

"Beshrew me if thou wilt," answered the priest; "that would, indeed, better the matter. The same breath that bloweth out the candle kindleth the fire, truly saith the proverb."

"But I'll dip in holy water, father," answered Zacharie.

"Crows are never the whiter for washing themselves, lad. Go to, go to, I will be my own shepherd," he added, laughing. "Now, Sir Soldier, or brother, as I had best call thee, in respect to thy habit, thou mayst eat, drink, and sleep as thou wilt till thy departure. Thou knowst where thy cell is situate. 'Tis thine while thou art our guest. But see that thy steps turn not towards my sheepfold, and thou mayst safely remain an inmate of the convent. Didst confess any one this morning, brother?" he hastily inquired.

"There's no one will say they have heard other voice than yours this day," he replied, evasively.

"The better, all the better for thee and mine," said the confessor, cheerfully; "there hath been less harm done than I dared hope. So come with me to the refectory, where Sister Agathe, if these rude riders have not scared her wits away, hath made ready our morning repast. Come thou also, lad, and break thy fast. Prayers and provender never hinder any man's journey. But methinks thou art rather a forward youth. Wanton kits, however, may make sober cats." Father Bonaventure, having thus spoken, preceded his guest to the refectory.

The opinion expressed by the monk in relation to the knowledge possessed by the female inmates of the convent of his real character was correct. Too remote from the hall door to hear distinctly the conversation between Zacharie and Luc Giles, they had only understood that men were in pursuit of some soldier supposed to have taken shelter in the convent, but entertained no suspicion of the identity of the youthful monk with the fugitive. One of their number, however, instigated by curiosity or some deeper feeling, had the boldness to advance beyond her timid companions, and approach the door leading from the gallery into the hall, though not without receiving a frown from the superior and a reproof from Sister Ursule. Eugenie, for it was the novice of the oratory, had heard the harsh voices of the men demanding the disguised spy, and with a strange anxiety that she could not account for, she listened until they had departed. Then, possessed with the assurance of the truth of her young confessor's story, and informed of his danger as a spy she hastily retreated and rejoined her trembling sisters at the farther extremity of the gallery as Father Bonaventure came from the chapel to return to the field he had so discreetly and piously deserted.

We will briefly pass over the monotonous events of the day. By the young soldier it was passed in his cell in poring over a huge black−letter tome, and in devising a plan for the escape of Eugenie; by Father Bonaventure, seated in a leathern armchair placed square before the refectory−room fire, into which he vacantly gazed, with his hands clasped over the front of his comely person; by the nuns and novices, in their rooms over rosaries, missals, or embroidery−frames; and by Zacharie, after he had seen and arranged affairs with the Indian guide, in tinkering at Father Bonaventure's old firelock, or wandering restlessly through the long passages and deserted cells of the convent.

CHAPTER X. THE FLIGHT.

The chamber or cell occupied by the monk was situated in a remote part of the convent. A single window, guarded by a lattice of ironwork, closed by a padlock, admitted sufficient light into it, while, at the same time, it afforded the security of a prison. Extending from the ceiling to the floor, it gave egress, when thrown open, to a close gallery or cloister running along the rear of the edifice. This gallery was enclosed on all sides by Venetian blinds, and in summer afforded a cool and agreeable promenade, with a distant prospect of the river winding through a gorge in the hills. It was now appropriated as a greenhouse, the proper temperature being preserved by tubes filled with hot air, and crowded with a great variety of native plants and exotics, some of which were young trees in size.

The numerous vases were so arranged as to leave a serpentine walk winding through them from one extremity of the cloister to the other, and so shaded by the foliage of the plants bordering it that one might walk there wholly screened from observation, save when passing by the windows looking into the cells.

The evening of the day on which the events recorded in the foregoing chapter had transpired at length arrived. A roseate hue yet lingering behind the sun suffused the sky, and, reflected from the snow through the interstices of the blinds, spread a golden light over the foliage of the plants. The monk, wearied with following the obscure arguments of the old fathers in their polemical controversies, had long since thrown aside his book, and, with his arms folded thoughtfully behind him, had been for the last half hour walking his chamber, revolving in his mind the morning's interview with Eugenie in the chapel, and contemplating its results. The final sum of his reflections

was a determination to aid her escape from the religious imprisonment to which she was subjected, and conduct her to the mansion of her friend, Madame Montmorin, then leave the farther progress of his love, as he already designated his brief and romantic interest in her fate, to fortune.

"At all events," he said, aloud, "she shall not become the victim of this villanous St. Clair. Conscious that my motives in relation to this lovely creature are pure, I will devote myself to her cause; and," he added, solemnly laying his hand upon his heart, "may the God of unprotected innocence judge me as I am true or false! If she will escape with me, I will safely conduct her to the abode of her maternal friend, and, leaving her there secure from further oppression, bid her farewell, perhaps for ever! and, forgetting her, pursue the destiny that is before me. Palsied be the heart of that man," he said, with a heightened glow, after pacing the room for several minutes in silence, as if replying to or combating some unworthy mental suggestion, "who could take advantage of her artless confidence and unprotected state. Were she other than she is, a proud, rich, vain coquette, placing her honour in the keeping of the first bold cavalier, playing, like Folly herself, around the net which at length ensnares her; a mere human butterfly of silk and ribands, it would be an intrigue to be less scrupulously balanced. Heighho! 'tis a great temptation," he said, in a tone half gay, half serious, "for one to whom laurels won in love are fairer than the bays plucked in war. Alas, that empty honour should stand in my way, and thus baffle me! Unlike Falstaff, here Cupid bids me on, and honour bids me off. This bewitching novice, whose sweet form has already been entwined in my arms, is *mine* ," he said, emphatically and with a sparkling eye; "yes," he added, in a deep and severe tone, "mine, if I dare be a villain!" In a few moments afterward he continued, in a different tone, "Her extreme loveliness and naive manner have so effectually captivated me, at all times sufficiently susceptible to the dark eye of woman, that, if I do not call in honour, her orphan state, and her unsuspecting confidence, and weigh them nicely against that propensity for intrigue that is in me, she would better trust her vestal purity with a Rochester than with me. Well, women are, at last, but charming toys to amuse our leisure hours withal. If I, who have borne off the prize in so many successful amours, and from beings lovely as the houri of Mohammed's paradise, convey this sweet novice to her friends with the self−denial I propose to myself, I shall have won a greater victory even than all these, a victory over myself. But before I can win I must dispose my forces. How the fair novice will manage to elude her keepers passes my comprehension. But the sex have an instinctive tact in these matters, and we thicker−witted men may safely leave all to them where any plot or mischief is going forward. There rings the vesper−bell! But I must not alarm Father Bonaventure by making my appearance in the oratory with his flock. Ha! I am not alone!"

The window of his apartment was at that moment darkened by a passing shadow, and a flower of the iris, attached to a sprig of myrtle, fell at his feet. Lifting it from the ground, he gracefully pressed it to his lips, saying, in a tone of gallantry,

"Fair flower de luce, emblem and pledge of promise! I accept the pledge! Yes, lovely novice," he added, in tones sufficiently audible to be heard by one standing without the open window, "my right hand shall forget its cunning ere I forget the promise I have sacredly pledged to you."

Then lifting his eyes, expressive of a secret intelligence, to the window, he added, placing the flower upon his heart, "`Goddess of the painted bow, To thee I still prove true; With all thy tints and purple glow, I boast thy name and beauty too.'"

Then looking towards the window, which was nearly covered by a myrtle, he saw "through its luxuriant blind" the outline of a female form whose exquisite proportions could not be mistaken. But with that caution which the incident of the flower had inspired, he remained on the spot where its fall had arrested him, saying, as he placed the sprig of myrtle in his breast,

"Propitious fates, accept a lover's thanks! Lo,

"`Sacred to Venus is the myrtle shade.'

"What stronger testimonial of requited love need wooer ask? I will wear this treasure next to my heart, for "`Myrtle on the breast or brow Would lively hope and love avow.'

"In her own delicate and mystic language I will assure her of my devotion," he continued, plucking a flower which grew in a vase within the recess of the window. "Here is the snowdrop, the emblem of friendship in adversity. It is a beautiful and appropriate reply."

He cast it through the window, and beheld it drop at the feet of the mysterious visitant. A fair hand hastily caught it up, and the next instant an anemone fell upon the floor of the cell. He eagerly seized it, and found a slip of paper wound around the stem. Unrolling it, he read with a beating heart,

"Take no rash step. Throwing myself wholly on your honour and generosity, I consent to leave this hateful convent under your protection. I will meet you by the myrtle when the moon rises. Till then, adieu." In a single line below, in the form of a postscript, was added,

"You will find the key of your window behind the wooden crucifix in the refectory."

The note bore no signature; but, aside from his knowledge of its source, he was assured the elegant Italian characters he so ardently perused could have had no other author than the romantic novice.

"I must try and draw her to the window," he said, in the animation of the moment, thoughtlessly, "that I may banquet on her lovely face, softened by this rosy twilight."

He approached the grating and whispered her name. The rustling of the foliage and the light sound of a retreating footstep convinced him that his mystic correspondent had fled, choosing in this manner to intimate the danger of prolonging their stolen interview, and, at the same time, reprove his imprudence, where she herself had practised so much caution.

"The lovely novice has shown more discretion than I," he said, retiring from the window and resuming his seat at the table, where, instead of the volume which lay open before him, he began to study the graceful turns of the beautifully−formed characters of the billet, as if each letter had been a flower, conveying in itself a mystic language.

The silence of midnight at length reigned within the convent−walls, and every eye save those of the monk and the novice Eugenie was sealed in sleep. The former had just dismissed Zacharie, who had entered his cell to bring the key of the window, for which the young officer had sent him, and which he found behind the crucifix, where the novice had probably placed it. Zacharie also informed him that the moon was about rising, and that the carriole and Indian guide was in readiness at the gate, the keys of which Father Bonaventure had consigned to him on retiring, not wishing to be disturbed by their departure.

"He ordered me," continued Zacharie, "to give him back the keys in the morning; and he bademe say that he left his blessing for thee, and to tell thee that thou hadst best settle thyself down in life in thy youth, for a rolling stone gathers no moss."

Zacharie's footsteps had not yet died away along the gallery after he left the cell, when the monk applied the key to the padlock, and at once removed the barricade from the window. As he stepped upon the gallery, the rays of the rising moon were visible through the blinds of the greenhouse, brightly silvering the tops of the forest trees on the opposite cliffs. With a throbbing heart, and with his spirits elevated by the romance of his situation, he moved a few steps noiselessly along the cloister, and then awaited in breathless silence the approach of the trusting and artless novice.

In a few moments a light footstep approached from the opposite extremity of the cloister, and the impatient youth advanced to embrace the expected partner of his journey. But he started back with his hand upon his sword−hilt, and a slight exclamation of surprise and disappointment, when he encountered the figure of a monk, visible by the rays of the lamp which streamed through his window. His first thought was, that Father Bonaventure, discovering the proposed elopement, had substituted his own person for that of the novice; but a second reflection, and a closer scrutiny of the height and dimensions of the person before him, convinced him that, multiplied five times, it could not become Father Bonaventure. His heart, moreover, aided by that instinct which enables lovers to ascertain, in a wonderful manner, the presence of a beloved object, however invisible its form and impenetrable its disguise to other optics, assured him that the lovely person of the novice, and not Father Bonaventure, was concealed beneath that uncouth disguise, and the next moment his arms encircled her, while his bold lips impassionedly sought her own. But the maiden shrunk from his embrace, hid her face in confusion in the hood of her robe, and seemed about to fly from him.

The young soldier, at once alive to his own imprudence, and instantly appreciating her delicacy, seized her hand, and, throwing himself on one knee before her, apologized for his warmth (in so modest a manner, and in a voice touched with such sincere regret, that he would have disarmed resentment, even on similar offence, in the bosom of nun Ursule), and expressed his sorrow that he should have been the cause of wounding her feelings by his rash thoughtlessness.

"Forgive me, sweet Eugenie," he said, in tones of deep humility; "it was but a momentary forgetfulness of the sacred relation in which I stand towards you as your protector, and also of your unprotected state. Say that you forgive me, Eugenie," he continued, his voice subdued to a melancholy cadence, and rising scarcely above a musical whisper, to which, pleased yet trembling, she listened with downcast eyes and heaving bosom, "breathe the word *forgive*, and I will offend no more."

"On that condition, then, you are forgiven," she said, in tones so low that none but a suppliant lover's ears could have caught them.

"Thank you, bless you! dearest Eugenie," he warmly exclaimed; "from this moment I will be to you only as a brother."

"Then, dearest brother," she said, in a lively tone, her confidence of manner at once restored by his seeming sincerity and deep respect, "beware," and her fore finger was raised threateningly, while an arch smile dwelt on her lip, "beware lest you consider as one of your fraternal privileges the liberty you were now about to take so very cavalierly. I am now on my guard, and not to be taken at vantage, like a certain simple maiden in a certain chapel I wot of. So be a good discreet brother, and I will make up my mind to trust you. If you had not repented, let me tell you, as you did, never frightened doe fled faster from the hunter to covert than I should have flown back to my little cell."

"'Twas, indeed, an escape, fair Eugenie," he said, as they entered his room.

"What! so soon forgotten your fraternal attitude?" she said, glancing at him reprovingly with her dark eyes, whose fire would have kindled a flame in the breast of an anchorite.

"Nay, if you are so severe, and will not let me call you neither fair Eugenie nor dear Eugenie, I must be silent, for my lips will shape no other mode of speech; unless," he added, in a tone of real or affected pique, "I had best call you brother, as your garb would sanction. If such be your pleasure, never two speechless clowns jogged together to market more discreetly than will you and I ride side by side to Quebec. I'faith, scandal shall have no food for her tongue if I can help it."

"Now you are hurt, brother of mine," she said, laughing. "But, if you will promise to be goodhumoured on the way, there's no telling what may turn up in your favour. It's hard for our sex to remain long in one mind. So comfort yourself, my gentle brother, on our well−known fickleness. Now let us leave this hateful prison. I long to breathe the free air of heaven, if it be at midnight."

"No, Eugenie, I will not avail myself of your sex's fickleness, but rather leave my better fortune to your own generous heart."

"'Tis a pretty speech and prettily spoken, brother; but let us not delay," she said, smiling and advancing to the door of the cell.

"Nay, Eugenie, give me one look from those charming eyes, but one smile from those sweet lips to assure me that there is peace between us, and," he added, imboldened by the smile on her beautiful mouth as his eye sought and met her own conscious glance, "grant me one sisterly kiss of forgiveness."

Before she could resist he had snatched the boon from her lips, and the next moment was kneeling at her feet.

So much audacity, immediately atoned for by such humility; the appeasing, imploring appeal of his eyes; his silence, as if he had offended too deeply for words to avail him, at once disarmed her resentment for an offence so gracefully expiated; and with a reproving shake of the head and lifting of the fore finger, she granted the forgiveness he so eloquently sought.

"Well, brother, I see you are incorrigible, and I suppose I must be lenient. But presume not too much on my good−nature. The moon is up. Let us not linger here, but fly," she added, with suddenly−assumed energy.

"This moment!" he said, taking the lamp, and placing himself by her side as she passed through the door. "Let my arm assist you to the carriole," he added, passing his arm lightly around her.

"No, no, I will lean upon it, good and careful brother."

Hastily and silently they traversed the passage to the hall, where they found Zacharie in waiting. He immediately opened the doors, and accompanied them across the court to the gate. Before it stood the sleigh, to which were harnessed two small but spirited ponies. Without speaking, the young soldier assisted the disguised novice into it, and, after bidding Zacharie a warm adieu, and rewarding him with gold and assurances of favouring his belligerant aspirations, he followed himself, and bade the guide drive off with what speed the convent's horses and the heavy condition of the road would permit.

The snow had settled a little during the day, and the track was by this time somewhat broken, so that they glided over the ground with greater facility than Father Bonaventure's words promised when, in the morning, he surveyed the state of the roads from the tower of his convent. The vehicle, for which the traveller had exchanged his equestrian mode of journeying, was a light wooden body, gracefully shaped like a phaëton, with the exception of the front piece, which rose sharp and narrow three feet in height, terminating in the curved neck and head of a swan, tastefully ornamented with silver. It contained two seats, one of which, in the back part of the carriole, and shut in by its high close sides, was occupied by the travellers, the other by the driver or guide. It was placed on *runners* sixteen inches high, shaped like skateirons, but consisting of a light frame instead of being made solid, and, like them, terminating in a curve in front, carved or cast so as to resemble the head of a serpent. The runners sunk into the snow, which was about two feet in depth, only six inches, leaving the body of the carriole ten inches clear of the surface, over which it glided with delightful rapidity.

The back, the sides, and the seats of the carriage were warmly lined with loose furs and numerous buffalo skins, two of which, placed under the feet of the travellers and drawn up before them, enveloped their entire persons,

and effectually protected them from the cold, which was still intense. The guide was seated in front wrapped up in a capote of bearskin, and otherwise so completely covered from head to feet with furs that both form and feature were undistinguishable, and he more nearly resembled the animal whose hide he wore than a man. The monk, as we shall continue to call our traveller, had not yet seen his face or spoken to him except when he bade him drive from the convent gate, to which he replied by whipping his horses and uttering the Indian ejaculation "eh!" an interjection, with him, expressive either of assent or dissent, and, indeed, of almost every emotion.

For some time they rode forward in silence, the merry bells around the neck of the horses making the otherwise dreary road cheerful by their lively music. At first they glided along the surface of the ground with the facility of a boat sailing on a smooth lake; but after they had travelled a few miles the road became intersected by furrows, called *cahots*, formed in the snow by the winds, heaving its surface into innumerable small ridges. They were the most numerous where the road wound through gorges, down which the wind swept unobstructed. The motion of the carriole at these places was like that of a boat pitching in a short sea, and well−known to carriolers; often, when drawn over a succession of them, like that motion, they produce in the unpractised traveller a sensation of nausea. Our travellers, however, experienced but little annoyance; and, after clearing the defile, their road became once more even, and their speed proportionably increased. The monk, now putting aside the furs from his face, addressed his taciturn guide, who, for the two hours they had been on the road, had exhibited no other signs of life than was indicated by the mechanical rise and fall of his right arm every five minutes, to lay his whip upon the back of his team, and an occasional interjection of encouragement to them as they toiled up some more laborious hill.

"When do you cross the river, guide?" he asked, as the horses were toiling up one of these ascents.

"Eh! Four league, by−um−by," he replied, in harsh guttural tones, without turning his head, and holding up four fingers by way of illustration.

"We shall soon accomplish that," said the monk, wishing to converse with, and learn something of his guide; "these horses of yours do not appear to know what fatigue is."

This compliment to his steeds did not, however, draw any reply from the taciturn driver.

"Is it not near morning?" asked the monk, making a second attempt to open a conversation.

"Sun come two hours, by−um−by," replied the man, elevating two fingers, and then flourishing his whip over the heads of the ponies, as they reached the top of the hill. Obeying the hint, the horses darted down the opposite descent with the rapidity of reindeers.

"What is your name, guide?" asked the monk, as they were gliding over a level tract, after having descended the hill with speed still unabated.

"Name! eh!" he grunted; "Indian callee Ohguesse, Canadian callee Gun."

"If your qualities, worthy Gun, do credit to your sponsors, you will be a valuable auxiliary on the road in case we are attacked. How is the ice where we are to cross the river, think you? It is, no doubt, strong enough to bear the weight of our carriole?"

"Eh! by−um−by, strong 'nough!" said Ohguesse, with a nod of assent.

"Will it bear us if we remain in the carriole?" asked the monk.

"Eh!" was the satisfactory reply of the Indian, who wrapped the collar of his capote closely about his face and ears, and more firmly grasped his reins, as if he would thereby intimate that he was already wearied by his unusual loquacity.

Defeated in the attempt to open a conversation with his guide, the young soldier determined to make an attack on a quarter where, perhaps, success was still more problematical. During the first hour of the journey, he enjoyed in silence the exquisite consciousness of the presence of the charming novice. The slightest touch of her little feet, as they nestled in the same fur beside his own, communicated to his veins a thrilling sensation of delight; and as he felt her soft breathing upon his cheek, and listened to the audible beating of her heart, which he compared to a bird fluttering to escape from beneath the folds of her robe, he feared to speak lest the charm on his senses should be broken.

A sound, like a smothered laugh, at the curt answer of Ohguesse, coming from the fur hood of the maiden, encouraged him to change the direction of his battery. Leaving Ohguesse to atone for his extraordinary garrulity by as long silence as he chose to preserve, he turned to his fair companion and gently repeated her name. But to reiterated repetitions of "Eugenie! sweet Eugenie!" there was no reply; and believing, by her soft regular breathing, that she slept, and that his ears had deceived him, he wrapped himself in his furs, and in a few moments was also sound asleep.

It is, to be sure, altogether unprecedented in the annals of romance, from the days of the Troubadours down to the present time, for an author to put his hero and heroine to sleep, and thus leave them; sleep, hunger, and fatigue being three human weaknesses to which genuine heroes and heroines are presumed never to yield. But our hero and heroine are not superhuman, but subject to like passions with ordinary mortals; like them enduring hunger and thirst, cold and heat, pain and fatigue; therefore, one of them having slept but three hours for the last three days, and the other having been wakeful half the night in anticipation of her escape, they very naturally yielded to the soporific motion of the carriole, and availed themselves of that restorative to the frames of weary mortals which Nature has provided. This was the more necessary, as on the morrow they were to undergo additional excitement and fatigue, for which a good sound sleep is, doubtless, an excellent preparative.

Trusting that they will awake at the beginning of the next chapter, refreshed, and forearmed to encounter the various adventures which may befall them as the principal personages of this tale, we will leave them to their repose and to the skill of the taciturn Ohguesse.

CHAPTER XI. THE PURSUIT.

When the travellers awoke, which very considerately they did when their presence had become necessary to the further progress of our tale, it was already dawn, and they found, on inquiring of their guide, that they had come six leagues, and that the point at which they were to cross the river was but a mile before them. The morning was clear and cold, and the prospect that met their eyes everywhere dreary; but its desolation was increased by the earliness of the hour, the leafless forests, and the wide wastes of snow: the Chaudiere, which formed a prominent feature in the scenery, was only distinguishable from the land by its more even appearance and destitution of trees.

"Had we not best lighten the carriole by crossing the stream on foot?" inquired the young officer of Ohguesse, when at length the guide turned from the main road, and began to approach the river in a direct line.

"Eh! um ground strong, so um ice strong," replied the phlegmatic Indian, his swarthy features, now visible by the daylight, as unmoved as those of an automaton.

He drew up his horses on the verge of the frozen river, leaped lightly to the ground, and, advancing to his leader's

head, prepared to lead him upon the ice. Before he left the carriole he had disencumbered himself of his outward covering of furs, and his person and form became plainly visible to the monk, who was struck with his remarkably agile and athletic appearance. He was full six feet in height, straight as an arrow, and very slender, possessing just such a figure as, in civilized life, would be termed genteel. His cheeks were attenuated, and his features regular, but too harsh to be handsome. A pair of black eyes glittered beneath his arched brows with an active, restless expression, and alone gave intelligence to a countenance the chief expression of which was that settled melancholy peculiar to his race. His face bore more of the traits of the Andalusian peasant than of the American Indian; although the well−known characteristics of this singular race of men were too indelibly stamped upon his physiognomy for his aboriginal birthright to be called in question. His taciturnity evidently did not proceed from intellectual dulness for his quick and sagacious eyes seemed to observe and comprehend everything passing around him but rather from that peculiar feature of education which teaches the Indian warrior that dignity and courage are slow of speech and of few words; or, as it is expressed in their own figurative language, "the warrior talks with his arm and eye, but women and birds are known by their voices."

"Why are you so silent, Ohguesse?" asked the monk, looking sternly in his face, after having twice suggested the expediency of taking the horses from the carriole and dragging it over the river, and receiving no other reply than the interjectional "Eh!" "*Eh* is not to get us out of the river if we once get into it, Ohguesse. Why do you not answer?"

"Eagle only scream when he strike um game: jackdaw never strike um game scream all time! Ohguesse, eagle! monk, jackdaw! Ohguesse no priest."

"A most sound and potent conclusion, I must confess, and, withal, a very complimentary reply to your fellow−travellers," said the monk, as he got out to try the strength of the ice. After sounding it in several places, he added, in a peremptory tone,

"Lead the horses and carriole over, Ohguesse, and wait on the opposite shore: we will walk."

He glanced at the carriole and its pile of furs, beneath which neither foot nor hand was visible, and then advancing to the sleigh, said,

"Will you cross with me on foot, fair Eugenie? I fear to trust too much weight in the carriole."

"Willingly," she said, exposing, for the first time since their departure from the convent, her face to the gaze of the young soldier.

As she encountered his dark eyes, her cheeks were suffused with conscious blushes; and as he advanced to assist her to alight, and extended both arms for the purpose, she said, laughingly,

"No, no, not in your arms, fair sir; I have feet, and can use them."

"They are very little ones, Eugenie, and will not support you through the deep snow. I can take you over as easily as a nurse would carry an infant."

"Art so good a nurse, brother? Really I had not believed it if your own lips had not assured me of it. What, piqued again! Nay, then, I will be as sober and as sinless of any approaches to playfulness as Nun Ursule herself."

"Eh! horse ready!" grunted Ohguesse, lightly springing into the carriole, and starting the horses forward so suddenly at the same time that the monk, who was standing on the runner, was compelled to remain with Eugenie, and share the fate of horse and carriole.

With great velocity Ohguesse standing the while upon his seat, and urging the horses forward by blows and cries the sleigh glided over the frozen river until it had nearly reached the middle of it, when, all at once, the leader was ingulfed, and nearly dragged the shaft horse after him; but the Indian checked him on the very verge of the chasm, by throwing him back on his haunches with a sudden and tremendous exertion of physical power. At the same instant he leaped on the ice, and cast a lasso or running noose, always carried by carriolers for such emergencies, over the drowning horse's head, and tightened it until he ceased to breathe. The animal, which till then had been kicking and struggling violently, to the great danger of his companion and the increase of his own peril, now became motionless, as if dead: floating to the surface from the buoyancy caused by this summary mode of strangulation, he was drawn out by main force from the air−vent into which he had broken, and laid upon the solid ice. Ohguesse then very deliberately loosed the rope from his neck, and the little horse began to respire, at first with great difficulty; but in a few minutes he rose to his feet, apparently saving a little, fright and a cool ablution, to which, however, the Canadian horses of any experience are accustomed as lively and in as good travelling condition as before. The sinking of the horse; the skilful checking of the carriole; the application of the noose, and the rescue of the animal, all passed so quickly, that the monk had neither time to comprehend the extent of their danger, nor leap from the sleigh with Eugenie in his arms, or offer his assistance to the active and experienced Indian, before it was no longer required.

This singular and, to him, novel operation was beheld by the traveller with surprise. Ohguesse observing it, said quietly, as he signed to them to take their seats again in the carriole,

"Choke him save um life!"

Eugenie declined getting into the vehicle again; and the monk, bidding Ohguesse drive forward to the bank, aided the footsteps of his lovely charge, who neither by shriek nor word betrayed alarm during the imminent danger she had been in, and only showed her sex's dependance on the more lordly being, man, by clinging instinctively to her companion. He, in his turn, asserted his manly prerogative by clasping her in his arms, when for a moment he thought, by the cracking of the ice around them, that they were all about to be ingulfed together.

The Indian, resuming his upright attitude on the front seat of the carriole, first having turned the leader loose to follow in the track of the vehicle, guided his remaining horse aside from the chasm, and, uttering a shrill cry, urged him forward at his former speed. He had nearly gained the shore in safety when the travellers, who were slowly following on foot, beheld him suddenly check the wild career of his steed, then hesitate for an instant; the next moment, cheered and encouraged by a loud and prolonged cry, they saw the horse leap a fissure several feet wide, formed by the shelving of the ice where it had been broken and piled by the current, which at this place flowed unusually swift; and both uttered an exclamation of surprise and alarm as the carriole bounded over the gap after the flying horse, who did not cease his wild career until he had galloped half way up the opposite bank of the river.

Hastening forward, and avoiding the fissure by ascending the stream a few yards, they regained the carriole, and, under the skilful guidance of Ohguesse, were once more on their way. Their road now lay along the banks of the river: the sun had appeared above the horizon, and the air became perceptibly milder. Stopping occasionally during the day at some lonely farmhouse to refresh themselves and their horses, on which occasions Eugenie abandoned her clerical disguise, and was represented by the monk as a novice on her way to a convent in Quebec, an hour before sunset they were slowly ascending a hill, from the summit of which was a distant view of the St. Lawrence, when Ohguesse, whose restless eyes were constantly on the alert, uttered his usual exclamation "Eh!" but now with an accent of surprise.

The lovers were at that moment absorbed in a low and very interesting conversation, in which Cupid was doing his best to make execution in both of their hearts.

"Why will you not answer to the name of Walter, then?" asked Eugenie, continuing the conversation to which we have just alluded, but which it is not necessary to record.

"Because I fear you will think more of that Norman knight De Lancy than "

"Yourself! brother," she said, in a tone of raillery. "So you have a spice of jealousy in your composition, I see!"

"I know not if it be jealousy or no," he said, in a low tone of tenderness; "but I would rather hear those sweet lips pronounce my own name."

"Then tell me that name, mysterious brother of mine; and if it is a pretty one, and not Peter nor Paul, Moses nor Aaron, I will, if it so pleases you, try and teach the lips aforesaid to speak it."

"Edward; call me Edward."

"Edward!" she repeated, in a voice of thrilling sweetness; "Edward! 'tis a sweet name! I think I shall like it better than Walter."

"If Edward himself," he said, in a voice half serious, "be as dear to Eugenie as the memory of Walter, then "

Here the lover's speech, which doubtless would have been a model for all future lovers on such occasions, was interrupted by the guttural ejaculation of Gun, who, at the same time, indicated with his finger the objects that had broken his habitual taciturnity.

"What do you see, Ohguesse?" he asked.

"One, two, four men! horse much break um down. No come yet, by−um−by."

The monk, comprehending the Indian's meaning rather by the direction of his finger and eyes than by his words, turned and saw on the opposite shore four horsemen, travelling southward at a slow and weary pace.

"One of them is the peasant Luc Giles," said the monk, surveying them attentively; "I would recognise his gaunt frame and stoop in the shoulders, which I particularly noted as he rode off from the convent, among a thousand. Those are his mates with him, as he terms them. They are now returning, Eugenie, as that singular boy, Zacharie, said they would soon do, crestfallen, and, no doubt, aware that they have been deceived by the lad's address."

"See!" exclaimed Eugenie, who became equally interested with her companion in the motions of the party, "one of them stops and points towards us, and now they are all looking this way."

There were visible certain signs among the party which convinced the monk that the carriole had not only attracted their notice, but had become an interesting object of attention.

"They will pursue us!" exclaimed Eugenie. "One of them has already dismounted, and is descending the bank to the ice. See! another tries in vain to urge his horse down the precipice, and also dismounts! Blessed Virgin protect us! How can you resist, Edward, at such a disadvantage?" she added, observing him bring his pistols round to the ready grasp of his hand; "oh, do not think of resisting. Hasten, Ohguesse, and get up this long and tedious hill! We may yet gain the top before they can reach us on foot."

"Be not alarmed, dear Eugenie," said the young officer, pressing her hand, which she had unconsciously, in the anxiety of her feelings, placed in his; "Ohguesse, who will no doubt prove himself a serviceable gun on this occasion, this brace of pistols, and myself, will make our numbers equal. Ha! one of them is already on the ice."

"If that be their leader, Edward, who is foremost, and, from his size and clamour, I take it to be him you call Luc Giles, he is not seconded by his men, who point to their horses, and seem to plead their broken−down condition. Marie! Heaven be thanked!" she suddenly ejaculated, yet instantly crossing herself for uttering an exclamation of joy at the event she beheld.

The individual to whom she alluded, and who was, indeed, Luc Giles himself, not being able to make his own horse leave the road to take to the river, had gone back, after trying the strength of the ice, and mounted one of those belonging to his companions. Forcing him by dint of spurring, much swearing, and a shower of blows, upon the ice, he was galloping across the river alone, when, all at once, horse and rider sunk before the eyes of the pursued, and drew from Eugenie unconsciously the exclamation of gratitude she had uttered.

"Hola, Ohguesse," cried the monk, "we must not let him perish!"

He sprung from the carriole as he spoke, and with youthful ardour and impetuosity would have hastened to the aid of his pursuer, when he beheld the companions of the horseman running with loud cries to his rescue: he detained the carriole on the brow of the hill, which they had now gained, long enough to see them drag the drowning man from the water, although with the loss of his horse. Congratulating Eugenie on their escape, he pointed out to her the St. Lawrence far to the north, glittering in the beams of the setting sun like a belt of silver, and then ordered Ohguesse to drive forward with the best speed his horses could exert.

As the night gathered around them, the wind, which had been light during the day, increased in violence, drifting the fine particles of snow (by the *habitans* termed *la poudre*) into their faces, the intensely frozen crystals inflicting extreme pain whenever they came in contact with the skin. Frequently it swept past them with the strength of a hurricane, lifting light clouds of frozen snow from the surface, along which it was whirled in wild eddies, and so thickening the atmosphere that both horses and driver became bewildered and unable to hold on their way. The night grew dark, and their path became every moment more uncertain. The occasional howl of a wolf could be heard in the forest not far from the road; and the fall of huge trees, torn up by their roots, crashing and echoing through the woods, the hooting of scared owls, and the mingled roar and whistling of the wind, contributed to the dreariness and gloom of their situation.

Forgetful of his own comfort, the young soldier was altogether absorbed in protecting his companion, and seeking, by every tender and assiduous attention that love or chivalry could suggest, to shield her person from the effects of the rude storm, which, although the skies were cloudless, was more severe than if accompanied with falling snow. At length the wind and driving snow became insupportable, and the intellects of Ohguesse were so bewildered that he could proceed no farther. Dropping the reins as the horses, unable to continue in the road, voluntarily stopped, he said, with his customary ejaculation,

"Eh! Horse um no go. Ohguesse no see. Priest sleep in woods by−um−by to−night."

The traveller, at this announcement, shaded his eyes from the icy blasts with his hand, and looked around upon the gloomy forest in which they were blockaded by the drifts. Satisfied from his survey that it would be impossible to proceed much farther unless the wind abated, he was about to communicate the necessity of halting to his companion, when the Indian suddenly, and with a degree of animation he had not before exhibited, said,

"Eh! Ohguesse smell um supper!"

The monk, who could not boast a similar exercise of the olfactory powers, advised him to go forward, that being the direction in which his nasal organ was levelled, and see if any habitation was near them. Ohguesse, after snuffing up the wind once or twice, like a hound when he scents his game, left the carriole, and soon disappeared in the darkness. In a few moments he returned, and, without speaking, resumed the reins, and urged forward the horses by dint of beating. In a short time, after ascending a slight eminence, their eyes were gladdened by the

glimmer of a light in the window of a cottage not far before them. The horses now moved forward with good−will, as if sharing with the travellers the prospect of food and shelter. As they approached the dwelling, which stood near the road, the voices of two or three children were heard mingling in a song; and, although the carriole drove close up to the door, it still continued, as if their own music had drowned that of the merry sleigh−bells, which otherwise should have notified them of the approach of strangers and travellers.

"What a contrast, this cheerfully−lighted cottage and these happy voices," said Eugenie, "to our dreary situation a few minutes ago. But stay, Edward! Ohguesse, do not interrupt them! Let us listen to their song before we enter. It is a familiar one, and recalls days of childhood. You have no idea, Edward," she touchingly continued, "how delightful are the emotions awakened by this simple Canadian song, after having heard, for so many months, the monotonous and lugubrious psalms and holy ballads of the nuns. Listen! there is welcome in their words."

Yielding to the wish of Eugenie, the monk paused at the door, while she leaned on his arm and listened to the youthful singers, who were aided at intervals in the higher parts of their hymn by a remarkably soft female voice:

"'Tis merry to hear at evening time, By the blazing hearth, the sleigh−bells chime; And to know each bound of the steed brings nigher The friend for whom we have heaped the fire.

Light leap our hearts while the listening hound Jumps forth to hail him with bark and bound.

"'Tis he! and blithely the gay bells sound, As his sleigh glides over the frozen ground; Hark! he has passed the dark pine−wood, And skims like a bird o'er the ice−bound flood; Now he catches the gleam from the cabin door, Which tells that his toilsome journey's o'er.

"Our cabin's small, and coarse our cheer, But love has spread the banquet here; And childhood springs to be caressed By our well−beloved and welcome guest.

With a smiling brow his tale he tells While the urchin rings the merry sleigh−bells.

"From the cedar−swamp the gaunt wolves howl, From the hollow oak loud whoops the owl, Scared by the crash of the falling tree:

But these sounds bring terror no more to me; No longer I listen with boding fear, The sleigh−bells' distant chime to hear."

"Here is indeed welcome," said the monk, as the song ceased; "let us enter this abode of happiness and hospitality."

Springing from the carriole, he knocked at the door, which was immediately opened by a pale and interesting−looking woman, wrapped in a gray mantelet, and bearing a light in her hand. Without betraying surprise at their sudden appearance, like one accustomed to exercise the duties of hospitality to strangers, she welcomed them with a quiet smile on her cheerful countenance.

We should delight to draw the picture of domestic happiness that here offers itself to our pen, did the limits to which fashion has prescribed the modern novelist, viz., two volumes duodecimo, allow him to turn aside to every fountain, wander through every rural lane, and linger under every shady tree, that might tempt him from the path it is especially his business to pursue. But, providentially for both author and reader, times are changed since the novel−reading public were content to read an eight or, peradventure, ten volume novel, such as the indefatigable Richardson turned from his pen with merciless celerity. The modern palate, happily, is contented with two thin volumes, and surfeited with three. Therefore, although authors may have *matériel* floating in their brains sufficient, if judiciously diffused, for ten or even a round dozen of duodecimoes, by this improvement in the tastes

of the present generation they are necessitated to condense, or compress, as it were, their abundant stock of ideas into the substantial compass of the aforesaid brace of tomes. This is intimated lest, to the disparagement of modern novelists, it might be thought that the cause of this modification of the public tastes lay in the depreciation and diminution of current coin of authors' brains, and not in its true source, the public themselves.

The reception of the travellers was characteristic of the Canadian peasantry; and they were at a loss which most to admire, the air of domestic comfort prevailing within the cottage, the excellence and abundance of the fare cheerfully spread before them on a table covered with a snow−white napkin, or the lightsomeness of heart and unaffected hospitality of manners displayed by the peasant and his wife.

The Canadian peasant or *habitan* especially is it true of those who are of French origin is happily free from that servility which is the prominent feature of their class in European states. On the contrary, he possesses manly freedom of speech and action, natural ease of manner, buoyancy of spirits, and a lively and enthusiastic temper. He is, moreover, proprietor of the soil, cultivating his own little farm, and enjoying the comforts of life as the reward of his individual industry. Religious, intelligent, industrious, and peculiarly susceptible of an attachment to domestic enjoyments to the growth of which virtue the long Canadian winters, when the hearth becomes their little world, in a great measure contributes the Canadian peasantry afford a striking illustration of the ennobling power of free institutions when operating on the interests of such a class of men, elevating them at once to the rank and dignity in the scale of society which is their birthright, but from the exercise of which feudal tyranny, by levelling them with the brutes, has hitherto alone debarred them.

CHAPTER XII. THE MARCH.

After resting three hours beneath the hospitable roof of the peasant, the wind having subsided, and the calm, clear beauty of the night inviting them to continue their journey, the travellers once more set forward. The horses, refreshed, moved freely over the road, the bells that hung on their harness jingling merrily, and infusing that sort of spirit into their motions which the music of the drum and fife is known to produce in a body of soldiers. The young officer and his fair companion seemed also to have imbibed new life and animation, and, yielding to the exhilarating influence of the time, conversed cheerfully together, the merry laugh of Eugenie often ringing above the music of the merry bells. Ohguesse, too, judging from his frequent ejaculatory addresses to his steeds, appeared to have been thawed into a more social mood by the hospitality of the peasants' board and hearth; and altogether, with high spirits, the carriolers glided swiftly on their way, lighted by the stars shining with that sparkling brilliancy which they emit only in winter.

They had been about half an hour on their road when the northern lights suddenly appeared with extraordinary brilliancy, dimming the stars, and diffusing a soft glow like that of twilight over the earth. With an exclamation of delight, Eugenie drew the attention of her companion to the beautiful changes their corruscations presented. At one moment they would assume the form of a waving spear of pale flame; then, shooting upward and expanding till they overreached the zenith, become a broad belt of light, which slowly faded into the sky. The next moment, sheets of light, of various colours and degrees of brilliancy, floated across the heavens, and broke into masses, that appeared like golden banners and plumes of warriors waving and dancing along the horizon. These gradually disappeared, assuming a thousand fantastic shapes before they entirely vanished, but were instantly replaced by gorgeous beams of purple and golden light, radiating from a bright central spot, and spreading in a vast resplendent star over half the firmament; while columns of pale, beautiful light rose perpendicularly from the horizon, as if to support the starry dome. Suddenly the whole magnificent temple would disappear, leaving "not a wreck behind." Other forms and strange shapes, more brilliant and richly covered with prismatic hues, as if a rainbow had been dissolved and its fragments scattered over the northern skies, succeeded, and these were yet followed by others, until their eyes were dazzled and their imaginations bewildered by the wild magnificence of the scene. After assuming a myriad of shapes, this gorgeous phenomenon, in which Eugenie imagined she could trace innumerable graceful outlines of familiar objects, entirely disappeared, leaving the northern skies cold, dark,

and cheerless as before.

The dawn found the travellers within two leagues of Quebec, and near the St. Lawrence, which spread its unfrozen bosom before them like a lake. As the sun rose, the opposite shores of this majestic river were visible two leagues distant, white with snow, yet variegated by cottages, churches, and villages; while on their right, far to the northeast, rose the towers and citadel of Quebec, crowning a lofty promontory, which stood boldly out into the broad river like an island of rock.

The travellers gazed on the distant city with various and mingled emotions. In the mind of Eugenie it was associated with home and its endearments. And her eyes sparkled with pleasure as she pointed out familiar objects, and spoke of her return to the abode of her childhood and youth, and to the arms of her maternal friend. Her anticipated happiness was, nevertheless, alloyed by the reflection that it was to be purchased by a separation, which, so busy had love been in her young heart, she began to contemplate with sadness. The young soldier viewed the proud citadel as the theatre of war and the gathering−point of armies; its walls soon to resound with the roar of cannon, and where important events were speedily about to transpire. He contemplated it as a soldier, and as a foe to its masters. With his national feelings, however, were mingled others with which Cupid had more to do than Mars. There he was to take leave of Eugenie, the lovely partner of his journey, the sharer of its fatigues, the participater in all its dangers; it was, therefore, not without emotion, which found ready sympathy in her own bosom, that he said,

"There, dear Eugenie, is your journey's end. My dream of happiness is terminated. It was too exquisite to last. This morning, Eugenie, we must part; I, to go whither my fortunes lead me; you to the embraces of those you love. Forget me and be happy."

"Edward!" said the novice, laying her hand upon his arm, and speaking in a soft tone of reproof, "why will you talk so strangely? Do not imbitter by your sad words the last hour we are to be together. Never can I forget the debt of gratitude I owe you."

"Gratitude, Eugenie?" he repeated, bitterly. "Only gratitude?"

Eugenie blushed deeply, and was about to reply with drooping eyelids, but with an arch expression on her lips that contradicted the mute and timid glances of her eyes, when Ohguesse drew up at a cabin on the verge of the water, and, turning inquiringly to the monk, said,

"Priest hab boat, eh?"

The monk looked around and saw that they were at a small landing−place or ferry−house, near which, attached to a rude flotilla, swung a batteau capable of containing a dozen persons. Under the active superintendence of Ohguesse the boat was soon ready to receive its passengers. Before leaving the carriole the monk examined the directions for his route given him by the Chevalier de Levi, and ascertained that he was opposite the residence of the priest Guise, which was on the north side of the river a few miles above Quebec, and that the ferry−boat would land him at the hamlet near which it was situated. Rewarding the faithful Ohguesse for his services, and bidding him adieu, the travellers exchanged the carriole for the less comfortable and more dangerous batteau, and, after a perilous passage through masses of ice, constantly floating by and momently threatening to crush their boat, which was only saved from destruction by the dexterity and experience of two Canadian boatmen, they at length gained the northern shore.

The abode of the priest Guisé was in the only remaining wing of an antiquated brick chapel, which at an earlier period had been constructed by the missionaries for their aboriginal converts. It was built on the side of a rocky terrace, and so near the water that the river washed its walls. Proceeding for a quarter of a mile by a rude path along the shore, the travellers, after ascending a few natural steps in the rock, came to an open gate in a high wall

enclosing the edifice. Entering it, they traversed a covered passage, and came to a door at its extremity, which was closed and locked. Applying for admission with that good−will which their fatigue and the severity of the season rendered expedient, their appeal was answered by a tall, swarthy man in the garb of a priest, with exceedingly penetrating gray eyes and harsh features, who, without inviting them to enter, waited in austere silence for them to make known their business.

"This is the abode of the curé Guisé?" observed the monk, interrogatively.

"I am the curé Guisé, and this is my abode," he replied, in a voice that corresponded with his features.

"Then it is with you my business lies," said the monk, without noticing the rudeness of his reception.

The curé grumbled something in the way of an invitation to enter, and, replacing the bar upon the door, preceded them with an impatient stride towards a small room, through the open door of which the travellers beheld, with no little degree of pleasure, a fire burning with a bright and cheerful blaze. They entered the room, which was long and narrow, with a low ceiling, and a single window commanding a prospect of the river and Quebec. Without ceremony they advanced to the fire, while their host, closing the door, seated himself at a small table near the fireplace, whereon, it being noon, stood a pitcher of water, a broiled fish, and a loaf of brown bread: in the discussion of these, from their dilapidated condition, it was very apparent he had been interrupted by the arrival of the travellers; and to this circumstance they were charitably disposed to attribute his ill−humour.

Without noticing them he applied himself diligently to his repast, and by the time they had expelled the cold from their limbs, the fish, water, and bread had disappeared within the copious jaws of the reverend curé. Then turning round, for his back had been towards them during his meal, he looked more complacently upon his guests, eying them, nevertheless, with very close scrutiny. Eugenie, by the advice of the young officer, had resumed her disguise, and, muffled in her cowl and furs, passed very well as a priest, though a rather diffident one, and somewhat small of stature. During the scrutiny of the priest she shrunk as much as possible behind her companion, who, apprehensive that her timidity would lead to the detection of her disguise, abruptly addressed his host:

"Thou knowest the Chevalier de Levi, brother?"

The priest started to his feet at the name, bent his eyes fixedly on the speaker, and, cautiously glancing his eyes at the disguised novice, replied evasively,

"I know a holy man whom men call the Father Etienne."

"Then thou knowest the Chevalier de Levi. He bade me give you this pacquet," said the monk, placing the correspondence of the chevalier in his hands.

The priest ran his eye over the superscriptions of the letters, glancing at intervals at his guest. Catching his own address on one of the epistles, he hastily tore the seal, and perused it with an excited countenance. Then, approaching the disguised soldier, he said,

"Brother, thou art welcome; and for the news of which thou art the bearer, doubly so. The time has at last come when the dignity of the church shall be restored, and the Canadas be free from the yoke of heretics. Where left you the army of invaders, who come friends, and not enemies, to Canada?"

"Within four days they will be on the opposite shore, ready to co−operate with the other division. Can you give me any information of the movements of General Montgomery?"

"There is a rumour that he has already captured Montreal, and is on his march to Quebec; but I gave no credence to it, not being informed of the invasion. The news you now bring renders it probable."

"It is, without doubt, true," said the soldier, with confidence. "Where is your governor, Sir Guy Carleton?"

"With the troops near Montreal, endeavouring to defend it and the surrounding country against any attacks of the colonists. If Montreal be already in your hands, he will doubtless return to Quebec by forced marches. The city is at this moment nearly defenceless; and if Colonel Arnold would cross the river to−morrow, it would fall into his hands without a struggle for its defence."

"If Montgomery can out−general Carleton, and gain a march on him," observed the young officer, "the city will fall into his hands before Arnold arrives. But it is important that he should be informed of our approach before Carleton can learn it."

"The fate of the country depends on the possession of Quebec," said the priest, earnestly. "Carleton knows this full well, and will not fail to avail himself of every means for its preservation. Montgomery will, perhaps, hesitate to advance without hearing from your division; and if he gives Carleton an opportunity of taking advantage of his delay, the city will be re−enforced, and its capture difficult."

The young man paced the room for several minutes after the priest had ceased speaking with an impetuous tread and a flushed brow; then, suddenly stopping, he said,

"What you say is too true. Would to God Arnold were here! Delay will be fatal to us. Montgomery must be informed at once of the approach of our division, so that a junction of the forces may be effected as soon as possible. You can furnish horses for my brother and myself?"

"When will you set forth?"

"So soon as you can get horses ready and we can take a little refreshment," said the officer, glancing rather despairingly towards the empty dishes upon the cure's dining−table.

As the intelligence the officer had received rendered it necessary that he should immediately continue his journey, and as there would be danger in going into the city now that the rumour of the fall of Montreal had reached it, it became expedient that Eugenie either should be committed to the charge of the Father Guisé, and trust to him for a conveyance to the city, which would have subjected her to detection and annoyance, or continue on with her companion to the camp of Montgomery, which he expected to reach that night. Eugenie reluctantly decided on adopting the latter plan, after he had promised that, immediately on their arrival at the camp, she should be placed under the protection of General Montgomery until she could be restored to her friends.

In less than an hour after their arrival at the insulated abode of the priest Guisé, they were once more on their way, coursing with a pair of fleet horses along the shores of the St. Lawrence, leaving Quebec, with its warlike battlements, far behind.

"Farewell, for a brief space, proud citadel," said the monk, as an angle in the road concealed the city from their view; "when next I survey your walls it will be in other guise than this monk's garb. But it is a garb dearly prized, my Eugenie," he continued, gently removing her hood and seeking her eyes, "and one that I shall hereafter hold sacred, as having been the means of linking my fate with the loveliest and sweetest of human beings. In three hours, or, at least, by evening, we shall be at Trois Rivières, where, doubtless, we shall fall in with the army. There, Eugenie," he added, sadly, "you will find more befitting protection than mine."

Eugenie slightly returned the pressure of his hand with which he accompanied his words, but made no reply.

They journeyed with great rapidity, learning the success of the American arms and the capture of Montreal from every tongue. At length, about ten leagues from Quebec, on gaining the summit of a hill that overlooked the river for many miles, and from which they could trace their road for a great distance as it wound along the shore, they were surprised by discovering the approach of a body of troops in the plain beneath, and within less than half a league of them.

"Hold!" cried the monk to his guide or postillion for Father Guisé had hired the *traineau*, horses, and driver for his guests from the keeper of an inn in the adjacent hamlet, who sometimes kept relays for the mails between Quebec and Montreal "can these be Montgomery's forces so near? But there is too much scarlet in that host, and yonder flies King George's standard."

"It must be Carleton, who has caught the alarm, and is making a forced march to throw himself into Quebec," said Eugenie, with animation.

"And you look, Eugenie," replied the young soldier, laughing, "as if you wished him success."

"I have known Sir Guy Carleton from childhood," answered Eugenie; "and though I feel as the daughter of Colonel de Lisle, I also feel an interest in an old friend, though he may be of those against whom my father drew his sword."

"No doubt you feel a deeper interest in a titled Englishman than in a simple colonist," said the young soldier, with that morbidness of feeling to which lovers are sometimes subject. "Perhaps," he added, ironically, "Miss de Lisle would like to exchange, in case this should prove Carleton's army, her present protector for one more noble."

"The exchange could not be effected without exposing you to danger, Edward," she quietly observed, without taking any notice of his manner. "I am anxious to return to Quebec; but, if Montgomery is so near, I will not alter my original determination. Is it really Carleton who approaches, do you think, Edward?"

"It is," he said, with animation. "Oh for one hour's advance of him with the gallant Montgomery's legion! But see! their vanguard is winding round the angle of yonder wood. We must withdraw from the highway if we would not both return under escort to Quebec."

He directed the guide to turn back, and, descending the hill a short distance, they entered a sledge−road leading into the forest on their right, and in a few minutes were entirely concealed from observation in a thicket of larches. The young soldier, however, from a mingled curiosity and a desire to ascertain the number of troops, accompanied by Eugenie, left the traineau, and cautiously approached the highroad. Here concealed in a thick clump of young pines, where, unless actually sought after, they could remain undiscovered, they awaited the march of the detachment past their post of observation.

They had been there but a short time when a score of troopers, with a noble−looking youth at their head, the advanced guard of the army, came trotting over the brow of the hill, with sabres clashing, spurs and bridles ringing, and attended with all those martial and blood−stirring sounds which characterize the movements of dragoons rather than the less imposing march of infantry.

"I should like to measure swords with thee, young gallant," said the monk, mentally, as their youthful leader approached, prancing before his troop, which followed in a column four abreast; and, descending the hill at a round trot, the whole body dashed past him, stern and silent, and disappeared in a wood at the foot of the hill.

A quarter of an hour elapsed, when a heavy, dull sound, like the continuous noise of a distant water−fall, fell on their ears, and gradually increased till the ground seemed to shake beneath them. The monk watched eagerly in the direction of the approaching sound, and in a few moments saw a single horseman, in the uniform of an

aiddecamp, with waving plume and drawn sword, make his appearance on the brow of the hill, rein up his spirited horse as he gained the summit, and survey, with a quick glance, the descent before him. Then casting a look down the declivity he had just ascended, he paused until another officer joined him. Both, putting spurs to their horses, then galloped down the road out of sight just as the helmets of a platoon of infantry appeared over the brow behind them. Another and another platoon followed, till a whole column appeared, all marching in good order, shoulder to shoulder, like the steady advance of one man, and in a compact body moved down the hill, without music, and with a dead, heavy tramp, for which Eugenie, as she listened to it with sensations of awe, in vain searched her imagination for a simile, so unearthly was the sound, so unlike any she had ever heard.

The rear of this column of regular troops was still in sight when a cavalcade of officers appeared trotting slowly along to adapt their movements to the march of the infantry. They were seven or eight in number, the majority of whom were quite young men, and all but two of them wore the British uniform: these were in the light simple dress adopted by the Canadian cavaliers who had volunteered their services for the war, some of them bringing and commanding companies of their own levying.

In the midst of this group rode an elderly officer, in whom, to a gentlemanly and strikingly military appearance, was united that manly and intrepid air characteristic of the British soldier. He was in conversation with an aiddecamp who rode by his side. Halting a moment on the ridge across which the road wound, he surveyed with a military eye the route before him, and then at a slow pace again moved forward, passing so near the grove of pines, which stood within a few feet of the highway, that a portion of his conversation was audible to the concealed travellers.

"If Colonel Arnold, as this rebel styles himself," said the superior officer, who, from the insignia of his rank, was a colonel, and commander of the battalion, "should arrive at Quebec before us, M`Lean will hardly hold out against a vigorous attack."

"If the intelligence we received at Montreal be true," replied the aid; "but the messenger sent yesterday by Colonel M`Lean reported that nothing had yet been heard from him."

"Were he already at Point Levi, ay, in possession of Quebec, he should not hold it twenty−four hours after our arrival," said the other.

"If he is like this Hibernian Montgomery," observed a young officer, with a light mustache on his upper lip, "he will take Quebec before we can throw our forces into it."

"No men fight so well or desperately as rebels," remarked the elder officer. "These colonists may probably, at first, succeed in a few enterprises, but the rebellion eventually will be crushed. M`Lean is a gallant soldier, and, though he has but a handful of men, and two thirds of the line of walls must be left undefended, he will not capitulate so long as he has a man left to apply a match or draw a trigger."

"For but one hour of Montgomery!" exclaimed the impatient monk, as they passed by and disappeared in the forest.

"St! my hasty knight," said Eugenie, placing her hand on his mouth. "You will not have even a minute of your own if those fierce−looking men discover us," she added, glancing with some alarm towards a second division of the army which that moment appeared, and by the music of drum and fife marched by with a lively step, its prolonged column winding, like a huge centipede, down the hill, till it disappeared in the forest at its base. Another column followed this, preceded by two or three officers possessing very little of the military air. This body of troops was without uniforms, irregular in its appearance, and unsteady in its march. The soldiers or volunteers who composed it evinced, by their independent movements as individuals, a sovereign contempt for the simultaneous planting of feet to the ground, the full and regular front, and stern silence characterizing the

regular troops that had preceded them. They marched, or rather crowded forward like a mob which has endeavoured to assume something of a military aspect, some with their muskets slung across their backs, others carrying them like spades over their shoulders, as if familiar with the mode; others were entirely without them, but their absence was accounted for in the appearance of a huge negro tramping along behind with some half a score of these weapons of war lashed on his back, doubtless to be resumed by their owners in case of need. Some were smoking, one or two were singing the fag end of a ballad, while the majority were exercising their tongues in a loud and boisterous manner. As they went by some of them straggled along the road so widely that our travellers in ambush momently apprehended discovery from an accidental detour upon their place of concealment.

They had nearly all passed by when a loiterer in a foxskin cap, with the brush hanging down his back, and in a capote of shaggy furs, stumbled so near their place of concealment that Eugenie uttered an involuntary exclamation, which only the thickness of the fur about his ears prevented him from hearing. Another, who followed him closely, still further alarmed them for their safety by breaking off a sprig of larch from one of the bushes screening their persons, and sticking it in his bonnet like a plume, with which he moved on after his comrade with a prouder gait than before.

When the last straggler of a miserable herd of noisy camp−followers of both sexes, and several baggage−wagons had passed by and disappeared, Eugenie drew a long breath, as if relieved from anxiety, felt rather for her companion than for herself, and said, in a lively tone,

"Marie be thanked! You are now safe."

"You are not quite a soldier yet, my Eugenie," he playfully said, "although you have just beheld the march of an army, if these few companies can be dignified with such an appellation. The vanguard is yet to pass. This long serpent has a tail as well as head and body. Hark! there sounds a bugle! They are calling in and warning the stragglers to fall into the line of march and keep up with the main body. See! they approach!"

As he spoke, a squadron of about thirty horse appeared, with a banner fluttering in their van, on the brow of the hill, preceded by a trumpeter, who halted as they gained the summit, and blew several notes loud and long. The party then rode slowly down the hill, laughing and talking in the rude and reckless manner characteristic of soldiers, who, ever at war with death and familiar with its aspect, give less thought to it, even on the eve of battle, than peaceful citizens, accustomed to contemplate it less familiarly and under different features and circumstances, are prepared to believe.

After this troop had swept past the disguised officer, whose bosom glowed while these warlike scene passed before his eyes, burning with impatience to mingle in the approaching strife, he hastened back to the traineau. In a few minutes they regained the high−road, now trodden solid by the feet of many hundred men, and proceeded on their route towards the camp of Montgomery.

CHAPTER XIII. THE CAMP.

The first division of the colonial, or, as it styled itself, the American army, which, led by the gallant Montgomery, invaded Canada by the way of Lake Champlain, had been victorious in every contest in which it had been engaged. Montreal, Longueuil, Chambly, and St. John's, with other important posts, successively surrendered to its arms, while military stores, artillery, provisions, and camp equipments, in great quantities, fell into its hands. All Upper Canada, in fact, by the fall of its strongest post, Montreal, was in possession of the Americans. General Montgomery wisely determined to follow up his brilliant successes by forming an immediate junction with the second division of the invading army under Colonel Arnold. For this purpose he resolved to advance on Quebec without delay, hoping to meet a messenger, as it had been preconcerted between himself and that officer, despatched to inform him of his approach, and thereby enable him to execute his plans for a speedy and effectual

co−operation.

General Carleton, at this period governor of Canada, on the breaking out of hostilities between the American colonies and Great Britain, had promptly marched to defend Montreal and the adjacent frontier against any incursions of the rebels. But, unsuccessful in his exertions to save that place, and alarmed by rumours that a second army had marched through the wilderness of Maine against Quebec, he trembled for its safety; for he was aware that the government of the province was lodged in the hands of those who held possession of that citadel, then styled the Gibraltar of the western world. He resigned, therefore, to Montgomery the present fruits of his victories, and, by an able movement, drew off his forces and advanced rapidly to its relief. After accompanying the detachment a few leagues, impatient at its slow progress, he threw himself, with a few attendants, into a boat, that he might precede it by a quicker route. While, with a fair wind, he sailed down the St. Lawrence, his troops, with forced marches, were approaching the city, within half a day's march of which they had arrived when our travellers encountered them.

General Montgomery, in the mean time, after taking such steps as should secure the possession of his conquests, followed in the track of the British troops. Except by vague and unofficial reports, he had not received any tidings of the success of his coadjutor since his departure from New−York. His anxiety to learn how far he had been successful was, therefore, in proportion to the stake depending on their enterprise. He was aware that an immediate combination of their forces was necessary to secure what advantages they had already gained, and even to the accomplishment of anything further. He indulged, indeed, though faintly, the hope that Quebec had already fallen into the hands of Colonel Arnold. This hope, however, did not retard his movements. After a forced march, he at length arrived within fifteen leagues of the city, and pitched his camp in a wood the night of the day on which our travellers, after beholding the march of the British forces, once more resumed their journey.

It was already midnight, when, after having made a second visit to his outposts, and taken those precautions against surprise which an experienced soldier will never neglect, whether danger be distant or immediate, General Montgomery entered his tent, and threw himself, in his fatigue dress, upon a pile of furs that formed his couch, and the only protection from the snow which covered the ground. He had just fallen asleep, when he was disturbed by the entrance of the sentinel who guarded his tent.

"How now, Horton?" he said, waking with that readiness characteristic of men who sleep in the midst of danger.

"A messenger from Colonel Arnold, sir."

"Admit him. Now is Quebec mine!" he added, with exultation, as the sentinel left the tent. "Ha! a priest? But, priest or layman, you are welcome, sir," he said, advancing to meet the individual whom the soldier ushered into his presence. "What news do you bring from Colonel Arnold?"

"I left him three days since," answered the messenger, "marching with a weary but determined army towards Quebec. He is now within two days march of that place."

"And I more than one, with Carleton between me and its gates," exclaimed Montgomery, with a gesture of impatience. "Well," he added, rapidly pacing the tent for a few seconds, "we shall only have a little harder work than I anticipated. Carleton will now give us an opportunity of gazing at the outside of his walls for a few days before we can get on the inside. Our troops will have an opportunity of showing their gallantry, that is all."

"They have already shown it, sir, if what rumour tells us be true. Permit me, General Montgomery," added the messenger, with grace, "to congratulate you on the success of your arms. If Heaven had favoured us with a speedier march through the wilderness, I had fleshed my maiden sword under a brave leader, at least."

"Ha! say you so? By my sword! there spoke the soldier then, beneath that monk's cowl," said Montgomery, eying him fixedly; "your words smack of the camp rather than the cloister, fair sir."

"I have so long lived in cloisters and worn their priestly vestments, that I had wellnigh turned monk in earnest. That I have had temptation to do so," continued the messenger, smiling, "yourself may judge when I bring forward the arguments to which I had nearly yielded. But first let me put an end to this mummery. I am no monk, General Montgomery," he added, throwing off his disguise, and casting it contemptuously on the buffalo hides at his feet, "but a volunteer in the army under Colonel Arnold, and despatched by him with a verbal communication to make you acquainted with his movements and intentions."

When General Montgomery beheld the sudden metamorphosis of his visiter, and found that an armed stranger stood in his presence instead of a peaceful monk, he involuntarily placed his hand upon the hilt of his sword, as if apprehending treachery. But the youthful and elegant appearance of the young soldier, united with his frank and graceful bearing, forming a marked and favourable contrast to the slouch and awkward monk whom he had gazed upon but a moment before, at once inspired him with confidence. After looking at him steadily for an instant, he approached him, and, cordially grasping his hand, said,

"My brave young gentleman, you are welcome indeed. I had despaired of much accurate information when I beheld a priest the bearer of Colonel Arnold's communications. But now I shall learn all. Sit with me on this buffalo's robe, which is both my bed and sofa, and let me hear what tidings, good or ill, you bring from my gallant colonel."

At once relieved from any embarrassment which, as a stranger, he might have anticipated on meeting with General Montgonery, by the affability and simplicity of his address, he forthwith detailed to him, with a brevity, and intelligence, and a knowledge of military tactics which pleased while it surprised him, the character of the re−enforcement on its way, the number of efficient men he might depend upon, and the probable time of their arrival at Point Levi and junction with his own forces. He also informed him of the march of the British army, of their number and condition; and finally gave him, briefly and pleasantly, a history of his adventures.

The communication of the young American was received by the chief with undisguised gratification; and his eye glowed with sanguine anticipations as, in turn, he eloquently laid his plan of operations against Quebec before his guest, whose intrepidity, intelligence, and the knowledge of the business of a soldier he had betrayed in his remarks, had inspired his entire confidence.

"Now, my young friend, as you hold no commission under Colonel Arnold, I shall insist on attaching you to my staff, appointing you as one of my aids. What say you to sharing my laurels, young sir?" he added, smiling and taking his hand.

The young officer pressed it in silence; but the proud glance of his dark eyes and the sudden suffusion of his brow spoke deeper gratitude than any words, however well chosen, could have expressed. It was the grateful acknowledgment of the heart, not merely of the tongue. General Montgomery was flattered by the display of emotions so praiseworthy in a chivalrous young man, and felt additional assurance that his appointment had not been misplaced. Brave and intrepid men read each other at a glance. While he surveyed his calm forehead, and listened to the manly tones of his voice as he related the business of his mission, he felt that he was in the presence of no ordinary spirit, and with one kindred to his own.

"Now, my young major," he said, after a few moments' discussion of the plans he had detailed, "you must be fatigued, and we will, for the remainder of the night, share this hairy couch together. It may not be so tempting as you have found among the monks, to whose arguments in favour of leading a monkish life, I think, you a while since observed you had wellnigh yielded. But, pray, why look you so intently towards the door? Have you a brother monk without?"

"Only the arguments I spoke of, general, in the shape of a pair of black eyes, fortified by a pair of sweet lips."

"Surely the novice you tell me you so romantically eloped with cannot be in camp?"

"She is now in waiting by the fire without the tent, and, I doubt not, some what impatient at my long absence."

"A Cleopatra in the train of my young Mark Antony! It's an ominous beginning of your military career," said the general, playfully. "Nevertheless," he added, shaking his head disapprovingly, "she must be admitted. But what can be done with her? I cannot well make an aiddecamp of a petticoat."

"I have rescued her," said the young soldier, in a firm but respectful voice, "from gross oppression and imprisonment, no matter by what other names the priesthood may gloss it over. I have brought her to your camp, General Montgomery, to place her under your protection, until, as I have already informed you, she can join her friends in Quebec; for I am sufficiently conscious of the impropriety of being longer her protector."

"You are, indeed, wonderfully discreet," remarked the general, with humour, "to deem a young cavalier of some twenty−one years, with a tolerable face and figure, to say no more, an indifferent duenna for a wild, runaway nun. Well, I suppose I must give an audience to this Delilah, and I will forthwith consign her to the care of my good lady, who is not far behind. Cupid defend me! if she be as lovely as you have described her to me, I mistrust my worthy dame will be jealous of my protectorship. But favour me with a sight of this fair vestal, under whose auspices you have entered the army."

Returning the playful irony of his general with a smile and blush, he left the tent, and in a few seconds returned with the novice, still disguised as a priest.

"What, ho! another monk? We shall have our camp converted into a holy brotherhood, and go to battle by sound of mass instead of fife and drum. Ha! another masquerade? Verily, young gallant, you are bringing back the days of romance, when knight and lady went mumming on adventure through the land. But if ever angel were imbodied, one has descended into my tent this night!" he exclaimed, as Eugenie, at the solicitation of the young soldier, dropped her disguise, at the same time partly unveiling her face, and displayed features, the brilliant and striking cast of which must have impressed the most indifferent beholder.

"Pardon a soldier's rudeness of speech, lady," he said, gracefully taking her hand, and pressing it to his lips with that courtly and profound respect which characterized the formal gentlemen of the day, "I know your story. If a convent's walls could have held out to you any charms, or if your tone of mind and disposition had fitted you for a monastic life, then, perhaps, it would have been best that you should have remained with your spiritual guardians. Nay, dear young lady, I do not censure you! I am merely expressing an opinion, unimportant, however, to my purpose. From this moment look on me as your paternal guardian. In the morning I will send you, with a suitable escort, to Trois Rivières, to the hospitable mansion of a friend to our cause, Colonel Olney, who will place you with your friends the earliest opportunity. There also you will meet Mrs. Montgomery, in whom you will find a lady as amiable and dignified as she is lovely. I will drop a note to her by you. In a few hours after leaving the camp you will be with her. Do not hesitate to embrace my offer, Miss de Lisle. It is made in affection and good−will. For you to remain longer with my young knight here will be, you are doubtless aware," he continued, smiling, "in some degree indecorous, according to the notions of our provincial maidens."

Although affected by the kind manner and friendly words of the dignified chief, the lovely novice, from time to time, while he was speaking, cast timid and troubled glances towards her late travelling companion. He interpreted her looks, and, drawing near, took her hand and said softly,

"Now, dearest Eugenie, preserve that noble fortitude which has so repeatedly challenged my admiration. Accept the kind invitation of General Montgomery, and take shelter beneath the hospitable roof of Colonel Olney. If you

will allow me to do so, I will accompany you part of the way. Your own heart must tell you," he added, still more tenderly, "that I would accompany you quite to Trois Rivières; nay, never leave you! But duty to my country, honour, everything dear to a man and a soldier, bid me tear myself away. Tell me that you will comply with General Montgomery's request, and you will make me happier than I can express."

Eugenie listened in silence, and, when he ceased, in the abandonment of the moment, overwhelmed by a vivid sense of her destitution and loneliness, heedless of the presence of a stranger, and forgetful of all else but the proposal which was to separate her from one who so entirely possessed her heart, she flung herself weeping upon his shoulder. The impassioned lover imprinted a kiss upon her forehead as he supported her form. The touch of his bold lip electrified her, and restored her at once to self−possession. Hastily disengaging herself, covered with confusion, from the arm which half encircled her waist, though so lightly that she scarcely felt that it sustained her, she said softly,

"Anything, Edward; your honour is dearer to me than my love. Go where it calls you. Think not of me. Do your duty on the field of battle, while I fly to the altar to pray for you. Sir," she added, turning to General Montgomery, who had beheld this little scene between the youthful pair with mingled emotions; of suspicion, as he marked the passionate glances, dangerous smile, and soothing words of the young man; of pity, while he surveyed the lovely form of the confiding girl, as, true to her sex, in total recklessness of all else but her woman's love, she threw herself upon his bosom. "Sir, I will accept your generous offer of protection, and intrude upon the kindness of your friend until Heaven sends me better fortunes."

"Then, my sweet child," he said, in his usual amiable and cordial manner, "you are from this moment my daughter. Wilt yield me a daughter's obedience?"

"Willingly, my kind parent," she replied, ingenuously extending her hand. "But you will promise I shall soon see my brother?" she asked, with a faint return of her usual archness, glancing as she spoke towards the young soldier.

"That I promise. Now, my child, you are fatigued. This is a somewhat rude couch for thy tender limbs to press, but sound sleep will make that shaggy bearskin a pillow of down. For this night I resign my tent to you. As for you, young sir, I shall be honoured by your company while I visit the chain of sentinels. Horton," he said, as he passed the sentinel, who was walking backward and forward before the tent, the barrel of his musket gleaming in the moonlight, "see that you admit no one into my tent during my absence, and that you do not enter yourself, under any circumstances."

The two gentlemen walked some distance through the camp in silence. After a few minutes' progress they came to an open area beyond the crowd of tents, when the chief, with a grave manner and in an impressive tone, said,

"This romance of yours, young gentleman, if I may judge from the scene I have just beheld, is likely to be rather serious, if it has not been so already. Pardon me, but young men are easily led astray, let honour call them back never so loudly. This lovely child for I have seldom before seen so much beauty united with so much childlike innocence addressed you once as brother. Am I to understand that such was the relationship you assumed in your wild journey, on which both Mars and Venus appear to have smiled?"

"It was, General Montgomery," he replied, in a tone of impatience.

"Forgive me, my dear friend, if I ask if the relationship was sacredly regarded by you?"

"Upon my honour, yes! saving that love has been busy with both our hearts, she is and has been only my sister."

His reply was delivered in a firm and frank voice, and with such natural warmth of feeling and honest sincerity that his companion's suspicions were at once removed.

"'Tis a great escape. I did not think your youth proof against such odds as you have so happily encountered. Well, if there be true love here, true love was never marred by an Irishman. After the wars, my brave youth, we will take our laurels to my farm at Rhinebeck, I to share them with my lady−love, maugre that Hymen hath bound us some half dozen years or so, and you to cast them at the feet of the lovely Eugenie. So now let us for a while dismiss the ladies, and take a sterner theme. 'Twas the ancient Goths, was it not, who forbade their young men to marry until they were twenty−one or had signalized themselves in battle? But we will be neither Goths nor Vandals with you. You lack at the very least two years of that hymeneal age; yet fight by my side in the next battle, which will win or lose for us this fair province, and then all the graces aid you in your suit at love's court!"

The two officers, after going the rounds of the silent and well−guarded camp, within which a thousand men were buried in as deep sleep as if their heads lay beneath their own roofs, returned to the tent they had left.

"I hear the breathing of our lovely guest within, soft as that of an infant," said the general. "It is thus innocence only sleeps. Morning approaches, my young cavalier, and you may keep watch and ward, as becomes a new−made knight, beside this temple; but enter it not, on thy knightly honour. Or if, as I am inclined to think, sleep be more welcome to a traveller than watching a maiden's pillow, you will find within this adjoining tent furs to form a couch. I will lie down in Horton's quarters, for in two hours we must be on our march."

He threw himself upon the floor of the privates' tent, beside half a dozen soldiers heavily sleeping, with their muskets stacked in the centre, and was soon asleep. The lover, protecting his person from the snow by an ample fur robe which the general had thrown to him, also laid down, but not to sleep. By one of those accidents which strangely favour lovers, his buffalo's hide had been placed just without the canvass curtain forming the tent, and so near it that, as he placed his head close to the envious division, he could distinctly hear the gentle suspirations of the sleeper within. Reclining on his arm, with his face turned towards the tent, he lay wrapped in a dreamy enchantment, his ear receiving the soft modulations of her breathing, till, at length, sleep stole upon his senses. He did not awake until roused by the sudden roll of drums and the piercing cry of fifes, as the drummers beat the cheerful reveille to stir the soldiers from their short repose, preparatory to resuming with the coming dawn their rapid march.

CHAPTER XIV. THE PARTING.

The first emotion of the young officer, on springing to his feet and beholding the warlike stir around him, was such as naturally would have arisen in the breast of an ambitious and daring young man on finding himself, after so long subduing his native ardour of spirit beneath the assumed gravity of a monk, in the midst of a camp, himself a soldier. He involuntarily carried his hand to his sword hilt as these stirring sounds of war struck his ears, and his eyes sparkled with pride and pleasure. With these feelings were mingled, however, emotions of sadness, as he thought of his separation from Eugenie. His brow grew melancholy at the reflection, and his whole manner became at once depressed.

"How now, my young sir?" said the general, advancing and taking his hand; "you look as if you were sighing for your monk's garb again. Your outward man showed the priest last night, while your look was martial enough; and now your face would canonize you. Well, 'tis sad, this parting of lovers, no doubt, and the briefer the better for both, methinks. But, if you choose to prolong the melancholy bliss, why, I suppose I must give you command of the escort for an hour's march. You will then resign to Horsford. I cannot well spare for a longer time one who will be my most efficient aiddecamp. Old Horsford, my stout sergeant, who, like John Rogers, has a wife and nine small children, which are somewhere about Tappan Zee, will be a safe and trusty escort till my good lady relieves him of his charge. You may rest secure, and not fear a rival in him. He thinks more of his old dame about whom, if you give ear, and, faith! if you don't give ear, he will wind you long stories than of the prettiest lass for whom youthful knight ever put lance in rest. But we must mount; I see the columns are marching out of camp."

"How large a detachment have you given this immaculate sergeant, general?"

"Twelve men; and Horsford is worth five more; as many as I can spare on this duty, but enough to awe any parties of the country−people they may fall in with. Here now comes the champion of your ladylove, booted and spurred. Well, Sergeant Horsford," he continued, addressing a stout−built, hale, and hearty−looking old man of some sixty winters, which had freely frosted his bushy hair, and with a good−natured, bluff physiognomy, lighted by a twinkling blue eye, "are your men ready?"

"All ready, general," replied the sergeant, paying the military salute; "every man stands with his hand on the bridle, prepared to mount at the word."

"They shall not wait long for it. Eugenie, my daughter," he said, approaching the door of his tent, "have you yet unsealed those bright eyes, that have done so much mischief, and are likely to do more? Horsford, man," he added, with natural humour, speaking aside to the stout sergeant, "you will need a treble breastplate, and the vision of your wife and children multiplied before those round eyes of yours full thirtyfold at least, to keep your heart true to your dame when once you put eyes on your charge."

The old sergeant shrugged his shoulders, winked, and twisted his mouth to one side by way of reply. At the same moment the curtain of the tent was drawn aside, and the lovely guest of General Montgomery was preparing to step forth, when, meeting the stare of old Horsford, and seeing the general and her lover, she dropped the screen and shrunk back into the tent. The latter, however, sprung forward and arrested her hand as she was releasing her hold on the curtain, and said, earnestly, yet with all a lover's tenderness,

"Nay, dearest Eugenie, there are none you need shrink from, unless," he added, in a low voice, which alone met her ear, "you would fly from me."

As he spoke he raised the canvass and sought her eyes by the faint light of the dawn. They expressed mingled affection and reproof. Casting back a glance, half apologetic, half pleading, towards his superior officer, he dropped the curtain of the tent and was alone with Eugenie. Folding her in his arms, he pressed her to his heart in a lingering embrace. They both felt they were taking a long, perhaps a last farewell of each other. Neither spoke, except with their eyes, which were full of the strong language of the heart; his, burning with the dark fire of his ardent feelings; hers, soft, lam bent, and full of tenderness.

It would seem that lovers can see in one another's eyes what is not so visible to the organs of ordinary mortals, and that glances interchanged are of more efficacy than words; such, at least, would be the inference drawn from the parting interview of Edward and Eugenie. At an hour when it would be very naturally supposed that they must have had a great deal to say, they stood gazing into each other's eyes instead of making good use of their time by making good use of their tongues.

For several moments they lingered in this lover−like oblivion, their looks, as the romancers say, speaking volumes, when their interview was interrupted by the sudden roll of a dozen drums, the shrill music of a score of fifes, the loud blast of a bugle close without the tent, and the voice of General Montgomery giving several military orders. The next moment he lifted the curtain and entered the tent.

"Come, my Petrarch and Laura, we are all in motion. Your canvass bower, fair Eugenie, must share the fate of war, and be stowed in the baggage−wagon, though I have a mind to send it to Rhinebeck, pitch it in my little garden, and dedicate it as a temple to Dan Cupid. It shall hereafter be put to no meaner use than Beauty's boudoir. Suppose, for the present, I intrust it to your knight for his especial benefit while in the army, and leave its future consecration to his loyalty. Now, Miss de Lisle," he added, affectionately taking her hand, "I shall regard you as my own daughter, whose happiness and interests, as such, will be very dear to me. This evening you will be at the residence of Colonel Olney, where you will meet with Mrs. Montgomery, in whom you will find both a mother

and friend. Here is your escort, Sergeant Horsford. He is a husband and a father. I intrust you to him with confidence in his care and attention. He already has his instructions. Now, my dear child, God bless you!"

Affectionately embracing her as he spoke, the excellent and noble−hearted man took his leave, mounted his horse, which a dragoon had been holding at the door of the tent, and, waving his hand to his new aiddecamp, said,

"In three hours I shall be happy to learn from your lips that my lovely protégé is full ten miles on her way to Trois Rivières."

Then courteously kissing his ungloved hand to Eugenie, he galloped off, surrounded by several officers, to join his forces, which were already filing through the forest towards the main road.

"Sergeant, we are ready to ride," said the young aid.

"Bring up that bay pony," cried Horsford to one of his command. "Here, now, my young lady, be as genteel an animal as the queen would wish to ride not the queen that is, but that was, being as we don't acknowledge king nor queen till they give us the rights we are fightin' for," added the sergeant, correcting his habitual colonial phrase to suit his new and yet awkward American politics. "To be sure it carries no side−saddle, seeing Congress don't supply the camp with such womanish gear; but there is a good bearskin strapped over a trooper's saddle, with the two ears left sticking straight up to hold on by, which may and may not answer, all depending whether you be a good horse−woman or be not. The pony, too, be een−a−most as easy as a skiff sailin' on the Hudson in a calm. You could carry a mugful of cider all the way to Montreal on the crupper and not spill a drop. But, if you don't like the bearskin, why, I can rig a pillion behind my own saddle, and you can ride on there, as wife and my oldest gal has done to church many a Sunday."

"I think, my worthy soldier," said Eugenie, smiling at this proposition, "I shall prefer the pony. So, if you will assist me to my saddle, I will not long hinder your journey."

"That will I, for I'd like to be back to the army before they are like to have a brush with the enemy," said the rough soldier, extending his arms as if he was about to lift a child from the ground.

"No, no, good Hosmer, not so," said the young lady, laughing and retreating.

"Horsford, young miss, not Hosmer."

"Then, worthy Horsford, I should prefer the aid of this camp−stool."

"Or my arm rather, Eugenie," said Edward, who had been busily arranging, for the greater comfort and security of the rider, the rude saddle destined for Eugenie, advancing and taking her hand as he spoke. Gracefully bending as he received a smiling permission, he received her tiny foot in his right palm. Lightly pressing her hand upon his shoulder, she was elevated to the saddle with case, and with much less exertion than even the rough strength of Sergeant Horsford would have demanded.

"By my honour, but that was cleverly done," said the sergeant, when he beheld her seated firmly in the saddle; "these youths have the advantage of gray hairs. I must larn my eldest da'ter to mount Biddy in this shorthand fashion. Now, young gentleman, or rather major," he added, respectfully raising his hand to his cap, "we will up and ride if it be your pleasure."

The young officer mounted a fiery and beautifully−formed animal, presented to him by General Montgomery, and took his station by the bridle of his fair companion. Leaving the ground so lately teeming with life, but now silent and deserted, they turned into the main road, where the detachment or escort which was to attend Eugenie was

drawn up, the men sitting immoveably on their horses, as if forming a group of equestrian statues.

"Forward! Trot!" cried the sergeant, as he rode to the head of his troop, after placing his charge in the centre. Obeying the command, with a simultaneous movement the squadron of horse moved forward at a round trot, and soon left the place of encampment far behind.

During the ride the lovers, as doubtless they should now be denominated, had uninterrupted opportunities for communication, not only with their eyes, but their tongues, the afterguard or rear division of the escort keeping, by the command of the young officer, some paces in their rear, "lest," he said, "their heavy tramp, and the clattering and ringing of their accountrements, should alarm the spirited pony upon which the young lady was mounted, and endanger her safety;" while, by riding very slowly, he managed to keep the van some distance in advance.

The conversation of lovers is, proverbially, only interesting to the parties themselves; and as that of ours cannot challenge an exception, it will not, if detailed, contribute materially to the entertainment of the reader. We shall, therefore, leave our fair reader, if, perchance, these ephemeral pages are honoured by the glances of bright eyes or graced by the fingers of beauty, to imagine all the sweet phrases, the endearing epithets, the tender looks, the love−full eyes, now cast down and tearful, now sparkling with hope; the soft hand−pressure, the agitated bosom, the heavy sighs, and all the other concomitants that go to make up a genuine *tête−à−tête* between a young lover and his mistress on the eve of separation. The separation of Edward and Eugenie was rendered still more painful, as it was to be for an indefinite time, as one of them was about to mingle in the dangers of the battle−field, and the other to seek a distant home among strangers.

"There is Champlain, major," said Sergeant Horsford, reining up and falling alongside of them, and interrupting a very interesting scene; "when we arrive there we shall have marched good fifteen miles before breaking fast."

"Fifteen miles!" repeated the officer, with surprise, looking in the direction of the hamlet, which lay close to the water's edge, not half a mile before them; "so far already! I thought we had not come a third of the distance."

The old man looked quizzically as he glanced at the youthful pair, but respectfully replied,

"There's been a time, major, when I've thought the Monday morning cock had crowed at midnight. These lasses play the devil with old Forelock's sandglass."

"I must, then, return, Horsford. Ride by this lady's bridle, and leave it not during your march." Then drawing near Eugenie, he said, despondingly,

"Here we must part, sweet Eugenie; when next we meet, may it be to part no more."

He took her hand as he spoke, and, as if reluctant to resign it, continued to ride by her side till the escort entered the village, when, hastily pressing it to his lips, he cried, "God bless you! God bless you!"

Turning his horse's head, he dashed his spurs into his flanks, and, followed by two dragoons as a body−guard in his progress through a hostile country, he rode rapidly back in the opposite direction; while Eugenie, hastily veiling her face to conceal her emotion, rode forward with a heavy heart, feeling alone and desolate in the world.

From the moment Eugenie met the eyes of the youthful monk in the oratory of the convent St. Therese until they parted in the village of Champlain, love, however disguised by the thousand little artifices by which maidens try to conceal its existence, as deep, pure, and devoted love as woman is capable of feeling, possessed her heart. The depth and purity of her attachment insensibly produced a corresponding sentiment in the breast of the young soldier, till at length an *affaire du coeur*, as he termed it, begun in the spirit of gallantry and a romantic

disposition, undemably assumed the elevated and hallowed character of love, and he yielded his heart to the spell with which he had dared to trifle. Neither had yet spoken of love, yet both felt a conviction that they loved and were beloved with an ardour of affection allied to devotion.

The young aiddecamp dashed along the road, on his return to the army, at a rate that kept his attendants busily employed in keeping up with him with their less active horses. He flew over hill and through hollow like a lover who is hastening to meet, rather than one who has just parted from, his mistress. Some epicurean traveller, who lived in those days when four−wheeled carriages were drawn by quadrupeds, has observed and left on record, that the most delightful of all sensations is that which is experienced when one is whirled over a turnpike in a mailcoach. Doubtless this worthy gentleman laboured under the infliction of the gout, rheumatism, or some one of the other ills that render cavaliers who have attained to a certain period of life peculiarly uncomfortable, and especially unfitted for equestrian exploits, otherwise he would have substituted in that age a fleet horse for that aldermanic mode of locomotion, a mailcoach; in the present day he would have rejoiced in a railroad car. Alas! that he should have been born a generation too soon to have enjoyed the quintessence of his sensation of delight!

The deep gloom weighing upon the heart of the young horseman gradually lightened, and his spirits rose with the rapid motion of the blooded animal he rode; and, partaking of the full excitement and exhilaration of his situation, he soon felt a joyousness and elasticity of spirits with which the vanity of Eugenie would have been little flattered: for genuine lovers estimate the degree of each other's affection, especially during an absence, by the length of visage they exhibit, and the depth and quantity of their sighs. There is a story told of a sentimental maiden, who preserved her tears in a crystal lachrymatory during her lover's absence over sea, and, on his return from a year's voyage, displayed it, with great exultation, nearly filled. The lover, in defence, and, as we are told, to prove the equal sincerity of his love, presented her with a demijohn which, at the request of some virtuoso, he had filled from the Lake Asphaltites. But this digression is somewhat irrelevant to our purpose; lovers, and not the tears which measure their love, being the subject in which our pen is enlisted.

It was noon when the horseman, moving at a slower pace than the agitation of his feelings had hitherto allowed him to adopt, arrived at the summit of a ridge over which the road passed, and in the valley beyond beheld the army he was hastening to join. The St. Lawrence was in sight on his right, its bosom relieved here and there by a merchant−ship seeking the ocean; small vessels, in greater numbers, sailing in different directions, and numerous batteaux plying among the fields of ice, which, borne seaward by the strong current, momently threatened to crush them, with their adventurous boatmen, to atoms. More than a league distant, their long black lines relieved against the snow, his eyes followed the army as in their march they wound through the valley, diminished by the distance to mere pigmies, and rendered still more insignificant by that contrast which always affects man or his works when surrounded by the stupendous works of God.

The young man watched them until, to his imagination, they appeared to be only a horde of insects. Curling his lip contemptuously as this idea became more impressive, he ironically mused,

"There crawl human pride and power! Long lines of insects moving, as I have seen their prototypes, to battle. To the eye, where is the distinction? To the reason, where? Which the immortal? The emmet performs its allotted duty, and each unit in yonder black mass does no more. Both alike spring from the earth and return to it. One appears no more useful than the other, its pursuits neither more dignified nor more earnest. Both levy armies and join battle: each army slays its thousands with a great noise, and the conqueror emmet or conqueror man is alike cruel to his victims. It may be that the nobler being will stand forth in the next world in his destined superiority; but here, man is as the brutes that perish. I, too, have a part to perform in this silly pageant of life, and must masquerade like my fellow−emmets. So, forward, and let me fling myself into the vortex that awaits me."

Putting spurs to his horse, he galloped down the hill, and soon arrived at the main body of the forces, and joined the staff of General Montgomery.

"Welcome, my knight−errant," said the general, as the young officer reined up his reeking horse by his side; "if you are as zealous in war as you have proved in love, you will yet win a name men will pronounce with pride. How left you our lovely protégé?"

"Well, general," replied the aiddecamp, compelling his still spirited horse to move along at the moderate gait preserved by the well−trained charger on which the chief was mounted.

"What grove or fountain between this and Trois Rivières has been made sacred by beholding the parting scene between Hector and Andromache this morning?" asked the general, pointedly.

"No other grove than the swords and plumes of half a score of dragoons; no other fountain than a few dropping crystals."

"Ha! art given to the melting mood, my Paris?"

"They were not the tears of Paris, but of Helen."

"'Tis fortunate," said the general, laughing, "that the walls of Quebec do not contain your Helen, lest it should prove a second Troy. I assure you, I have no ambition to become a modern Achilles. But a truce to this bantering, my dear Burton. Allow me, Captain M`Pherson," he added, turning to an officer near him, "to make you acquainted with my friend and aid, Major Burton."

The two officers bowed, and, shortly after, falling a little in the rear of their superior, entered into conversation.

That night the small army of invaders encamped a few miles above Quebec, where General Montgomery received fresh advices from the second division of such a nature that he was induced to await its arrival. The seventh day after the departure of his messenger, whose adventures we have followed, Colonel Arnold arrived at Point Levi, opposite Quebec. Disappointed, by the activity of Sir Guy Carleton and Colonel M`Lean, in surprising the place, he crossed the St. Lawrence after a perilous passage, and joined General Montgomery at his encampment at Aux Trembles, twenty miles above Quebec. From this point the combined forces, now constituting a formidable army, directly marched to lay siege to that important citadel, the possession of which was the key to both Canadas.

CHAPTER XV. THE COUNCIL.

On the evening of the thirteenth of December, the combined divisions of the invading army under General Montgomery, amounting, with the addition of a few Canadians who had joined the American standard, to about twelve hundred effective men, had been encamped several days before Quebec. Although they had immediately laid siege to it and erected a battery against its walls, they had not yet obtained any important successes. For several days they had endured the excessive hardships to which the rigour of a Canadian winter peculiarly exposed them, yet continued to labour in erecting works and completing the preparations for a vigorous siege with unabated courage and unshaken determination.

Nevertheless, General Montgomery feared they would sink under their fatigue, however great their fortitude and capability of endurance. He was also apprehensive that he might soon be abandoned by the majority of his soldiers, whose term of enlistment had expired at Montreal, and whom admiration for his courage, and a certain pride they felt in following a brave and successful leader, united with his own powers of persuasion, had induced to volunteer their aid in the capture of Quebec. Impressed, therefore, with the importance of taking an immediate and decisive step before circumstances should deprive him of the liberty of acting, he came to the gallant resolution to make an immediate assault upon the place with his whole force, "And," he said, his eyes kindling as he spoke of his determination to his young aiddecamp, "lead them in person to victory or death. But," he added,

more desponding, taking the arm of his young friend, as they were walking together before the walls, selecting a point of attack, "my hardy little army is composed of such discordant materials, that individual exertions can accomplish but very little. I hold my men by no legal authority; and, if they see fit, they can leave me if I venture to suggest a proposition which must ensue in much bloodshed. But the only alternative left us is to raise the siege, and retreat the best way we can."

"I trust that alternative will never for a moment be entertained by a single man in our camp," said the aid, impetuously.

"They will not think of it, my dear major, I am assured. They are brave and patriotic, and, I believe, also too much attached to my person to desert me. But I did not come before the walls of Quebec to retreat from them. I will either succeed in the enterprise I contemplate, or leave my body before its gates. I will forthwith summon a council of my officers and consult with them, and afterward address the troops. From them I anticipate less opposition than from their commanding officers."

"It were better to die like soldiers," said Burton, with animation, "than be picked from the walls like wild beasts, as our men daily are, or have our bodies paralyzed by frost and our spirits broken by this fruitless and idle siege. How have you decided to make the attack?"

"Assault both the Upper and Lower Towns at the same time. I will detail my plan more fully in council. I dare not think how my proposition will be received there. In you, Burton, I shall have at least one faithful coadjutor?"

"I will second you with my life!" answered the young officer, promptly.

"Not thy life, my gallant youth," said the general, smiling and turning from him to enter his tent; "not thy life, but thy voice only I require to aid me in the council I shall presently invite to discuss this matter. Alas," he added, with a melancholy expression, "life will soon enough be poured out! God spare the youthful and brave for our country!"

Burton passed slowly on towards his own tent, impressed with the sad look with which his general uttered the last words, which seemed to convey an omen of coming evil, when his attention was arrested by the figure of a man, indistinctly seen through the twilight, gliding along by the foot of a low wall bounding the field. His eye followed him till he saw him disappear in the moat and shortly after reappear on the opposite side at the foot of a bastion, and with rapid strides approach the city gate. At this point there was no sentinel posted; and Burton, struck with mingled curiosity and suspicion, by changing his route and quickening his pace, crossed the moat higher up and intercepted him. He was a tall, stoutly−framed man, wrapped to the eyes in a short Scottish plaid; but the skirt of a gray capote and moccasins visible beneath, and the addition of a fur bonnet, betrayed the wearer to be a Canadian peasant. He carried no arms, nor did he assume a hostile attitude. He took long strides across the level ground, and his object seemed to be to gain the American camp by the most direct course, and with the best speed he could exert.

"Stand, sir!" said Burton; grasping a pistol as he confronted him.

The stranger started back a pace, as if he had now for the first time observed him, and then said, in a rough, bold voice.

"Be not too hasty with thy pistolet, good sir. I am a true man, and as piously−disposed a rebel as the devil himself."

"How now, villain? what means this insolence?" demanded the young soldier, sternly, at the same time levelling his pistol at the man's breast.

"An hour ago I was a volunteer under Carleton," said the man, less rudely, "but I have taken a leap over the wall, and now, by my beard! seek to become an honest rebel."

"A deserter from the citadel?"

"Ay, master, and was on my way to your camp when you came across my path without any other hint than the click of that pistolet in my ear."

"And thank your stars 'twas not accompanied with a bullet through your body. Till you satisfy General Montgomery that you are what you affirm, I shall detain you prisoner. Pass on before me to the lines, and, as you value your life, make no attempt to escape."

Preceded by his prisoner, Burton advanced to the camp, and there delivering him to the guard, with orders to conduct him immediately to the quarters of General Montgomery, he sought his own quarters.

About eight o'clock the same evening, the commander−in−chief was seated alone in his tent before a rude table covered with letters, maps, and a plan of the fortifications of Quebec, the last of which he was inspecting with great attention. A single candle cast a dim light through the tent, which contained, besides the table, several camp−stools, and half a dozen buffalo hides thrown loosely on the ground to protect the feet from the snow. He had just laid aside his mathematical instruments, and, with his forehead resting upon his hand, given himself up to deep thought, when his servant, lifting the curtain, announced Captain M`Pherson, who immediately entered.

This officer was a tall, gentlemanly−looking man, with a fine military air, a calm, fearless eye of the most transparent blue, a Saxon complexion, and a frank and extremely pleasing mode of address.

"Be seated, captain," said the general, rising and courteously bowing; "I have called you from your arduous duties in the field to ask your advice respecting a plan I have in contemplation for bringing this dull siege to a close. What say you to risking an assault?"

"An assault, General Montgomery?" repeated the officer, his clear eyes dilating with pleasure, and rising and speaking with enthusiasm; "is such indeed your intention?"

"It is, even if I can get no more than a score of brave men to follow me," replied the chief, firmly.

"One of them shall be M`Pherson."

"I knew it, captain. I felt sure of you. If all my officers carried your ready spirit in their hands, our success would be certain. I was confident that my proposition would meet your views."

"Exactly, general. I am tired thrashing my arms against my ribs to keep the blood in circulation. I would much prefer exercising them on the enemy, who have a legitimate title to keep my fingers warm. When do you make the assault?"

"To−morrow morning, at five o'clock."

"To−morrow morning! better still. To−morrow noon, then, we will dine in Quebec. I am told the burghers keep good wines. Have you matured your plan of attack?"

"Fully. I have "

At this moment a second officer was announced, by the name and title of Captain Cheesman. His air and appearance were those of a country gentleman, who had laid aside his hunting−whip to grasp the sword. His eyes evinced coolness and decision to be the prominent attributes of his character. As he entered he saluted the gentlemen in a bluff, hearty tone, and with a familiar nod, while a smile of good−humour, which seemed to be quite at home on his well−shaped lips, at once prepossessed the beholder in his favour.

This gentleman heard with pleasure the plan of the proposed assault, and assented to its expediency. "But what says Colonel Arnold?" he asked.

The officer he named, accompanied by Burton and several other officers, at this moment came in. The appearance of Colonel Arnold was that of a courtly soldier. His person was manly and well−formed, but slightly inclined to portliness. In his attire, which was, nevertheless, exceedingly rich, he was careless, like one who felt the duties of the field to be both his pride and apology. A large and costly brilliant sparkled on his little finger, and his hair was profusely powdered in the fashion of the day. His address was easy, and oftentimes bland to fawning. His mouth habitually wore a smile which invited confidence, while the restless expression of his eyes betokened active suspicion. His features were handsome, and his voice agreeable; yet there lurked at all times, in every look and under every word he uttered, a hidden meaning, which gave to his countenance, however externally agreeable, a wily and forbidding cast, prepossessing unfavourably all men of sagacity and acute perception of character.

With a cold eye and a smile about his mouth he acknowledged the salutations of General Montgomery and the gentlemen present, and, seating himself near the former, yet a little aloof from those around him, as if wishing to observe without being observed, he silently watched the faces and feelings of all present.

"Gentlemen," said General Montgomery, after the council of officers was seated around the table, rising and speaking with great dignity, "I have invited you to my tent to consult with you on the expediency of adopting more decisive measures than we have done, and such as will ensure a successful termination to this prolonged siege. Our object is the capture of Quebec, and to accomplish this we must be ready to sacrifice life, but not honour. Permit me to urge, that the present mode of conducting the siege is not such as becomes men whose arms have hitherto been victorious, and to whom honour should, therefore, be more peculiarly dear. The bold attitude we have assumed before this city has drawn all eyes upon our little army. High expectations, founded, I trust not unadvisedly, on the gallantry you have already shown, are entertained throughout America of the successful result of this expedition, and God forbid that deficiency in energies, or any want of promptness in action, should disappoint these hopes. The territory of Canada, even to the gates of Quebec, is already ours. This post in our hands, and the arms of the northern army will be crowned with the most brilliant successes that have marked the present age. Great Britain, weakened by the loss, will more willingly listen to our remonstrances, and extend to us that justice for which we are now in arms against her; we ourselves, proportionably strengthened by the addition, will be able to contend with her arms more equally, and, in case it should ultimately come to this, cast off our allegiance and assert our independence in a more imposing manner.

"I admit, gentlemen, that the garrison, through the vigilance of Governor Carleton, is already increased to fifteen hundred men, and that we have but three fourths of that number to encounter this force. But unwavering courage, firmness, and entire confidence in the justice, I might say sacredness, of the cause in which we are enlisted, will assuredly balance this inequality of numbers. I am now about to suggest a plan to you, gentlemen, which not only will terminate this inactive and tedious siege, but, I confidently assure you, place us in possession of the city. That your cheerful and ready assent will be obtained to the meditated measure, I have no doubt. The enemy, encouraged by our apathy, have become, as I have learned from a deserter who came to−night into camp, careless and secure. Anticipating, from our mode of operations, a protracted siege, they will be, in a measure, unprepared for any important and sudden change in our tactics. It is, therefore, my determination, gentlemen," added he, slowly and decidedly, while his eye moved deliberately from face to face around the circle, "it is my determination to risk an assault."

"It is madness to think of it!" exclaimed Colonel Arnold, who had listened with no little impatience to this harangue, starting to his feet on hearing the last word; "there cannot be eight hundred effective men led against the walls, and not one third of these without their free consent. They are, moreover, dispirited by the strength of a post which they expected to find entirely defenceless. There are not one hundred pairs of shoes in the whole army."

"So much the better, colonel," observed Captain M`Pherson, dryly; "the men can climb the walls with greater facility, as doubtless thou hast heard orangoutangs do ascend trees."

A dark frown was the only reply to this observation; and, avoiding the cool eye of the captain, Colonel Arnold continued,

"But I can advise, perhaps, no better plan, General Montgomery, than this you have proposed. If you will find men in sufficient force to redeem this enterprise from anything like a Quixotic complexion, I will lead them. How have you arranged the plan of attack?"

"It is here."

As he spoke, General Montgomery unrolled and spread on the table before him a chart covered with lines of fortifications.

"My plan," he added, after the other officers had inspected the map and its accompanying explanations, "is to attack both the Upper and Lower Towns simultaneously; one of the detachments to be led by you, the other by myself."

"There are obstacles to the success of this plan, so far as it regards the attack on the Lower Town," said an officer attached to Colonel Arnold's division, a stout fat man, with a red face and the convivial air of a *bon−vivant;* "the path is difficult; the ice is piled many feet in height upon it in some places, and we have no guide. The last would be an insurmountable objection in itself."

"Ha, Major Brown!" said Montgomery, quickly, "I was not prepared for this dissent from so gallant a soldier."

"Nor would I dissent, general, if I were in your division," he said, aside, so as to be heard only by his superior officer; "I have very little confidence in my leader."

"In Colonel Arnold?"

"Devil a bit. Transfer me to your detachment during the assault, and I will fight so long as my sword−hilt and hand are friends."

"It cannot be, my dear major. Do your duty, and I will trust your colonel to do his."

"He may be trusted a little too far yet," said the officer, turning carelessly away to reply to Colonel Arnold, who abruptly inquired, as if he sought to interrupt their conversation,

"How many volunteers can you muster in your own command, Major Brown?"

"Some one hundred and eighty, colonel; and not a man will say no, if I say go."

"And you will say `go,' I presume, major?" asked General Montgomery, looking at him earnestly.

"Ay will I," he answered, striking his hand forcibly upon the table, as if to enforce his resolution.

"I trust, also, gentlemen," continued the commander−in−chief, addressing with animation several officers around him, slightly bowing as he called each by name, "Colonel Campbell, Major Livingston, Captain Edwards, Major Mills, and you, Captains Dearborn and Germaine, that I have your assent?"

"You ha' mine, general," said Colonel Campbell, a plain−looking Scotchman, with harsh features, but which were deficient in energy of expression, who articulated every word with a broad national accent; "but I relee for our success mair on your courage, gude fortune, an' the fears o' the garrison, wha'll na anteecepate an assault, than on the aaction and eenergy of our deesperited troops. How early 'll ye mak' the attack?"

"At five o'clock."

"I regret, General Montgomery," observed, in a slow, formal tone of voice and manner, a slender, dark−complexioned gentleman, with a high forehead and an oval face, who wore a military undress, over which was thrown a Spanish mantle, studiously arranged about his person in graceful folds, and who had been once or twice addressed as Major Livingston, "that I am under the necessity of opposing this desperate enterprise, proposed by you at a period when our soldiers are in a situation of deprivation and suffering that would fill with despair a mind less energetic or," he continued, bowing with grave politeness, "a spirit less brave than your own. I fear your sanguine hopes and our desperate situation urge you to a step which reason, and a sedate, unbiased judgment would, at another time, present to you in a very different light than you are now inclined to behold it."

"Major Livingston's opinions are doubtless of weight, and entitled to deliberate consideration," said Captain Morgan, commander of a rifle corps, a man in whose face was written intrepidity and decision, "and shall be duly weighed and discussed by the sober judgment of our senses *after* the assault. I agree with you, general, heart and hand, not only in the expediency, but the absolute necessity, of taking the step you have proposed. It is useless to sum up the arguments in its favour. Their name is Legion. There is one, and an important one, which will be an *argumentum ad hominem* to each soldier, and act as a spur in inducing those whose term of service is expired to volunteer cheerfully. It is this: if we capture the city after a long and close siege, which we are not so sure of by capitulation, not a soldier can touch a stiver, not an old dame's knitting−needle, as his share of the enemy's possessions. We must march in as soberly as we would go to church. But if we carry the town by assault, our men will profit by the rights of war in such cases conferred on the captors of a fortified town when taken by storm."

"These arguments," observed Major Livingston, sarcastically, "become a Janissary rather than an American officer."

"Far be it from me, gentlemen, to add to the horrors of war unnecessarily," replied Captain Morgan, colouring with rising anger; "but, as I have observed, this is the lever which will move the troops, and one which, from the days of Julius Cæsar, has never been applied in vain."

"I believe," said General Montgomery, rising, "that, with but one exception," glancing towards Major Livingston as he spoke, "you are, gentlemen, unanimous in the opinion I have advanced as to the expediency of taking immediate and more decisive measures to bring this siege to a close. I feel flattered by this expression of your sentiments. From the first I felt confident I should not be alone in this enterprise. If Major Livingston will have the kindness to honour me with a few moments' conversation after the council breaks up, I think I shall be able to win him by arguments as potent, at least, as those my friend, Captain Morgan, proposed levelling at the troops."

The gentleman addressed nodded a grave assent, and the general continued:

"I will now proceed, gentlemen, to detail my plan of attack, and arrange with you the best mode of carrying it into successful operation."

While the council was engaged in discussing the important business laid before it, the sentinel announced a guard with a prisoner, taken near the walls, who called himself a deserter from the city.

"Admit them," said General Montgomery, turning and advancing towards the door with expectation.

Two riflemen entered, guarding a youth dressed in the picturesque costume of the Canadian peasantry; then withdrawing to the foot of the tent, they left him standing alone in the midst of the council.

"Are you a deserter or prisoner, young sir?" sternly demanded General Montgomery, remarking with surprise his youthful appearance.

"I am prisoner now," answered the youth, pertly; "ten minutes ago I was a deserter."

"Have you deserted from the garrison?"

"I was not in the garrison. I like my freedom too well to be mewed up there, like so many sheep waiting to have their throats cut."

"I'faith, Carleton must be hard run to man his bastions with such pigmies as this imp," said Captain Morgan, whose large size authorized a comparison of this kind.

"Thou art an old boar," retorted the lad, turning upon him sharply, "and fitter to fill a ditch with that huge carcass of thine than line wall or bastion."

"There you have it, Morgan," said General Montgomery, laughing; "if Carleton's swords are as sharp as his tongue, we shall have warm work."

"And if thy officers' blades," spoke the lad, casting a significant glance towards Captain Morgan, "ring not with better metal than their speech, there will be little blood shed in this siege."

"A truce to this saucy speech, malapert," said General Montgomery, peremptorily, "and see if your tongue promise to be useful as well as sharp. When did you leave the citadel?"

"Within the hour."

"By what means?"

"Letting myself down the walls after dark."

"What induced you to take this step and desert your colours?"

"They were no colours of mine. I chose to fight on the side where I had friends."

"Can you give me, my lad, any important information of General Carleton's operations?"

"That can I. 'Twas for this alone I leaped the wall and hastened to this rebel camp. It was noised about by a deserter they let in after dark, that General Montgomery was to attack both the Upper and Lower Towns at the same hour, and that Governor Carleton was making preparations to receive it."

"Ha, say you so, youngster?" exclaimed General Montgomery, while the other officers manifested great surprise.

"Trifle not with us," said Colonel Arnold, grasping the boy's wrist till the blood turned black beneath his finger nails, "or your young neck shall answer for it!"

"Release the lad, colonel," said Captain Germaine, a tall, pale, and courtly officer about forty years of age, who had not spoken in the council; "how can he trifle, not having know our plans?"

"It puzzles me how in the devil it could leak out," observed Major Brown.

"I have mentioned it, except before you, gentlemen," said General Montgomery, "to no one but my aiddecamp, Major Burton."

"And I think I can explain how the secret has transpired," said Burton. "When I parted from you at the tent door this evening, general, I espied a Canadian, as by his dress he appeared to be, skulking along the lines, and moving in such a direction from me that I now feel confident he must have overheard, from behind the furze and stone walls which bordered our path, the conversation we had together in relation to the assault and summoning of this council. I succeeded in arresting him, and he is the man whom I sent to you under guard shortly after. He probably was a spy, and has perhaps escaped again into the city."

"It must be so. He told me so fair a tale, and played the rebel so well with his tongue, that, after drawing all the information from him that would be of use to me, and accepting his offer of services as a guide to the Lower Town, I dismissed him to the ranks; cautioning the men who guarded him hither, however, to keep an eye on his movements. Wilson," he said, addressing one of the guards present, "go to Lieutenant Boyd's quarters, and learn if that Canadian deserter calling himself Luc Giles is to be found."

"Didst see the deserter, boy?" inquired Captain Dearborn.

"I did, and know him to be an arrant rogue."

"Is his name Luc Giles?" demanded General Montgomery of the lad.

"As true as Old Nick be named Satan. I ne'er knew the hour both had not their heads and hands full o' mischief."

"It is clear enough, Major Burton," said the commander−in−chief. "This intelligence, gentlemen, threatens to interfere with our arrangements."

"But not with our ultimate plan, general," said Burton, promptly.

"How so, then?"

"The enemy, depending on the information they have received through their spy, are expecting us to attack both towns simultaneously, and will divide their forces, to be the better able to repel both. Therefore we should make one real attack with the best part of our force upon the Lower Town while they are thus weakened, and, with a smaller detachment, make a feint on the Upper, to keep the troops stationed there in play, and prevent their coming to the relief of the quarter where we make the assault."

"It is well conceived," exclaimed General Montgomery, warmly grasping the hand of his aid; "in addition, I propose that we divide our army into four parts, one of which, consisting of the Canadian volunteers, shall be commanded by my friend, Major Livingston," here he bowed courteously to that gentleman, who, after a moment's hesitation, nodded compliance; "the other I shall give to Major Brown," he continued, looking also towards that officer, who acknowledged his gratification at the appointment by a smile and striking his hand against his sword−hilt; "these two divisions shall distract the garrison by making two feints simultaneously

against the Upper Town at St. John's and Cape Diamond. The third division, led on by Colonel Arnold, and the fourth and remaining one, consisting of my New−York troops, and commanded by myself in person, shall make two real attacks on opposite sides of the Lower Town. Does this plan seem to be feasible to you, gentlemen, and meet with your approbation?"

"May I inquire your object in selecting the Lower Town?" asked Captain Germaine.

"All the commercial interests and a great portion of the wealth of Quebec is in this quarter. If it is once in our power, the citizens, to preserve their possessions, will compel Governor Carleton to capitulate."

"I believe I shall stand alone in any opposition I may make to General Montgomery's proposition," said Burton, looking round and observing the unanimous approval of the council. "My objections do not affect the mode of attack, which is admirable, and worthy the military genius of its author; but, I am decidedly opposed to General Montgomery's leading in person a forlorn hope, for such, undeniably, is each detachment destined for this assault. It is not his place; and, if he falls, it will be a death−blow to our hopes."

"The fate of the day will not depend on one division nor on one leader," said Colonel Arnold, sneeringly.

"Neither victory nor defeat will depend on me or my personal command, as you remark, Colonel Arnold," said General Montgomery, with dignity; "if I fall, there will be others equally able to fill my place. I thank you, my young friend," he added, turning to Burton; "but Richard Montgomery must not lag behind while his brave men are in the van. I give myself to this enterprise, and live or die with it."

It was at length decided that the attack should be made between four and five o'clock the ensuing morning. The council then broke up. The result of its deliberations will show how the wisest and most judicious plans are controlled by circumstances which lie beyond the reach of human fore−sight.

As the officers were departing to hasten to their several posts to prepare for the assault, Burton felt his sleeve pulled, and, turning, saw at his side the deserter, in whom, on his entrance into the tent, he had recognised his old acquaintance and guide, Zacharie Nicolet.

"'Tis you, then, Sir Monk that was," he said, in a low, sharp whisper; "I thought, when I came in, I knew the blink of that dark eye, though it is not now flashing from beneath a priest's cowl."

"And your tongue betrayed you as readily, Zacharie. But how came you engaged in the wars?"

"By the pope's toe! didst thou not promise, or I did for thee, that I should be a soldier? One o' Carleton's companies that volunteered in our neighbourhood was marching to Quebec, and so I joined it. But, after we got into the city, I found thou wert not fighting on that side, and so I took a leap over the wall, and here I am, ready to fight or run away, just as suits thy humour. But how i' the name o' all the saints came you to let that Luc Giles come to camp and return to garrison with his thick head full o' treachery. You keep poor guard here, even if two long−legged loons did make out to grab me," he added, glancing at his captors, who were both present, the one who had been sent to find the deserter having returned and already reported that he had disappeared from the camp; "but I stumbled over them in the dark, while they were snoring like a pair o' turtles, or they would have been none the wiser."

"You lie, you carroty−headed imp," cried one of the soldiers, indignantly.

"Silence, sir!" interposed General Montgomery. "I suppose, Major Burton, that I am to look upon this wild slip as one of your friends, come to camp to learn the art of war under your auspices. You are, doubtless, the friend in camp he spoke of. But methinks, boy, you had best be learning the art of spelling at school. It would better suit

your years."

"It's hard to tell a chicken's age by its teeth, as Father Bon would say. If I had been at school this night, thou wouldst have known less now than thou dost, and been less wise in the morning."

"You say truly, boy. From this time you are attached to Major Burton, if he chooses to receive such an adjunct."

"Willingly, general. He has done me good service already, and may be useful again. Perhaps he may be serviceable as a guide into the city."

"That may I. There is not a foot of ground within the walls but I have crossed it, nor path nor road to or from the city I have not put foot in."

"I could have sworn it," said Burton. "But keep your restless spirit quiet a while, and do not leave me. Your services as guide may be more useful than those of your friend Luc Giles. Guard, I will relieve you of your prisoner."

"Ay, go finish thy nap," said Zacharie, as they were passing by him to leave the tent, both casting on him no very amiable looks, "and keep a sharp look−out when next you sleep, or, by the pope's toe! you may catch a Tartar."

Thus speaking, Zacharie followed his patron to his tent, and was regularly installed as his confidential esquire.

CHAPTER XVI. THE ASSAULT.

The morning of the thirty−first of December, seventeen hundred and seventy−five, was ushered in with a tempest of snow, highly favourable to the storming parties, which, in four divisions, moved steadily and silently to the assault. The troops, on being drawn up at break of day and informed of the projected attack, were unanimous in desiring to be immediately led on; and General Montgomery, taking advantage of their high spirits, gave the signal for advancing nearly half an hour earlier than he had previously intended.

Placing himself with his aids at the head of his brave New−York troops, he marched along the St. Lawrence, by the way of Aunce de Mere, under Cape Diamond, and in the direction of a barrier which he knew to be defended by a few pieces of artillery mounted on a bastion, in advance of which, about two hundred yards, stood a blockhouse protected by a picket. This, from his own observation and the information of Burton, he considered the most advantageous point of attack, and therefore led, in person, the best part of his force against it.

His route lay round the base of the precipitous cliff upon which the citadel was built, and along a narrow path or beach between the face of the rock and the river, which flowed so near it as to leave passage only for a single column of three, and often but two men abreast. To add to the difficulties of the march of this adventurous party, enormous masses of ice, as rugged and massive as if they were fragments torn from the cliffs above their heads, were piled in wild confusion upon each other in their path, their perpendicular sides presenting almost impassable barriers to their farther progress. But with an indomitable spirit of perseverance, and a firmness of purpose that characterized the American soldiers throughout the revolutionary war, they surmounted obstacles that appeared to defy human energies. Now clambering over precipices, now sliding down inclined planes of ice, and now creeping under overhanging rocks, they continued to press forward until they came suddenly upon the picket protecting the blockhouse, which was indistinctly seen through the falling snow a few yards in its rear.

"Here, my fine fellows," said Montgomery, who, during their march, was at one moment in the rear, encouraging the slow to persevere, at another in the van, animating them all by his example, "here is the way to victory. Pass this picket and yonder blockhouse, and the battery is ours. Here, my man! I will take that axe. Look to the

condition of your musket;" and, taking an axe from a Herculean soldier who was about to assail the palisades, with a strong arm and heavy blows he cut a passage for his men through the picket. The sound of his axe was the first intimation the defenders of the blockhouse received of the presence of the storming−party; and, giving a scattering and harmless fire, they threw their arms over the breastwork, and with loud cries of "The enemy! the enemy!" fled in dismay and confusion for protection under the guns of the battery.

"The day is ours! On, my brave soldiers, on!" shouted the gallant Montgomery.

Waving his sword, he leaped through the breach he had made, which was now much enlarged by the labour of several soldiers and the active co−operation of Burton, who, unless when sent to the rear on duty, had constantly marched by his side, sharing and relieving him of many of his most arduous duties, and now, simultaneously with him, bounded over the picket.

"What, not twenty men by my side?" exclaimed Montgomery, in a voice of intense mortification, on looking back and finding but a few had yet gained the picket, while, as far as he could see through the thick atmosphere of snow, he beheld the remainder, in a lengthened line, slowly but perseveringly, in files and pairs, toiling towards the point of attack.

"Halt, my men," he said, in despair, to the few around him. "Haste, Major Burton, haste, and urge them forward! 'Twere madness to storm with this handful. Forward, my brave fellows, forward! Never mind your musket, my good fellow! Seize a picket," he cried to a soldier who had dropped his gun in the snow, and was stooping for it; "cool heads and brave hearts are all we want. Oh God! that the day should be lost now, when victory is in our very grasp. Forward, run! On, soldiers, on!" he shouted. "Nobly, nobly done, Major Burton. Forward, men! you follow a brave young leader. Ha, Horsford, are you there?" he exclaimed, seeing his sergeant join him with a score of men at his back; "now charge all of ye in the name of God and our country!" and, waving his sword, he placed himself at the head of about two hundred men, whom his voice had gathered around him, and advanced boldly to force the barrier.

"We are not too late, Major Burton," he said to the young officer who was by his side, while his eye kindled as he glanced round upon the brave band which he led against the bastion; "I would not exchange this day's laurels for imperial Cæsar's. Press forward, ladders! Another moment, my brave men, and our standard shall float on that bastion," pointing forward with his sword as he spoke, and almost running towards the wall. "Nobly done, M`Pherson; gallant Cheesman, you are ever foremost. Nay, Major Burton, not before me!"

He had scarcely uttered these words, when a terrible glare illumined the battery, and the gallant chief, arrested in the animated attitude in which he was advancing, and with the battle−cry still lingering on his lips, fell backward, with his face to the citadel, and was caught in the arms of Burton. "On, on!" he faintly shouted, as the hurricane of death checked the rush of his troops; "heed me not!"

Ere the smoke of the cannon, which for a moment enveloped him like a pall, had rolled away, he breathed out his gallant spirit, and died, as a brave soldier should die, in his armour.

The spirits of the intrepid and chivalrous M`Pherson, of the brave Cheesman, of the honest and resolute Horsford, also accompanied that of their gallant leader; in death united with one they so honoured in life.

Burton, the only surviving aid of the brave and unfortunate chief, gently laid his noble form on the ground, and hastily wrapped it in his own cloak; then, with a full heart, hastily dropping a tear to his memory, he shouted, with a voice that rung like a trumpet,

"Charge, men! Avenge your chief, or die with him!"

The soldiers, whose onward career had been so fatally checked, and who began to gather round their fallen leader, not like men who fear to advance, but like brave soldiers lamenting the fall of a gallant general, inspired by the thrilling voice of the young officer, sternly grasped their weapons, and with a loud cry rallied around him. He himself was already at the foot of the bastion, ascending a scaling ladder which had been planted against it by Zacharie, who, like his shadow, kept by his side. At this moment Colonel Campbell, on whom the command of the forlorn hope now devolved, cried out,

"Halt! Major Burton! It is useless to pursue an enterpreese that has terminated sae fatally."

He ordered a retreat as he spoke, and the division precipitately retired from before the battery, a few brave fellows who reluctantly obeyed the disgraceful order bearing the body of their chief in their midst.

Burton, execrating the apathy of the man who could thus desert an enterprise more than half achieved, slowly descended to the ground and retreated from the barrier, accompanied by his youthful esquire, who, before removing the ladder, had mounted to the highest round, from which he looked over the parapet, and satisfied himself, as he afterward asserted, that not a soul was in sight through out the whole range of his vision.

"With my old dame," he said, deliberately descending and following his master, "and another old woman, her match, I could capture that battery, wheel the guns round, point them against the town, and take it."

Burton heard him not; his mind was agitated by the death of his magnanimous friend and chief, and the shameful retreat of his party.

As he walked thoughtfully along, the firing of musketry in the direction of the Saut de Matelots roused him to a recollection of the great object in which he was embarked. Hoping that the other division might accomplish what his own had failed in achieving, he assembled several soldiers of his detachment who had lingered behind, when they saw he made no haste to retreat, and, followed by them, advanced rapidly towards the barrier attacked by Colonel Arnold, who was now, by the fall of General Montgomery, commander of the forces.

The detachment led by Colonel Arnold had moved forward at the signal for storming simultaneously with the party commanded by the unfortunate Montgomery. It pursued its march towards the Saut de Matelots against a barrier constructed at that point, and defended by a small battery hastily thrown up, mounting two twelve−pounders. This division consisted of a company of artillery, with a single brass fieldpiece lashed on a sledge and drawn by the soldiers; and in the rear, and behind Morgan's company of riflemen, the main body, composed of the Canadian volunteers and colonial militia.

This party was also distressed in its march by the difficulties it encountered at every step. The path through which it advanced along the skirt of St. Roques was rugged and narrow, and, by leading directly into the face of the battery, was exposed for a long distance to a raking fire from the twelve−pounders, which commanded the whole breadth of its column; while its right flank, when its approach should be discovered, was open to a galling fire of musketry from the walls and other defences of the besieged.

Silently and swiftly, their march concealed by the darkness of the morning, which was increased by the thickly−falling snow, this intrepid band moved to the assault with that steady courage which an enterprise so dangerous and so important called for at such a moment. One impulse and one spirit seemed to invigorate them all. The barrier was at length visible through the dense atmosphere, and with a shout they rushed forward to the attack. The besieged echoed the cry with a loud note of alarm, and, flying to the walls, poured a volley of musketry upon the flank of the storming party, which, like a troop of spectres rising from the earth, had so suddenly appeared before them from the cloud of mist.

"Now, colonel, scale that barrier, and the city is ours!" said a tall dark man in an antiquated uniform, half French, half colonial, and with a foreign air and accent, who had marched side by side with the leader during the advance, occasionally pointing out easier paths, as if familiar with the ground.

"Forward!" cried Colonel Arnold, looking back, and anxious to save his flank from the distressing fire on their right; "forward! and not loiter there, to be shot down like beeves."

The men, animated by the voice of the stranger, and encouraged by their leader, pressed on. Colonel Arnold was in the act of springing first upon the barrier, when the besieged discharged a heavy volley of musketry from the ramparts almost above his head, which killed and wounded many of his men, who dropped on every side. He himself uttered a sharp cry of pain, and fell severely wounded into the arms of his orderly sergeant.

"By the mass! my colonel, thou hast received a soldier's welcome before thy foeman's gates," said the stranger.

"If it had been behind them 'twould have been better welcome. Forward! Lead on the men, sir," he said, writhing with pain from his shattered limb as he was borne bleeding from the field.

"To the barrier! to the barrier!" shouted the stranger, rushing onward, followed by a few platoons of artillerymen, who, animated by the spirit of their new leader, deserted the useless fieldpiece, and, drawing their swords, emulously strove to be first at scaling the barricade.

"Storm it, my brave fellows!" shouted Morgan, pressing forward at the head of his riflemen.

Clambering up the face of the battery, he was aiding his ascent by clinging round one of the twelve−pounders, when it was discharged by the lighted wadding of a gun accidentally falling upon and igniting the priming. Although heavily charged with grape, it killed only a single man, who, recklessly climbing across the muzzle at the instant, was blown to atoms over the heads of his comrades below.

The rampart was immediately carried, and the battery, without the discharge of another gun, was in another moment in the possession of the gallant storming−party.

"Give quarter! Disarm and make prisoners," cried a loud voice, in a commanding tone, to the soldiers, who, in the first excitement of success, began to beat down all who opposed them. "Stain not your victory with butchery;" and, at the same instant, Burton leaped, sword in hand, from the gun into the barrier.

"Ha, my gallant cavalier, art thou there?" cried the stranger, who had mounted the battery with Morgan, striking, while he spoke, the pistol from the hands of the captain of the guard, and making him prisoner. "Thou art rather late, but there is something yet to do to keep thy young blood from cooling."

"Chevalier," said the youth, hurriedly pressing his hand, "I am glad to see you here. Brave men are welcome at this hour, when so many brave leaders bite the dust. Forward, and carry the second barrier!"

"Bless me, sir," said Morgan, as he caught sight of Burton, "are you here, Major Burton? How has Montgomery succeeded?"

"Lost, all lost!" he replied, in a low tone. "But, thank God, he cannot feel our disgrace!"

"What, not "

"Dead!"

"Dead! My God! there fled a brave spirit," said the captain, with deep feeling. "But what of the division?"

"Retreated when a sudden charge would have ensured our success. I see you have carried the barricade, and the fortune of the day may yet be in our hands."

"I will draw up my troops in the street within the defences, and instantly attack the second barrier."

"Do so, and let activity and courage redeem the fate of the other division."

"Who in the devil, Major Burton, is this tall, French−looking officer?" he inquired, as he was leaving him. "You seem to know him. By the sword of King Solomon, he fights as if he had served a trade at it. He wields that two−handed claymore, and lays on his blows with such right down good−will, that one would swear he was fighting for the love of it."

"A brave old French soldier, whom you may depend on as a faithful ally. See! your men have taken more prisoners than they can manage," added Burton, pointing down into the street, where the troops were disarming and taking into custody a score of Canadian burghers, armed artificers, and several English citizens. "Turn them loose outside the barrier, or lock the most unmanageable of them up in this stone house under a small guard."

"I will lock them all up," said Morgan, descending into the street, followed by Burton and the chevalier.

The latter immediately called out in Canadian French for the Canadian volunteers to rally around him. He was soon at the head of twenty men, whom he drew up near the barrier and awaited the signal to rush forward. This, however, Morgan, on whom the command now devolved, was not prepared to give. The party which had carried the barriers consisted only of his own body of riflemen and the corps of artillery, and did not amount in all to one hundred men. The main body of his forces had not yet reached the battery. He was under the necessity, therefore, of hastily forming his little force on the street within the barricade; and, perceiving that he could effect nothing without additional support, in this embarrassing and critical situation he was compelled to await the arrival of re−enforcements.

The dawn had not fully appeared, and objects around were rendered still more obscure by the storm, which still raged violently. His native intrepidity, nevertheless, might have carried him onward, but, unfortunately, he was without the slightest acquaintance with the situation of that part of the city; without a guide in whom he could repose confidence; totally ignorant of the streets through which he was to lead his troops, and wholly unacquainted with the nature and strength of the barriers to be forced before he could penetrate to the opposite extremity of the town.

"My dear major," he cried, in despair, to Burton, who shared his impatience, "for God's sake return over the barrier and quicken the steps of those laggards, or we shall lose the advantage we have gained."

Burton leaped the parapet, and fearlessly run the gauntlet along the line of musketry, which, on his approach, recommenced its firing from the walls. Gaining the head of the main body, which was approaching slowly but in good order, he infused some of his own energy into the soldiers, whose blood had not yet been stirred by actual contact with the enemy. They shouted to be led on, and several companies rushed forward with their officers; but, breaking into fragments before they gained the barrier, not more than a hundred intrepid fellows scaled it, with Burton and Captain Germaine at their head, and, with trifling loss, joined the detachment drawn up on the inside under Morgan, whose little party welcomed this addition to its number with loud shouts.

This re−enforcement was rapidly imbodied with Morgan's force; and the whole party, feeling confidence in their numbers and elated by the success already achieved, demanded to be led against the second barrier.

"Do you know the distance to it?" inquired Morgan of Burton, who again had taken his place by his side.

"No; but it cannot be far."

"'Tis not forty paces, for I paced it nimbly last night ere I scaled the wall," said Zacharie, who, with a horsepistol in one hand and a dirk in the other, walked behind his master.

"Art thou there, my young kite?" cried Captain Morgan. "Then lead on, in the name of thy manhood; for we are taught that great things may be done by babes and sucklings."

"If I lead the battle I'll wear the honours," replied the lad, who did not hear the last part of this speech, or doubtless it would not have passed unnoticed. "See, now, what a dust I will kick up."

Fearlessly running forward as he spoke, he stopped at the angle of the next street, about twenty yards ahead of the attacking column, and discharged his pistol towards an object concealed from the view of the advancing party. He alertly sprung aside as he fired, and had scarcely regained the protection of the angle, when a shower of bullets, following the discharge of a heavy volley of musketry, whizzed harmlessly past him, at once betraying the position and presence of the enemy, and their readiness to repel an attack.

"Gallantly done, my brave boy," exclaimed Morgan; "thou hast spared us twenty lives."

"Forward, men, before they reload," shouted Burton, as they gained the head of the pass, across which the besieged had constructed a strong battery; "plant your ladders firmly."

"Give them a volley, and sweep the barrier," shouted Morgan.

Wheeling round the angle upon the run, the storming party rushed against the barrier under a tremendous and incessant fire from the battery in their front, and applied their ladders to the works. But the courage and reckless intrepidity of the besiegers could not avail against superiority of numbers, and the disadvantages of the position into which the besieged had drawn them. The street where they were crowded together, rather than drawn up with military precision, was narrow, and, besides the battery in front, was lined on both sides with stone houses, from the windows of which they were galled by a spirited discharge of firearms.

"Hola! my brave habitans," cried the Chevalier de Levi, seeing one after another of the besiegers picked from the ladders, in attempting to carry the barrier, by marksmen concealed in one of these dwellings, "who will follow me to clear this house of its heretical horde."

Seizing a ladder as he spoke, he rushed forward to the windows, and was instantly followed by a dozen men also with ladders. They first discharged their pieces at the inmates, but with trifling success, as their exposure to the storm had unfitted nine in ten of their firearms for use, and then gallantly mounted at several windows. After a short contest, they took possession of the building, from which, as their numbers were increased, they poured, with the few serviceable muskets they could command, a well−directed fire upon the barrier.

The fire from the battery at length became so incessant and fatal, that, finding it impossible to force the barrier, in attempting which, at the head of a few gallant soldiers, he had been repeatedly beaten back, although fighting with the cool courage of a veteran, Burton determined to throw himself into the houses bordering the scene of contest, both for protection from the fire of the besieged and the violence of the storm, which bewildered the troops and rendered their arms unserviceable.

The besiegers, now increased to four hundred men by the re−enforcement of the main body, immediately took possession of these defences, leaving the narrow street covered with dead and wounded, and in a few minutes the

firing from the battery ceased.

"Now, by the mass!" shouted the chevalier to Burton who now had returned to the shelter of the house of which he had first taken possession, "I will strike one blow more for old Canada and old scores, and charge the barrier while its defenders are refreshing. If I carry it you will support me, and Canada will be free. If I fail I can only be slain, and fall like a warrior in my harness, which I desire to do. If this enterprise does not succeed," he added, sadly, "I wish no longer to live."

Elevating his voice, he cried, "Who will follow me to victory or death? for here we are as surely prisoners as if already in Carleton's dungeons. I will strike once more for my country if it be my last blow," he said, enthusiastically; and, rushing out, he was followed by a dozen men, both Canadians and Americans, who had caught his enthusiasm.

This little band sallied with intrepidity from the house towards the barrier. Before its defenders, who supposed the besiegers had given up their attempt to storm the works, could recover from their surprise and repel them, they had planted and mounted the ladders, and the chevalier, with two men, already stood upon the top of the battery, striking off, as he gained it, the arm of a soldier about to apply a match to one of the guns.

Burton, beholding the result of this rash adventure, which he had at first warned the chevalier it was madness to attempt, leaped from the window shouting for followers, and found himself in a moment at the head of twenty men. In the midst of a sharp fire, which, as the houses were now in the possession of the besiegers, came only from the front, and, therefore, was not so annoying as it had been, and covered by a spirited discharge of musketry from their own party, they rushed forward.

The besieged now assembled in force to the defence of their post. With the loss of half his men, Burton reached the ladders, by which he actively mounted the battery, closely followed by Zacharie and one or two soldiers, and gained the top of the works in time to support the chevalier, who, covered with wounds, with his back against the gun he had captured, was defending his life against two Canadians, one of whom, a stout dark peasant, was attacking him with a short dagger and the butt of a pistol. One of these Burton shot as he mounted the barrier; but, before he could gain his feet to second him with his sword, the chevalier received a ball in his breast, and fell dead across the cannon.

The peasant instantly turned upon Burton, and had raised his dagger to bury it in his bosom, when Zacharie, who was yet on his knees climbing over the verge of the parapet, close to the back of his leader, caught the Canadian by one of his feet as he drew back to give the blow, and, with a violent exertion of his strength, destroyed his equilibrium, and pitched him, with great danger to himself, head−long into the street among the bodies of his foes.

"Lie thou there, Luc Giles, where many a better man hath made his bed before thee," he quietly said, as he looked after him. "Thou hast cheated the gallows at last, for which thou mayst thank Zacharie Nicolet."

He had hardly performed this feat when he was caught in the arms of a stout soldier and thrown back within the barrier. Burton, who in vain called on the soldiers below to mount and second him, was in the act of leaping back into the street again, when he was seized and disarmed by half a score of burghers.

The force of the enemy now momently increased on the barrier. A formidable detachment, composed of burghers, artificers, peasants, and a few regulars, despatched from the quarter originally attacked by Montgomery, marched to the head of the defile or street on the failure of this last attempt to scale the barrier, and completely blockaded the besiegers in the houses of which they had taken possession.

"Would that Montgomery had lived another hour, or Campbell had pressed on," said Captain Germaine to an officer who lay wounded on the floor of the house nearest the barrier.

"In that case," said Morgan, with animation, "they would have crossed the town and formed a junction with us; but now, God knows, we have no alternative but to collect our broken forces and cut our way through that band of burghers who are drawn up to intercept our retreat."

This daring proposition, originating from a determined spirit, was at first generally approved of by the officers who had collected near him; but the great increase of the enemy's forces, which rapidly assembled and now surrounded them in great numbers, plainly rendered its achievement altogether impossible.

"Well, gentlemen," observed Captain Morgan, "I see our destinies are no longer in our own hands. We must make what terms we can with the enemy."

It was at length decided that there was no other alternative left than to surrender themselves prisoners of war.

"When my poor Mary tied the knot of this cravat the morning I left home," said Morgan, with a feeling which he attempted to disguise under a careless tone, while he secured his white cravat to his sword, "she never dreamed that it would be waved from a window in token of a gallant army's surrender. But such is the fate of soldiers!"

He advanced to the window with the necker−chief; and, although the slight exposure of his person was at first hailed with one or two single musket shots, these were soon followed by a loud shout when he extended his muffled sword, and waved the white flag it bore in token of surrender.

Thus ended one of the boldest enterprises of modern times, conceived by an active and intrepid soldier, with a display of skill and judgment evincing military talents of the highest rank. The loss of the besieged was trifling when compared with that of the Americans, which amounted in all to four hundred men, sixty of whom, including three officers, were slain, while the remainder, three hundred and forty in number, surrendered themselves prisoners of war. Several officers were wounded, and the clothes of those who surrendered were perforated with balls, and burned by the powder from the muzzles of the enemy's guns; striking proofs of the severity and obstinacy with which the assault was maintained. But even the possession of the city by this detachment without the loss of a single man would have been a victory dearly purchased by the fall of Montgomery. His death cast a cloud of gloom over the American army, and was universally deplored by his country, which has expressed its gratitude for his services, and cherished his memory by erecting a monument in commemoration of its high sense of his virtues as a man, a citizen, and a soldier.

CHAPTER XVII. THE PRISONER.

It is not our province to detail the operations of the campaign of the winter of seventeen hundred and seventy−five, six, during the farther progress of the fruitless siege of Quebec. The elegant historian and biographer Marshall, and other writers, have left the novelist no excuse for encroaching on the empire of history: it is his province only to make use of the materials they have furnished him.

With the death of General Montgomery the soul of the expedition departed, and the Canadians, who, previous to this event, had encouraged the invasion of their country by the colonial army, began to lose confidence in the ability of the invaders to accomplish what they had undertaken. A universal disposition became manifest among them to withdraw their countenance from the American cause, and patiently endure the existing government, which, save that it was that of conquerors, was exercised with unparalleled forbearance and generosity towards the conquered. Referring the reader, whose curiosity may have been awakened by the perusal of these pages, to the histories of the period and the scenes which they relate, we will follow our hero, whose adventures it is alone our purpose to record, into the camp of the besieged.

Burton, on being seized and made prisoner as he was about to leap from the ramparts which he had so rashly but

intrepidly mounted to support the unfortunate chevalier, was led, or rather dragged, to the rear by his captors, with that exultation which the besieged might be expected to display on making their first prisoner. Several of the Canadians proposed that his life should be sacrificed on the spot. Once he had nearly fallen a victim to their resentment, a rude burgher having cocked and presented a pistol to his head, when a British officer, who had hastened to the spot on seeing a prisoner evidently of rank, struck it from his hands, and commanded them to release him. The captors reluctantly resigned their prize, but were better reconciled to the loss when, at length, the shouts of their comrades beyond the barrier informed them that the whole force of the besiegers had fallen into their hands.

"You are an officer in this rebel army?" said the officer, inquiringly.

"A volunteer, and an aiddecamp to the late General Montgomery."

"It is, then, true that Montgomery has fallen. I heard such a rumour, and, indeed, judged so from the precipitate retreat of his division. I regret that it is my duty," added the Englishman, with that military courtesy which none know better how to assume towards a prisoner than British officers, "to send you to General Carleton. Your sword, I perceive, has already fallen into the possession of those inexperienced volunteers, who know not how to use a victory with moderation. Ha! Saint George!" he said, with animation, "those shouts tell me that your party have surrendered. I will attend you to the chateau, as I wish myself to be the bearer of the news to Governor Carleton."

On the arrival of the officer to communicate the intelligence of the surrender, the governor was on a balcony of the vice−regal chateau of Saint Louis, which, supported by piers, projected over the precipice and commanded a view of the Lower Town.

"I guessed it, Miltimore," he exclaimed, as the officer approached, rubbing his hands and pacing the balcony; "the storm is too dense to see the operations, but those hearty shouts I heard a while since came only from British throats. How many prisoners say you?"

"The whole attacking force has fallen into our hands; it cannot be much less than five hundred men."

"Bravely done! I would have been in the fray had I dared leave my post here. Their plan was so well concerted, that from the Saint Lawrence to the basin every part seemed equally threatened. Had they come down on our heads, it would not have increased my surprise. I wonder at the result with such a leader as Montgomery."

"Montgomery has fallen," said the lieutenant. "He fell mortally wounded at the first and only discharge of artillery."

"Fallen! Then has a brave man gone to his reward. I need not now be surprised at our victory; for, in spite of Harley the Earl of Oxford's impeachment for attempting the same thing, I feared for our Western Gibraltar. 'Tis strange that he should have lost his life in attacking a citadel which he himself, but a few years since, aided us in acquiring!"

The governor paced the piazza thoughtfully a few moments, and then raising his eyes, as if to put a question to his officer, they rested on the prisoner, who stood within the window, guarded by two soldiers.

"Ha! whom have we here?" he quickly asked, fixing his dark and penetrating eyes upon him.

"A late aiddecamp of General Montgomery, who was taken prisoner at the barrier."

A slight exclamation from a room which opened on the gallery drew the attention of the gentlemen, and the train of a lady's robe was not so hastily drawn from the open door as to escape the prisoner's eye. The governor walked forward, closed the door, and then said, in a polite tone of sympathy,

"I regret, sir, that the fortune of war has placed you in our hands. For one so young, methinks," he added, surveying him attentively, and then speaking somewhat sternly, "you are rather old in rebellion against your lawful monarch."

"I am not too young, Governor Carleton," firmly replied the prisoner, "to distinguish oppression from injustice, and to know that George of England has no better title to my allegiance or that of my countrymen than Louis of France. When the monarch encroaches upon the liberty of the subject, the latter is not to be censured for asserting his invaded rights."

"Nay, young sir, your patriotism, like that of your hot−headed fellow−colonists, outruns your judgment. Great Britain is the colonial mother of your states; and, as such, is entitled to your allegiance until she herself acknowledges your independence. And, forsooth, because she desires you to contribute to the support of the government which protects you, you rise up in arms, and involve her in a civil war."

"The tax you allude to, which she levied and which we resist, was not for the just and necessary expenses of government, but for defraying the cost of the conquest of these very Canada's which she now holds. We did not choose to pay for Canada, nor did we esteem it the part of political wisdom to pour our money into her coffers without receiving some benefit from its outlay."

"Here you err again, my dear sir," said the governor, as if wishing to persuade; "you had the interest which all Britons, whether colonists or Englishmen, feel in the growth of empire."

"But we were not regarded as Englishmen, nor were the privileges and blessings of the British constitution shared by us. If we are Britons, why is not our voice heard on the floor of parliament? We ought and future ages will echo the sentiment to cast off our allegiance to the colonial mother rather than submit to be taxed in any mode whatsoever without being represented in the imperial senate."

"There may be something very plausible in all this," said the governor, in a careless tone, as if dismissing the subject; "but, sir," he added, advancing and taking him by the arm, and leading him from the place where he had continued to stand between his guards to the opposite extremity of the balcony, "I regret extremely that a gentleman apparently so well calculated to adorn society, and possessing talents and address to enable him to make his way among men, should have taken so unfortunate a side in this unhappy quarrel. The war will soon terminate, and the colonists who have engaged in it will labour under his majesty's displeasure; and, I fear, much blood will be shed, even on the scaffold, before all will be over. You are a volunteer, and therefore hold no commission in the rebel army, hence you will break no faith therein. Be persuaded by me to accept a commission in his majesty's service, and I will ensure you rapid promotion. After the war, if I am not deceived in you, I will favourably represent you to his majesty. Otherwise," he added, with some show of feeling, but with marked emphasis upon the last word, "I shall have to commit you to prison."

"I am flattered, Governor Carleton, by the confidence you are pleased to bestow on me," replied the prisoner, with cold politeness, "and appreciate your kind offer of patronage, but I fear I must forfeit your good−will in choosing the fate which war has allotted me."

"You will not, then, embrace my proposal, young gentleman?" said the governor, with some sternness of manner, fixing his penetrating eyes upon his face.

"I will not, General Carleton," he replied, firmly, meeting his glance with an eye as keen and resolute as his own.

"Then take the consequences of your folly," said the general, turning away from him in displeasure, chagrined at his want of success, while at the same time really feeling interested in the fate of one so young and prepossessing in his address, for whose neck he beheld, in perspective, a gibbet or a block. "Miltimore, conduct your prisoner for the present to the guardroom of the hall, and desire Captain M`Lean to attend me here, that we may arrange for the disposal of the other prisoners."

The fate of the captive besiegers was soon decided. They were thrust into the Dauphin prison, there to await, in extraordinary suffering and privations both from hunger and the severity of the season, their release, either by exchange or some favourable operation of the war.

The apartment allotted to the prisoner in the Chateau Saint Louis, at that period the military quarters of the governor, was a small oriel or anteroom adjoining the main hall; and, under the ancient regime, was often used for the temporary confinement of state−prisoners. It was built on the extremity of a bastion or wing of the building, and overhung the precipice. A single window lighted the cell and looked down upon the Lower Town, commanding a view of the basin in front of the city, and the shores of the St. Lawrence for many leagues. The window was without the precautionary addition of iron bars, as the possibility of escape was effectually precluded by the dizzy precipice which met the eye of the captive as it followed, with a giddy brain, its sheer descent of three hundred feet to the water.

The prisoner, on being left alone, approached the window and listlessly looked forth. At once his gaze was fixed in admiration on the sublimity of the prospect that burst on his sight. The storm had ceased, and the rising sun, dissipating the clouds that, in innumerable fragments, mottled the brilliant blue of the heavens, shed a cheerful glow over the landscape, which, although mantled in snow, presented a majesty of outline that winter had no power to diminish.

The St. Lawrence moved majestically past, like a lake in motion. Its bosom was relieved by vessels of war; and numerous merchant craft of every class, from the tall Indiaman to the light sloop, and small sailboats, light skiffs, and batteaux moving in different directions, gave life and spirit to the picture. The towering promontory on which the citadel stood stretched away from his eye like a gigantic wall, and was lost in the outline of the distant shores of the mainland; and the stupendous cataract of Montmorenci arrested his eye as it leaped from a cliff two hundred feet in perpendicular height in an extended sheet of foam, that rivalled in whiteness the surrounding snow. The distant populous country; the forests, churches, and picturesque villages; the lofty mountains, the summits of which lined the horizon; Point Levi, with its cottages and towers; the battlements running along the edge of the precipice; the density of the Lower Town; its crooked streets of rude stone houses, alive with the victors and parties of his fellow−prisoners on their way to confinement under strong escort, all formed a striking scene, which was vividly impressed upon the mind, and was long retained in the memory, of the youthful captive.

Governor Carleton had scarcely dismissed his prisoner, with a sternness proportionate to his mortification at his failure in the conversion of a rebel to loyalty, when the door of the balcony opened, and a graceful female, veiled to the feet, came from the room to which the attention of both the governor and his prisoner had been attracted in the early part of the conference. Approaching him as he was promenading the gallery, supporting his steps with his sheathed sword, which he used like a walking−stick, she placed a fair hand upon his shoulder, and removing her veil, though not sufficiently to exhibit the whole of her features, which were fair and youthful, said,

"I congratulate you, my dear governor, on the surrender of the rebel troops to his majesty's arms."

"'Tis a glorious victory, child, and has saved his majesty's provinces."

"There must be a great many prisoner," she continued; "I wonder what you will do with them all?"

"Lock them up till the rebels treat for them. But they ought to be shot, every one of them, as insurgents."

"Wouldn't it be wisest, general, to try and persuade them to join his majesty's colours? A little eloquence, I think, should succeed with them."

"No eloquence but that of the British bayonet will avail," he said, hastily. "They are stubborn like all rebels, and obstinately bent on their own ruin."

"But why do you not make the attempt, general?"

"I have done so. But now I sent to prison a noble−looking youth, with the eye of Mars, and a brow and bearing that should have been that of a prince instead of an untitled rebel, and who from the first I took a fancy to, because I thought I discovered in him the elements which go to make a man in these stirring times. And, forsooth, when I offered him his liberty and an honourable commission under his legitimate king, what does he but thank me as coolly as if he had only declined a glass of wine, and say he would rather choose a king's prison than a king's commission."

"And were you so cruel as to send the youth to prison, sir?" inquired the lady, in a tone of mingled sympathy and reproach.

"That was I; he is now doing penance in the guardroom cell."

"I wish you would let me persuade him, my dear General Carleton," she said, in a voice of the most insinuating sweetness.

"Cupid forfend!" said the governor, smiling. "Dost thou think those pretty eyes could convert an arrant rebel into a good subject? Nay, nay, my little novice, I am too old a falconer to train an eyas with a dove, coo it never so sweetly."

The maiden appeared for a moment embarrassed, and then said,

"I can't bear that this poor youth should be shut up in a cold prison. Will you give me leave to send Father Eustache to talk with him? I am sure holy council will avail him much."

"Thou art a true Catholic, girl, even though thou likest not a convent's walls. But who will answer that Father Eustache be not himself won by the youth? Our Canadian priests are already but indifferently affected towards the government."

"I will answer for his loyalty with my life," she said, warmly.

"Were I a score of years younger," said the governor, with gallantry, "I would accept the security; but bargain that the gage should be thy hand instead of thy life."

"A poor hand, without roof or rood," she replied, with emotion.

"If justice can get thee back roof and rood, thou wilt yet hold a dowry in thy hand, that, with thy person, shall mate thee with the noblest. But go; have it your own way. But see that this new proselyte of Father Eustache's steal not thy heart if I take him, on repentance, into my military family. I must send thee to England, if once your eyes meet, to keep your lands from owning a colonial lord. Now go, for here comes M`Lean. Send me word nay, come yourself, and tell me how your legate succeeds."

"You give me leave, then, to send the priest to the officer in the guardroom?" she said, turning back and speaking in a lively tone as she passed a window opening on the balcony where a guard was constantly stationed.

"Yes, yes," he replied, impatiently, as Colonel M`Lean entered.

"You hear that, soldier?" she said, lifting her forefinger as if to attract attention.

"Yes, lady," replied the armed automaton.

"Then send that man who is smoking by the fire to tell the guard of the prisoner's cell to be ready to admit a priest, by the governor's order, in a quarter of an hour from this time."

The guard briefly conveyed the order to the soldier, and the lady immediately disappeared through the door from which she had issued upon the balcony.

In a short time afterward, the sentinel stationed in the hall, into which the door of the prisoner's cell opened, was accosted by a priest advancing towards him from that part of the chateau appropriated to the governor's family, who demanded admittance to the prisoner in a voice scarcely heard beneath his cowl, which, with the privilege of the priestly order, he wore closely muffled about his face.

"I have no order from the general, Sir Priest," said the soldier.

The priest started as if embarrassed, and was at length about to retreat, when a soldier slowly opened one of the doors, and said, in a drawling, gaping tone,

"Oh h! John, I'd like to forgot. The general says as 'ow you must let in a priest to pray with hey! there he be now; well, that's all right, then, and no mistake made. Heighho! eigho!" and the diligent messenger, gaping for the third time, closed the door and slowly disappeared.

"Well, I suppose it is all right, though I like to see written orders," grumbled the soldier, taking the keys from his belt and putting one of them into the lock of a small door near him. Then turning the heavy bolt, he admitted the priest, and, closing the door after him, cautiously turned the key.

The prisoner was still leaning out of the win dow, his eye watching with apparent interest the manoeuvres of a vessel of war which was hovering about the shores of Cape Rouge, but his mind occupied by reflections on the temporary suspension of his liberty, and the check it placed upon the brilliant military career his ambitious aspira tions had marked out, when the opening of the door of his cell roused him from his gloomy contemplation. Turning quickly round, he beheld the intruder, who raised a finger in a cautionary manner; then dropping the hood and robe, the lovely form of Eugenie de Lisle stood before him, and the next moment was clasped to his heart.

"Eugenie, my charming Eugenie!" he exclaimed, "is this reality or a vision?"

"Nay, if you doubt my identity," said the blushing novice, disengaging herself from his ardent embrace, "especially after such a mode as you have chosen to convince your senses that I am flesh and blood, I had best vanish whence I came."

"Not so, sweet Eugenie," he said, seizing her hand as if to detain her; "I am convinced of your claim to mortality, though, if cherubs have lips, I would swear those I have but now pressed were no mortal ones. But tell me, whether of heaven or earth, for both may justly claim you, Eugenie," he continued, pressing her hand, and looking into her eyes with a gaze that fascinated her with its love and devotion, his voice modulated to tones of inconceivable sweetness; "explain the mystery of your appearance here. Does the camp offer such charms for one so lovely that she must leave the roof of her protectress to follow its fortunes?"

"Or the fortunes of one in the camp, you would say, sir," she answered, with playful irony. "Upon my word, you young soldiers think your charms so irresistible, that maidens have nothing better to do than race the country to feast their eyes upon them withal. Now if you think I followed you to the siege because, like a heroine of romance, I could not endure your absence, you are marvellously deceived. I am here for the same reason that you are, my gallant cavalier, because I could not help it. But sit here; nay, a little farther off! well, that will do; and now, if you will be very quiet, I will tell my story."

In a tone more natural to her, and in better keeping with the true state of her heart, the feelings of which, the maidenly raillery she assumed for the purpose of disguising only served to betray, she briefly recounted her adventures, to which we will devote the beginning of a new chapter.

CHAPTER XVIII. THE ESCAPE.

"The evening you parted from me so very sentimentally," commenced Eugenie, with mock gravity, and putting herself in the genuine story−telling attitude, "the faithful Horsford, without falling in love with me, as good General Montgomery predicted, placed me in the charge of Colonel Olney, from whom and the general's lady I received every kindness which a distressed damsel could demand. The colonel's chateau is situated close to the river, and a gallery in the rear of the wing I was to occupy overhung the water. After I had retired to my room, wakeful from the various adventures of the day, and with my imagination too lively to yield to sleep, I threw up my window, which opened upon the gallery, and, wrapping myself in a fur bonnet and cloak of Colonel Olney's, for a while promenaded there."

"Waiting for some invisible serenader, like a true heroine." said Burton, smiling.

"Did I not bid you be silent, Edward? Beware, or you will get but a half−told tale! I had walked but a few minutes, however, when other music than that of the guitar and lute reached my ears. It came from the water. I leaned over the balustrade and looked down upon the river, when the sound of oars became very plain, and I could see indistinctly through the darkness a boat approaching the land. In a little while it came to the beach directly under the chateau, and two men stepped on shore.

"They walked apart from those who remained in the boat, and at length stopped, in low but animated conversation, at the foot of the rock overhung by the balcony. I listened a few moments, and catching some words, such as `Quebec,' `Montgomery, ' and `Colonel Arnold,' the legitimate curiosity of my sex was roused to learn more. So, wrapping my mantelet closer about my person, I descended a flight of stairs leading from the gallery to a rough path down the side of the cliff. This I entered. After winding round the rock for a short distance, it conducted me to a small level area at the foot, and close to the speakers, from whom a sharp angle of the precipice only separated me. I could now hear every word, and soon ascertained that Sir Guy Carleton was one of the two. The other I afterward learned was an influential tory from the States.

"They spoke of the affairs which are on every tongue; of the approach of Colonel Arnold; the danger of Quebec; the successes of Montgomery, and of the strength of the king's party in the colonies. Governor Carleton at length gave some instruction and letters to the other, who took leave of him and proceeded along the beach toward Trois Rivières. At the same moment I regained the path, to make good my retreat to the chateau; but, in my haste, my foot slipped on the icy surface, and, displacing a stone, the noise drew the attention of Governor Carleton, who was hastening back to his boat. At once suspecting a listener to his conversation, which, nevertheless, did not at all reward my curiosity nor repay me for my trouble, he stopped and narrowly surveyed the face of the rock, when his quick eye detected the interloper. He sprang up the ascent, and the next moment I was his prisoner, rescue or no rescue. Before I could explain who I was or why I was there, I found myself seated in the boat between two rough soldiers, and facing Governor Carleton, on my way down the river. In reply to his interrogatories, I explained, very much to his astonishment, supposing he had caught some rebel spy to make an example of, who I

was and how I came to be at the chateau, and, subsequently, his prisoner. He recognised me by the boat−lamp, and I had the pleasure of exchanging my seat between my ruffianlooking guards for a place by the side of my captor.

"The next morning I arrived at Quebec, and have ever since remained in the family of Governor Carleton, who has manifested a deep interest in me, and already taken legal steps preparatory to the investigation of my hereditary rights. The acquaintance of Sir Guy Carleton with my father, and his intimacy with Madame Montmorin," concluded Eugenie, "renders the chateau more a home to me than Colonel Olney's would have been. "My presence here," she added, with feeling, "also affords me an opportunity of repaying in kind a debt of gratitude I owe you, Edward, for an escape some weeks since from a prison even more dreary than this."

As she alluded to the period which introduced to her heart the image of one who had since solely possessed it, and, at the same time, recalled the progress of that love, strengthened amid numerous dangers; the faltering tones of her voice, the softness of her manner, the telltale cheek and drooping eyelid, ingenuously told a tale of love to which the sentiments of the youthful soldier responded. Gently drawing her to his heart, he for the first time sought and received from her lips the assurance that he was beloved. Before they separated from that lingering embrace they had exchanged vows of unchanging constancy. The words were registered in heaven! but, alas, they were uttered on earth, and by mortals!

The ringing of a musket on the pavement of the hall, and the tramp and voices of men relieving guard, recalled them from bright creations of the future to the realities of the present moment.

"A monk hath gone in, I suppose, to confess the prisoner," said a voice, which Eugenie recognised to be that of the guard. "You will have to let him out when he gets through."

"Ay, ay! lave me for doin' that same," replied the soldier who had relieved him; "and, by St. Pathrick, will I axs him for absolution and holy wather for me sins."

"'Twould take the Red Sea to wash your sins out, Teddy," rejoined the soldier, with a laugh. "You'd best ask him to give ye a little o' the oil of extreme unction to make your skin slippery, so that, if the devil grabs you, you can slip through his fingers like an eel."

"The divil hould ye wid his clutches in purgatory, omadhown an misbelaaver that ye are," replied Teddy, as the hall door closed and separated him from his opponent.

His measured tread was soon alone heard moving regularly across the hall.

"Dearest Eugenie, you have placed yourself in danger by visiting me," said the lover. "I fear your anxiety on my "

"Now, do not say anything too flattering to yourself, my dear Burton. I am in no jeopardy whatever. It is you who are in danger, and," she said, firmly, "I am determined to aid your escape."

"Impossible, my lovely enthusiast. If I possessed wings, as I have no doubt you do, why I might, perhaps, fly from this window and find freedom on yonder promontory; but otherwise there is little chance for me."

"This monk's frock will serve you better," she said, with animation, "than wings, Edward, if you will envelop yourself in it and pass the sentinel as Father Eustache, as I have done. The way is open to the gate. There you will find no obstacles, for priests are privileged, their holy duties calling them forth at all seasons."

"Romantic girl!" he said, embracing her; "you should be a soldier's bride! But this may not be. The attempt possibly might be successful; but I cannot consent to adopt the steps you propose to gain my liberty. You will be sacrificed to Governor Carleton's displeasure, which will fall upon you when he learns my escape."

"He cannot injure a woman!"

"But he will withdraw his paternal care from you."

"He will not. But I am willing to sacrifice it, if need be, and all else, to save your life."

"But my life is not in danger, Eugenie."

"But it may be," she said, earnestly. "Oh, I cannot live and know that you are in a dreary prison. This is not long to be the place of your confinement. You will be removed within the hour, and be thrown into some gloomy prison, perhaps the horrid Dauphin, with a hundred others, and exposed to every privation. No, no, you must consent to escape. I will promise you my agency shall never be known to the governor."

"Assure me that you will not suffer by your generosity, and I will yield, noble Eugenie."

"Oh, how stubborn you are! You never thought of obstacles when you released me from my religious imprisonment."

"But I had a prize worthy of every sacrifice to rescue," he said, ardently.

"And have not I a prize? Nay, do you not now, by doing what I request, serve me more than you then did, inasmuch as your liberty is dearer to me than my own? Must Eugenie believe herself less dear to Edward now than she was then?"

"Dearest, noble Eugenie! You have conquered! If you will only assure me that Governor Carleton can in any way be kept in ignorance of your agency in this romantic attempt, I will obey you."

"The guard will permit whoever goes out disguised in this monk's frock to pass freely. I will remain here until from this window I see you take boat and land at Point Levi on the opposite shore. Then, assured of your safety, I will boldly call the guard to let me out. If he betrays any surprise, I will amuse him with some excuse, for, as I have been here some weeks, most of the chateau guards know my person. When your escape is discovered, his own safety will keep his tongue."

"'Tis well planned, my brave Eugenie. But still I fear the result."

At length, yielding to the arguments, entreaties, and even tears, woman's last resort, of Eugenie, the prisoner consented to escape after settling the place of their next meeting. Disguising himself in the monk's cassock, he said, as he drew the cowl about his face,

"This has been fortune's cap to me, and I cheerfully trust to it once more."

"Remember," she said, impressively, "you are to leave the city immediately for the States. I shall anxiously follow your escape with my eyes till you arrive at Point Levi."

"I remember! and that in the spring I return to claim my bride!"

"If my father's lands are mine. Thou shalt not take me penniless. If your restless spirit must find employment in war, seek it nearer its great theatre, in the province of New−York."

A brief and protracted leave−taking took place between them, after the manner of all true lovers, and especially as became the hero and heroine of a romance. Burton now informed her of the death of her friend and protector, General Montgomery, which deeply affected her, and added to the sadness of their parting.

He now called to the guard and was let out by him; not, however, without being solicited for absolution; but he hastily passed him and safely gained the outside of the chateau.

Muffling his face in his cowl, he steadily pursued his way through the narrow avenues of the town, between rows of ancient stone houses, in the direction of the Mountain street, which led from the citadel to the Lower Town. At one moment he was jostled by a crowd of soldiers, who paid little respect to his holy garments; at another involved in a group of females and children, crowding with lamentations about the dwelling of some burgher or artificer slain in the assault. Once, at the corner of a street, his robe was seized by a youth, who entreated him to hasten and confess his father in the last agonies. He was about to follow the boy as the only alternative of preserving his apparent character, and turning suspicion from his disguise, when a child came running and saying,

"It is too late; trouble not the holy father."

Descending the precipitous way cut in the face of the cliff, he encountered a file of prisoners, escorted, on their way to prison, by a detachment of soldiers. As the road was narrow and the crowd great, he was compelled to walk past so close as to brush against them. He had nearly escaped the throng when he was gently pulled by the sleeve. Turning hastily, and in some alarm, he caught the eye of Zacharie, who was tied to another prisoner by a stout cord.

His first impulse was to endeavour to effect his release. Stopping, he rapidly ran over in his mind some feasible plan to liberate his esquire from his thraldom. His motive was understood by Zacharie, who immediately set up a most lamentable cry, twisting his features into contortions inimitably expressive of violent pain, and crying out,

"Oh, I am dying! Oh, for a holy priest to relieve my conscience! Misericorde! Oh, a priest, a priest!" and, flinging himself upon his knees beside his fellow−prisoner, to whom he was bound, he lifted up his voice in the most pitiful wailings.

Before the monk could recover from his astonishment, he was seized by half a dozen burghers and soldiers, and dragged with pious celerity to the dying penitent.

"The saints reward you," cried the sufferer. "Oh, stand back! Father, my soul oh, oh I shall not live. Oh holy monk, thine ear."

The bewildered monk bent his ear to the feigning penitent, when he said quickly, in a low voice,

"Bid the villains cut my cords. Oh, I shall die my hands," he began, in a higher key than before.

"Cast the cord loose," said the monk, now in some degree enlightened.

The prisoner was instantly released, but his howlings continued to increase rather than diminish, and he rolled over the ground in apparent agony. The captain of the guard at length said,

"Leave the poor lad with the father. If he recovers, we'll make him responsible for him. If he die, as he's like to, why the priest can bury him."

The detachment of prisoners again marched forward; and, as their distance increased, so did the invalid's malady decrease. He at length became so much better as to lean on the monk's arm, who promised the dispersing crowd that he would be accountable for him.

"He's but small fry, any how," said a citizen, turning away.

"'Tis Father Eustache, I think," observed another, as the priest and his penitent walked slowly down the hill.

"I think he be," replied a third, "though he looks some bit shorter than the father."

The monk no sooner arrived in the Lower Town, than Zacharie was miraculously restored to the full possession of his health, and walked briskly beside his deliverer towards the quay.

"Zacharie," said the monk, "your lungs do you credit, and, what with your wits, have held you in good stead to−day. I suppose you will use your liberty, if we get safe across the water, to good purpose, and return to study the humanities with Father Ducosse."

"I prefer studying the broadsword with thee, sir."

"But I am on my way to the States."

"Then am I," said Zacharie.

Finally, as he could not be prevailed on to return to his maternal roof, he was permitted to remain with his master, who knew from experience the value of his services.

On their way through the streets they passed a house which had been occupied by the American troops. Numerous dead bodies were lying about, some of them half−hanging from windows, others laid across the threshold, or piled before the doors. They paused here an instant; and the monk gazed on the scene with emotions in which disappointment and regret for the fate of the day were mingled with revulsion at the gory spectacle of human carnage.

They were about walking forward again when a deep groan fell upon their ears. Burton's steps were arrested; and, looking round, he beheld in a recess, reclining on the pavement, with his back supported by an aged larch which grew beside the building, an officer apparently severely wounded He drew near him, and recognised Captain Germaine. The wounded man lifted his eyes at his approach, and feebly extended one hand, while he covered his breast with the other, vainly trying to stanch the blood which, from a deep wound, oozed through his fingers.

"Not badly hurt, my dear captain?" inquired Burton, putting aside his cowl and showing his face, while he sympathizingly took his hand.

"Dying, Major Burton. My campaign is ended for this life."

"Not so bad, I trust, Captain Germaine."

"It is all over, major. I have one request to make before life runs quite away. I have a fond wife and an affectionate daughter. Take a locket and papers from my breast when I am dead, and bear it oh, God, that I should die and leave them desolate! Take it bear it to them with my dying affection."

"It shall be done as you wish," said Burton, pressing his hand with warmth.

The dying soldier acknowledged his gratitude by a look of satisfaction, and then feebly articulating,

"Laura, my dear wife Caroline, my child farewell! Give my Laura your hand from mine, major. Tell her it received my *last grasp* in death."

In a few moments the soldier was no more. Burton closed his eyes, and removed the packet and miniature undisturbed by the few passengers gliding with alarmed and anxious faces through the streets, who, viewing his religious garb, believed he was performing the last duties of religion to a soul, and respected his sacred office. Covering the dead soldier with his cloak, Burton cast towards him a farewell look, and, with Zacharie, hastened on his way to the river, and embarked for the southern shore.

As the footsteps of her departing lover died away at the extremity of the hall, Eugenie, with a face beaming with hope, while her heart throbbed with anxiety, took her station by the window to trace his flight. She caught sight of his form as he descended the steep thoroughfare of the town, and with speechless terror saw him seized by the soldiers; and, although her limbs scarcely supported her sinking frame, and her eyes grew dim with the intensity of her gaze, she watched the whole scene, altogether incomprehensible to her, until the procession of prisoners again moved on. With a prayer of gratitude upon her lips, she saw him again proceed on his way, supporting a youth. Her eye followed him until he was hidden by the roofs of a projecting hangard or warehouse, when he was lost to her gaze in the windings of the irregular streets. Soon afterward she saw him, still, to her surprise, attended by his companion, arrive at the shore and put off in one of the numerous batteaux that plied for hire between the city and Point Levi.

She kept her place at the window, and gazed after the boat until its inmates were scarcely distinguishable, and from time to time answering the wave of a white handkerchief which fluttered for an instant, as if by accident, above the head of one who sat in the stern, with a less cautious signal of her fair hand. When the boat was blended with the opposite shore, she strained her eyes to distinguish the form of her lover as he disembarked. The smile that dwelt on her lip when she was at length assured of his safety from pursuit was instantly chased away by the tears that came fast into her eyes when she thought she should behold him no more for many months, perhaps never meet him again on earth. Between mingled emotions of joy and sorrow, the maiden, losing the heroine in the woman, kneeled by the window, and, with clasped hands and full heart, thanked Heaven for his escape. She then put up a silent prayer for their speedy and happy reunion.

Now casting a long, lingering look towards the opposite shore, she turned with a deep sigh from the window. After making one or two ineffectual attempts to address the sentinel, she at length, by a strong mental effort, summoned that energy which her situation demanded, and, with a smile at anticipating his surprise, said, in a firm, confident tone,

"Ho, Sir Soldier! draw bolt and let me out. Do gallant Irishmen keep guard over ladies?"

"The divil, thin! but 'tis a faamale voice!"

"To be sure it is. So let me come out if you be a true Irishman."

"You're a leddy, by your own swate spaking lips. But, faith now, I've no orthers ony for the praast as is off, widout nivir laaving a blissin ahint him."

"I do myself give you orders to let me out."

"An' if ye'll tell me, honey swate, what is yer own jewill of a name, I'll maybe let ye out."

"`Have you never heard tell of Kate Kearney?"' sung, or rather chanted his prisoner in reply, and in a lively voice of such sweetness that, either at the name or by association, the Irishman's heart opened, and, applying the key to the door, he said as he turned the bolt,

"By St. Pathrick, an' I'm the lad has often heard till of Kate Kearney of Killarney; and if och hone! here's traason in pitticoats," he cried, as his prisoner darted through the half−opened door like an arrow, knocked his musket down with a heavy clash, and disappeared through the hall leading to the inhabited wing of the chateau.

Recovering his musket, the astonished Teddy found that the cell was deserted; neither priest nor prisoner was to be seen. At first he prepared to lift up his voice to give the alarm; but the reflection how far he might be suspected in aiding the escape of the prisoner, whom he believed he had permitted to pass by him in the guise of a female, suggested to him the expediency of forestalling an examination and a military sentence by desertion to the enemy. Suppressing, therefore, a sort of Irish howl with which he was about to give voice to his lamentations, he carefully locked the door of the cell, stole from the chateau, and found his way into the enemy's camp, which, under General Arnold, who had now assumed the command, was pitched three miles from the city, with the object of reducing it by a blockade. Eugenie gained her room undiscovered and unsuspected. On learning the escape of his prisoner and the simultaneous desertion of the guard, Governor Carleton was impressed with the idea that the soldier had betrayed his trust, and voluntarily liberated and escaped with him.

Leaving the northern division of the American army to its destinies, we shall now transfer the scenes of our story to a period some months later than that embraced by this volume, and fix them on an equally important theatre of the war which gave to these United States their independence.

BOOK II. THE SIEGE OF NEW−YORK.

CHAPTER I. THE SPY.

The second volume of this romance opens at that period of the revolutionary war when the British army, favoured by the toryism of its inhabitants, had taken undisputed possession of Staten Island, and were contemplating a descent upon Long Island preparatory to an investment of New−York. Around this fated city, like the eastern hunters, who enclose their game in a vast circle, which they contract until they secure it, the British general had been gradually, but surely, concentrating his forces for a final and decisive blow.

On Staten Island, a mile or two inland, the Earl of Percy had taken up his headquarters; but, so far from being idle while waiting the preparations of Lord Howe for landing his forces to attack Brooklyn, he kept up a vigilant system of espionage on the beleaguered city, and was diligent in employing means to obtain information of the movements of the army under Washington, then in possession of the whole of York Island.

Several days had elapsed without any intelligence from the city, the increased vigilance of the American general having rendered communication, at first sufficiently easy, now both difficult and dangerous. Some tory spies, despatched by Lord Percy to gain what knowledge they could of the intentions of the Americans, either had been arrested, or returned reporting their inability to hold any communication with the royalists in the town. He therefore saw the necessity of adopting other means, which should enable him not only to obtain accurate intelligence from the headquarters of the American general, but preserve uninterrupted communication with York Island.

It was near sunset on a lovely evening in August, about seven months after the defeat and death of Montgomery, that the Earl of Percy was slowly promenading the gallery of a villa which a colonial royalist had resigned to him for his headquarters, his thoughts busily occupied in devising some meth od of obtaining regular and accurate intelligence of the enemy's movements. It at length occurred to him that he should be able to open an

uninterrupted and sure correspondence with the city, and be advised of the plans of Washington as soon as they should transpire, through the instrumentality of an individual then an inmate of the mansion.

No sooner had this idea flashed upon his mind than, hastily turning in his walk, he entered a library which, by long Venetian windows, opened upon the piazza, and ordered a servant in livery, who was in waiting, "to say to Major Ney that he desired an interview with him." He then seated himself before a table and commenced writing.

The appearance of the nobleman in this attitude was striking and dignified. He was in the prime of life, and the clear, falcon glance of his eye, and his haughty, though not unbecoming port, evinced both the soldier and hereditary noble. His whole bearing betrayed the man of high birth, conscious that his brow was encircled not only with laurels won by his own hand, but with those of a long line of princely and warlike ancestors. He wore his own hair, powdered after the fashion of the period, and, excepting his sword and military hat, which lay beside him on the table, he was dressed in full uniform.

As Major Ney entered the library, he waited to affix his signature to a letter he had just completed; then looking up with a courteous smile of recognition and welcome, he said, in a voice trained, by long intercourse with all classes of men, to tones remarkably bland and winning, as if he sought to impress rather by the sound of his voice than by the words he uttered,

"You are welcome, my dear Ney. Do me the honour to be seated, or, rather, as there is a rich sunset, and a pleasant breeze is blowing in from sea, I will take your arm and promenade the piazza while I communicate with you a few moments on a subject of infinite importance to the present campaign."

Thus speaking, he condescendingly passed his arm through that of Major Ney, and led him from the library to the gallery. The two gentlemen were soon engaged in animated colloquy. Leaving them to pursue their conversation, we will, in the mean while, introduce the reader to another part of the villa, and to an individual therein, whose fate is involved in the result of their interview.

In a boudoir looking upon a lawn on the north side of the dwelling, and a little while before sunset, the same evening we introduce Lord Percy to the reader, sat a young lady, who, save an attendant, was its only occupant. She reclined by a window that opened like a door upon the terrace. Into it peeped innumerable gay flowers, which filled the apartment with their fragrance. Her eye had wandered westward over green fields, and rivers, and bays, spread out beneath a roseate sky, the tints of which enriched the scene with the effect of a painter's pencil. Wearily had she traced the flashing waters of the Hudson till they were lost in the far off pass of the Highlands. Even the green and cottage−sprinkled shores of Long Island failed, for more than an instant, to arrest her eye. With a listless air she gazed on the ships of war composing the fleet of Great Britain, riding at anchor in the Narrows, which were alive with boats passing and repassing between the shipping and the opposing shores, while the illimitable sea spread its world of waters beyond. Even the picturesque appearance of a tented field lying almost at her feet, its white pavilions relieved against the green plain or half−concealed by the foliage of the encircling woods, drew from her lips only an exclamation of impatience. Turning her eyes away from all else, she fixed them lingeringly on the distant city, which sat, like Tyre, upon the waters, its towers proudly lifted from their bosom, and its outlines mellowed by the twilight, which, like a blush, suffused the hazy atmosphere.

After gazing a few moments in this direction, she sighed, and, suddenly turning to her attendant, said, in the tone of a spoiled beauty,

"I am tired to death, Marie, at being mewed up here, without seeing a soul except Lord Percy, who is too grave to smile, and thinks too much of his own dignity to notice me; my graver pa, or some pert officer, who comes and goes like a rocket. One might as well become a nun at once. I wish I had been a soldier, or anything rather than a poor, dependant woman, with a stern father for a chaperone. Look you, Marie," she added, with an air of mystery, and in a cautious tone of voice, "I'll tell you a secret!"

"Of all ting in de world, a secret be what me loves to hear," replied Marie, rubbing her hands, and dropping a tambour−frame on which she had been indolently employing her fingers, at the same time opening her black eyes to their full periphery.

"And, above all things, what you love to tell. But listen."

Before we also give ear to the lady's secret, we will, after the most approved manner of novelists, describe the personal appearance of one who is to perform no inferior part in the remaining scenes of this romance. Her moral picture, like that of Eugenie, we shall leave gradually to develop itself in the course of events.

She had been for the last half hour listlessly reclining on an ottoman, which was standing half on the lawn, half in the window; but, when she addressed her maid, she slightly raised herself and assumed a more animated attitude, at the same time lifting one finger in an impressive manner, in order to draw her attention to what she was about to relate. The easy and graceful attitude she had unconsciously assumed; the curious and eager features of the listening slave; the gorgeous and oriental aspect of the apartment; the window half hidden in leaves and flowers; the smooth lawn; the encircling bay and its green islands; the distant city and blue mountain line of the northern horizon, presented altogether the most strikingly beautiful of all objects earth in her loveliest robes, graced by her loveliest and brightest ornament woman.

The lady was very young, her youthful brow bearing the impress of not more than fifteen summers, but summers every touch of which had been laid with the finger of beauty. Her silken, unbraided hair, which was dark as the raven's plumage, was from time to time lifted by the evening wind from her brow. It was long and wavy, and flowed with the luxuriant freedom of a child's about her neck, the Parian whiteness of which was chastened by a tinge of the Italian clime, yet so lightly added that it arrested the eye only by the peculiar delicacy and softness it lent a rich shadow, mellowing and subduing the radiant lustre of the blonde, and spreading the warm glow of life over the exquisite whiteness of the marble De Medici.

Her cheeks were tinged with the same olive shade, enriched by mingling with the carnation that, with every movement, mantled them. Her forehead, on which the hair was parted evenly, was full and intellectual. Her brow bespoke enthusiasm, pride, and passion, and a haughty spirit sat in the midst of its severe and feminine beauty. Her eyes were large and black, and seemed floating in a lake of languor. Their expression was at one moment melancholy, at another lively; flashing into fire, and then melting with indescribable softness, while joyous tears seemed to tremble behind their long lashes. Her mouth was delicately formed, but her beautiful thin upper lip wore a slight curl of sarcasm, which heightened its lofty beauty while it warned the impassioned gazer to beware of the arrows of wit that a fortress so armed might discharge on the unmailed besieger. The severe and classical beauty of her nose; the finely−moulded chin, and the faultless contour of her face; the polished neck and well−turned arm, coquettishly bared from her robe, have seldom found being save in the imagination of a Canova or a Thorwaldson.

Yet, with all this exquisite perfection of form and feature, the maiden was one for whom knights might break lances and heads, whom all men would admire, but none dare to love. Her beauty was like that of a fallen and still beautiful angel rather than one of earth's lovely and loving ones. There was a strange fascination dwelling in the deep fountains of her dark eyes, every motion of which was eloquent; a fearful beauty in the expression of her curling lip, while her whole manner and aspect betrayed a wildness of spirit and an impatience of passion in strange contrast with her feminine loveliness.

Her voice, as she addressed her attendant, was liquid and full, rather like the more sweet, yet not less martial notes of the clarion than the soft, womanly tones of the flute. She was a West Indian by birth, and the daughter of a beautiful creole, whom her father, Major Ney, married seventeen years before, while on the West Indian station. As her mother, with whom she had lived on a plantation in Jamaica in creolian luxury, and who had spoiled her by indulgence, died a few months before Major Ney was ordered to America on the breaking out of the

revolution, he had brought his child with him, with the intention of taking her to England on the termination of the war. During her sojourn at his headquarters, Lord Percy had been struck by the vigour and maturity of mind she displayed; her keen wit and unusual intelligence; nor had he been altogether unmoved by the extraordinary beauty of her person. As we shall hereafter see, he determined to profit by her talents.

Marie, her faithful attendant, who had accompanied her from Jamaica, was a tall, slender, graceful mulatto. Her figure possessed that undulating outline, and that flexibility and elastic movement of the limbs peculiar to her race, and which resembles the facile and harmonious animal action of the leopard. Her eyes were full−orbed, lustrous, and black as the sloe, dilating and sparkling with brilliancy when animated, but at other times half hidden beneath drooping lids that fell languidly over them. Her teeth were white, and contrasted finely with the golden brown of her skin. Her hair, which was glossy and wavy like the fleece of the Angola, was tastefully braided, and wound in a sort of imitation of the tower of Babel on the summit of her neat, round head, the smooth surface of which defied the phrenologist.

Having given some space to the description of our heroine, and farther intruded on the gentle reader's patience by honouring Marie with a passing notice for confidential maids and valets are subheroes and heroines we will only remark, in passing, that neither caps, stiff high stays, nor hoops, disfigured either the lady or her attendant. The former was enrobed in a *robe de chambre*, couleur de rose, with her faultless feet thrust into high−heeled shoes of pink satin. A half−embroidered frill, with the needle sticking in it, lay on the floor beside the ottoman, on which were thrown one or two French romances. Marie was arrayed in a bright yellow spencer and brighter green petticoat, with her pretty feet for she had very pretty feet encased in clocked cotton hose, and thrust into a pair of shoes of some red stuff, and with heels full two inches high, which materially aided her position as she leaned forward to listen to the expected secret.

"My secret is this, girl," said her mistress. "I have made up my mind that I will not remain here another day at anybody's will. So I have determined to give pa the slip and go over to town. Such a milk−and−water set of officers as Percy has in his camp, eyes of woman never gazed on."

"Go to de town, Missis Isabel!" exclaimed her maid, in undisguised astonishment; "who, for Heaben's mercie, will you go for see dere?"

"Gallant cavaliers and handsome! Shows, balls, and theatres! Life, and gayety, and, perchance, beauty, where I may battle with a rival! Of what use is beauty here, where it meets no competitors? Like the soldier's sword, what worth if not to triumph over others, and make slaves of men?"

"'Tis a fac, missis. You is too purty," said Marie, with simplicity; "dere's dat mischief boy midshipman, dey calls de young prince Willie, who came up from de ship and dine here yesterday. I heard him sa' you was purty 'nough an' proud 'nough to be England's queen."

"Those were his words, girl?"

"Exact to a syllabus, missis."

"Prince William, was it?" she said, thoughtfully; then added, with a sparkling eye and lofty look, rising and traversing the room, "but he is but a boy, after all; and, were he not, dare I aspire so high? Ay, there is no human pinnacle, however high, that Isabel Ney dare not strive for! I will keep my eye on this kingly scion. He already nibbles at the bait; he shall yet take the hook, or I have no skill at angling. If I cannot win a throne as a king's bride, I will win a Cæsar as Cleopatra did!"

She had no sooner given utterance to these words than her brow and bosom were suffused with a deep crimson, and, hiding her face in her hands, she for a moment stood still, as if overpowered with shame and confusion, like

one before whose moral sense the dark and mysterious secrets of his bosom are unexpectedly laid bare, and whom the appalling vision strikes suddenly dumb.

"God knows," she said, after a moment's silence, without removing her hands, "that I meant not what my tongue uttered."

This tribute paid to her maidenly feelings, which, recoiling from the rude shock they had received, had asserted for a moment their supremacy over a virgin bosom which neither crime nor temptation to crime had yet polluted, Isabel Ney now for the first time discovered whither her daring ambition and strong passions, if unrestrained, would lead her. While she trembled at this self−knowledge, and instantly atoned for her bold words with a blush of maidenly shame, yet she could not disguise from her own conscience that she experienced a secret and half−formed pleasure in the contemplation of the prospect of ambition and power which the bold idea unfolded; and she felt that, although her judgment condemned what her tongue had spoken, yet in her heart she secretly approved of it. This train of reflection passed rapidly through her mind; and instead of putting up a prayer the resource and shelter of youth and innocence suddenly assailed by temptation to be delivered from the evil passions of human nature, and without forming internal resolutions to guide her head and heart wisely, and curb an ambition aiming to such a fatal end as her thoughts and words had suggested, she said, with a reckless and indifferent air, as if she had recovered from the first shock her virgin delicacy had received, and was determined to abide her destiny,

"If it do come to that at last, why, then, 'twere no such evil thing, provided the reward be so princely. 'Tis better to be a prince's mistress than a boor's wife, as I'm like to be for all Percy's staff. Yes, I will aim high. What matters it, in the end, whether I am legitimately trained with jess and perch, or fly a free falcon, so I pounce upon my game, and that the eagle?"

Her figure, which was tall and majestic for one so young, yet, nevertheless, exquisitely feminine, seemed to expand with the energy of her ambitious spirit, and her curved lip vibrated tremulously for a moment after she had ceased, while her strange, wild beauty was enhanced by the animation of her eye and the glowing hue of her cheek. The next moment she threw herself on a sofa, and, with her natural manner, assumed with a readiness and ease which evinced the control of a no ordinary mind over passions and emotions so intense, was about to address Marie, who, in silent wonder, had beheld a burst of feeling, to the operations of which she was no stranger; for her mistress had long shown all the fire of the West Indian in her temperament: but on this occasion it exhibited itself under phases entirely new. A footstep without the door, accompanied by the metallic ringing of spur and sword, changed her intended remark to an exclamation:

"Hush! there is my father!"

A single rap, followed almost immediately by the opening of the door, preceded the entrance of Major Ney.

This officer's presence was commanding, and his air that of an English gentleman and soldier. His naturally florid Saxon complexion was browned by Indian suns and exposure to the hardships of the camp; his blue eye, which was of that peculiar triangular shape sometimes found in men of determined courage, expressed coolness, deliberation, and resolution; his mouth, the only feature that betrayed the relationship of father and daughter, was remarkably flexible, with a thin upper lip, which curved with an expression of hauteur, while it was closely pressed by the under, as if firmness predominated in his character. The change in his daughter's countenance on his entrance showed that she held him in some degree of awe. The mild expression of his countenance, and the paternal smile with which he greeted her as he took a seat beside her, exhibited the proud father, while the grave and dogmatic tone in which he addressed her in the more serious parts of the conversation that followed, betrayed with equal force the stern and authoritative guardian. His face was now full of a certain intelligence, which aroused the curiosity of his daughter, and it was by no means decreased by the serious manner with which he ordered Marie to leave the apartment.

"Bel, my daughter!" he said, turning to her as the slave closed the door, and kissing her forehead affectionately, "you know I have always indulged you in your most wayward wishes, and, since your mother's death, have striven even to anticipate them."

"I know it, sir," she replied, as he paused as if expecting her to speak, "and I trust you have not found me ungrateful!"

"No, my Bel, I have not. You have always been a good girl, though a little wilful, hey!" he said, playfully patting her cheek; "and I feel that you will yet repay me for my parental anxiety on your account."

"I trust so, father," she replied, struck by an unusual seriousness and embarrassment in his manner. "But why this anxiety, sir? Have you found any recent cause for anticipating ingratitude? I may have been wild and eccentric, and saucy it may be, but I have loved my dear father none the less. If there is anything I can do to prove more sincerely my filial gratitude, you have only to speak."

"I know it, Bel! I believe it!" he said, hastily; and then, at once overcoming his embarrassment, he took her hand, and continued, in an impressive manner, "I have often heard you say, and reproved you for it, that you wished Heaven had made you a man, that you might then have served your king and country "

"But, sir," interrupted the daughter, alarmed at this ominous calling up of her sins, "it was merely in "

"Tush, hear me, child!" continued the parent. "The opportunity you have so often desired is now at hand. Your wish can be accomplished."

"My wish be accomplished!" she exclaimed, in undisguised astonishment, while her eyes danced with laughter to which she dared not give audible expression; "solve me that, if it please you, kind sir."

"Nay, I meant not, wench, that you should turn cavalier in good earnest," replied Major Ney, slightly smiling, although somewhat mortified at the construction his auditor saw fit to put upon his words; "but that you can, if you will, serve his majesty's cause better than e'er a hirsute visage in the camp."

"Then Heaven save the mark! I said but now there was not a cavalier in camp fit for a lady's glance to rest upon."

"Truce with such folly! Isabel, I know the strength of your character, your sterling good sense, your tact and penetration, which, in many cases, stands one in better stead than experience. I know your devotion to your country, and feel I can place implicit confidence in you in an affair where judgment, caution, observation, resolution, and all the art and tact of which your sex are possessed, is required in a remarkable degree; and I not only have this confidence in you, but have pledged my honour that you will be all I have said and all a father can wish. Have I read you rightly, Isabel," he added, seriously, "and is my word worthily pledged?"

"Worthily, sir," she replied, promptly, and confidently returning the earnest pressure of his hand. "But am I, who bring such good fortune to our arms as you hint, to be led blindfolded, like Dame Fortune herself?"

"No, Isabel! Only promise me that you will faithfully perform what is required, and you shall at once be enlightened."

"I promise you, sir; for I know your love for me, and, also, your family pride, will secure me against that which, as a maiden and Major Ney's daughter, I should have no part in."

"Thank you, my child," he said, embracing her; "you are my own brave Bel. Now come with me to the library, where you will receive your instructions from my Lord Percy."

Isabel Ney, in surprise, followed her father to the presence of the earl. The native pride and independence of her character disposed her at first to refuse to become party, if not principal, in an unknown scheme; but, wearied of the monotonous life she led in the secluded villa, this undertaking which was proposed to her held forth change of place and circumstances at least. Of what nature these might be she was indifferent, so that she escaped from her present state of ennui. She therefore determined, like a dutiful daughter and loyal subject, to acquiesce in her father's and Lord Percy's views, and leave the event to produce for herself out of them good or evil. On their entrance the nobleman rose to receive them.

"My dear Miss Ney," he said, advancing on tiptoe as the door opened, and courteously bending till his lips gently touched the finger of the fair hand he pressed, "I am delighted to see you! The sun did wisely," he added, paying her one of those extravagant compliments of the days of Charles the Second, and which were not yet wholly antiquated, "the sun did wisely, as you entered, to hide his head behind the Jersey hills. It was the only way he could escape a total eclipse."

"Truly, my lord, the star of your wit sparkles brightly to shine in the presence of so dazzling a sun. I fear me your poor sun will have to follow its prototype," she rejoined, gracefully courtesying as if about to withdraw.

"You are facetious, Miss Ney!" said the earl, with imperturbable affability; "this scintillation of your wit has so dimmed my unlucky star, that, I fear me, 'twill shine no more to−night, at least in such a presence," he added, with a courtly bow.

"You do wisely, my lord, if your lamp glimmers thus faintly, to be chary of your oil."

"Nay, a truce, fair Isabel! We gentlemen, major, only get our wits hacked like a handsaw whenever we essay to sharpen them against the finertempered blades of the ladies. Spare me, Miss Ney! I have solicited," he added, changing his lively tone, and assuming at once a serious, yet courteous air, "the honour of an interview with you in relation to a service of importance and of great delicacy. You, doubtless, have intimated as much, major, to Miss Ney?" he said, fixing his eye inquiringly upon the face of the officer.

"I have, my lord; and she has signified her willingness to be useful to her country."

"I thought so. I envy you the possession of so lovely and patriotic a child. Now, Miss Ney, I will instruct you briefly in the nature of the enterprise to which it is my desire, and that, also, of your parent, that you should devote yourself. Do not change colour; there is to be no great personal sacrifice demanded on your part, unless it be absence from your father. From my knowledge of your character, and from your father's confidence in you, Miss Ney, I intrust this mission to you, and will now inform you of the nature and importance of the sacrifice I require. Ten days have elapsed since we have received any important advice from York Island. It is, therefore, not only my wish to obtain present information of the enemy's motions, but to have some one in the city who can, from time to time, by letter or otherwise, report to me the movements of the colonial army. After much reflection, I have concluded, my dear Miss Ney, to intrust you with this duty."

His lordship ceased and gazed fixedly into the face of the maiden, as if watching the effect of his communication while he waited her reply.

"Does your lordship mean," she asked, with playful irony, "that I shall look down upon the enemy, and watch their motions in my character as a sun? or would you be graciously pleased to lessen my conspicuity, and make me a star, and set me keeping pale watch over the heads of the rebels by night? I don't see how else I am to do you the service you hint at."

"Neither as star nor sun, my fair Isabel, though you shine as both, but as a habitant of earth. I propose that you address a letter to General Putnam at New−York, whose wife and daughter are with him, and say that you desire

his protection for a time, or until you can get to your father."

"To my father! How mean you, my lord?"

"I should have been more explict. I send a flag of truce to−night by Lieutenant−colonel Patterson. I wish you to write by him, dating your letter at Elizabethtown, where General Putnam knows you were but a short time since, while he is still ignorant that you are now here. To−morrow a reply will be received from the general, and, if favourable, I will send you in a boat to meet his messenger at `the Kills.' While in the family of the colonial general, omit no opportunity, my dear Miss Ney, of informing yourself of everything that may be of importance for me to know, and neglect no opportunity of transmitting intelligence. I cannot give you minute instructions. You must be guided in a great measure by circumstances. But do not forget that everything will depend on your good sense, secrecy, and observation. In these I place the most undoubting confidence."

"My lord," she replied, her eye kindling with pride, "I accept the trust you repose in me, and will faithfully do my duty as a loyal Englishwoman."

"You are a noble girl, and would honour a commission better than one half of his majesty's officers. Prepare your letter to−night, Miss Ney, and tomorrow we will be governed as the reply of the American general, Putnam, shall make it necessary."

This singular interview here closed, and the earl, saluting her on the cheek, courteously took leave of the lady several steps beyond the door of his apartment; for at such a length it becomes us, as a chronicler of olden times, to record did the gentlemen of that day carry their forms of politeness. But chivalry, alas! which is simply devotion to the ladies, has gradually retrograded since the last crusade, and men, we fear, are fast returning to the Gothic rudeness of the dark ages.

CHAPTER II. THE BONNET BLEU.

About nine o'clock on the evening following the events recorded in the last chapter, a youth, wrapped in a military cloak, and wearing the *bonnet bleu*, issued from a steep and narrow street in the eastern quarter of the city of New−York into an open square intersected by old Queen−street. He paused in the shadow of a brick dwelling on the corner, as if fatigued by ascending the hill, and as if desirous, at the same time, of withdrawing himself from the observation of the few chance passengers while he stopped to reconnoitre the space before him.

It was a small triangular area on the summit of the hill, from which several streets led to different quarters of the town. It was surrounded by dwellings of the better sort, and, altogether, displayed a certain air of aristocracy. The most conspicuous of these dwellings was a large quadrangular edifice three stories in height, facing the south, and occupying the whole northern side of the area, and built in that firm, massive style characteristic of the architecture of that period when men did not expect the world to end with their generation. A strong battlement ran around the roof, from the summit of which, in a clear day, was an extensive prospect of the environs for many a league. The main entrance to this dwelling was hospitably capacious, and adorned with columns and carved friezes, which elaborate style was also visible in the strong window−frames and cornices. A narrow lawn, garnished with a few trees, plants, and rose−bushes, was enclosed by a strong fence of complicated construction, with a gate in the centre flanked by tall pillars. Each of these, at the beginning of the war, had been crowned with a symbolic piece of carved work representing Britannia; but, after hostilities commenced, they were demolished, no doubt by some pious whig. The dwelling wore a cheerful aspect; lights were gleaming from many windows, and dissipating, in some degree, the gloom of the square, which otherwise was but dimly lighted by the faint glimmer of the stars; and occasionally a voice of merriment reached the ear of the youthful stranger, which he echoed by a low sigh as he folded his cloak closer about his person, and shrank farther back within the dark shadows of the corner. Save the occasional footfall of a citizen hastening to his home; the heavy tramp of a party

of soldiers at the extremity of one of the diverging streets, on their way from post to post to relieve guard; and the slow tread of a solitary sentinel pacing before the gate of the dwelling we have described, there was neither sight nor sound of human being; for, in that primitive era aside from the annoyances to which peaceful citizens were subject who chanced to be abroad after nightfall in a beleaguered and garrisoned town people were content to go to bed and get up with the sun.

After reconnoitring the square with timid caution, the youth stepped briskly forth from his concealment; and, with a bold step, crossed the open space and advanced directly towards the gate of the edifice. The sentinel stopped in his walk as he observed his approach, and challenged him. His brief, stern tones seemed to startle the stranger, for he recoiled, and appeared to hesitate whether to advance or retreat. The struggle, however, was but for an instant; and, regaining his previous confident demeanour, he approached the guard, and said, in the tone of a youth of some seventeen years, and with a slight foreign accent,

"Soldier, I would speak with Major Burton, if, as I think, here are the headquarters of General Washington."

This is headquarters, sir," said the sentinel, in a respectful tone, "and I believe Major Burton is within, Holton," he added, to a sentinel whom the stranger had not before observed, who was standing in the door of the mansion, "say to the general that a stranger desires admittance."

"Oh no, no! not the general," interposed the youth, earnestly; "I wish not to see your chief, but his aid, Major Burton."

"See, then, if Major Burton be in, Holton."

While he was speaking the door of the mansion opened, and an officer made his appearance in full uniform, accompanied by a gentleman without his hat in a military undress, who seemed to be taking leave of him at the door.

"Then we are to have the honour of your excellency's presence at Brooklyn at eight in the morning?" said the officer who was leaving.

"At eight, General Livingston," replied the individual addressed; "I wish to inspect your works in person as they progress. We must defend Long Island at all hazards; for, if we give General Howe possession at Brooklyn, we resign him the key of New−York." The officer, who, as Major Livingston, is already known to the reader, then took his leave; and, hastily passing the sentinel, crossed the square and disappeared through a close street at the left leading to the East River.

"A stranger to speak with Major Burton!" repeated the gentleman who had been addressed as his excellency, in reply to a communication from the guard at the door; "invite him in, and inform that officer."

"Pass, sir," said the sentinel, standing aside for the youth to enter.

He hesitated, and remained standing in the same attitude, without making any reply, when the gentleman stepped forth, and, approaching the gate, said, in a manly and placid voice,

"If your business is with Major Burton, sir, and of importance, walk in, and he shall be made acquainted with your presence here."

"Oh no, sir, 'tis of no importance; but, if I could see him, I should rather not go in."

This was said in a tone of extreme embarrassment, as if the speaker was greatly agitated, while the voice, which at first was bold and boyish, became soft, and the words were tremulously uttered, like the broken notes of a glassichord rudely swept with the fingers.

The gentleman surveyed the speaker, who shrank away from his glance, fixedly for a moment by the glare of light from one of the windows; but his face, concealed by the fold of his cloak and the drooping front of his bonnet, defeated his curiosity, which was at once excited by the voice and manner of the stranger. At length, as if influenced by a sudden resolution, he approached him and said, in a tone calculated to sooth and restore confidence, while it carried with it the weight of a command,

"I fear, my young sir, that we shall be compelled to hold you under gentle arrest as one arousing our suspicion; nay, my child," he continued, with paternal kindness, as he surveyed his agitated form, "I will send for him you wish to see; I half guess your secret already." Partly leading, partly persuading him, he drew him into the dwelling, conducted him into the library on the left side of the hall, and, closing the door, led him to a sofa, upon which he immediately sank in excessive agitation.

"My child," he said, in a voice of dignified tenderness, "do not charge me with intrusive or uncalled−for curiosity for so rudely pressing upon your privacy. But the honour of my military family is dear to me, and the individual you have called to see is a member of it. The mystery of your conduct leads me to suspect there is something wrong, for virtue and honour neither require concealment nor fear exposure. I have penetrated your disguise, for your voice is all too gentle to sustain you in the character you have assumed. Throw aside this unsexly disguise, my child, and resume the habits of your sex, and with openness and candour give me your confidence. If you have suffered wrong, as I greatly fear, you shall be righted; but if, as I hope, good faith and honour have not been broken by those you have trusted, you will then find in me a friend and adviser."

"Oh neither, neither, sir," said the youth, covering his features with his fingers, through which the tears trickled freely, while his whole frame heaved with emotion

"Then allow me to remove this unworthy headdress," he said, with a voice of the deepest sympathy, at the same time gently uncovering his head, around which fell a cloud of golden tresses, shielding it like a veil. For an instant he gazed on the bright abundance of wavy hair, and then, parting it from her brow, as if he were soothing a grieved child, he removed, one after another, the scarce resisting fingers which strove to hide the blushing face, and gazed with admiration upon the features of a lovely female of seventeen, checkered with mingled sunshine and showers.

The officer beheld with surprise, mingled with commiseration, the face of the beautiful creature who now stood confessed in all her feminine loveliness, and became deeply interested in her fate. Affectionately holding her hand within his own, he questioned her respecting the nature of her engagements with his aid, her name, and the place of her birth, but her only replies were tears and blushes, which chased one another across her cheek like rosy clouds. The original suspicions hinted at on his first addressing her were confirmed by her silence and mysterious bearing, and with a clouded brow and stern aspect he crossed the room, rang the bell, and ordered a servant to inform Major Burton that a stranger was in the library who desired an interview with him.

The appearance of the gentleman who had taken such a deep interest in the fate of the stranger was in the highest degree dignified and commanding. He was tall of stature, and, although his person was large−framed, it was symmetrical, and remarkable for the harmonious case of its motions and its lofty carriage. His step was firm and resolute, and his air soldierly. His address was that of an accomplished gentleman, in which politeness was dictated rather by the heart than by fashion or policy. His countenance was remarkable for its power of expressing strong emotions; and majesty dwelt upon his expansive brow, as if nature had placed there her seal of greatness. His eyes were full, calm, and impressive when in repose, but when he was excited they emitted flashes of light. The Roman strength of his nose, the bland and quiet expression of his habitually−closed mouth and resolute

compression of the firm lips, the massive chin and angular cheeks, with the majestic breadth of his face, and noble expanse of forehead, presented striking combinations of features that could belong to no common man. He appeared to be about forty−five years of age, although the powdered wig which he wore after the fashion of the period, and the lines of thought and wisdom traced on his countenance, gave him the appearance of being several years older. He was without sidearms; and his dress, which was plain, aside from its semi−military character, exhibited no insignia of rank. Yet the maiden, as she gazed on him and made the observations we have recorded, was convinced that she was in the presence of Washington.

After sending the message to his aid, he seated himself by a table in silence and in an attitude of deep thought, while his companion, seemingly forgotten, remained timidly gazing, as if she would there read her fate, upon his noble features, rendered still more striking by a strong beam of light from a suspended chandelier falling upon the more prominent parts, and casting the remainder into deep shadow.

At the sound of an approaching footstep without the door, he turned and said to the disguised female, "Replace your bonnet." She obeyed mechanically, when the door was thrown open by a servant, and a young officer in full uniform, and with spurs, as if he had just been on horseback, entered the room. He gracefully approached his commanding officer, mingling in his manner the usual forms due to the military rank of the individual he addressed with the gentlemanly ease of an equal in society. The commander−in−chief rose and received him with that dignified courtesy which never deserted him, while the severe expression of his eye promised no pleasing termination to an interview so inauspiciously begun.

"Major Burton," he said, in a grave tone and with some sternness, "you doubtless will admit that the honour of my military family is infinitely dear to me?"

"It should be so, your excellency," replied the young officer, fixing his eyes upon him in surprise at his words, and then casting them to the opposite side of the room, his attention being drawn thither by the unaccountable emotion of a third person, whom he now for the first time discovered.

"And you are prepared to acknowledge that I must feel a deep interest in the honour of all the officers under my command, and will not deny my right to inquire into the moral as well as military character of the few who compose my staff, and reside with me beneath the same roof?"

"I am not prepared, your excellency, either to deny or admit the right you would claim," replied the officer, with some pertinacity; "but, if you will honour me so far as to state any particular instance which calls for the application of this system of morals to your staff, or any under your command, I shall then be better able to give you my opinion."

"I will do so, and explicitly, Major Burton," said the chief, with emotions of mingled displeasure and reproof; "I am not ignorant, sir, of your vanity, from causes which should tinge the cheek of an honourable man with shame, nor of the testimonials you have displayed to your brother officers, in my presence, of the weakness of the sex which, by every tie as a man and as a gentleman, you are bound to protect, but which it is your boast to degrade. This morning, sir nay, your hand need not seek your weapon! Hear me! In that very hall I overheard you shamefully boast to a group of officers of an instance of successful passion, wherein you had grossly violated the solemn bonds of friendship. It would appear, sir, that, like the Indian who preserves the scalps of his foes, you delight to cherish trophies of your victories, where defeat would be honour, though it could not lessen your infamy."

"You presume, General Washington," replied the young officer, trembling with passion, "upon your rank to insult me. From this moment I resign my commission, and then you shall meet me where your rank shall not protect your tongue. But I beg leave to ask your excellency," he added, in a tone of inconceivable sarcasm, "from which of your trusty spies you have heard of some recent, and, as it appears, aggravated liason, that you call me to so

severe an account?"

"Approach that trembling child, who has sought you out even in the headquarters of your commanding officer, which at least should be sacred from the atmosphere of licentiousness, and let your own conscience, sir, answer the question."

The young aiddecamp approached the disguised female, who had listened with fearful excitement to this accusation. She threw aside her disguise, and, with a bound and a wild cry of joy, sprang into his arms.

"Eugenie!" he cried, pressing her to his heart, the angry cloud on his brow giving place to an expression of pleasure; "what grateful gale has wafted you hither?"

The maiden clung to the neck upon which she had flung herself, but spoke not. He raised her, and found that she had fainted. The general, moved by the scene, pulled the bell, and ordered two of the maids to be sent to him, when, by his direction, the insensible girl was removed to the apartments of his lady, and the two gentlemen were left alone. For some time they remained silent, differently affected by the events that had occurred, when the elder officer, in a voice of stern displeasure, said,

"Major Burton, here is another trophy of your victories. If your heart was steeled against so much innocence and beauty, her affection, at least, should have pleaded eloquently in her behalf. Thus to blast the fairest piece of God's workmanship, to desecrate so fair a temple, is worthy the genius only of a demon. Leave me, sir! from this hour we are strangers."

"Ay, and mortal foes!" replied Burton, striking his sword till it rang again; and, with a flashing eye and a haughty step, he left the apartment.

With a single word he might have cleared his own honour from the dark stain which, in the opinion of his superior officer, tarnished it; but resentment at being so boldly charged with crimes which, though not amenable to the laws, were unworthy of a gentleman and a man of honour, deterred him from offering any defence or explanation. This silence, however, could be traced to another cause, peculiar to the seducer of female innocence: the secret pleasure he experienced in being thought the beloved possessor of so much confiding loveliness, even when the opinion was coupled with dishonour to himself. It was a kind of gratification too exquisitely enjoyed by him to be willingly resigned; and, therefore, rather than renounce a triumph so nearly allied to his vanity, he willingly permitted his own reputation to suffer, on the present occasion, at least, innocently, and the fair fame of the lovely girl, who had abandoned for him all but honour, to be blighted, if not for ever blasted.

Hastily passing through the hall, he ordered his horse, and, mounting at the gate, turned a corner to the right and spurred up Queen−street into Broadway; then, again turning to the left, he dismounted before a large brick mansion imbowered in trees and wearing an antiquated air of respectability. It stood a little back from the street, with which it was connected by an avenue of trees. A negro servant was holding two or three horses at the gate; throwing his bridle to him, he inquired if President Hancock had yet left town on his return to Congress. On receiving a reply that he would not leave till morning, he hastily ascended the stone steps to the door, and was admitted into a lighted hall.

"Give this card," he said to a footman, "and say the bearer desires to see President Hancock in private."

The servant entered a room to the left, from which, as the door opened, several voices were heard in lively conversation, and in a few moments a gentleman came forth, richly dressed and with his hair highly powdered, which he covered by a cocked hat as he came out into the hall, as if to protect his head against the evening air.

"Ha, Major Burton, my young soldier, how do you do?" he exclaimed, in a hearty, cordial tone and manner; "'tis some time since I have seen you. Upon my soul, I can almost believe it is my old friend, your father, I am speaking to; you are his genuine scion. But come in, come in; there's Sullivan, Putnam, and a host of `goodlie companie.'"

"No, sir," replied the young officer, returning his warm salutation, "I beg leave to decline your invitation. I have called on you, as an old friend of my father, to ask your advice before taking an important step." Offering his arm, he then led him forth into the avenue, and stopped beneath a tree which overshadowed it.

"You shall receive all the benefit my advice can bestow. But why this secrecy, this clouded brow, this solemn air?"

"I have been grossly insulted this evening by the commander−in−chief, and, knowing that you arrived this morning from Philadelphia, I have hastened hither to consult with you, as my father's friend and the president of Congress, respecting my withdrawal from the service."

"Leave the service, my young sir, for a hasty word or so? That will never do, Major Burton; your services are too valuable to be lightly dispensed with."

"But, your excellency, I cannot longer remain in the family of General Washington; and his language to me has been so personal, that I wish to meet him on ground where grades of rank shall offer no obstacle to an honourable satisfaction."

"That is to say, Major Burton," observed the governor, gravely shaking his head, "that you wish to meet the commander−in−chief in single combat."

"That is my wish, your excellency," he replied, decidedly. "If the high rank of an officer does not restrain him from inflicting injury, it ought not to protect him from the resentment of the wronged."

"True, my dear Major Burton; but it will never do for you to send a challenge to your superior officer. He will, in the first place, pay no regard to it, and it will do you infinite harm. I will not inquire into the nature of the injury you have received, but I think there must have been a mutual misunderstanding. General Washington, you are aware, has a good deal of the lion's irritability as well as his courage, and your own blood is not over cool."

"Does your excellency mean to say the commander−in−chief, like the king, can do no wrong?"

"Not so, my gentle Hotspur, but that you had best pass it by. But do not think of retiring from a profession you are so well calculated to adorn, and wreck your future hopes in life for the hasty words of your superior officer."

"I regret, your excellency," said Burton, with energy, "that I cannot comply with your advice. I will not return to the headquarters of the commander−in−chief."

"But, my dear Burton, you should subdue this sensitive and fiery spirit which kindles so readily. 'Twill one day bring evil upon your head and blood upon your hand. But, I beg your pardon, I meant neither to advise nor reprove. As your prejudice is only against an individual, and not the service, I think I have a plan to retain you still. How would you like the staff of General Putnam? If the appointment would please you, I will speak to Putnam this moment, and you can at once remove to his quarters."

The young soldier hesitated a moment, and then said, "Willingly, your excellency."

"Then excuse my absence, and I will inform him of your wishes."

He entered the house, and soon returned, accompanied by a gentleman in the uniform of an officer of high rank.

"My dear Burton," said the president, "I have preferred bringing Putnam to you, as the thing is better settled in a quiet way here than before a room full. I have told him that you are dissatisfied with your present station in the commander−in−chief's military family, and that you would like a similar appointment in his own."

"Major Burton," said the officer, in a frank and manly way, in which good−nature predominated, "I feel honoured by your choice, and cheerfully comply with your own and the president's wish. I shall be happy to have you breakfast with the ladies and myself in the morning. I shall," he laughingly added, "have a brace of protégées, but of different metal, in one day. The daughter of a Major Ney, now with Percy on Staten Island, sent me a letter this morning, dated Elizabethtown, saying she was anxious to reach her father, and desiring my assistance and protection until she could do so. So I have sent for her, and she has, no doubt, arrived by this time. I am told she's a beauty, and a little devil in her way. So, Major Burton, I give you fair warning."

Here Major Burton took a cordial leave of the two gentlemen, who re−entered the house to rejoin the party they had left, while with rapid steps he traversed the avenue, mounted his horse, galloped to the quarters he had left, and precipitately sought his room. Securing the door, he cast himself upon his bed in a fever of excitement caused by the events of the evening. His brain whirled, and his thoughts, like the rapid changes of a kaleidoscope, took a thousand shapes and retained none. At length he became calmer, and was enabled to reflect deliberately on the incidents of the night. His resentment at the dictatorial position assumed by his commanding officer finally gave place to his wonder at the mysterious appearance of Eugenie; and, as he recalled the scene, he could hardly convince himself that it was not all a dream.

When he last beheld her she was leaning from the prison window of the chateau, waving her fair hand till it was no longer visible. Amid the stirring scenes through which he had since passed, her image had gradually faded from his heart, or had been replaced by others, to hold there an equally ephemeral existence. Not more than seven months had expired, and yet Eugenie was forgotten, or only remembered with that kind of feeling with which some men look back upon an opportunity when they might have gained an unlawful advantage which, from some compunctious visitings, they permitted to pass unimproved and now regret. That he sincerely loved Eugenie at that time does not admit of question. It was, perhaps, to the depth and sincerity of his love conquering and excluding passion, which, in a case where the heart was less engaged, would have reigned paramount to which alone the guileless novice owed her preservation from the imminent danger to which her attachment then exposed her.

The commonly repeated adage, that man can love but once and love truly, will only be true when Cupid bears but one shaft in his quiver. The youthful heart has not been inappropriately compared to soft wax, on which impressions are easily made and as easily effaced. The daily experience of life shows us that men, and women too, can love many times, and love well and heartily. There is not a schoolboy but has loved in turn every pretty schoolmate who would deign to look kindly upon him with her laughing eyes; and there are few instances where a man marries the maiden who stole his heart in his teens. There is no passion to which the youthful heart is so susceptible, and which it so readily receives, and none so evanescent when the object is removed, as love. This is not so true of the female as of the male sex. Love in the heart of woman may be likened to that mysterious principle in the vine, causing it to stretch forth and curve its tendrils, and which gives it a tendency to cling around the neighbouring trunks and limbs for support, at the same time relieving them by its graceful beauty. 'Tis thus woman, guided by love, clings to man. He, like the unbending oak, towers proudly in his own strength, and needs not this principle of support.

For a few days the lover had cherished the image of Eugenie with religious devotion. But gradually it faded away, or was obliterated by a fresh impression. It was not so, however, with the lovely novice. Love, once admitted into her heart, she gave herself up to that delightful abandonment of the senses it produces. Her thoughts became intoxicated with delight, while her soul seemed to be suddenly endowed with new being; and she experienced the

most ecstatic enjoyment in the contemplation of one, the knowledge of whom had unfolded to her a new element of happiness. Day after day she feasted on the luxurious banquet love had spread before her senses, till her passion, resembling fire in its purity and strength, partook also of its intensity, gradually began to consume the rose in her cheek and dim the liquid brilliancy of her eye.

At length Governor Carleton, who continued to extend a parental regard towards her, in order to restore her health and spirits, permitted her to visit Saratoga, even at that early period celebrated for its springs, in company with a Canadian family, which had obtained the necessary passports, and were going to try the effect of the waters. Eugenie embraced this proposal, for it would bring her nearer her lover, from whom she had not even heard since his escape; so ungrateful are ardent lovers when they once forget the object of their passion.

After a few weeks spent at the springs, the Canadian party proceeded to New−York previous to their embarcation for Charleston, where they intended to spend the winter. They had arrived in a Hudson river packet on the morning of the day we have again introduced Eugenie to the reader. The impatient maiden, on making inquiries at the rooms her friends had taken in Broadway, and learning that her recreant lover was in the city and had been for some weeks an aiddecamp to the commander−in−chief, waited impatiently until nightfall, and then, with more of romantic passion and womanly devotion than, perhaps, maidens countenance at the present day, sallied forth in disguise to seek him. Although a stranger in the town, this was no very difficult enterprise, as New−York at that period was not so large as Providence in Rhode Island at the present day; and the headquarters of the commander−in−chief were too conspicuous not to be readily found, even in a place of much greater extend and by a less anxious seeker.

CHAPTER III. THE VICTIM.

Major Burton revolved in his mind the events of the evening, and his resentment against his commanding officer gradually gave place to reflections upon the sudden appearance of Eugenie. His vanity whispered that she had sought him from the intensity of her love; and, flattered by this testimonial of her continued attachment, his feelings towards her once more rushed back into their former channel; but, like a stream that, for a time, has been obstructed, and then suddenly breaks away, they carried along with them a mass of impurity which they had in the mean while accumulated. We have observed that his later reminiscences of Eugenie were tinged with a regret that he should have permitted a prize so lovely to escape his possession; and now, although her image was revived in its original strength, he contemplated it, not with the chastened and sacred feelings which alone the dignity of her vestal purity challenged, but with the impassioned and voluptuous imagination of the sensualist.

The person of Major Burton at this time was manly and handsome. Some months had elapsed since his campaign in Canada, and the boyish and almost feminine beauty which then characterized his features had become changed by exposure in the camp, and by the dignified and manly duties of the soldier always in the field. His form was symmetrical and elegant, his attitude erect, and his bearing strikingly military. His slight stature was atoned for by a lofty carriage and an air of courtly ease, which marked the polished gentleman and haughty soldier. His face and features were now more severely cast, and his complexion had become browned by exposure till it had assumed the dark olive of Italy.

The most remarkable feature he possessed was his black eye. It was of the most piercing brilliancy, the burning glance of which few men could steadily encounter. In the presence of beautiful females his address was winning, his deportment graceful, his air self−possessed, and, in conversation, his voice and manner inconceivably fascinating. With a proud contempt for woman, his transcendent genius, his towering talents, his powers of mind and conversation, were cultivated and brought into play only to make himself pleasing to them. But it was the lion crouching to the earth that he may concentrate all his strength for a final and fatal spring upon his prey. Few women whom he singled out for his victims listened to the fascinating eloquence of his lips, and met, tremblingly but pleased, the gaze of eyes which, with the softness of the gazelle's, possessed the fearful power of the

basilisk's, without falling, like the charmed bird, into the folds of the destroyer.

When, therefore, under the influence of a new and grosser passion, Burton had resolved to desecrate the altar that had before known his devotion, and began to contemplate with pleasure the fall of a temple, the beauty of which had formerly fixed his admiration, his fertile brain immediately conceived a plan for accomplishing his object.

Ignorant of the female heart, though he had made it his study, but, unhappily, deriving his knowledge of it from false and corrupt sources, he believed that the shower of gold would yet find a Danae; that a Leda would still protect the fugitive swan; and that Amphitryon in disguise would still find his cousin Alcmena in many a hall and bower. The possibility of defeat he did not anticipate; he imagined indeed, that Eugenie had only to be wooed to be won. Her lively spirits he interpreted wantonness; her warm and devoted love, passion.

Rising from the couch on which, half an hour before, he had flung himself, booted and spurred as he entered from his ride, he crossed the chamber, and, opening a door that led into an inner bedroom, called to some one within. Then enveloping himself in his cloak and foraging−cap, hanging near, he waited as if expecting some one to come from the adjoining room. After the delay of a few seconds, a youth in a half−military, half−menial livery, which might indicate him to be either a private or a footman, or both, made his appearance. On seeing his master in his cap and cloak, he, without speaking, and as if acquainted with his habits, went back, and shortly returned equally disguised and in readiness to attend him.

Placing a finger on his lips and beckoning him to follow, Burton led the way silently and cautiously to the hall, removing his cloak and showing his face as he passed by the sentinels. Entering Queen, now Pearl−street, he traversed it at a rapid and steady pace, his attendant walking just so far behind that he could converse with him in his ordinary tones, or give him his orders without turning his head. The night was still and clear, the air was mild, and the countless host of stars, with a single planet hanging like a lamp in their midst, kept their silent watch over the earth. It was within an hour of midnight, and, save guards at the corners of the squares, whose stern challenges and brief replies broke strangely on the stillness of the night, and the two whose echoing footsteps we are following in their devious way, there was no living being abroad, and it demanded a strong effort of the imagination for these to realize that an army reposed around them. On gaining the Broadway, now one of the most magnificent avenues in the world, but then, except for a half or three quarters of a mile up from the Battery, a spacious road bordered with fields, or adorned with pleasant country−seats or humbler farmhouses, they turned to the north. In this direction they walked rapidly onward, now passing under lofty elms which shaded a substantial building set back from the road, now traversing a gravelled sidewalk nearly overgrown with grass, now crossing a pool of water on a bridge of planks, and now stooping to avoid the branches of fruittrees that overhung the fences, and at noonday shaded the footpath beneath. They at length came to the head of a narrow lane, which turned to the left towards the Hudson, bordered by hedges, clumps of fruit and forest trees; crossing the road, they entered it, and, after a walk of some minutes, stopped beneath a huge elm that flung abroad its branches across the lane, and shaded a neat white cottage, half hidden in shrubbery, fronting the river, which glided past within a short distance, the ripple of its waters mingling with the sighing of the wind through the branches of the tree.

Here Burton spoke for the first time, save to reply to the challenges of sentinels, since he left his room. "I have brought you with me, Zacharie, so that you may know the place should I wish to send you here."

"Ay, more love messages, I'll warrant me. I'm puzzled to tell if thou art better soldier or better lover. By the cross, between the two I shall be well taught," replied Zacharie, who was just as saucy, just as short, fat, and freckled, and, altogether, as unchanged as if but seven hours, and not seven months, had passed over his shaggy head since we took leave of him in Quebec. His relative condition was, however, altered; and, from a roving, independent lad, who had no particular service so that he was on the side of mischief, he was transformed into a faithful and confidential attendant of his former patron, serving him as his valet in peace, a sort of orderly−sergeant in war, and, finally, as a most efficient Mercury in love.

"Remain here," continued his master; "keep your eye on those two frigates below; and if anything moves, either on the land or water, inform me."

"That will I," replied the young Mercury, throwing back the visor of his *petasus*, and drawing his *herpe*, while his other hand rested on the butt of a pistol concealed in his breast; "and if I see a Johnny redcoat skulking along the beach, I'll pink him with my dudgeon, and swear roundly after that I took him for a lobster."

Burton opened a wicket and entered a narrow walk strewn with fine gravel, and neatly bordered by flower−beds, which approached the cottage by circuitous and artificial windings. He traversed it with a firm yet noiseless step, and advanced through its imbowered labyrinths close to the foot of the portico. The dwelling consisted of two circular wings, and a light portico projecting from the main body, supported by four slender columns. A short flight of steps descended from it into the parterre or garden. There was an air of rural elegance and seclusion that was gratifying both to the eye and the imagination. Casting a brief and familiar glance around him, for the clear lustre of the stars made every object visible to his eyes, now accustomed to the darkness, he ascended the steps, and gave a peculiar knock, which he thrice repeated. After a few moments delay the door was softly opened, and, with a slight exclamation of pleasure, the white arms of a female encircled him.

"How could you stay away so long, my dear Burton?" said a sweet voice as the door closed. "Ten thousand fears have alarmed me for your safety in these hourly dangers. My head has nightly sought a sleepless pillow. Alas! how is it that you are the constant subject of my hopes and fears? But, now that you have come again," she added, embracing him affectionately, while he coldly and indifferently returned it, "I am relieved and very happy; and if you will only fix your eyes tenderly on your dear Caroline, and say you still love her, my troubled spirit will be soothed, for nothing but your loved presence and the sound of your voice can tranquillize me."

As she spoke they entered the room from the windows of which the light had streamed upon the foliage without. It was a small parlour, furnished simply but richly, with the additional and, at that period, unusual luxury of an ottoman covered with crimson velvet. The curtains were of crimson damask, relieved by a veil of muslin, with a deep embroidered border half drawn over them. A marble table stood near one of the windows, which was thrown up, though guarded by Venetian blinds, and a pleasant air cooled the room, for the night was warm, and, but for the light wind which came off the water, would have been close and sultry. A single shadelamp burned on this table, and beneath it lay open, as if just deserted, a small volume, which Burton, carelessly casting his eyes upon the title as he passed the table to seat himself by the window, observed was a French translation of a new German story called "The Sorrows of Werter."

Caroline, who had continued to cling around his neck, sat by his side and looked up into his face with a sad fond gaze, parting his hair from his brow like a child who has displeased a beloved parent, and seeks, by endearments, to draw his attention and win a smile of affection.

He received these marks of tenderness with a moody brow, and an occasional motion of impatience on his features, while his eyes wandered irresolutely from her own soft glance, and he frequently bit his lip, as if disturbed by some emotion to which he wished, but could not command the resolution, to give utterance.

"My dear Burton, why this cold silence and stern brow? Have I given sorrow to one whose happiness I would die to promote? Tell me, dearest, if your love is undiminished," she added, while the tears gushed to her eyes, "and Caroline shall no more weary you with her presence."

"Caroline," he said, abruptly, "you are a fond and foolish girl. You well know," he added, in a softened manner, tenderly taking her hand, "that I love you, and would sacrifice my happiness to promote your own."

"Oh! I know it, Burton; God knows I never doubted it! Alas! if I had, I could not have lived. But forgive me, dear Edward; you have, of late, come to see me less often than you were wont; and your stay is short, and your brow is

gloomy, and you look as if you thought I loved you not. Oh! I dare not tell my own heart how much I love you."

"You are my own sweet Caroline," he said, gazing on her childlike, tearful face with a playful smile, and kissing her brow; but his eye was arrested by the unusual paleness of her face, where suffering and anxiety dwelt in fearful contrast with its delicate beauty. His colour rose, and a painful sensation seemed to shoot across his brow, for, with an indistinct exclamation, he suddenly pressed his temples with his hand and turned from her.

The appearance of this young creature was strikingly interesting. She was in a white evening robe, open before and gathered at the waist by a silken sash drawn tightly round her form, displaying a figure of sylphlike grace. Her person was very slight, and of small but exquisitely symmetrical proportions. Her brown hair was parted evenly on her forehead, and gathered beneath a muslin cap, which, bordered by a narrow ruffle, met beneath her chin. Her face, relieved by the ruff, appeared perfectly oval, and, perhaps, additionally lovely. Her features were small and delicate, and her eyes of a mild blue. But her present loveliness only exhibited the traces of her former beauty. Her eyes were unnaturally large and sunken; her face, save a hectic spot on either cheek, was transparently pale; and her beautiful lips were of a strangely brilliant red. Her diminutive hands were thin and attenuated, and the blue veins appeared through the transparent skin as if delicately traced with the pencil's nice touch. She seemed in the last stage of illness; like one on whose damask cheek grief and wrong, like the worm in the bud, had preyed until life fluttered on the threshold of death.

"My dearest Caroline," he said, again turning towards her, but without resolution to lift his eyes to this wreck of loveliness, "you did not tell me," and his voice was touchingly sweet and affecting, "that you were ill, at least that you were worse. Why did you not send to me? My duties have been so multiplied of late that I could not call and see you so frequently as my heart would have bid me. Good God!" he added, raising his eyes to her face, and struck with the change, "have three short weeks made such havoc? Tell me, my dear Carol, are you *very* ill?" he inquired, folding her slight form in his arms, while the silent tears, which freely flowed on hearing words of kindness from beloved lips that had so long forgotten to utter them, dropped from her eyes upon his cheek as he pressed her face to his own.

"Ill!" she said, smiling while reclining on his shoulder, "ill, and Burton holding me thus to his heart, and his words so very kind! Oh no, no. Speak to me always as you did but now; love me as you now love me, and I shall never know either illness or a heavy heart more! Bless you, dear Edward. I feel that you are my own again."

He gazed upon her an instant, deeply affected by her language; then kissing the tears from her cheeks, while his eyes, wearing the troubled expression of a heart ill at ease, still lingered with solicitude over her fading features, he said, tenderly,

"You must take better care of yourself, my frail flower; even this gentle wind," he added, dropping the curtain before the open window, "visits you all too roughly. If you love me, Carol, take good care of your health;" then, with a smile, tapping her forehead with his finger, he playfully added, "Perhaps, if you try and get well, I may comply with the wish which you so foolishly keep, as you say, close to your heart."

"Will you, oh, will you, dearest Burton?" she exclaimed, with a glad cry and inconceivable energy, drawing back from his arms, clasping her hands together, and looking fixedly and earnestly in his face with a countenance of intense delight, so artless, so childlike, as to be unspeakably affecting. "Oh, say that once more, and God will bless you."

As she continued to gaze upon him, her eyes grew wild and sparkled with unearthly brilliancy, her lips firmly pressed together, and then, with a piercing shriek, she fell in convulsions upon the floor.

Alarmed by the energy of her attitude and language, and encountering the wild gaze of her eyes, he was about to take her hand and reply as she would have him, when, overcome by an excess of joy, her full heart strained the

delicate casket containing it beyond its strength. He now raised her from the floor, placed her on the ottoman, and with words of kindness, promises, and entreaties, kneeled over her until the paroxysms gave way to a flood of tears, which at once relieved her bursting heart, to which hope and joy, long banished thence, had returned all too rudely.

"My sweet Caroline, calm your emotion," he said, mildly, after she had recovered some degree of composure, and leaned her head trustingly on his arm; "your delicate frame can ill bear a repetition of such excitement. You should not permit your imagination to invest with such importance a mere ceremony which can render you no happier, and will make me love you no better than I now do. You know how obstinate I am," he continued, with a smile, as if pleasant looks could take the sting from bitter words; "I believe, if I were compelled to protect, I should no longer love you. The married world would live all the happier did they not love by compulsion. I have hitherto forbidden you to speak to me on this subject, because I saw it affected your spirits, and made you unhappy. Must you, dearest Caroline," he added, sportively, "tie my poor body to you by a rope of priestly words?"

Caroline, who had looked into his face and dwelt on every word as it fell from his lips, as if her existence depended upon it, turned her eyes mildly, imploringly, and yet resignedly to seek his own, and said, faintly and solemnly,

"Edward, I cannot feel as you would have me. I have sinned, deeply sinned; nay, dearest Edward, do not frown so darkly. I alone am guilty, and shall soon be summoned to a fearful, fearful account."

"No, no, my sweet pet," he said, assuming a cheerfulness which he was far from feeling, for her few and simple words had sunk deep into his soul; "you are nervous to−night, and broken rest has filled your little head with a thousand vagaries. Let me place this cushion for you, and I will read you asleep from this German story of Werter."

At the mention of this name she started up, and cried, "Oh no! oh no! not that! I have been reading it till my blood boiled and my heart was rent with suffering. Horrible," she continued, pressing her hand over her eyes, "horrible is the punishment of the guilty who sin as we have sinned."

With a hasty exclamation of impatience, Burton threw the book down upon the table, and, withdrawing his arm from beneath her head, arose and walked the room for some time in silence, his face overcast with the gloomy shadows of his dark and uneasy meditations. The distressed Caroline hid her face and wept.

The dying request of Captain Germaine to Major Burton, when he fell before the walls of Quebec, alas! was too faithfully complied with. After delivering his message, he became a frequent visiter at the cottage, and in a few short weeks Caroline became his victim. Her mother, weighed down with grief at her husband's loss, did not survive to learn what would have wounded deeper than death; and the little cottage, adorned by the wealth and taste of Burton, became the abode of the unhappy Caroline. It would be useless to go back and narrate the growth of their passion after their first meeting; the fascinating attentions of the one, the artless and confiding devotion of the other. Alas! it would only add another to the countless histories of man's ingratitude and woman's crushed affections; of art pitted against artlessness; of guilt against innocence, and of deformity plotting to mar the fair proportions of beauty.

A crisis had now arrived when reflection was to take the place of passion. The long−deferred hopes with which, from time to time, he amused her, when she pressed him upon a subject which now, all too late, began to agitate her bosom, at length made her heart sick. Her entreaties ultimately became so importunate, although urged with mildness and submission, that they drew from him, in a moment of passion, a fearful menace, which silenced and appalled her. But the hopes and wishes to which she could not give utterance fed upon her heart; she was rapidly wasting from life, the victim of broken vows and foul wrong, betrayed by those very weaknesses which should

have proved her highest and holiest claims to protection.

"Caroline," he at length said, stopping and resuming his place by her side, with gentle violence removing her hands from her face, and speaking in a conciliating tone, "I did not think you had this foolish whim so much at heart. 'Tis but a word and a grace, after all; and, if it will make you happier, and bring back the bloom to your cheek, and the merry laugh to your lips, as in times gone by, why, then, I will grant your desire. Now hush! still that little heart, which flutters beneath your robe as if it would burst its prison! Be calm, and let not so light a cause move you. You shall certainly be my wedded wife if there can be found priest to say `Amen' to it! So now be happy, my trembling bird."

When he began to speak she looked eagerly up into his face, seized his hand, and gasped for breath; when he ceased, a smile dwelt upon her mouth, and she said softly, closing her eyes and folding her hands peacefully over her breast, "I am so happy, so very happy, Edward!"

He gazed upon the lovely creature as she reclined like breathing marble before him, and his features convulsively worked, as if agitated by some intense emotion, while pity and remorse dwelt by turns upon them.

"You will not deceive me, Edward!" she said, lifting her eyes and gazing into his own, in the manner of one expressing confidence rather than seeking assurance, while a peaceful smile played about her lips.

"Deceive you, Caroline? Have I ever deceived you?" The rich colour mantled her cheek and brow, the smile faded mournfully away, and, closing her eyes, she made no reply.

"My dear Caroline," he said, after a moment's embarrassing silence, "you are too much alone here with only your two slaves; and, now that your health is so delicate, you will need cheerful society. I have thought of a companion who will please you. She is a young Canadian who escaped from a convent somewhere in the neighbourhood of Quebec, and is now at General Washington's. I will invite her to remain with you until you are better."

"Edward?" she said, impressively, looking into his face with a steady and inquiring gaze, which seemed to read his inmost thoughts.

"Caroline," he solemnly answered, interpreting her looks, "so help me Heaven, no!" appealing, as he spoke, both with eyes and hands for the truth of his words.

"Then send her to me, for I am indeed lonely when you are away. Why cannot we be together as when first you loved me? Then evening after evening you were ever by my side, and thought the stars numbered hours for minutes, so sweetly and swiftly they glided by. Those were happy days, alas! too, too happy! Nay, Edward, you will not leave me?"

"I must, Caroline. 'Tis past midnight, and I have duties far from hence ere the morning, which, as a soldier, I may not neglect. I will summon your servants, and leave you to repose."

"To−morrow, then!" she said, impressively, as she returned his embrace.

"To−morrow, Caroline!" he repeated, evasively; closing the door as he spoke, he left the cottage.

Caroline listened to his departing footsteps till they were no longer heard; then falling upon her knees, with a face the expression of which was humbled by sorrow and penitence, she prayed calmly yet earnestly for forgiveness and guidance. But in every petition Edward's name was breathed, and oftentimes, forgetful of herself, she pleaded only for one who was the author of her shame and sorrow, and whom she was ready to shield from the consequences of his errors by the interposition of her own person.

CHAPTER IV. THE RIDE.

When Eugenie was borne by the two female slaves from the library of General Washington, she was conveyed into the family sitting−room. Mrs. Washington, with an exclamation of surprise at so singular an intrusion, received, with mingled wonder and sympathy, her lifeless form into her arms, and, aided by her astonished maids, soon restored her to animation. On opening her eyes and beholding strangers gazing upon her, she faintly closed them again, and, with a slight shudder, whispered the name of Burton.

Struck with her youth and remarkable beauty, Mrs. Washington affectionately strove to sooth her. The tender and maternal tones of her voice at length inspired the invalid with confidence; and, raising her eyes gratefully to her face, she smiled and warmly pressed her hand in silence. Although anxious to receive an explanation of so extraordinary an incident, the lady, with instinctive delicacy, forbore questioning the servants, who, however, were equally ignorant, or to seek a solution of the mystery from the lips of the lovely stranger herself. Nevertheless, her eyes turned frequently and expectantly towards the door, as if she looked for the entrance of her husband, and, consequently, the gratification of her curiosity.

When the door closed on Major Burton, who, with a flashing eye and angry brow, had departed so abruptly, General Washington entered the sitting−room, every trace of the scene in which he had borne a part having disappeared from his majestic brow. With his face softened by benevolence and compassion, he approached the sofa on which Eugenie reclined, passive and with her nerves unstrung, on the sustaining arm of his lady, who sat beside her with maternal solicitude beaming in her matronly and beautiful countenance.

"My dear general," she said, as her husband approached, "what lovely vision is this? Do make me wise, for I have most perseveringly conquered my woman's nature, though I had not much longer claimed the victory had you not appeared as you did. Who is this gentle creature?"

Sending the servants away, he in a few words informed her of the events which had transpired. After much kind entreaty, they at length learned from the lips of Eugenie herself the whole of her ingenuous tale from the orphan state in which her infancy was exposed to her seclusion in the convent and romantic escape, with the story of her love, and, ultimately, her arrival in New−York.

The naïve and artless manner with which, while seated beside them, she told her tale, carried with it conviction of its truth to their minds and hearts.

"I have then done Major Burton injustice by my suspicions," replied the general; "I will seek an interview and atone for it. He should have told me this."

"And would you have believed him?" inquired Mrs. Washington.

"Most certainly. However faithless Burton may be with the sex you so eminently adorn, Mary, in his intercourse with men I believe him the soul of honour."

"What a singular structure of society," said Mrs. Washington, musingly; "that honour, like a medallion, should have a reversed face for our poor sex! But, my dear George, what shall be done with our sweet nun?" she added, smiling, and playfully kissing the embarrassed Eugenie; who, after concluding her tale, with her face trustingly hidden in the mantle of her kind friend, and with a throbbing heart and bewildered senses at the strange situation in which she was placed, sat silently awaiting her destiny without the power either to think or act for herself.

"Give the one to whom she is so devoted the right to protect her."

"What, Burton? Never, George!"

"And why not, my Mary? It is an affair of the heart; though Burton may not be worthy of so fair a gem, 'twill be the only way to secure her happiness; for you know your devoted sex will love, even if they love unworthily. And it may be the means of saving my young aiddecamp from wrecking his bark in the very harbour of life. There is nothing like matrimony to cool youthful blood."

"Upon my word, general, you are in a very complimentary mood to−night. My dear Eugenie, you see what these husbands think of us. The general would use you as they say they do the tame elephants in the East, and make you a trap to catch this wild Burton and sober him down. Now what do you answer, my sweet nun?"

"My dear, kind madam, I have no will of my own. I have been imprudent, and will cast myself wholly upon your goodness. But oh, bid me not forget him!" she added, with timid earnestness.

"That he loves you not, dearest Eugenie, is evident, not only from his silence, but from his habits since his return from Quebec. Try and forget him, my love; but, if you cannot, I will see that you are made happy your own way."

After a long and interesting conference, it was decided that Eugenie should be removed on the succeeding afternoon to a friend's villa about a league from the town, on the shore of Kip's Bay, a small inlet of York Island formed by the encroachment of the East River, there to remain until the Canadian party should be ready to set sail for Charleston, when, provided that, in the interim, Major Burton made no honourable overtures, it was decided she should leave the city with them, and think of him no more. All this Eugenie assented to; and, although she promised to forget Burton if he proved unworthy of her, she nevertheless felt she should remember him so long as she lived. It was further decided that her Canadian friends the same night should be informed of the intentions of their protegée, for whom they felt no kindred interest.

By daybreak the ensuing morning Burton was on horseback. Giving at the gate strict charge to Zacharie to remain, and inform him, on his return, of whatever might transpire during his absence, he rode off, and visited several of the military posts in the execution of the last orders to be delivered to him as aiddecamp of General Washington, and then galloped to the quarters of General Putnam. The residence of this officer was a large square edifice of brick, two stories in height, at the corner of Broadway and the Battery, its windows looking out upon lawns and trees, the bay with its green and fortified islands, and the shores of Long Island and New−Jersey stretching away to the south and east. The morning was cloudless, and the heat of the summer sun was lessened by a breeze from the bay. Detachments of soldiers, the sun glancing on helmet and steel, were parading, with drum and fife, and banners waving, on the green between the mansion and the water; horsemen were riding at full speed over the field, and the occasional note of a bugle swelled clearly on the air. The British fleet lay at anchor far down the Narrows, and the harbour was dotted with barges and light boats coursing in every direction. But none of these attracted the attention of the young officer as he dashed up, his horse foaming with his morning duties, to the front of the edifice which was for the present to become his quarters. Objects more brilliant and enticing drew his eye and demanded his homage. Before the door was an equestrian party, consisting of two or three ladies in hat and plumes, mounted on small, graceful ponies; a young officer, with his foot in the stirrup, in the act of striding a spirited charger, richly caparisoned with military saddle and housings; and the figure of General Putnam himself, seated on his warhorse, the whole cavalcade just ready to move up Broadway, in which direction the young ladies had already began to canter their horses.

"Good−morning, Major Burton," said the general, in a cheerful and welcome tone of voice, as our hero reined up; "you have joined us just in time. We have ladies under escort, you see, and comely lasses they are; so you'll be just in your element."

"I am honoured, general, by such an opportunity of "

"There is no honour about it; we are to have a gallop as far as Bloomingdale, where I have some army business to transact, and these ladies have volunteered to be my escort. So we will press you at once. Take charge of Miss but I had best make you acquainted with the lady. Miss Ney, I have the honour of presenting to your acquaintance and tender mercies my young friend and aiddecamp Major Burton. My daughters you already know. Now, major, be careful you are not converted to toryism on the ride. I have seen the time," he archly added, "when a pair of black eyes but, never mind; let us forward."

The young officer's eyes, as he rode up, had been instantly arrested and fixed by the graceful figure and haughty beauty of the fair equestrian; and as he was thus unceremoniously presented to her, he bent profoundly in his saddle, until his plume mingled with the mane of his courser, and then, elevating his person, he was about to address her, when the report of a piece of artillery on the green caused her fiery horse to rear and plunge fearfully. She firmly kept her saddle, but, not having sufficient strength to manage him, he would have bounded away had not Burton, who was in the act of assuming his cavalier's station at her side, compelled his horse, with the quickness of lightning, to clear the space between them. Seizing her rein, he held it securely in his grasp, while, at the same time, he threw his arm around the young lady to assist her in retaining her seat.

"Gallantly done, my good cavalier, and prettily," exclaimed General Putnam, who, though already in advance, had beheld the act as he turned round at the firing; "did I not say you were in your proper element? Well, it would be long before a pretty girl would get into danger if I were beside her. Oh, you are a lucky dog, Burton. Take care of your heart, Miss Ney; he will lay close siege to it, depend upon it. I'faith, 'tis a worthy prelude, this passage of arms at first sight! Ha! ha! ha!"

The cavalcade now moved up Broadway at a round pace, General Putnam and his eldest daughter taking the lead, followed by Major Burton and Isabel Ney, the younger maidens being escorted by the artillery officer before mentioned, while an orderly sergeant, two or three mounted privates, and a negro servant brought up the rear. They proceeded along the avenue, exchanging salutations with occasional passengers on the sidewalk, or with ladies drawn to the windows by the tramping of horses. Their ride, for the first half mile, was lined with the stately residences of the wealthy and great, each standing by itself, within its enclosure of lawn or parterre. After they had passed the angle where the Boston road turned off to the right, the dwellings became less frequent and substantial. Instead of imposing brick edifices bearing the index of wealth and fashion, they saw around them houses of an humbler description, such as linger about the skirts of large towns, the abodes of the poor and labouring classes, each dwelling, what with pigs and children of equal cleanliness, broken panes and slatternly females, appearing like a farmhouse in dishabille.

Leaving this suburban quarter, they came into the open country, and cantered forward with that exhilaration of spirits which the fresh morning air and the sight of green fields is calculated to bestow. Isabel Ney was in the highest vein of spirits. Her wit and humour, and bewildering beauty, speedily captivated her companion. As now they traversed an open common, now threaded a dense forest, and now wound along the bank of the river through dell and dingle, the susceptible Burton abandoned himself to the exquisite enjoyment of the moment, and quite forgot that Eugenie de Lisle or Caroline Germaine ever had existence. Isabel Ney alone occupied his eyes, his thoughts, his imagination.

Isabel, who had arrived in a continental barge from "the Kills" the evening previous, ostensibly from Elizabethtown, but, as the reader is aware, really from Staten Island, had heard General Putnam, at the breakfast table, speak of a gallant young officer who was that day to be attached to his staff and received into his family, and the lively description given of him had excited her curiosity. When the handsome horseman was presented to her as the expected stranger, she was immediately struck with his fascinating address and fine Castilian style of face, lighted up with an eye, the brilliancy of which she thought had never been surpassed; and from the moment he seized and restrained her terrified horse, and so gracefully, yet naturally encircled her waist, although she blushingly expressed gratitude for his services, she felt a deeper sentiment than could spring from this emotion. With this prepossession in his favour and his own meteor−like passions, an acquaintance approaching a

confidential nature was soon established between them.

They had insensibly fallen behind the party as they advanced into the country, at one time drawn aside by an eminence which promised a prospect of the distant city to the south and of the surrounding country, or at another galloping away to explore a romantic glen, or, perhaps, linger for a few moments on some green, rock−girted peninsula, to gaze upon the Hudson and the ships−of−war lying far below; so that, when within little more than a mile of the rural village of Bloomingdale, the cavalcade had ridden quite out of sight.

They now came to a retired peninsula, nearly encircled by inlets of the river, and which left only a narrow grassy path to connect it with the mainland. Scarcely an acre in area, it formed a romantic amphitheatre of smooth sward; two noble oaks stood in the centre, and it was bordered by a fringe of willows and water−oaks. It was a spot in which Scottish superstition would have believed fairies to hold their nightly gatherings. Secluded from the road, it had only an opening to the north by a natural vista through the foliage. As this lovely spot burst upon their sight, they simultaneously reined up their horses, then spurred to the tempting, hedge−bordered isthmus, which invited them to penetrate its recesses. They gazed around for a few moments in silence, and interchanged glances betraying that mutual pleasure experienced by cultivated minds when surveying nature in her lovelier aspects.

At length the eyes of Isabel rested on the summit of a distant cliff on the opposite side of the river, crowned with a fortress. After gazing upon it steadily for a moment, she turned carelessly to her companion, and said, pointing with her ridingwhip,

"Canst tell me, Major Burton, as every tree and rock, every hill and hollow on this lovely island seem known to you, what fortress frowns on yonder eminence?"

"Fort Lee, Miss Ney. One of the lions that guard the pass to the Highlands."

"Ah! I have heard of it. A stronghold of you rebels, hey?" she said, archly. "But where, pray, is the other lion?"

"That fortification thrown up on this side the river, some four miles above us, and directly opposite Fort Lee."

"I see it now, crowning a wooded eminence. You call it Fort Washington, I believe, after your leader. They are, I doubt not, two noble warders, well armed and fitted for their duty. I judge, Major Burton," she playfully observed, and bowing gracefully to her cavalier, "that, from the specimen I have already seen of rebel gentlemen, yonder rock−guarded fortress has officers better suited to a lady's taste than the dull automatons of Percy's staff. What gallant rebel chief may command there?"

"A brave and excellent soldier, Colonel Morgan; but one who cares less for beauty's eyes than ball and steel; a bold soldier, but, perchance, rather a rude lover."

"Say you so? Then will I have nothing to say to him," she said, with lively determination. "Canst not give me a more tempting portrait of your brotherofficers? No doubt, among so large a garrison, there are some gallants worthy a lady's glance. How many soldiers," she added, carelessly, and as if without aim, "may its garrison number?"

"About two thousand. But dost think of laying siege to it, Miss Ney, that you number the forces so closely?" he said, smiling.

"Heighhe! I cannot say," she replied, with the air of a vain beauty; "I have taken such a fancy to rebels this morning," added she, glancing towards him with eyes in which he thought irony and passion were mingled, "that I think I shall lay siege to some of their hearts. But I dare say these stubborn rebel hearts it would be harder to make capitulate than even their frowning fortress."

"Not so, I think, Miss Ney," he said, tenderly; and then, with something of the soldier's enthusiasm, replied, "the lines and outworks of yonder fort are drawn quite across the island; the ground, you see, is naturally strong; the fortifications admirable; and although, perhaps, not sufficient to resist heavy artillery (however its officers' hearts may be defended)," he added, meeting the brilliant artillery of eyes that played with effect into his own heart as he spoke, "it is, nevertheless, in condition to resist any attempt to carry it by storm. The garrison consists of the best American troops in the army, and in the commanding officer the greatest confidence is placed."

"Truly," rejoined the young lady, in a lively tone, after having listened to his words thoughtfully and with a marked attention, that would not have escaped the observation of Burton had not his senses been banqueting in the glance of her eye and blinded by her captivating beauty; "if you rebels have hearts as strongly fortified as your forts, I may as well save my credit, and neither lay them siege nor assay them by storm. I'll warrant me Fort Lee hath both her walls and hearts less defended."

"There are there gallant officers whose hearts would soon yield to force so irresistible as that Miss Ney would bring against them."

He spoke with a devotion and fervour in his tone that did not escape her; and although, as a woman, she was flattered by the silent, yet eloquent homage of his eyes and manner, she nevertheless resolved, with that strength of mind which could control every emotion, and even bridle a passion so subtle as love, and make it the slave of her will, to profit by her power, and, while she controlled him as her admirer, if not her lover, also to make use of him as the instrument of her dangerous mission. Time will unfold the success of her policy. Edward Burton, she was yet to learn, was no ordinary lover.

"You have, no doubt, been at Fort Lee, which appears as if nature had intended it for the guard to the Highlands? Is it as impregnable as it looks from here?" she quietly asked, appearing at the same time as if her whole attention was engaged in soothing her spirited pony by patting him on the mane.

"I have frequently visited it. It is equally strong with Fort Washington; but, the two fortresses being dependant on each other, its evacuation would, no doubt, follow the capitulation of the former. Neither of them alone could command the river."

"Nor both together, I should think," said the maiden, bending her brows, and directing a steady and observing glance towards them. "They are too high and far from the river to guard its pass. I could as easily," she added, with animation, her natural spirit breaking out, "sail between them in a good and well−appointed frigate, as I can canter between the hedges that border the avenue we just came through, and with as little danger."

The young soldier watched her flashing eye and almost stern aspect as, with the mien of a youthful Minerva, she spoke on warlike themes so foreign to her youth and sex. With a kindling eye he gazed upon her, bewildered between wonder at the strange and fierce energy of her spirit, admiration of her lofty beauty, and the devotion of an ardent lover.

"Are all of England's maidens so skilled in the science of war, and wear they all such bold hearts as are oftener hidden beneath steel corslet than a silken spencer?" he said, with playful irony.

"England is a warlike land," she replied, heedless of his tone of raillery; "her sons are brave and soldierly, and it becomes not her daughters to be indifferent to themes which fill a father's, a brother's, or a lover's bosom. The casque and corslet can become woman's brow as well as man's, if history tell us truly."

"Fair lady," said the cavalier, bending low, "wilt take horse and armour, and join our banners in the field? Myself and a score of lances, at least, will serve under your banner."

"Fit knights, I would swear!" she answered, piqued at his raillery, and curling her beautiful lip with derision, "and but too well honoured by being led to the charge by a woman."

"Your sex, fair lady," he continued, in the same vein, "has led knights and caused battles without number, from the days of the Egyptian sorceress until now. Verily, 'twere no such strange thing for those who pit armies in the field to take the lead in the mischief they have set on foot."

"Bravely spoken and courteously, most gallant rebel," she replied, laughing. "Is such the incense you colonial gentlemen are wont to offer to our sex? But hark you, rebellious sir; all that you have told me about yonder frowning lines will not tempt me to lay siege to either heart or wall connected with them. Canst not, fair and valorous sir, point me out a worthy mark for my artillery? I am strangely belligerant this morning, with breathing this rebel air and keeping rebel company, and feel as if I could take off a score of rebel heads without mercy."

As she spoke her features were animated with the conscious power of beauty; and while she thus discoursed, with a freedom that appeared to despise the little arts of her sex, whom, in love, Nature has taught by art to conceal art, her voice and manner exerted an irresistible charm upon Burton. Suddenly yielding to her fascinating influence, he leaped from his horse, and dropped gracefully on one knee before her.

"Lady," he said, laying his hand on his heart, and speaking in a low and earnest tone, that seemed as if either subdued by the power of love or artfully modulated to suit his purpose, and assuming the respectful air of a lover who trembles between hope and fear, "behold at your feet both the heart and head of a rebel knight, who yields himself a slave to your beauty, rescue or no rescue!" and low he bent his head as if awaiting his sentence.

"Rise, Sir Knight," she said, gayly, while the heightened colour of her cheek and the trembling emotion of her lip, as she spoke, betrayed a depth of feeling which she in vain sought to disguise beneath the lightness of her words and manner; "I herewith figuratively strike off thy head," playfully laying her riding−switch upon his shoulders, "or dub thee my dutiful knight, as it may best please thee. Thy heart I will not despoil thee of."

"Lady," he continued, still kneeling, with his eyes pleadingly uplifted to hers, and full of the devotion of love, "thou hast cruelly spared my life if thou wilt not grant me that which alone can make life endurable."

"Name, then, thy wish, sir," she replied, after some hesitation, turning away her eyes from his eloquent glance, in which all his heart beamed, even under the mask of mockery, while maidenly expectation flitted across her face in deepening blushes for at such a moment the woman could not be altogether subdued.

"In gratitude for the life thou hast bestowed, fair lady, deign to accept the heart which was also offered with it."

"Nay, Sir Knight, if thou canst not live without thy head, how canst thou live without thy heart? Solve me that mystery," she rejoined, with something of her natural humour and spirit.

"With all humility," he replied, bowing to the stirrup, till his lips nearly touched the slipper that half concealed her symmetrical foot, "I trust to your generous nature to supply its place."

"Of a truth, fair sir, 'tis a modest trust. You rebels must think English maidens carry a brace of hearts beneath their spencers, to supply some wandering cavalier's lacking."

"Not so, lady," pursued the kneeling lover; "but we are taught to believe England's maidens are too generous to take a poor cavalier's heart away and leave him none in return."

"Whose heart, then, will suit thee, Sir Suppliant? I trust thou couldst not think I'd give thee a sound loyal one in exchange for a rebel's. Admit treason into my bosom, and adorn thee with a heart as loyal as ever throbbed in

Briton's breast! In sooth, thou art as modest in thy individual 'quests as thy greedy Congress in her wholesale demands. Thou art a true rebel, as thy modesty would testify."

She spoke these words in a tone of affected seriousness, but so inimitably assumed that the lover gazed upon her for an instant in doubt and hesitation before he was convinced, by an almost imperceptible smile playing in her eye and round her mouth, that she felt not as she spoke. All at once changing his manner and attitude, in which there was more of sincerity than affectation, he seized her hand, and, pressing it warmly to his lips ere she could withdraw it, said,

"I will no longer disguise my feelings, nor debase their sacred nature by this gay badinage. Nay, curl not that queenly lip, and look not upon me with a coldness which my heart tells me you do not feel."

"Which your vanity tells you, rather, you should say, bold wooer," she replied, smiling; "but, if you will be so pressing, and it suits your humour to fall or affect to fall in love so soon, why, then, all that a poor maiden like me can do," she continued, with a submissive air, which, however, her arch looks contradicted, "is meekly to submit. So there is my hand, and, if you will, my heart in it, in token of submission to my fate; but not rescue or no rescue, mark you, sir, for, if the humour take me, I fly a free bird again."

"Not if these arms can hold you, lady," he exclaimed, with passionate ardour.

"What, sir! you take a free license with your speech! But mount, and let us follow my guardian, who would be apt to cage me if he knew how wildly we flew when beyond his call. Hark you, sir," she said, shaking her riding−whip at him as they cantered over the grassy causeway that divided the peninsula from the road, "be discreet, and let not your eyes betray what has passed;" then adding seriously, "'twill bring suspicion on you as an American officer if 'tis whispered that you are in too close confidence with the daughter of Major Ney. We will be friends as inmates of the same family, but, on thy knightly spurs, beware! no more!"

As they entered the village of Bloomingdale they met their party on its return to town.

"'Tis well we have no Gretna Green on the island," said General Putnam, laughing, and addressing them as they rode up, "or I should now accost you as Brother Benedict, Major Burton. Ha! Well, I have not so widely shot my random shaft," he continued, in a lively strain, as he observed the colour mount to the brows of the young officer, and marked the studiously averted head of the young lady. "Well, there is nothing like the country, with its snug hiding−places among the green trees, for lovers. Ha! ha! ha! What say you, major?"

"I will not presume to dissent from your opinion, general, my experience in this matter having been more limited than your own."

"Upon my soul, a modest reply! You are disposed to make me a perfect pastoral! I am not worthy to be the string to tie your bouquet in such matters; and I will wager my best charger, that, if Hymen has not been busy, Dan Cupid has not been idle. But 'tis as natural for folks to love as to hate at first sight, I suppose. But something equally dangerous has been at work. You are by this time either a brace of tories or a brace of whigs. Ho! Miss Ney, you need not look so archly with that demure countenance. You have not been idle. I believe you have come here expressly to convert my young officers to rank toryism. If so, and it is proved on you, I shall hold you in close bondage. Dost hear that, miss?"

"Truly do I," replied the maiden; "and wonder not, if you tremble at a poor maiden, that your rebel officers are so ready to yield to British arms."

"If all British arms were like thine," replied the general, gallantly, but dryly, putting a construction on her words which she could not foresee that they were susceptible of receiving, "there would not be officer or soldier in camp

by sunset."

Isabel blushed, half angrily, and, without replying, whipped her horse into a canter, while Burton, having encountered a glance of sly intelligence from the humorous general, galloped on and was soon at her side. The party regained the city without accident or adventure. Major Burton assisted Isabel to alight before the mansion of General Putnam. As she touched the ground he pressed her hand. The slight pressure was returned with a smile strongly partaking of the newly−awakened feelings in her heart, and she glided past him into the house. He was about to follow, when a footman placed in his hand a note that had been left for him during his absence. Hastily breaking the seal, he glanced at its contents with a smile, then, remounting his horse, galloped away in the direction of the headquarters in Queen−street.

CHAPTER V. THE BOUQUET.

Zacharie, with his natural sagacity, had faithfully followed the parting instructions of his master when he rode away in the morning. Through the servants and other means with which his instinctive tact provided him, he had ascertained that Eugenie (whom he had not yet seen, and only knew as a young lady who had called to see his master, and been intercepted by General Washington, who had placed her, for the time, under a sort of arrest) was to be removed that afternoon to the country, but to what place he could not obtain any accurate information. He hastened, however, to the quarters of General Putnam to communicate the knowledge he had gained, and, on learning Major Burton's absence, obtained a piece of paper from a neighbouring guardhouse, and drew upon it with some skill for the art of writing formed not a part of Zacharie's education the figure of a monk, with a misshapen Z beneath it, and above it that of a horse, or what was, no doubt, intended for it, with his legs extended at full speed. Having executed this hieroglyphic note, he folded, sealed, and, without directing, left it with a servant to be given to Major Burton on his return.

Comprehending the meaning of the note rather from his own wishes than by the aid of any free−masonry existing between him and its perpetrator, Burton put spurs to his horse, and rode at a rate which even the far−stretched limbs of Zacharie's pencilled steed had no pretensions towards illustrating.

He had nearly gained the square in which the headquarters were situated, and was riding past the outlet of a steep and narrow alley leading from the water to Queen−street, when, hearing a shrill and peculiar whistle, he looked round and beheld Zacharie a few paces down the alley beckoning to him. He turned his horse and rode towards him. The close or alley was retired, and seldom used as a thoroughfare, Beekman−street, in its immediate vicinity, being the chief avenue communicating with the East River in that part of the town.

"Well, Zacharie," said Burton, laughing, "I received your mysterious note, and advise you henceforth to adopt as your coat of arms a monk salient, with a horse rampant, surmounted with the letter Z for your crest. I will take a hint from your style of notes; 'twill serve me both in war and love."

"'Twill be the more like its writer, then; but I have news for you. Your game will soon be beyond bowshot."

"How mean you?"

"She is still in the general's family, but will have left this afternoon for the country by water; but which way, as blue water is as plenty as blue sky about here, it must take thy wisdom to tell."

"Take water, and this afternoon," said Burton, surprised; he then added, thoughtfully, "this must be prevented. I am not to be browbeaten, and then robbed of my ladylove by a man because he happens to be my superior officer. By Heaven, I will beard the lion in his den, and at his hand demand her."

"Look ye, sir," said Zacharie, grasping his rein, and by a movement of his hand, rather of sleight than of strength, almost throwing his horse back upon his haunches, as the rider buried his spurs in his sides and prepared to obey the hasty impulse of his passions; "I think I know a better plan than that. 'Tis this!" here he dropped his voice to a low key for a few sentences; "I will keep close and watch their departure, and, after marking the course they take, hasten and let thee know."

"How is this to aid me?"

"Give me orders to have a boat well manned in readiness at Whitehall, so we can pursue them if they cross to the islands. If they go up the river, we can take horse and follow. So we have them, let them take land or water."

"A scheme worthy the wit that begat it," said Burton, with a smile, and shaking his head disapprovingly. "If Washington is sending her from my presence, he will probably place her under a strong escort, and thus defeat my purpose and render your plan abortive. Canst not make your wit, ready enough for your own mischief, now serve me better than this?"

"You can at any time call out a detachment of soldiers for scouting. Demand of General Putnam ten men to accompany you on an excursion for any purpose you choose to invent, and have them ready by four o'clock to ride or row, and leave the rest to me."

"I thought you had some devil lurking in your eye, sir. Would you have me to attack an escort of my own army?"

"Ay! Wouldst thou not attack thy own army's general shouldst thou encounter him bearing off thy ladylove? By the holy pope, if it comes to fighting, then say 'twas mutiny, treason, a mistake, anything. Or leave it to me; I will make out a lie that shall outface truth."

The officer mused a moment, and then said quickly, as he turned away,

"'Tis the only alternative. I shall be ready at my quarters to hear news from you at four. But take care you breathe not my name in your transactions, and see, too, that you do everything both secretly and surely."

Here Burton put spurs to his horse and rode back to his quarters, the image of Eugenie giving way at every stroke of his horse's feet on the pavement, and that of Isabel gradually taking its place, until, as he dismounted before the mansion of General Putman, and hastened to seek her presence, it had entire possession both of his heart and head.

A liveried and powdered footman informed him that the ladies were in the cupola, where General Putnam was watching the manoeuvres of the British fleet, which appeared to be getting under weigh. He ascended to this place, and was received with a hearty welcome by the general, and a pleased yet embarrassed manner by Miss Ney, who, with the general, were the only occupants of the cupola.

"The enemy are manoeuvring mysteriously be low there, major," said General Putnam, surveying through a telescope the British fleet. "Howe has some scheme in his head which he thinks will overreach the Yankees. Look, major, what do you think of yonder movements? Can those frigates be ranging up along the shore for the purpose of covering the landing of their troops on Long Island?"

"They are evidently contemplating a landing," said the young officer, after a moment's observation.

"Pray Heaven it may be so! If they don't soon give us a little fighting, they will find no enemy to keep their blood in circulation."

"How so, general?" inquired Isabel; "do you think of running away?"

"Not exactly, if we can help it. The soldiers' time of enlistment is up in December, when the army will dissolve like icicles in a sunny forenoon. Confound this short enlistment! We no sooner get men used to the sound of cannon and the burning of gunpowder, and begin to feel confidence in their officers, and they in them, than, presto! they all vanish like the thin air, leaving, as William Shakspeare says, `not a wreck behind.'"

"How large an army is there now in the city, general?" she inquired, in the tone in which she would have asked the name of a flower.

"Some six thousand men, besides our regiments in Brooklyn. What do you see, Major Burton? You look as if you spied something of moment."

"A single frigate standing boldly towards the city."

"'Tis the Roebuck. Keep this post, and report from time to time your observations. I will ride to headquarters, and make known this movement."

The time passed in the cupola after the departure of General Putnam was faithfully and pretty equally devoted by Burton to the operations of war and love. The progress he made in the latter, however, was the most gratifying; and when, at the termination of an hour, General Putnam rejoined them, he had been told, not only by the eyes, but also by the lips of the haughty Isabel, that she loved him. It was, therefore, with the heightened glow of victory in love, as well as the flush of military enthusiasm, that he received the announcement that the commander−in−chief had appointed General Putnam to the command at Brooklyn, whither he was immediately to proceed, with six additional regiments.

"Now, Burton," he said, with noble ardour, "we will try what mettle our troops are of. Howe is actually disembarking his men under cover of his guns, for a spy came in and confirmed our suspicions while I was with Washington. He is to march his forces against Brooklyn, which, if taken, will give him command of New−York; and then, Miss Ney," he added, archly, "we shall most certainly have to run away."

"I hope you will not carry me with you, general?"

"Assuredly. I shall hold you as my prisoner."

"But what if I refuse to become your prisoner? You will not lock me up, I hope."

"I fear I must," he replied, with assumed gravity. "What think you? The commander−in−chief, on being informed of the character of my fair guest, frowned with some displeasure; and, at first, said you must be sent with a flag of truce to Staten or Long Island to your father. But, them, I having told him what a tinder−box you were, he said very seriously that no doubt you might be well calculated for a spy, and perhaps was one, and that I must keep a sharp eye upon you, and, moreover, not allow you to come within speaking distance of my gallant aiddecamp, whom he advises me to keep in close duty at Brooklyn, no doubt to prevent his being brought over to toryism by a pair of black eyes and ruby lips."

"Your general is a rare cavalier, and has my thanks for his flattering opinion of me," she said, scornfully curling her lips, and assuming an appearance of indignation. "Said he aught further in this courtly vein?"

"Only that you possibly might be detained as hostage for your father's good behaviour."

"Now will I assert my woman's spirit," she said, rising and speaking with great energy, "and meet compulsion with obstinacy. I will be neither prisoner nor hostage. With faith in the honour of a gentleman and an officer, I placed myself beneath this roof as his guest. And if the word of a gentleman and a soldier is to be pledged thus lightly, then are ye a base rebel crew, unfit to stand in that august Senate to which ye aspire, and for which ye are now in arms. I appeal to the faint spark of honour yet in American bosoms, and there is my glove," she added, with ineffable scorn, flinging her glove at the feet of the gentlemen, "in testimony of my appeal, though, God knows, there is not gentle blood enough in the land to lift it!"

Burton sprang to take it up, when General Putnam, at whose feet it fell, gracefully raised it, pressed it to his lips, and fixed it like a bouquet to the buttonhole of his vest; then taking her hand, he said, with mingled sympathy and good−nature,

"My dear Miss Ney, you judge too harshly of American soldiers. So long as you are beneath my roof, which shall be as long as it is your pleasure to remain, you are my honoured guest. When the commander−in−chief proposed to retain you as a hostage," he added, smiling, "my sword flew half out of its sheath, and I swore a round oath that it should not be."

The emotion of the maiden, although it was at first, perhaps, partly assumed, but, from the quickness and violence of her feelings, had become real, was soothed by the sincere and tender address of the general; and with glistening eyes she returned the pressure of his hand; but happening at the same moment to meet the riveted gaze of her admirer, she gave way to an uncontrollable burst of merriment.

He had stood, while she was speaking, lost in wonder and surprise, and, with something of the philosopher and the lover in his countenance, deeply studying the character of the strange creature whose moral features, like the changes of the northern lights, were constantly presenting new and more startling appearances. Bewildered in the maze of speculation which these contrarieties of disposition presented to his study, he forgot for the moment his usual presence of mind; and, when she turned towards him, his eyes were fixed upon her with the look of one in whose hands a dove has suddenly assumed the ferocity of a bird of prey, and which he knows not whether to replace in his bosom or shrink away from with fear.

The merry laughter of the maiden instantly restored good feeling, and seemed at once to place them all three, lately in such a belligerant attitude, on a more confidential footing than before. The attention of the general now was once more drawn to the bay.

"See! that vessel of war, which I think is the Roebuck, has hove to nearly abreast of Gowan's Cove, but lies beyond gunshot of Red Hook, or I should think she was about to open a cannonade upon it. How many thousand men can Howe lend them, Miss Ney?"

"Who is the spy now, general?" said the lady, laughing. "I shall order you under arrest if you put any more questions of that nature to me."

"I dare say you could tell the number of stitches in a stocking better than the number of men in a regiment. Burton," he added, "we must embark six regiments to−night, and I shall need your services. I see a flag of truce approaching. Good−by."

"Eight, perhaps, will be early enough for me to join you?" asked Burton, carelessly.

"Oh, yes, if you have other business. The boats will not be ready before dark."

"Then at eight I shall assist at the embarcation; for if General Washington is to keep me at such close duty in Brooklyn, I shall need some hours to attend to my interests in New−York."

"No doubt," said the general, dryly, glancing at Isabel as they descended the steps of the cupola.

On gaining the hall, they met the officer bearing the flag of truce, who had come to negotiate for the exchange of a tory officer then prisoner with the Americans.

During the conversation in relation to this subject, Miss Ney, as if it had no interest for her, desired Burton to aid her in making a bouquet, saying that she wished to send it to her father. Approaching the windows of the drawing−room, which were filled with vases of flowers, with his assistance, though not without unaccountably and waywardly rejecting many he offered, and making her selections with much care, she soon made up a garland of peculiar form and arrangement of colours. Returning into the hall, she presented it to the British officer with much grace and a glance of meaning, which was intelligibly returned by him, inquired after her father's health, and desired him to present him with it in token of her affection.

Neither the manner, voice, nor glance were lost on the vigilant lover, and for the first time it occurred to him that the suspicions of General Washington might not be unfounded; and he was strengthened in this opinion when he hastily ran over in his mind the character of Isabel, than whom none fitter for the service could have been chosen among her sex. He was aware that she had obtained some important information, but did not know how much she had gained in the short period of her stay. Isabel, indeed, had commenced her system of spying even upon the officer commanding the boats that came to convey her from "the Kills" to the city; and by every means in her power, guided by her remarkable tact and presence of mind, and aided by numerous unguarded opportunities, she had in one night and subsequent forenoon obtained almost all the information which the Earl of Percy would have deemed necessary.

Familiar with the language of flowers, and observing the glances of intelligence interchanged between her and the bearer of the flag of truce, and the suspicion of her true character having consequently flashed on his mind, Burton closely observed the bouquet which the officer held in his hand, studied the arrangement of its flowers, and detected at once their artifice. Although he could not, without exciting suspicion by the closeness of his observations, interpret their story, he determined at once to render the plan abortive. He therefore carelessly approached the window, pulled a `forgetme−not, ' and, returning to Isabel, said gracefully,

"You have forgotten, Miss Ney, to send to your father a `forget−me−not;' shall I have the honour of adding it to your nosegay?"

"Oh, no, no!" she said, with quickness, thrown off her guard, and at once confirming his suspicions.

He had, however, already solicited and obtained the bouquet from the officer, who could not, without rudeness, decline resigning it to him; and, while inserting the flower, he destroyed, unperceived, their artificial and intelligible arrangement. In returning it to him again, he encountered the dark eyes of the maiden lighted up with anger and suspicion. Her equanimity, however, was soon restored by the fascinating attentions of Burton, who, after the officer left the room, entirely removed her suspicions of his knowledge of her secret; and, as usually is the case after a cloud raised by a lover darkens a lady's brow, there succeeded a more brilliant sunshine of smiles than before.

Although now amply convinced that Isabel was a spy, he resolved to conceal his suspicions from her, and remove her at once not only from the scene of the operations of the army, but, at the same time, accomplish a purpose of his own. Having, therefore, assured himself of, and strengthened his power over, her heart by those insinuating attentions, and that language of love no one knew better how to use or adapt to the weaknesses of those around whose hearts he wished to throw the charms of passion, he took leave of her; then seeking General Putnam, who was in the act of mounting his horse at the door, he at once communicated to him his suspicions, or, rather, his conviction of the dangerous character of his guest.

"Strange that Washington should always have so much more sagacity than other men," said the general, who was convinced by the statement made by his aid. "So long as God preserves him to lead our armies," he continued, as if reverting to other instances of his wisdom, "our cause will prosper. But what must be done? I have taken up her gauntlet," he added, gallantly pointing to the gage still adorning his breast, "and, with her high English blood, she will consign us all to ignominy. Our gallantry and hospitality are at stake, sir."

"Obtain an order from the commander−in−chief for her removal to New−Jersey or Kingsbridge until we see how affairs turn out at Brooklyn. I will command the escort and return before you embark. She will be unable then to communicate with the British army, and can, therefore, do us no mischief."

General Putnam looked inquiringly into the face of his young aiddecamp as he pressed, somewhat warmly, this plan, and then, with a significant smile, said, as he got into the saddle,

"I would make oath, Burton, thou art serving thyself more in this matter than thy country. But I think it best to take this step you propose. Spare me in the affair," he added, laughing, and riding off, "or she will hack off my spurs as a craven knight."

At the expiration of an hour, Burton, who in the interval had been making preparations for marching with the escort, which was about to serve a double purpose, received, through General Putnam, an order from the commander−in−chief, confirmed by the president of the Congress, who had not yet left the city, directing Miss Ney to be conveyed, as a suspicious and dangerous person, to Kingsbridge, and there to be strictly watched. Accompanying the order was a letter addressed to General Mifflin there commanding, and private instructions from General Putnam to Burton to take command of the expedition, which should consist of not more than six dragoons. Burton undertook the delicate mission of acquainting Miss Ney with the official order. He found her on the housetop, surveying with longing eyes the fleet of her native England.

"I can liken you only to an imprisoned bird, fair Isabel, looking from the bars of its cage towards its native woods," he said, smiling, as he entered the latticed tower; "but, poor bird! I fear me," continued he, with affected commiseration, "the cruelty of the rebels will shut you up yet closer."

"How mean you, Burton?" she inquired, laying aside the telescope, and placing her hand confidingly, yet with an earnest manner, on his arm; "there is a mystery in your face which betokens either good or ill to me, but which I am too unskilled to read."

"Here, my Isabel, are lines less mysterious," he replied, placing in her hand the order from the commander−in−chief; then, taking his seat beside her, while his arm carelessly, and as if unconsciously, glided round her waist, he watched the expression of her countenance as, with kindling eyes, a changing cheek, and scornful lip, she perused the order.

"Upon the honour of an Englishwoman," she said, coolly returning the paper, "this chief of yours hath little to do to meddle thus with the affairs of a helpless girl. Truly, your cause must be a noble one, sir, that its leader can resort to such means to uphold it. Well, Burton," she continued, turning towards him and bitterly smiling, while her eyes glistened with tears, which the penetrating lover attributed to their true cause, excitement rather than innocence, "I yield me your prisoner. But," she added, quickly, blushing at an exhibition of feeling she sought not to suppress, "I trust I shall not lose you, Burton. I know not how it is that you have so soon obtained such control over me! Until I saw you, I never beheld a man I did not absolutely hate. I know not why, unless from that perverse nature which is in me, and makes me differ from every one of my sex. This morning has shown me," she continued, with more softness, and yielding to the slight embrace in which he held her, "that I am as free to love as to hate. Now that I fear I am to be separated from you, perhaps for ever, I will frankly and sincerely tell you and if I hated you I should be as frank that, if the feelings I entertain for you are suggested by love, I love you, Burton."

"So haughty, and confess so much?"

"It is my proud spirit that makes me openly confess what maidens generally strive to conceal, albeit love speaks out in every look and motion as plainly and visibly as a lamp shines out at night. I am too proud to leave you in doubt for one moment as to my sentiments. I could not endure that you should speculate upon my feelings. And, my dear Burton," she said, returning his embrace, "my heart tells me that my love is not unrequited. Will you not come and cheer my solitude at Kingsbridge?"

"Does the wanderer in a gloomy night wish to behold the sun?"

"Nay, Burton, use not such expressions. I like honest, straightforward language. I cannot believe there is much depth of feeling or of sincerity in coined compliments."

"Then every hour I pass not in the field shall be spent at your feet."

"Well, that is better. But say that I may see you at least twice a week, and I shall be resigned to this unjust and tyrannical order."

"My beautiful Isabel, for by that endearing name I must call you, I will see you once a day so long as you honour Kingsbridge with your presence. But tell me, Isabel," he inquired, looking steadily into her eyes, while a smile of peculiar intelligence played round his mouth, "is this order so very unjust?"

"*You* certainly cannot suspect me, Burton?" she exclaimed, between surprise and alarm.

"Oh no!" he said, laughing; "but a fair countryman of your own, when I was quite a youth in college, taught me the language of flowers."

He fixed his dark eyes, as he concluded, full upon her, with a conscious gaze which she could not withstand. Encountering his steady look for a moment, she dropped her eyelids, and, as the scene in the hall occurred to her, she said reprovingly, yet forgivingly,

"Can it be, Burton, that I am indebted to you for this order?"

"Not to my duty as a soldier, Isabel," he replied, casting himself at her feet, "but to my deep and devoted passion as a lover. I detected your correspondence with the flag of truce, and, as you perceived, rendered it abortive. Alarmed for your safety if you should be detected by others in communication with the enemy, I immediately obtained from General Washington this order for your removal, not so much to a place of security, my dear Isabel, as to a bower of love. Here I could see you only in the presence of others; there I can see you daily unobserved. It was to secure to myself the uninterrupted happiness of your society, rather than to prevent mischief to our cause, that I sought this removal. It is my act, and not the chief's. I alone am guilty; and if love deep and sincere can plead my cause and procure my pardon, then should I not now plead in vain."

The face of the maiden, as he confessed his participation in this act, became dark and fearfully passionate, as if she could have struck a dagger into his bosom. Her eyes gleamed with that fierce and almost demoniacal light which characterized the strength of her feelings, giving to her countenance a fearful beauty; more fearful still from its exquisite loveliness. But, as he proceeded, the sterner character of her face changed; and while her ears drank in the words of passion he poured into them, a new spirit, such as is wont to beam in woman's eyes when love pleads to her heart, animated hers, and with a smile that marked his entire restoration to favour, she extended her hand. He seized and pressed it to his lips, then enclosed her person in his arms.

She blushingly released herself from his embrace just as the round face of Zacharie made its appearance in the door. With a countenance in which arch roguery, sly humour, and mischievous intelligence were oddly mingled, he beckoned his master to him with a jerk of his chin.

"I have found out which way the scent lies. A place called Kip's Cove or bay is where " here, as he happened to encounter the dark eye of the lady, sundry winks supplied the remainder of the sentence, which, however, ended with, "Four o'clock precisely Coenties−slip."

"Then go and wait my coming."

"Ay, ay, sir," said Zacharie, casting a sidelong glance at the lady as he was disappearing; "if this master of mine wouldn't make a capital friar, cassock on or cassock off. He is always confessing some black eye or other. Well! every man to his tastes. I like the chink of a dollar, and he likes the blink of a bright eye, and so we are both suited."

Thus soliloquizing, he found his way, by a sort of instinct, to the apartments of the servants, where, with one eye cocked towards the hall door to watch his master's approach, and the other squinting at the maids, black and white, he awaited the appearance of Burton, entertaining the company in the meanwhile with many a jibe and joke.

CHAPTER VI. THE DEPARTURES.

As the bell in a neighbouring spire tolled the hour of two on the afternoon of the day on which the events related in the last chapter transpired, a small troop, consisting of six dragoons, trotted across the lawn in front of the quarters of General Putnam, and, drawing up at the corner of the street, sat immoveable in their saddles, as if awaiting the orders of some one within the mansion. A little way before them a footman held two horses, one caparisoned for a lady, the other a noble warhorse in military harness. In a few moments afterward, mounted on a nag with a shaggy and uncombed mane, long whisking tail, short legs, and round plump body, did Zacharie, arrayed in a sort of uniform, also gallop round from the stables, and by dint of beating with his fists and thumping with his unarmed heels, compel his fierce little horse to range up along the flank of the dragoons.

"Lo, are ye here, my masters?" he cried, in a shrill voice and confident tone, when at length he had brought his horse to stand at an oblique angle with the grave studs of the troopers, it being the only mode of proximity he could compel him to assume; "I thought you'd be so busy stowing provender 'neath your belt, Simon," he continued, addressing one of the troopers, in good corporeal condition for a soldier in garrison, who seemed to command the party, "that you'd give your knaves a plea for loitering when work's to do."

"So, then! work's to do, ha! younker?" said the stout soldier, with some alertness; "'twere time the rust were taken off our blades. They've been idle full long."

"Marry have they, stout Simon. You've been feeding and fatting here till you are now like so much live pork, fit only to be killed."

"Art at your jokes, younker," said the trooper, laughing with good−humour. "If't come to that, I'll use the flat o' my broadsword on your back; its what'll only match that sharp tongue o' thine."

"The saints a mercy, Simon," replied the lad, in affected terror; "if thou makest such arguments to thy *rib's* ribs when her tongue plays nimbly in thine ears, thou hast no need of other work to keep they blade from rusting. Marry! if all our troopers had wives like thine, 'twould keep them in practice. Six so experienced would put a score of the enemy to flight."

"Out upon thee, jackanapes! didst ever know a woman without a tongue?"

"By the pope! have I not. 'Tis as useful to her as the broadsword to a bold trooper. My grandam hath a tongue will start fair with a guineakeet and win the field. 'Twas the song used to wake me o' mornings, season my porridge, and sing me to sleep o' nights."

"Then hast thou come honestly by thy tongue, boy; but hist! here comes thy master," he added, as Burton came to the door, and, after glancing at the escort, returned into the hall.

"Thou liest, Simon! he is no master of mine. We are sworn friends. We did each other a good turn in the northern wars, and so we stick to each other from sympathy."

"Thou wearest his livery, and art ever at his heels."

"There again thou liest! Look ye! Dost not know the Congress livery from a master's? Wear I not the same blue jacket with the yellow braid the same lawloop on my shoulders, and the same spurred boot; ay, am I not mounted all the same as thou art? Thou art an ignorant ass not to know thine own comrade! and, look ye," he added, unsheathing his hanger, "carry I not arms as well as thou? Thy wife's finger−nails have blinded thee, stout Simon."

"Thou art bravely apparelled, comrade," said the trooper, laughing, and glancing down upon the boy, "and gallantly mounted withal. I ask thy pardon that I did not observe thee minutely. When next I come in thy company," he added, looking at him through the focus formed by his closed hand, "I'll bring a microscope lest thou shouldst escape my vision. But I could swear thou wast not thus decked out when thou camest to the barracks an hour ago to call us out."

"And for once in thy day thou wouldst make oath to the truth. Dost think a man can be but one thing, because thou thyself art fit only to straddle a horse's back, deal blows with thy broadsword, and move at the word of command, for all the world like a huge wooden chessman? My wit is put to better use. I can be private secretary at home, soldier in the field, companion in the walk, and in a thousand ways make myself of use, and turn a shilling into my pocket."

"A sort of chameleon of the times," said one of the other troopers, dryly, with a shrewd physiognomy, a tall, gaunt frame, and the nose of Bardolph.

"Thou art an overgrown camel, carrying more liquor in thy belly than brains in thy scull," retorted Zacharie to him.

"There thou hast it, Mack, close home," cried another, laughing; and then turning, he said, "Zacharie, thou dost mean that thou art now a robber, now a saint; serving God or the devil, as suits thy present convenience."

"It hath never yet suited thy convenience, Joe Carbine, to be but the one, and that a devil−server. When thou art a saint, Mack's nose will turn pale with wonder. But hush up thy garrulous jaws; here comes thy master, if not mine," he quickly added, as General Putnam came to the door, lightly sustaining on his arm the elegant figure of Isabel Ney. Burton soon followed them, and, ordering the troop to ride forward, mounted his horse while General Putnam assisted Isabel into her saddle.

"I have, then, your full pardon for my inhospitality, my dear Miss Ney?" he said, taking leave of her.

"You have, sir," she answered, with a smile; and then added, glancing archly at her glove, which still adorned the breast of the gallant officer, "in token of which I recall my gage."

"Not so, Miss Ney," he replied, courteously; "that smile shall be sufficient token. This graceful gauntlet I beg leave to retain as a memento of the fair combatant who so bravely flung it into the lists."

"You had best present it to your chief," she said, in a laughing tone, in which a slight vein of sarcasm was just perceptible, "in memorial of his arrest of the challenger."

She then extended her hand to her late host, who with formal courtesy pressed his lips to the taper fingers, and cantered away. Burton, after giving some orders to Zacharie, waved an adieu to the general in reply to some half−heard pleasantry in relation to black eyes and toryism; and, galloping after Isabel, the party was soon out of sight.

Zacharie, who had been left behind, followed them for a moment with his eyes; then, putting spurs to his nag, he dashed down a narrow alley which led in the direction of Queen−street. After a break−neck ride up hill and down hill, for this section of the city was at that time uneven, he arrived at the entrance of the square, on the northern side of which stood the quarters of General Washington, and turned abruptly into the lane where he had formerly held a brief interview with Burton. Dismounting, he fastened his horse to a tree that stood at the corner of the lane, and placing himself behind it so that he could, without observation, command the whole front of the mansion, he continued to gaze steadily towards the edifice, occasionally uttering an exclamation of impatience. He had waited, however, but a quarter of an hour, when a heavily−built coach, drawn by a pair of large bay horses and driven by a black coachman, rumbled through the gate which led to the stables, and, passing round the house, drew up before it. A black footman descended from behind and opened the carriage door as General Washington and his lady, accompanied by two ladies and a young officer, came forth from the house. Zacharie beheld the last three get into the coach, the general and his lady take leave of them and re−enter the house, and the carriage turn down a road to the east leading to Crown Point, now called Coenties−slip.

When the top of the carriage had disappeared behind the intervening hill, Zacharie remounted his pony, and, making a *detour* so as to elude the observation of the inmates at headquarters, came into the road behind the coach about half a mile beyond. He followed slowly at a distance, along a dusty road running within a few rods of the East River, and bordered by magnificent elms and oaks of enormous size. The coach turned at length into a grassy lane a few yards in extent, which terminated at the water's edge, where the youthful spy saw the arms and waving feathers of a party of American soldiers. Leaving his horse by a fence, he crossed a narrow enclosure, and, undiscovered, gained a clump of bushes in an angle of the hedge close to the party. Insinuating his flexible form among the limbs and foliage, he at length stood within a few feet of them, and within the hearing of their voices.

Four soldiers, with muskets and fixed bayonets, were seated in a boat with an awning over the stern, and, their arms lying beside them, had taken oars in their hands. The coachman sat upon his box, his glistening eyes rolling about in wonder, which was the more lively as he dared not express it by any other organ; and the footman stood with his hand upon the door of the coach from which the ladies and young officer had just descended. One of the ladies, who possessed a tall and fine person, and whom Zacharie recognised as a Mrs. Stuyvesant, who had been two or three days on a visit at General Washington's, was supporting to the boat the other female, who was of a slighter figure and closely veiled, and appeared to be deeply agitated.

"Are you all ready, Holton?" asked the officer.

"Ay, ay, sir, for the last hour; 'tis now full late to go and return by dark."

"'Tis only to Kip's Bay. We can run down in half an hour."

When the party was seated the young officer removed his cloak, exposing by the act a sword and brace of pistols, and placed it upon the seat for the comfort of his fair passengers, particularly the youngest, who received the largest share, and around whom he folded it with tender assiduity, as if the cool August breeze from the sea would

chill her limbs. He then commanded the amphibious guard to give way to their oars.

Handling them something as they would grasp a musket to charge bayonet, and dropping them into the water in such a fashion as to besprinkle the party with a shower of salt water, and feathering them, or, as sailors term it, "catching crabs" at every alternate stroke, as if they sought to inflict further ablution, the soldiers pulled out from the land, and rowed along parallel with it until they turned the first point. Then hoisting a sail, they held their course northwardly, still hugging the shore, until they disappeared from the eyes of Zacharie behind a projecting ledge.

"Now, by my two patrons, Love and War," he said, making his way out of the bushes, not without divers scratches and punctures from the thorns and branches, "if our six troopers, with myself to match that younker, leaving the Frère Edward to take care o' the petticoats, do not make these longlegged soldiers yield their charge, and on their marrow−bones cry *peccavi*, as Father Duc says, before we've done with them, then will I forfeit my manhood. Come, thou shaggy imp," he added, as he regained his steed, "put thy four legs in motion if thou lovest mischief like thy master. Dost thou not know thou wast given me by the frère, because thou art so near akin to me? Now paddle thy ducklegs, and make the road smoke behind us."

Thus speaking, Zacharie stuck his spurs into the flanks of his nag, who, after flinging his heels into the air and making a demivolte across the road by way of reply, scrambled forward, snorting and tossing his head: in a little while he left the main road, and, entering a bridle−path, pursued his way rapidly across wide fields to the northwest. A short time afterward he entered the Boston road, about two miles from its southern junction with Broadway, and, following the wellbeaten road, rode forward without slackening his pace, occasionally catching glimpses of the distant sailboat, which slowly kept its way along close to the land.

He had ridden about half an hour, when, descrying from a hill the approach of a company of infantry, he cautiously turned to the right into a wood to conceal himself until they passed by. On gaining this shelter, and canterning round an abrupt ridge covered with trees, he came suddenly upon a small detachment of soldiers, seated around their open knapsacks eating their evening meal. Before he could retreat his bridle was seized by the one nearest, and his business demanded in no hospitable tone.

"I'm a trooper in the York dragoons, and despatched to meet my detachment, who are now on their way back from Kingsbridge."

"A pretty cock and bull story," cried the soldier who had arrested him; "you a trooper!" added he, with a laugh of derision; "I could put you and your horse in my knapsack, with ten day's provender, and not feel you."

"Ay," said another, holding up the breastbone of a chicken which he had just denuded, "I could make a better dragoon of this, set it astride my finger."

"A fine route you've taken to Kingsbridge, my hop−o'−my−thumb," growled a third, taking a canteen from his mouth, and drying his lips with his sleeve; "does Kingsbridge lie across East River that you take this course, coming down upon us peaceable soldiers as if the devil kicked you on end?"

"He's a foreigner! hear his base accent!" continued a fourth.

"He's a Hessian," roared a fifth; "twig his Dutch build."

"If he dodges," cried a sixth, aiming a well−picked bone at Zacharie's head, "he's a tory, and shall be hung up on the highest tree."

Zacharie dodged as the missile hummed past his left ear, which it narrowly missed. A shout of laughter, and the cries of a "tory, a tory hang him noose him up," resounded from the whole party.

Zacharie had turned from one to the other of his antagonists as they severally spoke, with a fierce look that only increased the merriment which a good subject, as they thought, and a full stomach gave rise to. But at this last insult he drew a pistol from his belt, where he carried a brace, his saddle not being furnished with holsters, and, suddenly striking his foot into the face of the soldier who held his rein, at the same time crying out, "There is a bone for you," he aimed and fired at the man who had tested his politics by flinging the bone at his head; then, quicker than thought, turning his horse, he galloped round the ridge by the way he had approached. Before, however, he could get out of the reach of their muskets, two or three shots, fired by some of the soldiers who had seized their arms, whizzed by him, one of the balls passing through his cap. Instead of entering the road, lest he should encounter the infantry which were yet some distance off, he rode along the skirts of the wood, and, being mounted, soon distanced all his pursuers, who were on foot, and who, after firing a few more ineffectual shots, gave up the pursuit. One of their number, however, had got possession of a horse, probably the fruit of a forage; for the continental troops were often as dangerous enemies to private property, either of whig or tory, in the neighbourhood of their encampment, as even the British soldiers themselves. This man, with a sword in his hand, with which he would one moment point energetically towards the object of pursuit, and the next belabour his steed, came on, shouting and extravagantly gesticulating, swearing huge oaths, and loudly calling on the fugitive to stop. Zacharie only laughed, mocked his mode of riding, and, turning round, fired his remaining pistol at him in defiance.

The chase continued for half a mile, when Zacharie, finding that he was the best mounted, and seeing that his pursuer bore no firearms, slackened his pace; then, throwing the reins on his horse's neck, he proceeded, with great coolness, to reload his pistol. Having accomplished this, he looked back upon his antagonist, and, after measuring him steadily for a moment, turned short to the right, leaped a narrow brook, and, favoured by the impetus of his pursuer, was the next moment in his rear.

"Now yield thee, base villain!" he cried, stopping his horse, and levelling his pistol at the soldier as he reined up, on finding himself, by this skilful manoeuvre, the pursued instead of the pursuer.

"That will I, and gladly, Zacharie; for such thou art, or else it be thy ghost. By my beard! thou hast given me a sweat for't, lad."

"And who art thou, that swearest by thy beard, and callest me Zacharie, as if thou wert my pot companion? By the pope! I should know that face o' thine, though the varlet that I think it belongs to were better at the tail of a plough than where men use sharp steel and burn gunpowder."

"Who, then, dost take me for, good Zacharie?"

"If I saw that foxy face 'neath a bonnet blue, and a capote over thy short carcass, and that carcass in the Vale of Chaudiere, I should call thee Jacques; but Jacques had so much of that better part of valour called discretion, that thou, in thy soldier's casque and with steel in thy hand, canst not be him I mean." As he spoke a sly expression of humour, as if he now recognised the soldier, twinkled in his gray eyes.

"By my beard! I wish I were 'neath hood and capote, and once more safe in my cot; I am that same Jacques, good Zacharie, whom thou knowest. Turn away that pistolet from my body, and let me grasp the hand o' thee. 'Tis a long time since I've grasped a countryman's hand."

"Then here's a welcome to thee, Jacques," said the lad, replacing his pistol in his holsters, and riding to the side of his old acquaintance, who grasped both of his hands and shook them with good−will.

"Gad's me," he said, his voice thick with delight, "but 'tis a lucky hour this! I doan't know whether to cry or laugh;" and, making a noise something between both, he again heartily shook his countryman's hand. "Lawk! who'd ha' thought of seeing you here! though they did tell me you were gone to the wars."

"Who, in the name of Beelzebub, rather, would have thought of finding the ploughman Jacques, who had not the heart to kill a mouse, armed to the teeth, mounted on a fierce charger, pursuing an armed trooper, and ready to do battle to the death?"

"Noa, Zacharie, I know'd thee when thou didst ride so scamprageously in among us, and would ha' spoke to thee, but could not get time to put in my word with all the speaking; and so, when you kicked up the scrimmage, and was off as quick as you came, I jumps on this horse, which belonged to nobody in particular, but is a sort of a camp follower, and gave chase. Noa, not I! I didn't think o' making battle."

"I'll be sworn you didn't, Jacques," said the boy, laughing; "thou hast too much discretion left, I will answer for't, to risk thy life on the chances of a humming bullet or the prick of a sword."

"Thanks to the holy saints, that have I, valiant Zacharie! an' if I were once well out o' this fighting work, and home again, if I'm caught ayont the sound o' the old convent bell again, may the old one flay me."

"Then 'tis not thine own valiancy that hath impelled thee to the wars, Jacques?"

"By my beard, no! It got abroad, after the army went through the valley, that I guided a monk, who proved to be no monk, but a spy, Zacharie," Jacques added, in a low tone, as if revealing an important item of intelligence; "and they told me I would be hung for't. Think of that, Zacharie! for a man to have his weasand twisted round like a barndoor fowl's;" he here mechanically sought the threatened precincts. "Hugh! 'tis awful to think on. Well, I began to tremble in my shoes; but there was nobody I feared so much as Luc Giles. Two nights after Arnold went past, I was in neighbour Bourné's cowpen canst guess what I was there for, Zach?" he asked, with a grave look, that was intended for a sly one.

"How in the devil should I tell? Go on, and be less familiar with your nicknames."

"Well, Master Zacharie, an it please you, I was helping Netty Bourné milk the kine coz, see thou, Netty and I have a thou knowst a little sort of a secret together a the priest thou knowst "

"Keep the priest to his cell, and you to your tale," said Zacharie, impatiently.

"Well, I heard Luc Giles going by with a score more, and I heard him say he was for the wars, but that he would hang me up first; and I found they were going to my cot, so I trembled all over, and Netty let me hide in the stall, and covered me over with hay, and there I laid all night."

"By the pope! then wert thou, like an ass as thou art, in thy proper place. If it had been the spy−monk in thy case, he would not have let a maiden tuck him up in the hay, and leave him there to go to her lone pillow. But what can we expect of an ass but that he will bray? Go on, for time presses. What became of thee the next morning?"

"Netty came and pulled the hay from off o' me in the morning, and, with a sweet voice, bid me get up, for my enemy had fled; and when I crawled out and shook myself, who dost think I saw standing there beside her?"

"'Tis more than I can tell, unless one of the cows waiting for thee to milk her."

"By my beard! the first thing I put eyes on was big Luc Giles, looking fiercely at me from over her shoulder with his great black eyes; and, giving one yell, I fell down on my face as if I were a dead man."

"Ha! ha! then Netty had really no better lodging for thee than a stall!"

"By my beard! it may be so. She looked very pleasant, methought, when she awoke me. Well, Luc Giles told me, in a terrible voice, while Netty laughed, no doubt, to give me courage, that I had done treason, and deserved to be hung; but that, if I would follow him to the wars, my life should be spared."

"So thou hadst choice of dying by ball or rope?"

"By my beard! did I, and, like a brave soldier, I chose the ball. So I joined the troop and marched to Quebec."

"Wert there when the assault was made, most brave Jacques?"

"That was I, and did the enemy much damage."

"By thy beard! an I believed thee, if I would not damage thy brainpan for thee! Tell me truly, where wast thou during the siege?"

"I hid myself in a stout house to 'scape the balls that flew somewhat thickly."

"I will answer for that. Where is Luc Giles?"

"That was the blessing of that day, good Master Zacharie. He was killed."

"Dost know how?"

"'Twas said a young, ill−famed devil, with a forked tail and cloven hoof, rose out of the ground and whisked him up into the air, and then pitched him down head foremost among the rocks in the thick o' the fight."

"Thou liest there," said the lad, striking him in the face. "'Twas I myself who tumbled him down the ramparts to save my officer's life."

"If I were not afeard o' them pistolets o' thine," said Jacques, hastily, "I would strike thee back this blow; but one o' them might kill me, whereas thy fist only hurts a little, it being small."

"Thou art a philosopher, Jacques, and I am sorry for the blow. But how camest thou here."

"When I knew big Luc Giles was dead oh, 'twas an awful sight to see 'um piled up so thick! I went, after a while, with great General Carleton to Ticonderoga, and then, to 'scape a fight the next day, went with another comrade over to the colony troop. We then marched down to York, where we've been most two weeks."

"Your company is stationed near by, no doubt. What is the detachment I came upon doing?"

"We belong to the troops quartered at Harlem, and are on our way down to town to escort up some ammunition; but, oh Marie! I wish I could get rid o' these wars!"

"Desert, desert!"

"Then I should be hanged if caught."

"But thou'lt be shot if thou stayest."

"I know it. But, if I must die, why, then, I'll die like a valiant soldier," answered Jacques, stoutly.

"Bravely said, Jacques. So thou dost fight from cowardice, like a thousand others. By the pope! if every soldier's valiancy were sifted, 'twould be found to be four parts out o' five of sheer cowardice. The better coward the better soldier, so you give him no chance to run away. Believe me, Jacques, thou art in a fair way of promotion."

"The saints grant it may be in the ranks, and not by the neck. But how camest thou here, and whither ride you so bravely?"

"How I came hither is none of thy business; but, if thou wilt have tale for tale, wait my leisure. I am going on brave matters; if thou choosest, come with me, and I will show thee the man who caused thee to turn soldier against thy nature."

"Art thou on the right side, Zacharie?"

"That am I."

"'Twill be no deserting, then, to go with thee, Master Zacharie?"

"By the pope! no. But forward, and we'll discuss that point."

The two Canadians rode forward at good speed Jacques, delighted to fall in with a fellow−countryman, and one whom he had before seen, giving way to an emotion which all men who have visited distant countries have at times experienced; Zacharie, pleased at finding one over whom he could exercise an influence congenial with his domineering spirit, secretly determining to seduce him from his corps, and attach him in some sort to his person.

CHAPTER VII. THE RESCUE.

The declining sun was flinging his beams aslant hill and forest, and gilding many a distant sail on the river and Sound, when the two Canadians descended a slight eminence overlooking an inlet of the East River called Kip's Bay, a few miles above New−York. Their way wound along a bridle−path, which conducted them through a natural grove of some extent, and across a narrow tract of pasture−land, when they came to the remains of an old forest that extended quite to the beach, at this spot overhung by a high precipitous bank and one or two isolated rocks of great size.

Near one of these rocks was a platform or wharf for small boats, one end of which rested upon the beach, from which a winding and romantic path led to a tasteful villa situated on a wooded eminence not far from the shore. It was behind this rock, and concealed from the landing−place, that Zacharie and his companion at length stopped. After surveying the place with great attention, climbing to the top of the rock and looking off into the river, the former descended, saying,

"All is right. Now, if they can only get here before the boat, which is a good half mile below, then we have them, Jacques. Come with me on yonder hill, and await my return, and move foot nor finger more than if thou wert a part of this rock. If, by−and−by, you see any fighting going on, look thou, deal blows on the right side."

Thus conveying his commands, Zacharie put spurs to his horse and soon disappeared over the hill. Riding forward for a quarter of an hour through a thick wood, he came all at once upon a party of dragoons, one of the number leading a horse caparisoned for a female equestrian, spurring at the top of their speed towards him. Drawing to one side of the path to avoid collision, he muttered, half aloud,

"There he comes, at a rate that only a battle or a lady would send him."

As the foremost passed him he whistled shrilly, when Burton, for it was him, reined up, glanced towards him, then was instantly at his side, and demanding his intelligence.

This was conveyed in a few words. Bidding Zacharie then to keep by his bridle, he commanded the troop to ride forward.

"Said you the boat was but a mile off ten minutes since?"

"Ay, sir; we'll be there in time. Is the other prisoner safe?"

"If your curiosity had a pocket, it would soon be filled in reward for thy services. I did not bargain with you for double pay."

"Nor I with thee for double service."

"Well, then, prime minister of mine, if 'twill please you to learn so much, know that the lady whom I have escorted is safe beneath the roof of General Mifflin, at Kingsbridge, there to abide as a guest, under some restrictions, until General Washington shall make further disposition of her."

"A brave lady! Dost think they'll hang her?"

"The graces forbid, at least for the present."

"I think I'd like thee to marry her."

"What put that into your wise head?"

"From the cut of her eye, I think she would be thy match."

"A charitable wish, truly; but what dost think of her?"

"I think, if possible, she has more of the devil in her than thyself. But yonder comes our prize."

At this moment they came in view of the East River; and, lifting his eyes, Burton beheld a little boat, its single white sail relieved against the dark water on which it was suspended, standing slowly and steadily towards the little flotilla on the beach.

He halted the troop, and, placing a pocket telescope to his eye, closely surveyed the approaching party for a few moments. Then closing it, he turned to his men and briefly addressed them:

"In yonder boat are two ladies, one of whom it is my intention to seize and place under temporary arrest. There are four soldiers and a young officer forming their escort; these I leave you to do with, but, on your lives, shed no blood! Holton, secure your horses here, then conduct four of your men along the woods, and draw them up behind that rock which commands the ascent from the water to yonder villa. Permit the ladies and officer to pass by you unmolested; then surprise the guard as they are securing the boat, disarm them, and throw their muskets into the water. You and your comrade, Mack, may accompany me. Forward!"

"You will find a comrade of mine behind the rock a little cracked in the topworks," said Zacharie; "see that you harm him not."

Holton and his men, under the protection of the trees and irregularities of the descent, gained their appointed station, where they found Jacques, who sat his horse immoveable and without speaking, evidently in the extremity of bodily terror, to find himself so suddenly surrounded by so many fierce−looking warriors. Placing their hands on their pistols, the party anxiously awaited the approach of the boat.

"Is't another petticoat spy, Holton?" asked one, whom Zacharie had formerly designated as Joe Carbine.

"That I can't tell; though 'tis like to be. These women−folks are sharpsighted enough to be spies, if that's all."

"They look like American soldiers in the boat, and I could swear to the uniform of the officer. I don't like fighting against my own countrymen."

"There's no fighting, boy; only disarming some half dozen of the enemy," replied another.

"They may be in disguise," said Holton. "All we have to do is to obey orders. If there's any mistake, the blame goes to shoulders that can bear it as well as their epaulettes."

With this conclusive argument of men under authority, the dragoons were satisfied; and in breathless silence, and with clear consciences, they awaited the approach of the barge.

Burton and his two troopers, accompanied by Zacharie, who led the spare horse, continued, without dismounting, to the right, and rode along the inland inclination of the hill towards a hollow at the summit of the pass, equally hidden from the villa and the shore.

Here they dismounted. Burton now ordered Zacharie to hold the horses in readiness to mount suddenly; and bidding one of the dragoons to present a pistol to the officer's breast when he should gain the head of the pass, and make him prisoner, and directing the other to prevent, without violence, the lady from giving alarm, he cautiously approached the verge of the hill and looked down into the quiet cove.

The boat was now within a few yards of the shore. Twilight had already rendered objects indistinct, yet he could see the young officer's marked attentions to the younger female, whom he at once recognised to be Eugenie, and a pang of jealousy shot through his breast.

The party disembarked, and the officer, giving all his assistance to the younger lady, preceded by the matron, ascended the path towards the house. The soldiers forming the escort, after securing the boat, were preparing to resume their muskets and follow, when they were surrounded and disarmed before they had time to offer the least resistance; and, to prevent escape, a dragoon stood by each with a cocked pistol levelled at his breast.

This attack was so skilfully and silently executed, that the officer a moment afterward gained the summit of the pass without having been aware of it. The elderly lady was a little in advance; and, as the pair approached the ambuscade, Burton could hear their voices in conversation.

"Say that you will permit me, Mademoiselle de Lisle, to call on you; at least, say that my presence will not be intrusive," said the officer, tenderly.

"I have nothing to say, sir," she replied, in her low and peculiarly sweet tones; "I know not whether I am a prisoner, or am still to have my own will?"

"Will you bid me despair, Eugenie?"

"I can bid you do nothing. Do not distress me in this hour of my unhappiness. Nothing but the most undeniable proof of *his* faithlessness should ever induce me to forget him, or replace his image by another."

"Bless you, dearest Eugenie, for those words," exclaimed Burton, stepping boldly from his concealment, and gracefully advancing towards her.

Eugenie shrieked with mingled terror and delight. The officer drew his sword, which was struck from his grasp by the ready weapon of Burton, and at the same instant was seized by the dragoons. Lifting Eugenie, unresisting and half−clinging to his neck, from the ground, the lover placed her in the saddle, and whispered a word or two of hope and encouragement, mingled with promises and protestations, in her ear; then mounting his own horse, and commanding his dragoons to release their prisoners, he took the reins of Eugenie's pony and rode swiftly along the ridge of the hill.

"Leave your prisoners and to horse," he shouted, as he came in sight of the men on the beach.

The dragoons obeyed, and, rapidly ascending the hill, were soon in the saddle. Elated by their success, the whole party moved forward at a round trot through the wood, and, gaining the main road, galloped rapidly towards the city. They passed several parties of sentinels and outposts of both foot and horse; but, answering every challenge correctly, they gained the northern suburb of the city about eight o'clock without interruption.

During the ride Eugenie had not spoken, and only acknowledged the words of love breathed into her ear by returning the pressure of his hand. When they had got within a mile of the city, they halted at the head of a crossroad leading into Broadway. Here Burton dismissed his troop to their quarters, and, when the last faint echo of their footsteps had died away, he galloped up the crossroad, followed by Zacharie, at the top of his speed. Gaining Broadway, he rode a few rods southwardly, and then suddenly turned aside into the secluded and rural lane leading to the cottage from which he had departed the preceding night. They had ridden but half way through it when he, in a low voice, commanded Zacharie to go forward alone and inform the inmate of the cottage that her female companion would shortly be with her, and then to wait his arrival at the gate. Zacharie dashed on rapidly ahead, and soon disappeared. Dismounting at the gate, he entered, and meeting Caroline in one of the avenues of the front yard, he delivered his message; then retracing his steps, and seating himself sideways upon his pony beneath the elm, he began to whistle a lively tune, to which he kicked his heels against his pony's sides by way of accompaniment.

"My dearest Eugenie," said Burton, passing his arm around her waist, and gently drawing her to his embrace, "forgive me if I have offended you by this rescue. I could not give you up without one effort to recover you; without hearing from your own lips my doom. I have taken you from the protection of the friends Washington has assigned to you, to plead my own cause at your feet. It is the cause of sincere love of deep, pure, and uncontrollable passion. But why need I tell you this? Your heart can say, better than any language my tongue can utter, how dearly I love you. Tell me, Eugenie, that you do not hate me."

"Hate you, Edward! God and the sweet Mary know I cannot hate you! But if you are as you have been represented to me, I fear I tremble when I think how much I love you!"

"Best and loveliest of creatures! Then you do not detest me! These people have not poisoned my dear Eugenie's mind. You still love and believe me true? If you desire it, I will here solemnly appeal to Heaven in attestation of my sincerity."

"No, no, Edward; I should no sooner believe you; I know that you are the same; but oh, there are many things weighing heavily on my heart. Hold, Edward," she said, suddenly reining in her horse, which, during this conversation, had been walking on slowly, "I cannot sacrifice my maidenly delicacy even to my love. Whither are you leading me? Why have you taken me from honourable protection? Hold, sir! I will go no farther," she cried,

with energy, as he attempted, though gently, to urge her horse forward.

"Alas, Eugenie!" he said, in a tone of bitter reproach, "do you so soon believe that I would betray you? By your past confidence! by our long−plighted love! by our vows registered in heaven! believe me, and trust to my honour."

"I do, I do! But tell me whither I am led? I am in a maze in a mystery. I have been led by the will of others the last two days as if I were a mere child or incapable of reflection, which may, indeed, be true, for what but madness could have driven me to take the rash step I have done? Why did I not before view it in the light I now do? Edward, if you love me, restore me, before you leave your saddle, either to the protection of General Washington or my Canadian friends."

"Eugenie," he said, in tones of sadness, "I will do as you bid me if you will still urge your wish when you learn the home that I have chosen for you. Listen to me patiently for a moment, and I will then be guided by your decision. After the attack on Quebec, an American officer, mortally wounded in the fight, called me to his side, and with his dying breath bequeathed his widowed wife and only daughter to my sympathy and protection. The mother is recently deceased. The daughter, I fear, will soon follow her. She needs a companion in her lonely hours. I have told her that I would seek one for her. When I left General Washington's last night, I called and spoke to her of you. I promised to bring you to see her today, though I did not anticipate the events that have since occurred. She was delighted at the prospect, and her pale features lighted up with happy smiles. She now sighs for you. You will love her, Eugenie, and I know that she will love you; for none can see and not love you! Will you be her solace? the angel of her pillow? Will you become her companion, and soften the pangs of the departing spirit? or will you turn a deaf ear to the eloquent pleadings of suffering, and bid me tell her that she must die unblessed by the presence and sympathy of one of her own sex?"

"Edward, Edward! forgive me! How could I be so ungenerous as to suspect you for a moment of a dishonourable action? But it was the language of my friends."

"Friends, Eugenie? Those whom you knew but yesterday, and who are my enemies! Will you give me up for these? I cannot, nay, I will not believe it."

"No, I will not, Edward. I am convinced of my error. Let us ride forward. I am ready to follow whither you will, to atone for my unjust suspicions. You will forgive me, won't you?"

"A thousand times, my dear Eugenie!" he exclaimed, embracing her; "whatever words of thine may give offence, are at the same time atoned for by the sweet accents of the voice that utters them. This embrace shall atone for all, and bind our love the stronger."

In a few moments they arrived at the gate and alighted. Burton, leaving the horses with Zacharie, passed through the cottage gate with Eugenie leaning tremblingly on his arm, and in silence proceeded to the house, which lay in the same quiet repose as on the previous night, with its single light twinkling through the blinds. Eugenie was charmed with the air of everything; and, pressing his arm, she whispered,

"How happy could I be here with you, Edward!"

"That happiness shall be yours, dear Eugenie," he replied, as they gained the portico; "I will go in, if you will permit me to leave you a moment, and inform Miss Germaine of your presence, lest, in her delicate health, she should be surprised by your sudden entrance."

Leaving Eugenie on the portico agitated by mingled emotions, Burton entered without knocking, and, going unannounced into the parlour, the door of which was half open, the next moment he held Caroline in his arms.

"My dear Caroline," he said, playfully placing his hand on her lips to check her exclamation of joy, "you look better to−night. I have come to apprize you of the arrival of your young companion. You have only to see her to love her."

"You are very kind, Edward, and kind yourself to visit me once more. Is she near? Can I go and meet her?"

"I left her on the portico to announce her presence, lest your nerves should receive a shock from the sudden appearance of a stranger. You will meet her with sisterly affection?"

"Oh, Edward, how can guilt embrace innocence? Oh, do not frown upon me! I will not breathe it in her pure ears. I have too much need of sympathy not to love those who will befriend me. Bid her come in. But," she added, falteringly, as if she feared to ask, scarcely, the while, sustaining her drooping form on her tottering limbs, "is she quite alone? is no one with her?"

"No one, Caroline," he said, with a surprised air of inquiry; "whom do you expect?"

"Oh, nobody; not any one," she said, clasping her hands to her temples. "Oh, not any one, if you have so soon forgotten!"

"Caroline, for God's sake calm yourself," he cried, vexed and alarmed, flying to support her to a sofa; "I said not that I would bring the clergyman to−night."

"Go, Edward; leave me," she said, faintly; "my heart is broken!" and she threw herself with an utter abandonment of manner upon the sofa.

Chagrined at this incident, he turned from her, muttering within his closed lips, "Some demon seems to have plotted to ruin me! Ha! a happy thought! This scene," he added, crossing the room to the door, "if well managed, is all in my favour. I shall escape a double eclaircissement, which I have trembled to think on. 'Twere better Eugenie should see her thus; 'twill clinch my purpose firmer. Eugenie," he said, in tones attuned to the ear of love, going to the portico, "the lady is more indisposed than I imagined. Your presence is providential. Come in and see if you would have done well to have turned from such a scene!"

While he was speaking he conducted Eugenie through the hall into the parlour. Caroline, whom he expected to find nearly insensible on the sofa, to his surprise, advanced towards them with graceful dignity, and with a smile which her tearful eye and heaving bosom told was called up with an extraordinary mental effort.

"My dear Miss de Lisle," she said, affectionately taking her hand, while she seemed struck with her beauty, "I know, in part, your romantic sory. You are welcome! but 'tis but a poor reception an invalid may give the young and lovely. I have long wished for a friend and companion, but such as you are I never hoped for. I already feel that I shall love you."

Eugenie, surprised at her fragile loveliness, and affected by her sad voice and manner, not only took the hand Caroline extended towards her, but, with the ingenuousness of her artless character, threw her arms about her neck, and, kissing her, assured her of her love and sympathy. The sensitive Caroline, touched by this exhibition of kindness and sympathy from one of her own sex, from whose society she had so long been estranged, gave way to a paroxysm of tears in her arms. At length she became calmer, and Eugenie supporting her to a sofa, sat by her, and clasped her hand in hers, and for a moment the two lovely girls gazed on each other's features as if prompted by a mutual impulse to peruse the lineaments of one another's faces. This tacit correspondence drew their hearts closer, and in a few minutes both Eugenie all gayety and humour, and anxious to divert the mind of the interesting invalid; Caroline happy, grateful, and confiding were deeply engaged in conversation; for two young creatures so long estranged from intercourse with persons of their sex, age, or tastes, thus meeting together under

such circumstances, had much to say, a thousand concealed thoughts to express, and innumerable ideas to interchange, before they could connect the broken chain of social intercourse so long severed.

The dark and guilty being, the controller of the destinies of the lovely victim whom his arts had so successfully placed in his power, with folded arms and anxious brow, paced the room in silence. Occasionally he glanced towards the sofa, but his thoughts were buried in schemes of conquest, alas! such conquests as degrade humanity. Unmoved by the gentle sufferings of Caroline, whose only crime was her misplaced love, who was dying without a murmur at the feet of her destroyer, petitioning Heaven to bless him with her dying breath, and ready even to plead his innocence at the bar of final justice; unmoved by the innocence, the beauty, the youth, or the unprotected state of Eugenie (all which should plead to the heart of the deliberate seducer, but all which are only incentives to urge him to his purpose), as, unconscious of the snare closing around her, she sought, in the benevolence of her unsuspecting nature, to cheer the drooping spirits of the invalid, who every moment wound closer around her heart's affections.

We have, in the foregoing paragraph, struck a vein for the moralist. But it is not the purpose of the romancer to load his pages with the reflections which naturally arise in contemplating the moral actions of his characters, but rather to leave them to be deduced by the contemplative reader. It is his province only to relate events as they transpire, and not to speculate upon them: to prepare food for the mind, but not to lay down rules for the regulation of the mental appetite: to direct all events to one great moral end, but not to point out, as they occur, the component parts which go to make up the aggregate.

The situation in which he had now placed himself gave Burton, with all his tact and presence of mind, no little uneasiness. Guided by the strength of his passion, which turned a deaf ear to reason, he called in the aid of reflection only when too late to extricate him from his embarrassments. "If," thought he, as he paced the little parlour that he had made the theatre of so extraordinary a scene as that before his eyes, "if Caroline should, in a moment of weakness and confidence, betray to Eugenie her attitude in relation to myself if Eugenie should speak of her love and our pledged affection in either case I am ruined. Ruined? Pshaw! an intrigue ruin a man of honour, only because it happens to be based on another! I have a double game to play now, that calls for all my skill. Do I fear the world's censure? No. I would show the world these angelic creatures as a court beauty sports her diamonds, and enjoy the envy of men. He who would openly censure me for deceiving the fair innocents, would, in his heart, curse my good fortune, and wish himself the lucky cavalier. Publicity I court. It makes me, among men, the envied possessor of untold loveliness, which I feel I do not half possess when hiding it, miserlike, from the public gaze. Among women, too, it gives me the greater power, for with the dear creatures 'tis `to him that hath it shall be given.' The surest way of success with them is to approach their shrines with our brows adorned with laurels of conquest. What I alone fear is, that exposure at this time will kill the one and frighten the other away, and then I am fooled for my pains. Am I yet sure of success? Eugenie shows spirit. I may be foiled. Well, there's matrimony! I feel some compunctions at taking advantage of my dear Eugenie, whom, if I ever have truly loved, I love. But I cannot resist temptation. Fortune, if she loves innocence, should not leave it in my path. I cannot marry every beauty who pleases my eye; I had best turn pacha at once. Here I have three, all equally claimants to my affections; a charming triad! By my honour! I could not tell which to choose in the noose of matrimony, although poor Caroline has the best claims; but the very strength and nature of her claim makes it all the weaker. I have broken the vessel, it is true, but it does not, therefore, follow that I should content myself with the pieces. Caroline, in losing her own self−respect, has forfeited mine. No! she who would be my mistress shall never become my wife. Isabel Ney will never do! I should need with her the philosophy of a Socrates. If either, it shall be Eugenie; and, if I cannot possess her without, she shall be mine *in vinculo matrimonii*. Isabel Ney I will leave to fortune and to circumstances, and at present think only of Eugenie, blooming in all her virgin loveliness. Aid me, Cupid, and I will build a temple to thee! You appear much better, Miss Germaine," he said, suddenly stopping in his walk and approaching her with an air of respectful sympathy; "I trust the lively society of Miss de Lisle will renovate your spirits, and in a few days you will look more like the rose than the lily, of which you are now the emblem."

Caroline looked up to him with a melancholy smile, but made no reply, while Eugenie said gayly,

"I will answer for it that you will not know her in a week's time. See what a fine glow is now in her cheek!"

Caroline sighed deeply, and Burton turned away his head, but instantly replied, in a lively tone, as if he sought to conceal his passion for Eugenie from Caroline, and, at the same time, prevent the latter from being hurt by coldness,

"I leave her in your charge, fair novice. It is now after eight o'clock, and I have duties which will demand my presence before nine. I bid you both good−night, and will see you as early to−morrow as I can leave the field."

Without further ceremony he hastily left the room and house. While he received his horse from Zacharie, the latter said, in a low tone,

"There has been a horseman skulking about here ever since you went through the gate."

"Did you recognise him or learn his business?"

"No; he looked like an officer, and rode in sight to yonder tree three times. I would have followed him if I could have left the horses. The last time I saw him, which was not three minutes ago, I hailed him and cocked my pistol, when he put spurs and vanished up the lane."

"Then we will give chase. I find that I am watched."

Drawing a pistol from his holsters, followed by Zacharie, he rapidly rode off in the direction taken by the fugitive. They had nearly reached the outlet in Broadway, when a horseman suddenly emerged from the roadside, galloped along ahead of them, turned into Broadway, and disappeared round the corner. Following him at the top of his speed, leaving Zacharie far behind urging onward his less fleet steed, Burton saw the form of the horseman just disappearing around the corner of the cross street which led into the Boston road. Desirous of ascertaining who had acted the spy upon his movements, he spurred forward at a fearful risk of life and limb, and, turning the corner, came full upon the stranger, who had wheeled his horse and was standing facing him, firm and still, directly in the middle of the narrow lane. Unable to check the speed of his horse, Burton had time to guide him so as to avoid the full shock which the fugitive horseman seemed to have prepared for him by the position he had assumed. The horses, however, came together with great violence; and Burton, discharging his pistol at random as he encountered the spy, received at the same moment a pass through his belt and clothes, which was only turned aside from his body by the interposition of his sword−hilt; while the guard of the well−directed steel, striking him in the breast with its full force, hurled him bodily to the ground.

When Zacharie came up, he found his master with difficulty remounting his horse, but his antagonist was nowhere to be seen. Burton rode slowly to his quarters, wondering at the strange event which had just transpired, and fatiguing his mind in conjectures as to the identity of the stranger who had not only been a spy upon him, but had also decidedly manifested a hostile purpose: nor could he quite defend his own fiery pursuit of one who had not crossed his path, and at whom he had discharged his pistol without certain provocation. This was done, however, rather on the impulse of surprise at finding the fugitive drawn up to receive him in so singular a manner than from any deliberate intention.

CHAPTER VIII. THE DISCOVERY.

When the departing footsteps of Burton, as he traversed the avenue to the gate, no longer fell on her ears, a shade of melancholy passed over Caroline's features; tears, which she in vain sought to suppress, silently filled her eyes;

and, sighing deeply, she leaned her head on her hand, and was for some time lost in thought. Eugenie, after striving unsuccessfully to make her more cheerful, gently took her arm and led her to the portico, to allure her from her desponding meditations by the beauty of the night. The foliage was gently stirred by the light south wind, and the stars sprinkled their pale light upon the brow of the invalid as she leaned on the arm of her lovely companion.

"Dear Caroline, if I may call you by so endearing a term on so brief a friendship," said Eugenie, "give not away to this melancholy of spirits. I have come here to cheer you, and I am resolved to restore you to health," she playfully added. "'Tis wrong to pine so, and let the rose fade in your cheek, and the lustre of your eyes be dimmed. You will lose all your charms, and then how will you get a lover? These lovers, like moths flitting about a lamp, will hover round none but a bright eye."

Caroline shuddered, and clung nervously to her arm, but made no reply.

"Nay, sweet Caroline," she continued, kissing her, "I meant not to touch so sensitive a chord; I see, by that sigh, thou knowst what 'tis to love," and Eugenie herself sighed unconsciously, and was for a moment silent.

"And does not that sigh, my gentle Eugenie, tell a tale of love?" said Caroline, lifting her eyes to her face, and striving to read its lineaments in the faint starlight. "Come, Eugenie, tell me the story of your young heart's adventures; 'twill serve to beguile the time, and, perhaps, dissipate this weary load of sadness which oppresses me. Walk with me through this shady avenue, the dark depths of which tempt to seclusion and invite to tales of love. There is a little arbour beyond where I love to sit when alone, and look out upon the placid river, meditate upon the evening skies, and fancy all bright heaven beyond them; or pass the weary hours in reading some favourite volume. Come with me, Eugenie, and I will listen well, for your silence tells me you have a sweet story to sooth my spirits with."

"I cannot, dear Caroline, refuse to make you happy; but my tale will be one of a silly passion, which I dare not speak of to myself. Urge me not."

"Then give me the history of your escape from a Canadian convent, and which I have only partly heard. There is a romance in all associated with a nun that delights my imagination. If you will not make me a confidant of your heart's secrets, then give me the story of your adventures. I think I could listen to it, told in your sweet accents, my Eugenie, until the stars faded into morning."

Caroline, while she spoke, drew her companion to the steps of the portico, and together they descended into the secluded walk, overhung with the laurel, althea, and arborvitæ, that, meeting above, formed a natural cloister, through which, during the day, the sun fell upon the gravelled floor beneath in a thousand flecks of golden light. Now it was darkly shaded and silent, save that a single bird, disturbed by their intruding footsteps, fluttered higher among the branches, in the thick security of which it had made his hiding−place for the night. They slowly and in silence walked along the avenue, impressed with the deep repose of a place where heavenly contemplation seemed to have taken up her abode.

"Poor bird, no harm shall come nigh you," said Caroline, as another inhabitant of those leafy abodes flew twittering away among the shrubbery. "Happy things! How often have I wished of late that I had the wings of a bird, that I might fly away and be at rest. But, Eugenie, I shall infuse my own melancholy into your spirits if I talk thus. Here is my little bower!" she added, as they arrived at the termination of the avenue near the water, the rippling flow of which they could distinctly hear, and stood before the entrance of a summerhouse half hidden in woodbine and jessamine. "I wish it were moonlight, Eugenie," she added, with some liveliness of manner, "that you might see what a lovely spot I have chosen for my hermitage. When the full moon pierces the interstices of the lattice and foliage, you would think the floor strewn with silvery spangles. The light then comes down like the scattered brilliancy of a thousand stars; into so many gems does the thicklywoven foliage break its disk! Why are

you so silent, Eugenie?"

"I was thinking, Caroline, what a happy effect the exchange of the close room for this lovely garden, the pleasant air and sweet seclusion, has upon your spirits. Your voice is richly toned with returning health and happiness. I cannot recognise the plaintive invalid of a few moments since with the animated being now before me. I would I knew the secret of such a cure!"

"Alas, Eugenie! 'tis all illusion," said Caroline, in a melancholy tone. "I have passed many pleasant hours in this bower; it is many days since I have been here, and the sight of it revives the past, for me no longer to return! Alas, it should not have affected me thus, for bitter, bitter indeed are the associations connected with it. Its memory is full of mingled sweet and bitterness. But I may not pour my griefs into your bosom. Oh, no. It would kill me to see your eyes turned upon me in coldness and scorn. My heart has its own griefs locked up from every eye but that of Heaven. There it may safely pour forth its misery! But forgive me, Eugenie. I will no more sadden your gentle and sympathizing bosom, which heaves as if it shared the full burden of my woes."

"My dear Caroline," said Eugenie, embracing her, "willingly would I share them. Unburden your throbbing heart of all its griefs. 'Twill lighten half the load to pour your sorrows into another's ear."

"Tempt me not!" she cried, with energy, releasing herself from her embrace; "oh, tempt me not! Thy scorn *his* withering eye! Oh God! no, no, *never!* I will hold it closely in my bosom until my heart burst with the pressure of its weight. Eugenie, my dear, my finely−strung nerves are delicate, and will not bear much; the lightest breath will ring harsh tones from their tremulous chords."

"Dear Caroline, sooth your agitation. If you will listen, I will tell you a tale of love; I will refuse you nothing, only calm your feelings. Sit here by my side, and I will relate how a silly nun let a cavalier run away with her, and how, when he went to the wars, she was foolish enough to run after him. Sit by me, and, while I speak, you can watch the river flowing past so deep and stilly, with the stars reflected in its bosom like another heaven."

"No, no! not *there*, not there!" she exclaimed, suddenly sinking into the opposite seat; and then added, faintly, "*he* sat' *there* when last we met here! No, Eugenie, no," she said, with assumed playfulness, "you must yield to my wilfulness. I am given to strange humours of late. I will lean on your shoulder thus while you are speaking, and gaze on your dark eyes if this poor light will let me. I love dark eyes, Eugenie. They tell of happy hearts and a sunny life. Blue eyes seem to me like the heavens; at times beautiful and clear, and the emblem of celestial peace, but oftener darkened and varied by clouds and tempests, smiling and weeping by turns."

"Your eyes are emblems alone of April skies, my dear Caroline."

"Indeed they have been of late, Eugenie. But once they had more of sunshine in them than of rain. Now tell me your tale; I shall listen with a child's wonder."

"Shall it be of love or escape?"

"'Twill be of both if you are the heroine, I think."

Eugenie laughed, and then sighed, and then began her story. She assumed at first a lively and humorous strain, which, coloured by her feelings as they were strengthened by the associations her narrative called up, insensibly became more natural, and, finally, energetic.

"There was, then, Caroline, once upon a time, a certain orphan nun, who, nevertheless, did not like to be a nun. She scandalized the graver sisters by her profane and worldly desires, made false stitches in her embroidery, broke her tambour−frame regularly thrice a day, and invented tales to vex the confessor."

"And, pray, what was the name of this pretty specimen of mischief?"

"Her name concerns not the tale," said the maiden, demurely. "At length it chanced a cavalier came to the convent disguised as a priest, and, imposing on the reverend father, took the confessional chair."

"No doubt this cavalier knew there was one of the penitents who `would not be a nun,' that he adopted this stratagem."

"Not so. He was escaping in disguise, being in an enemy's country, and sought the convent's hospitality. It was by mere accident she met him. When," continued Eugenie, more seriously, "the nun went to confess, she told him in her confession how she pined for the free world; and so, when he had heard her story, he all at once came out of the confessional and kneeled before her, a handsome youth, most beautiful to behold."

"And I dare say the nun screamed, and then threw herself into his arms, and they both ran off together."

"That same day," continued Eugenie, smiling, "the nun, trusting all to the honour of the youthful cavalier, left the convent with him in disguise."

"Poor silly nun," said Caroline, sighing; "I hope she rued not this trust!"

"The saints forefend!" replied Eugenie; "the youth was as honourable as he was comely and bold."

"'Twere a lovely sight, this bold youth and fair maiden! Whither went they?"

"'Tis a long story. They rode all night, and the next day reached Quebec. She was received into the governor's castle, and afterward freed her cavalier from prison, into which the governor, who was his country's enemy, had thrown him."

"How freed she him, this bold maiden?"

"By deceiving the guard, and becoming, for an hour, prisoner in his stead."

"Ha! I think the cavalier who would purchase his liberty at such a price were worthy to live his life out within a prison's walls. I dare say she loved him after this, nevertheless; for it is hard to keep anger against one we've loved," she said, sadly.

"Censure not the youth, fair Caroline," said Eugenie, with animation; "he knew no meanness. I made him fly! I made his obedience the test of his love!"

"*Thou!* I half guessed thou wert the nun."

"Thou hast guessed rightly, Caroline. Censure him not, for you will blame one who is your friend."

"Nay, I know you are my best, my dearest friend," she said, embracing her, misapplying a term which Eugenie meant for another; "forgive me. Your story interests me. What became of your for such I must now call him what became of your lover?"

"He went far away to the wars, for he was a soldier, and was absent many months."

"And did not my Eugenie hear from him all the while? and what became of the sweet nun in his absence?"

"He sent no tidings of his safety; and she, after waiting with great patience, accompanied some friends who were journeying in the neighbourhood of his army, if perchance she might hear of or even see him."

"Then thou wert much in love, Eugenie! That is a genuine sigh. Proceed; I honour you for your true love; but you were led by it into great danger, should you find your lover and he not prove true."

"I did find him, Caroline. I met him in the presence of his chief, who looked with suspicion on my love, and would have misconstrued, to my shame, my devotion to Edward."

"Eugenie!" almost shrieked Caroline, grasping her arm. "Oh God! But no, no, it could not be! I will not injure him by a half−formed thought of suspicion. Go on! mind me not! It was a sudden pang; I am better now go go go on, Eugenie."

"I fainted for joy on recognising him, and, when I recovered, he was gone, and I was in the presence of strangers."

"And then," said Caroline, with assumed gayety, "you no doubt fainted again, like a proper heroine."

"No, I did not. I was kept prisoner as if I were a mere child or a criminal, while much was said to me to turn the current of my affections."

"And you were not false, Eugenie?"

"No. Though much was told me false of him, of which, if the ninth part were true, I would tear his image from my heart, if it took life with it, and trample it thus beneath my feet," she said, energetically stamping upon the ground. "But I did not believe them, and only loved him the better that I found him beset with enemies."

"You would not have been a woman if you had done otherwise. How escaped you?"

"The next day I was conveyed under escort to a villa not far off, there to wait, as the chief said, to see if my lover proved worthy of me; if not, he wished to bestow my hand, as if chance had given him the right to do so, on a youth of his household."

"What, another lover?"

"No, no, Caroline. He was of a noble presence and courteous, but I cared not for him. Nevertheless, he was very kind, and defended him I loved; and for one word he spoke in defence of him whom all conspired to injure, I could have loved him."

"So fickle, Eugenie? This chief, then, would not have had much ado to bestow your hand where he wished if your lover had been out of the way or you had proved him false?"

"If I thought you serious, Caroline, I should be hurt. Yet this youth were worthy a highborn maiden's love; but I think not of him, unless I win him to give him to you, Caroline."

"No, Eugenie! Proceed. Where was your lover, pray, when this rival was in the way?"

"After we landed, for we went in a boat to the villa, our guard was set upon by an ambuscade, and the next moment I was in the arms of the leader."

"Who was "

"Edward."

"Edward! It is very strange! And all this happened in the far Canadas? I doubt not 'tis a land of romance. You are a lovely heroine, Eugenie. But proceed."

"It was not in the Canadas; but I will tell you by−and−by. It was twilight. I was lifted to a saddle, and while my protector, with his guard, were kept passive, Edward seized the reins of my horse, and, spurring his own, urged the animals forward. We were soon joined by the whole troop, and galloped along the road and through the forests with the noise of thunder, the spurs, chains, and armour ringing bravely. Both pleased and terrified, I still enjoyed my situation, and, catching the spirit of the occasion, almost wished I had been a soldier."

"I verily believed there was an ambitious and restless spirit beneath those soft downcast eyes of thine. Didst have a chance of proving thy courage, my cavalier?" said Caroline, with increased gayety and with playful irony. "I dare say, if your lover had not obeyed you at that time, you would have challenged him to single combat. Well, my military nun, what happened next? I would Burton were here to listen to your tale. He could take lessons in valour from it. What adventure next?"

"After half an hour's riding the guards were dismissed, and I was left alone with Edward and his servant. We then rode forward, and at length, on his turning from the highway, I demanded of him a knowledge of his intentions, saying that, as an honourable maiden, I should not ride the country with any cavalier by night, love him never so much."

"And I dare say," said Caroline, her spirits in a fine flow, "you threatened him with present chastisement by sword or pistol, as might suit his valour, if he declined replying to your very proper question."

"Not so; he told me he was to lead me where I could perform a deed of charity; and so affectingly appealed to my heart, that I could not refuse him."

"'Twas to go with him to church, this deed of charity, I am well assured, Eugenie. And so you went?"

"No, I did not," replied Eugenie, in the same tone of raillery. "It was to be the companion of a young female friend, an invalid, whom he was bound to protect, from friendship for her father, who fell in the northern wars."

"And this invalid!" said Caroline, her suspicions reawakened, gasping for breath, and pressing Eugenie's arm until she cried out with pain.

"My dear Caroline! restrain your feelings! What has moved you?" exclaimed Eugenie, in terror.

"The invalid! who? her name? speak for oh God! I fear, I fear speak!"

Eugenie in vain strove to sooth her.

"Will you not answer?" she cried, rising up and grasping her shoulders with a firm hold; "was it not me, Caroline Germaine?"

"It was, Caroline; but be calm "

"And was not thy lover's name Edward?"

"Indeed, Caroline, release me! You torture me! I cannot endure this grasp!"

"Answer, Eugenie de Lisle, if it were thy last word! Was it not Edward?"

"Yes, Caroline."

"Edward Burton!" she whispered, through her closed lips, with increased energy.

"Yes."

A convulsive shudder passed over her frame, she released her hold of the distressed maiden, and, uttering a piercing shriek, fell lifeless to the ground.

Eugenie echoed the thrilling cry; and, after attempting in vain to raise her, flew with the speed of a fawn along the avenues, and, rushing into the dwelling, called on the servants for aid. She had scarcely disappeared in the windings of the walk when a man made his way through the hedge beside the arbour, and hastily entered it. With an exclamation of sympathy he lifted Caroline from the ground, and, without hesitation, traversed the avenue along which, as he leaped the hedge, he had seen Eugenie flying. At the foot of the portico he met her, accompanied by the terrified servants bearing lights. On seeing the stranger she started back, and suppressed a cry that rose to her lips; then advancing towards him, she exclaimed, in a tone of joyful surprise,

"Colonel Arden! thank God! Bear her into the house. Is she is she? oh, I dare not know the truth!"

"My dear Miss de Lisle," said the stranger, "be not distressed. She has only fainted. Preserve your presence of mind; it is all called for now."

While he was speaking he bore Caroline into the parlour, and, by Eugenie's direction, gently placed his lovely burden upon the sofa. Then, leaving her to the more experienced care of Eugenie and the servants, he walked into the hall, which was lighted by a lamp in a glass globe suspended from the ceiling. The light fell upon his fine intellectual forehead as he paced to and fro beneath it. His eyes were cast into deep shadow, which, however, did not conceal their fierce glow; his lip was compressed with determination, and indignation gave a stern expression to his fine features. As he walked, his step rang as if the whole man sympathized in the emotion of the spirit within his breast. His reflections were evidently of a dark and violent character. One moment he would strike the hilt of his sword vehemently, and half draw it from the scabbard; then, as if changing a sudden purpose, he thrust it back again with a loud clang. Now he would suddenly pause in his walk, and listen to catch some token of returning life to the frame of the gentle girl; or, tapping softly at the door, learn from the lips of Eugenie herself, who, pale and distressed, answered his light summons, the state of her patient. At last Eugenie came into the hall, and informed him, as he hastened to meet her, that she slept.

"Pray Heaven," he said, solemnly, "that it may be the sleep of eternity."

"The holy saints forbid!" replied Eugenie, with surprise.

"Why," he said, "need we wish the unfortunate to live, when life is purchased with tears? Why recall the wretched and broken−hearted from the threshold of the grave, that opens its welcome bosom to receive the weary body to its embrace? Why call back to sin and sorrow the spirit which is spreading its wings for its heavenward flight?"

There is but one step from mutual sympathy, excited by a cause that appeals to the sensibilities, to confidence. The low−toned communion of the sick−chamber, where a youth and maiden chance to be the watchers, goes farther to awaken love in their hearts than a *tête−à−tête* in a leafy bower, or a walk beneath the pale moon. The heart is at this time softened by sympathy with suffering; the feelings are then gentle; benevolence is active; and kind words and tenderness characterize the intercourse of the speakers. This gentle tone of voice and manner, caused by the sympathy of human nature with present suffering, insensibly takes a warmer character, and love in

the guise of our best feelings steals insensibly into the heart. There is no better prescription to make a youth and a maiden love one another than to enlist them in the same act of charity; no contiguity so dangerous, if that policy which governs those matches that are not made in heaven would have them, in reference to each other, strangers to this passion.

After a few moments' conversation in relation to Caroline, in those low tones which are as equally the accents of love as of sympathy, confidence seemed insensibly, and at once, to be established between the two, and they conversed together like proved friends. Their voices were attuned to the atmosphere of suffering; but Arden's had the full pathos of love; low, deep, and touching; which, if it at all startled her, Eugenie easily referred to the remote cause, the invalid. Her heart was opened by the distress of Caroline. Its most generous impulses were uppermost; while gratitude for the sympathy of Arden, and the relief she experienced by his presence, rendered her heart, as it would that of any woman so situated, peculiarly susceptible of impression. This, however, Arden sought to make only by look and accent, with the most persevering, but, at the same time, the most delicate approaches; determining to press his suit at the moment she should become convinced of the faithlessness of her first lover, for then the heart yields most readily to the introduction of a second passion; for it is sympathy, to which love is akin, it then seeks. Having overheard the conversation between her and Caroline, he had the advantage of knowing that she did not regard him with indifference; and he flattered himself that, if he could displace the image of Burton from her heart, his own happiness would be secured. He therefore determined, both from a principle of justice and personal interest, which almost always mingles with our best acts, to expose, with as little abruptness as possible, his dark designs, and especially to show her that Caroline had been his victim.

A slight movement in the room as he came to this conclusion called Eugenie from the hall; and turning from the door, he with a thoughtful brow paced up and down the saloon, thinking how he should introduce the painful subject with the most delicacy.

CHAPTER IX. THE RIVALS.

Arden at length drew near the door, and called to Eugenie, who seemed to have forgotten his presence by the length of her absence. She came with a book in her hand, as if she had been reading by the pillow of her patient, while he, with all a lover's ardour, believed her to be thinking only of himself, and impatient to return to him. He was, however, not easily moved by her apparent indifference; but, in his own heart, commended that sense of maidenly reserve her conduct had exhibited.

"Does your patient sleep?" he softly inquired, his voice aimed unconsciously to her heart, his words to her ear.

"Sweetly. She passed from that fearful paroxysm without a word into a deep sleep. She breathes unequally; but 'tis sleep, and I hope the most favourable result on awakening. But tell me, sir, how you came to appear so opportunely, as if you had fallen from the skies?"

"I followed you to this house, after the dragoons were pleased to restore me to liberty, for the purpose of reclaiming my stolen charge; was near when this young lady shrieked, and entered the arbour just after your left it."

"How fortunate! Alone, I should not have known what to do in such an emergency."

"I feel happy that Miss de Lisle can, under any circumstances, feel that my presence is agreeable," he said, tenderly.

"Major Arden, I have before forbidden such language," she said, firmly, and with dignity; "the betrothed maiden should be as sacred as she who claims the protection due to a bride."

"Forgive me, Eugenie," he said, quickly; and then, in an altered and grave tone, he continued, "Can you indeed be ignorant of the true cause of this lady's illness?"

She started at the marked emphasis of his voice and manner, and looked at him inquiringly for a moment, while her face changed alternately from the deepest crimson to the deadliest paleness, and her whole frame became agitated by some sudden and violent emotion. Then, with a wild eye and a blanched cheek, she laid her hand upon his arm, and would have spoken, but her voice failed her. Words could not have been more expressive than her looks. Her face betrayed a full consciousness of the dreadful import of his question. Yet she was far from knowing the extent of her lover's faithlessness. Her heart only told her that Caroline and Burton were lovers. Indignation and grief agitated her bosom. But the dregs of the bitter cup prepared for her she had yet to drink.

"Tell me, Major Arden, for the sake of Heaven! tell me if my dreadful suspicions are true!"

"Forgive my abruptness; but my duty to myself as a gentleman, to you as a deceived and suffering women, compels me to divulge the truth, Miss de Lisle. Burton is a villain, and "

"Speak on! I can bear all! Tell me the worst!" she demanded, with a kindling eye and compressed lip.

"Your own purity of heart and ignorance of evil alone prevented you from knowing, half an hour since, that the name you pronounced in the arbour, and which I overheard, is the key to Caroline Germaine's suffering."

"Merciful God! how blind I am! I see, I know it all," she whispered hoarsely to herself; then added impetuously, "there is more to tell! I see it in your troubled eyes! Keep nothing back."

"It is necessary, my dear Miss de Lisle, that you should know the worst. Caroline Germaine is the victim of foul wrong."

The indignant countenance with which the proud and insulted maiden heard this disclosure changed, as he spoke the last word, to an expression of agony mingled with deep shame. Her brow and bosom were suffused with a flush of crimson, which suddenly disappeared again, leaving her face as colourless as Parian marble, while her young bosom heaved as if it would burst the bodice that confined it. Arden repented his sudden disclosure, and, fearing she was about to fall, extended his arm to support her, when she waved him back.

"No, no," she exclaimed, with a stern eye and in a tone of wounded feeling, "I need it not! My indignation will bear me up in this hour."

She pressed her hand upon her forehead as if she would recall the past, while, in the energy of her feelings, the blood sprung to her lip, which she had pierced in the intensity of her agony.

"Colonel Arden," she suddenly exclaimed, unclasping her hands, "prove this false, and Heaven will reward you."

"Alas! it is too, too true," he answered, with a melancholy firmness. "It has long been known to the world."

After a moment's silent agony, she suddenly changed her energetic manner, and laid her hand entreatingly upon his shoulder, while her eyes were full with the eloquence that pleads to the feelings:

"Oh, tell me that this is not so! Tell me you have been over hasty in your words! Say you doubt! Oh, give me one ray of hope!" and her eyes dwelt on his as if they would read in them something to assure her that her lover was not so false; that she herself was not so deeply degraded.

But, alas! there was nothing to assure her; nothing to arrest the judgment that had gone forth against the idol of her soul. He tenderly took her hand, and the moisture of manly sensibility bedewed his eyes as they rested on the face of the sweet sufferer. She continued for a moment longer to watch his countenance, as if still some faint gleam of hope might linger there; and then, in the desolation and abandonment of her heart, the insulted but high−spirited maiden burst into tears, dropped her head upon the shoulder of the noble youth, and wept like a very child. This act was not the impulse of the heart, but the prompting of nature; the tendril, torn by the rude blast from its stalk, clinging around the nearest trunk for support. It was woman in the hour of adversity looking for sympathy and support to the nobler being man, the natural protector of her weakness.

This tribute to her insulted feelings was but momentary. Her heart was relieved of its pressure by a few passionate showers of tears; and raising her head, and meeting the tender, gratified glance of his eyes, she blushed and shrank from him, although with manly delicacy he had refrained from wounding her sensibilities at such a moment by offering to support her drooping form in his arms. She felt his delicacy, and acknowledged it by a look of gratitude, that amply rewarded his selfdenial. This forbearance, when she subsequently reflected how she had abandoned herself in the grief of the moment, and how he had respected the sacredness of her injured feelings, went far to give him a firmer hold upon her heart.

"Colonel Arden," she said, frankly extending her hand, "I know you speak the truth. I thank you for your bitter words. You have saved me from a fearful delusion; alas! scattered to the winds my heart's treasures. Poor Caroline! I can now read his dark purposes by the light you have given me, and to which my silly heart would have blinded my eyes, perhaps, till too late. Arden," she said, suddenly, "I must leave this house immediately. Will you protect me to my friends?"

"Cheerfully. The doors of Mrs. Washington's mansion are ever open to you."

"Thank the Virgin! there is, indeed, a home for me! Dear lady! Why did I not believe her? But Caroline, poor, dear, injured Caroline! She is dying of a broken heart. Alas, I have killed her. Indeed, it were enough to kill her. If pride and scorn did not come to my relief, I should soon be like her. Gentle, suffering creature! she is not I cannot believe her criminal."

"Nor is she. She is the innocent victim of deliberate guilt. But "

"We must not desert her; no, never. She has doubly need of my presence."

"Excellent girl, who cannot forget the sufferings of others in your own. Caroline shall also be removed."

"Alas, I fear 'twill be only to her grave. Ha! I hear the sound of horses' feet! If it should be *him!* Colonel Arden, fly! your life is not safe."

As she spoke the rapid fall of a horse's hoofs was heard along the lane bordering the garden, and the next moment ceased at the gate, which opened so quickly afterward that the rider must have thrown himself from his horse in his haste, and left him loose. A quick, determined tread traversed the avenue and approached the portico, on the threshold of which, in the hall door, stood Arden, calmly awaiting the appearance of the hurrying intruder.

"It is *he!*" whispered Eugenie, with a strange, determined calmness in the tones of her voice.

"I anticipated this," said Arden, placing his hand habitually on his sword.

"For God's sake be not rash! Let your own coolness counteract his fire. But my presence should at least check him."

While she spake the form of Burton issued from the walk, and the next moment he stood before them on the topmost step of the portico, his dark eye flashing fire and his lip trembling with emotion. He checked the fierce words that rose to his lips as he beheld Eugenie standing pale and unmoved in the hall; and, as a placid scene succeeds, at the will of the scene−shifter, the frowning tempest, so the storm of passion disappeared from his brow, and was followed by a bland and courteous smile, the more striking from its contrast with the dark expression that had preceded it; and in his most courteous manner, although his voice was marked by a slight shade of irony, he said,

"Colonel Arden, I wish you a good−evening. We have met before to−night, I believe."

"We have, sir," replied Arden, sternly, "and will meet again. You are a villain, sir."

"Ha! That to me?" cried Burton, striking his sword−hilt and half unsheathing his weapon. "The presence of woman, which you have sought, alone protects you. But there will be a time "

"None better than the present to prove your baseness," said Colonel Arden, in a determined tone. "Dare you confess your dark purpose, sir, in enticing this artless creature?" he continued, glancing at Eugenie, who gazed fixedly upon the features of Burton with a face in which love struggled with indignation. "Dare you confess, sir?"

"Colonel Arden, you presume too much," said Burton, with the steady voice of settled hate, "nor shall I permit you to catechise me."

"I have one more question to put to you, sir. Is Caroline Germaine, who, six months ago, was the loveliest of maidens, and whose wrong rumour hath blown abroad I ask you, sir, is she your wedded wife?"

"Colonel Arden," cried Burton, who stood chafing like a chained tiger on the portico, "the presence of a legion of angels should not prevent me from chastising you on the spot. So, sir, draw and defend yourself! and, if it please you," he added, with a smile that caused Eugenie to shudder, at the same time unsheathing his sword, "there stands the reward of the victor. Strike for Eugenie and beauty."

"Hold, insulter," cried Eugenie, extending her arm between their crossed blades; "degraded as you have made its owner, pollute not that name! The charm is broken. You are unmasked, and I behold him whom I believed an angel of light a dark, polluted demon!"

"Eugenie!"

"Address me not. I know all. From this moment I am nothing to thee nor thou to me! I have been long dreaming on a precipice, and Heaven has awakened me just as I am ready to fall."

"Eugenie! I could not have believed this," he said, in astonishment, but in a voice of tender reproach that, had her proof of his guilt been less palpable, would have touched her heart; "is this the love you have borne for me?"

"Love? Yes, I did love you, Edward," she said, in a changed voice; "but," she added, firmly, "I love you no longer. I should hate," she continued, with scorn, "did I not pity you."

She turned from him as she spoke with a withering curl on her beautiful lip; but it was to hide tears that stole into her eyes in this struggle between her heart and head.

"I am, I find, somewhat indebted to you, Colonel Arden," said Burton, with concentrated anger, but speaking slowly and calmly. "If you think my discarded mistress worth fighting for, I will resume my interrupted pastime with you, and so wipe out the score."

As he spoke he set upon Arden with great fury, who, skilfully parrying his fierce attacks, acted only on the defensive. Eugenie did not hear Burton's offensive allusion, a noise in the adjoining room drawing her at the moment to the door of the parlour; but, before she could ascertain the cause of it, the clashing of weapons turned her back again.

The rapid motion of their swords, as they glanced in the light, for the moment bewildered her eyes, unused to such fierce scenes; but, guided by the impulse that instinctively impels us to attempt to prevent the effusion of blood in a hasty broil, she prepared to rush forward, that, by the interposition of her own person, she might stay their weapons. A large Indian shawl which Caroline had thrown aside caught her eye at the instant, and, seizing it, she threw it, ere the third pass, upon their crossed blades. In the act she approached so near Burton that, prompted by some sudden impulse, he seized her firmly around the waist. Disengaging his sword at the same time, he said exultingly to Arden, whose weapon was still entangled in the shawl,

"Now fight for her if thou wilt have her!"

Eugenie neither shrieked nor struggled, but with that presence of mind which had hitherto so successfully aided her, she no sooner felt his arm around her, and saw his sword brandished to defend her person, than she drew from her bosom the stiletto he had formerly given her, and said, in a low, fearfully distinct voice, that alone reached *his* ear,

"Release me, or you die by my hand."

He instinctively obeyed. The door of the parlour at this instant opened, and Caroline advanced steadily and directly towards him. Her face was haggard and pale; whiter than the snowy robe she wore. She seemed rather a dweller of the tombs than an habitant of earth; a pale spectre, which even death had not robbed of its youthful loveliness. All were struck dumb at her sudden appearance and the unearthly solemnity of her countenance. Without looking to either side she approached Burton, who leaned over his sword and gazed at her in silent horror, without the power to avert his eyes from an object he shuddered to look upon. Fixing on him a cold, steadfast look, she said, in sepulchral tones,

"Edward Burton, my cup is filled. My heart is broken."

The solemn earnestness of her manner affected them all. Arden looked on her with deep sympathy, and then cast a glance of resentment at him who had destroyed so fair a fabric of humanity. Eugenie was deeply affected. Burton alone stood unmoved, except by surprise and impatience. He was about to speak, when she arrested his words.

"Edward, hush! I would no more hear that voice either in kindness or in anger. May Heaven forgive, even as I forgive you."

She then came close to him, and looked in his face for a moment like one about to take a long leave of a dear object, her face softening as she gazed. "Yes, yes," she said, "they are there! the same lineaments which are graven on the tablet of my heart, never, never to be effaced. God in Heaven bless you, Edward! I cannot curse you!"

Then clasping her hands together and raising her eyes heavenward, she gently sunk down upon her knees as if in silent prayer. Eugenie, who had continued by her side, passed her arm around her and received her head upon her bosom. The spirit of the injured sufferer, released without a sigh, took its flight to that region where there is neither sorrow nor wrong, and where justice is meted by Him who sees not as man sees; and who, with unerring discrimination and wisdom, shall judge between the tempter and the tempted.

For a few moments the group stood in the portico in which the close of this tragedy had arrested its individual members: Eugenie supporting the lifeless body, herself nearly as lifeless; Arden, with his arms folded and his eye glancing from the face of the dead victim to the face of the guilty seducer, his chest heaving with hardly suppressed emotion. He himself stood leaning on his sword, gazing upon her with a cool, steady eye and unmoved lip; his emotion, if he felt any, effectually disguised from the closest scrutiny. He appeared rather to be thoughtfully contemplating a specimen of statuary that had unexpectedly fallen across his path, than gazing upon the wreck of a beautiful temple which he himself had despoiled and afterward destroyed. For a moment, even at that solemn time, his eye wandered over the form of Eugenie, and for an instant lingered to mark the heaving swell of her bosom as she kneeled on the floor over her insensible burden. Eugenie seemed instinctively to have felt his libertine glance, for, hastily arranging her kerchief, which had fallen aside in her agitation, she laid the head of the corpse upon the ground; then all at once, with a heightened colour and a flashing eye, and with the bearing of a young Pythoness, she addressed him in terms of fierce eloquence, inspired by mingled emotions of scorn, contempt, and anger words faintly expressing the character and intensity of her feelings.

"Man with the face of an angel and the heart of a demon! this is your act. Has God given you power that you should use it to this end? Can you gaze calmly on this wreck of loveliness? Does not the silent appeal of death move you? Has thy conscience no voice? Do you not tremble at the awful charge the departed spirit of the murdered Caroline I repeat it, *murdered!* is at this moment laying at the feet of Divine Justice? Dare you contemplate the future, when she will confront you in judgment, innocence arraigned against guilt, the victim against the destroyer? Cold, dark, guilty being! too low for revenge, too high for pity, you only merit the contempt of all honourable minds. Leave this spot, which death has made sacred! Continue to abuse the exalted gifts that Heaven has bestowed upon you, but remember! fearful, both in this life and the future, will be the retribution. Back, sir," she cried, as he advanced as if to entreat her; "approach me, and I will avenge this dear murdered girl, and send your guilty spirit to the bar where justice awaits her victim. Human laws punish not thy crime! 'tis too great! they cannot reach it. 'Tis alone reserved for the bar of Heaven. Think not thou wilt escape its judgment."

If Caroline had expired in the presence of Burton alone, he would, perhaps, unseen, have shown human sympathy for her untimely fate, hastened, if not wholly produced, by his own criminal passions. But in the presence of a rival and a victim who had escaped his toils, his pride came to his aid, and he affected an indifference which, in reality, he did not feel. Like all unreal emotions, the cold, unmoved face that he called to his assistance was exaggerated. His heart was wrung with remorse and sorrow, while his features wore an expression of easy indifference, slightly mingled with contempt, as if he felt himself, in a manner, the victim of a got−up scene. The language of the deceased had affected him so far only as his sympathy was called into action. Although he felt some degree of resentment when she at first approached and addressed him, he was deeply moved when, in her calm, gentle accents, she lifted her eyes heavenward and sought the Divine blessing upon him. His heart was pierced through by her few and simple words; and the agonies of death seemed to have wrung his own frame as Caroline's sweet spirit passed away, and left her with a peaceful smile on her mouth, like an infant just fallen to sleep. The arrow rankled in his heart; but he set his features to an expression far removed from that which they naturally would have assumed, the more effectually to prevent any outward sign of his inward emotion from being exposed to his high−spirited victim or haughty rival; preferring in his proud heart to appear unfeeling and inhuman, rather than excite the pity of those whose contempt he felt he merited. Men will ever choose the hatred rather than the pity of their fellow−beings.

But the depth of his emotion could not entirely subdue the outbreakings of that passion which formed a prominent and a fatal point in his character when an object was present to excite it, and it was with visible confusion that he saw Eugenie, glowing with resentment, immediately rise up and confront him. His embarassment was, however, but momentary, and he listened with a cool smile as she addressed him, though every word she uttered sunk to his heart. When she ceased he said, with cutting severity in his sarcastic tones,

"Verily, if I had been Lucifer himself, I could not have been more highly honoured. 'Tis a pity, lady, such sweet lips and such a rich−toned voice should discourse of aught beside love thy bright eyes enforcing each argument."

Eugenie looked on him for a moment in undisguised wonder and scorn, and then tremblingly kneeled by the dead body, upon whose face her hot tears trickled fast. She was roused, however, by Arden, who advanced upon Burton as he was speaking, and said, while his voice trembled with emotion,

"Man or demon, whichever thou art, avaunt!"

"And leave thee this pretty orator to beguile thy leisure hours," replied Burton, with the most provoking calmness.

The indignant Arden, unable to restrain his feelings, replied by striking him a violent blow in the breast with his sword−hilt. Burton staggered back, but, recovering himself, attacked his antagonist so madly, that the cooler Arden, who was prepared to receive him, had all the advantage, and, after two or three passes, he disarmed him, sending his sword flying to the extremity of the hall, at the same time presenting the point of his own at his breast. Eugenie sprung forward and arrested his arm. Burton took up his weapon, and, gnashing his teeth with rage, said, as he descended the steps of the portico,

"When next we meet we part not thus." He hastily traversed the avenue, and in a few moments his horse's footsteps were heard swiftly moving along the outer hedge of the garden.

Arden and Eugenie remained in the same attitude in which he had left them until the sounds had quite died away, when the latter, releasing her grasp of his sword, pressed her hand to her temples, and, with a melancholy cry of anguish, would have fallen, had he not caught her, across the body of the now happy Caroline, who in this world had expiated, alas, how severely! the punishment that followed her error. Poor Eugenie! the fate of Caroline was, indeed, enviable when compared with hers. The excitement of her mind subsided with the absence of its cause. Carried forward with the rapid transition of events, and shocked by the tragic end of Caroline, she had not yet time to reflect on her own state, and realize how deeply all these things affected her individual happiness. With the departure of Burton, the proud spirit which had come to her aid in the time of trial deserted her; and, like the contemplation of his death−hour to the condemned, her close connexion with the developments she had been a witness to, and the horrible reality of all that had passed and its relation to herself, rushed upon her thoughts, and she sunk under the weight of affliction that pressed upon her young heart. She did not faint. But she was struck with mute and dreadful grief, the more fearful that it could find no relief in tears. She leaned upon the sustaining arm of Arden in the full and lively consciousness of all her suffering; her eyes were hard, and the fountain of tears seemed to have been dried up; her lips refused utterance, although trembling to articulate; her bosom heaved short and quick; her breathing was difficult and audible, and her whole frame seemed alive and expressive of intense mental agony. Arden was alarmed.

"Miss de Lisle," he said, looking into her face, which was eloquent with anguish, "speak to me! Do not feel it so deeply! Merciful Heaven! her reason has fled! Speak, Eugenie! Oh God, what suffering! Weep, let me see you shed one tear, Eugenie! If you love no, no, I meant not so; but try and relieve your heart with tears. You will die! oh God, you will die!" cried the distressed Arden, as he supported her in his arms and gazed into her eyes, which wore that suffering expression that we often see in the eyes of children who are afflicted with some severe physical pain which equally terrifies and distresses them. The cup was, indeed, full to the brim. Every moment he expected the delicate vessel would break, when her heart suddenly overflowed, and tears, happy, merciful tears, came to her relief.

We will not linger over a scene so distressing. Arden embraced an interval of calmness; and Eugenie, yielding herself to his protection, was, ere half an hour elapsed, in the maternal arms of Mrs. Washington, who poured the balm of sympathy over her wounded spirit, and bound up her broken heart.

Like legitimate storytellers, we should here account for the timely appearance of Arden and the very untimely reappearance of Burton at the cottage.

Arden, surprised at the audacity of the attack upon his person, and prevented by his own arrest from taking any measures for the safety of his charge, had beheld Eugenie borne off in dismay. When, however, after the leader of the party had ridden out of sight with her, he was released by the dragoons, he commanded two of the soldiers, who now came up sufficiently crestfallen, to guard the remaining lady safely to her villa, while he ordered the others to search the stables for a horse.

"Ha! whom have we here?" he suddenly exclaimed, as Jacques's head and shoulders hove in sight on the verge of the hill. This valiant warrior had remained trembling behind the rock during the scene we have described; but, after the departure of the dragoons, he rode from his concealment and followed the dragoons up the steep ascent. The soldiers, turning at the exclamation, and seeing a horseman so near them, were about to fly, supposing themselves again set upon by the enemy, when Arden, who saw that he was alone, and manifested no very belligerant attitude, restrained them, and, advancing to the rider, demanded his business.

"By my beard! comrades, I have sought your protection from the Philistines, for I see ye are good men and true."

"Give up your sword," demanded Arden.

Jacques complied, and said,

"Thou art an officer, worshipful! but not I. Though I wear a sword by my thigh, I am naught but a poor private."

"Dismount," said Arden, impatiently. "Soldiers, hold him under arrest, but harm him not."

Then taking a hasty leave of the lady, in whose breast indignation rather than fear was predominant, and ordering the soldiers to recover their muskets from the water, and remain at the villa until his return, he mounted the horse which Jacques had surrendered, and galloped to the top of the hill; he then spurred forward to the road, on which, afar off, he could faintly discern, through the gathering darkness, what appeared to be a squadron of horse. To make sure that he pursued the right road, he dismounted, and, carefully examining the ground, discovered by the marks that horses had passed that way towards the town. He remounted and rode forward, and soon approached near enough to distinguish the party who had attacked him riding at full speed, with Eugenie in their midst. At length the troop halted at the head of a lane. Arden drew aside to elude observation, and saw the whole party except three proceed towards town; these, one of whom was Eugenie, he beheld, shortly after, turn down the lane and ride rapidly towards Broadway.

"I will outwit this arch−intriguer," he exclaimed, as he saw this manoeuvre, "and protect Eugenie from the snare laid for her with my life!"

He rode after them, lingering so far behind as to keep them in sight, and at length turned into the lane, which, overshadowed by trees, enabled him to advance nearer to them unperceived. When Burton sent Zacharie forward to the cottage, and Eugenie, reining up, questioned him in relation to her destination, Arden resolved to rescue her then. Alighting, he secured his horse to the hedge, and, advancing softly, came so near as to overhear enough of their conversation to enable him to judge of the intentions of Burton, and to be assured of the artless confidence of Eugenie. His first impulse was to rush upon Burton, and win her from his grasp at the sword's point. After deliberating a moment, however, he determined to adopt another course. He therefore returned to his horse, and followed, as they rode forward, until they alighted at the gate of the cottage. He then approached closer, and would have dismounted and pursued his investigations further, but was defeated in his object by the presence of Zacharie, and his purpose was to avoid discovery. He hovered around the house and determined to enter after the departure of Burton; but, at length, for fear of being encountered, and thereby defeating his object, he rode slowly towards the head of the lane, when the sound of horses' feet led him to quicken his pace. The result is already known.

When Arden dismounted at the gate the voices in the arbour arrested his ear. He listened to the playful story told by Eugenie until the shriek of the ill−starred Caroline called him to her aid. It was Burton's suspicions of the true character of the spy he had pursued that induced him to return a second time to the cottage.

CHAPTER X. THE BATTLE.

On the memorable morning of the twenty−seventh of August, 1776, the citizens of New−York were aroused from their slumbers by a heavy cannonading from the southeast, and these ominous sounds convinced them that the attack, which the American army had been, for the last two days, busily making preparations to meet, had at length commenced. A thousand prayers from a thousand patriot hearts ascended to heaven with every report of the artillery, while mothers and maidens sought their closets to pray for those most dear to them. The Battery, the wharves, the roofs of the houses, and the spires of churches were thronged with spectators; their bosoms agitated by various emotions, as the hopes of the Tory or the fears of the Whig prevailed.

The army at Brooklyn, which had been re−enforced by the six regiments under General Putnam, who now assumed the command there, heard the first distant discharge of cannon, as they lay on their arms, with an interest still more intense. General Putnam, who, by the greatest exertions, had got the army in a situation to receive and repel an attack, was riding along the lines, encouraging the soldiers, by the most animated exhortations, to preserve coolness and courage. The cannonading continued to increase, and, as the day dawned, became spirited, occasionally mingled with the roll of musketry, and the dull, heavy report of a mortar; while the colonial army, drawn up in line, stood anxiously awaiting the approach of the enemy.

The British army had landed, the morning of the twenty−second, on the southwest coast of Long Island, about two leagues below the town. Resting their centre at Flatbush, they stretched their right wing towards Flatland, and extended their left to the shore on which they had disembarked. The centre at Flatbush, by this position, was but little above a league distant from the American lines at Brooklyn, while the wings were five or six miles.

Such was the position of the British army the evening of the twenty−sixth, separated from the enemy only by a long range of thickly−wooded hills, through which were two or three passes, strongly guarded by detachments of American troops. During the night both wings of the British army simultaneously advanced. The right wing and van, under General Clinton, seized a pass about three miles east of the village of Bedford, and at daybreak crossed the heights, surprising and capturing the guard posted there; then, entering the level country on the opposite side, they immediately advanced to turn the flank of the American left.

General Grant, with the left wing of the British army, advanced along the coast with ten pieces of artillery; and, to draw the attention of the Americans from their left, and to cause them to direct their whole force to this point, he moved slowly, skirmishing as he advanced. As, nevertheless, he continued to gain ground, General Putnam sent strong detachments, which he constantly re−enforced, to check his advance. At length he directed General Stirling to lead two of the regiments along the road from the Narrows, by which Grant was approaching. It was nearly dawn when Lord Stirling gained the heights over which the road passed. There he was joined by the previous re−enforcements sent by Putnam, which, slowly and in good order, were retreating before the British column, which was in sight. He immediately prepared to defend the heights, when the British opened the spirited cannonade, the thunder of which had started the citizens of the beleaguered city from their beds.

Satisfied with defending the heights, Stirling made no attempt to advance on the enemy below. General Grant, on his part, had no intention of trying to drive him from his position until he should be informed of the success of that part of the plan of attack that had been intrusted to General Clinton. The two columns, therefore, kept up a distant cannonading, with occasionally a sharp skirmish between advanced parties of infantry, which continued for several hours without any material advantage. In addition to this, and the more effectually to bewilder the Americans and draw their attention to this quarter, the British fleet amused itself by keeping up a noisy and

incessant cannonade upon the battery at Red Hook.

While both wings of the invading army were moving forward one, in silence, to a real, the other, with the roar of artillery and roll of musketry, to a feigned attack their centre, composed of Hessians under General de Heister, continued to stand its original ground at Flatbush, which it was ordered to maintain until Clinton's ruse had been successfully executed. To divert the attention of the Americans from the right wing, De Heister kept up a warm cannonade against General Sullivan, who, with a considerable force, had thrown himself between him and the American army for the purpose of defending a pass in the highlands which was directly in front of the British centre. By this *ruse de guerre* the attention of the American general was drawn wholly to the British left and centre, while their main column, the right wing, consisting of the largest part of the army, was advancing in silence and secrecy against the American left. Every step of Clinton's progress, after he had seized the eastern pass and crossed the heights, not only brought him nearer the lines at Brooklyn, but in the rear of the generals, Sullivan and Stirling, who were on the heights defending their respective passes against Grant and De Heister. No military stratagem during the revolutionary contest was better planned or more singularly successful than this.

At length, some time after sunrise, an aiddecamp came spurring up, and informed General de Heister that Clinton had reached Bedford and gained the rear of Sullivan's left. On receiving this information he advanced to attack this officer's position. Sullivan's forces awaited the attack with firmness, when a firing in their rear from Clinton's column, which at this instant turned their left flank, threw them into confusion. In vain Sullivan tried to rally them. Without waiting to receive the charge of De Heister and his Hessians, they turned their backs and fled in the greatest confusion and completely routed, each man seeking to gain the security of the camp at Brooklyn with reference only to his individual safety. The centre advanced to an easy victory, and hastened to form a junction with its right wing. The Americans, driven before it, found themselves hemmed in between two armies, and, seeking to cut their way back to their camp in detachments, were slain in great numbers.

General Stirling, hearing from his position the firing towards Brooklyn, saw at once the deception that had been practised; and, aware of the critical situation of the army, he made a precipitate retreat. Lord Cornwallis, however, had thrown himself in his rear, and occupied the only avenue by which he could withdraw his troops. Without hesitation, he gallantly attacked and nearly dislodged him from his position; but, overpowered by superior numbers, he at length surrendered, with the remnant of his brave regiment, prisoners of war.

Having anticipated events a little in the last paragraph, to open a clearer road to our story, we now revert to the movements of the column under General Clinton which so unexpectedly and fatally to the American army decided the fate of the day, and with which the thread of our romance is more closely woven.

The left wing of the Americans was drawn up along the northern face of the heights, and was in part covered by a thick wood which extended to their summits. About eight o'clock in the morning, near the edge of this wood, on slightly rising ground in front of the lines, was gathered a group of mounted officers, distinguished among whom was General Putnam, who was momently receiving reports or sending orders to different parts of the field. The cannonading from the British centre and left was incessant, and nearly the whole effective force of the American army had been fruitlessly despatched against these two bodies, which, as we have seen, were believed to be the only attacking columns, and also to comprise the whole force of the British army.

"How goes it with Sullivan, Ogden?" inquired General Putnam of a young officer who, at the moment we introduce the reader to the group, rode up, covered with mud and foam.

"Warmly enough. The Hessians play their artillery to lively music."

"Have they left their position?"

"Not a foot. Sullivan holds the pass, and De Heister contents himself with exchanging six−pounders with him at a distance. I know not what to make of it."

"'Tis an odd game John Bull is playing throughout," replied the general. "Welcome, Major Burton!" he cried to that officer, who at that instant dashed into the midst of the party, with his horse reeking, his sword drawn and bloody, and his whole appearance that of one from the midst of the fight. "You have seen the enemy! How goes the day? Does Stirling hold his ground? Needs he further re−enforcements?"

"He still holds the pass, and will, no doubt, maintain it with what men he has. The British have made several feints, but have not yet tried to force his position."

"Clinton is at some deep game," said General Putnam, with a thoughtful brow.

"Neither Clinton, Percy, nor Cornwallis are with either of the divisions," continued Burton. "I approached that opposed to Lord Stirling near enough to distinguish the staff with my glass. I met Livingston on the field, who reconnoitred the column at Flatbush, and reports the same. The British are not playing their artillery all the morning for their own amusement. It is Clinton's intention to surprise us, if he can, by seizing some unguarded pass through the highlands, and so turn our flank. This firing is only to divert us till he succeeds."

"But all the passes are well guarded, Major Burton; and we should instantly be apprized of any such attempts by our outposts."

"They may have surprised these, and so prevent your receiving any information. Moreover, there are no horse among the detachments, and the enemy would be here as soon as they."

"It may be so. Spur forward, Major Burton, and collect what news you can."

The aiddecamp buried his spurs to the rowel−head, and disappeared on the road towards Bedford. He entered the path which led along the heights, and rode forward until he came within sight of the village; suddenly he heard discharges of musketry, the shouts of combatants, and the report of artillery. He involuntarily reined up, but the next moment rode forward to an eminence by the roadside, and beheld the British column under Clinton advancing in an interminable line along the Jamaica road. Its vanguard had already surprised the detachment in the village, completely routing them after receiving their irregular fire.

A glance satisfied him that it would be in vain to attempt to rally the dispersed troops, which had reached the hill and were flying past him along the road to regain the camp at Brooklyn; and, turning his horse's head, he rode back at full speed to convey the intelligence to General Putnam.

He had hardly regained the road when he was involved in the confused melée of the retreating detachment, which its officers were vainly endeavouring to rally. But discipline had given place to fear; and, throwing down their muskets, with their faces set towards Brooklyn, the panic−struck warriors fled, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left; so that the first intimation the American army were likely to receive of the approach of the enemy was by their outposts tumbling in head−long upon their lines.

"Gentlemen," cried Burton to the leaders, as they came to a gorge in the road defended by high banks, "make a stand here if in your power. Give the enemy a momentary check."

With the exertions of two or three of the officers, and the animating voice of Burton, they rallied. But, as the plumes and bayonets of the enemy appeared over the top of the hill, they broke, and again fled with precipitation on the main body. In despair, Burton put spurs to his horse and galloped forward. Half way from the lines he met General Putnam, who, advancing thus far in his anxiety to gain intelligence, found himself at once in the midst of

his flying soldiers.

"For God's sake, Major Burton, speak! Have they possession of the pass?"

"A column some thousands strong have surprised Bedford, are now entering the pass, and in thirty minutes will turn our flank!"

"We are lost."

"There is no hope, certainly, for the left wing, sir."

"Nor for the whole army. Not a man will stand in the ranks to meet the desperate charge. See," he said, as they came in sight of the American army, "the lines already begin to waver, panic−struck by the wild rush of their comrades towards them."

"The army must retreat."

"There is no alternative."

After a moment's discussion of their perilous situation, and ascertaining more accurately the overwhelming force coming upon them, General Putnam ordered a retreat. To retire in the face of an excited and conquering foe, before a blow has been struck by the fugitives to rouse their blood, is almost always fatal. Alarmed by the firing on their flank and by the flying soldiers, the Americans, although they began to retreat in good order, soon broke into regiments, and then into companies, and, retiring in disorder and haste, endeavoured to regain the works in their rear. General Putnam, nevertheless, by his presence of mind, saved a great portion of the ill−fated wing.

"Burton," he said to his aiddecamp, who had just reined up by his side after conveying an order to a colonel of a regiment in great peril, whom he assisted in successfully extricating his command, "there are two or three companies of infantry by yonder copse; their colonel is down, with half a dozen of his officers, and I fear they will give way before they reach the intrenchments. Ride and place yourself at their head."

The party in question was defending itself with gallantry against a superior force. The quick eye of the young soldier saw that they were hemmed in on three sides by a marsh thickly set with bushes, which prevented farther retreat; and that, unless they could cut their way by a bold charge through the ranks of their foes, they must either surrender prisoners of war or be cut to pieces. Skirting the copse, and gathering, as he spurred along, half a score of stragglers, who rallied under his orders, he came unobserved upon the flank of the enemy, here but two or three deep, and through an opening in the hedge charged them vigorously. At this sudden attack from an unlooked−for quarter they gave way. Following up his success, he leaped into the area, and, wheeling round, placed himself at the head of the division he had come to aid.

"Now, my brave fellows!" he shouted to the soldiers, who still presented a firm front, "I will save you or share your fate. Follow me!"

Firing his pistols in the faces of the enemy, he waved his sword and rode upon their bristling bayonets. The Americans, inspired by the presence and example of their new leader, made a sudden and desperate charge. The opposing phalanx swayed to and fro before it, but settled again after the first shock, and stood as firm as an iron wall.

"Retreat, and try them again!" shouted Burton, wheeling and placing himself at their head.

Thrice was the command repeated, and as many times was it obeyed. Before the third desperate charge the solid ranks of the English gave way, and the determined band of Americans gained the open hillside; and, although hard pressed by their foes, who closed upon their rear, they retreated in good order, and safely retired within the intrenchments.

Burton, however, after they had gained the open field, left them to effect their retreat alone. He had turned to rejoin General Putnam, when Zacharie, whom he had not seen since daybreak, mounted on the horse of some dismounted English officer, made his appearance, galloping down a steep descent at the imminent peril of his neck, and shouting at the top of his lungs,

"For the love of the Virgin and all the saints! help the general; he is hard pressed."

"Where?"

"This way."

Guiding his horse over the ground strewn with the dead and the dying, Zacharie crossed a low wooded ridge closely followed by Burton, who, on gaining the summit, beheld General Putnam on foot, his horse slain, gallantly defending himself against two grenadiers and a mounted Hessian officer, while two dragoons lay dead at his feet.

"To the rescue, Major Burton," he shouted, dealing a well−directed blow upon the head of a grenadier with the butt end of a carbine, and striking him to the ground, at the same time parrying a pass of the Hessian's sword.

"To the rescue," shouted Zacharie, as he came in sight; and, descending the hillside at a furious rate, he drove his horse full against the remaining grenadier as he was about to revenge his comrade by a tremendous stroke of his broadsword on the uncovered head of the general, and bore him bodily to the ground. The next instant he was upon his throat.

"Yield thee, Goliath, or say thy paternoster and be dirked."

"I yield," cried the disabled soldier.

Burton at the same instant crossed blades with the Hessian, who was pressing hard upon his antagonist, now greatly exhausted by the unequal combat. He had exchanged but two or three passes with the fiery foeman, when two British officers, galloping over the field, seeing the contest, turned and rode up at full speed. General Putnam, who had sprung upon Zacharie's horse as Burton relieved him from his furious assailant, now prepared to receive the new−comers.

They came up as Burton sent the Hessian's blade whistling over his head, and buried his sword in his body.

"Lie there, base hireling!" he said, wheeling his horse to meet one of his fresh foes, each of them having singled out an antagonist, who now came up. Instantly their weapons clashed, and also at the moment after did those of Putnam and his assailant, the four combatants seeming, as the sun glanced upon the bright, flashing steel, to be wielding swords of flame.

He who had selected Burton was a noble−looking young soldier, with a falcon eye, and firm but beautiful lip. He sat his spirited animal with ease and grace, and rode like an experienced horseman. His skill as a rider was, however, surpassed by his mastery of the sword; and as he encountered Burton, who was no ways his inferior in either accomplishment, it would seem that two swordsmen were never engaged in hostile combat more equally matched or more skilled in the use of their weapons.

They had fought for several minutes without either gaining the advantage, when Sir Henry Clinton and staff, followed by a squadron of horse, came spurring over the adjacent hill, and were passing onward: but suddenly an orderly sergeant separated from the body and galloped towards the combatants. When he came within hailing distance, he shouted,

"General Clinton desires that Major Andre will join him without delay."

"We will meet another time, fair sir," said the young officer, receiving his antagonist's sword on the guard of his own.

"May it be as friends rather than enemies, sir," answered Burton, chivalrously dropping the point of his weapon and reining back.

"Amen!" was the reply; and the gallant young Englishman, waving the sword so lately aimed at his life in a parting salute to his foe, cantered over the field to join the staff of his general.

Meanwhile General Putnam and his antagonist, though less equally matched, fought with equal energy. At length, already wearied with his previous encounters, the former was nearly ready to give way, when Zacharie lifted a four−pound shot from the ground and cast it with all his force against the breast of the English officer. His sword dropped from his hand, and he only saved himself from falling by grasping his horse's mane; then burying his spurs into his flanks, he had sufficient strength to guide him over the battle−field in the direction of his party, towards which the animal carried him at the top of his speed.

"Thou wouldst make a good piece of artillery, lad," said Putnam, with a smile, "only mount thee upon wheels. Thy hand has done me good service."

"Thank the British. 'Twas one of his own marbles I snapped at him."

"Well, major," said Putnam, as Burton came up, "we are masters of the lists. I did only gallop to the opposite hill to reconnoitre, leaving my staff on the edge of yonder wood, when I was here set upon. I would rather wrestle with a score of wolves than one such Hessian as you have just quieted. Your presence was well timed. See! Yonder squadron of horse is at some mischief; oblige me by following them, and report what you may discover."

He then galloped back to regain his staff, while Burton, followed by the victorious Zacharie, rode off after the troop which the British officers had joined. It had just entered the forest at the foot of the heights, and its last file was trotting out of sight when he started. He dashed forward over a pathway strewn with dead bodies, firearms, cannon balls, and dismounted artillery, and in a few minutes gained the wood. He then drew rein to advance more cautiously for fear of surprise, but was proceeding, nevertheless, at a good pace along the forest track, when, as he was about to ford a brook that gurgled across his path, he descried two men a few yards higher up the stream. One was a private, the other a single horseman, dismounted and watering his horse. His head was uncovered, and he was wiping the perspiration from his brow, while the chest and limbs of the animal were spotted with foam.

A single glance was sufficient: it was Arden! Burton threw himself from his horse, leaving the rein in Zacharie's hand, and advanced upon him. Midway between them the rivulet made a circular sweep, leaving a small level space between its banks and an overhanging rock. Two or three large trees grew on the spot, interlocking their branches above, and the sward was short and verdant. It was such a place as two knights of the duello would select to tilt in mortal combat. Arden discovered Burton at the same instant that he himself was recognised by him. A proud smile only was visible on his lips. He advanced when he saw him dismount, and they met on the spot described with haughty tread and flashing eyes.

"Colonel Arden, I have sought you," fiercely cried Burton, drawing his sword.

"And you have found me, Major Burton," quietly replied Arden, also unsheathing his blade.

The next moment steel rung against steel, and the two rivals warmly engaged. One was cool and quiet, and stood only on the defensive; the other was fiery, and vengeful, and exerted all his skill to disarm or transfix his antagonist. Every thrust of his sword was aimed at Arden's bosom; ruse, feint, and sleight, and every known trick of fence were in vain employed as instruments of his revenge. Every fatally−directed pass was turned aside by science equal to that which directed it; and ruse and stratagem were met by a ready hand and a cool head.

Zacharie in the mean while had secured the horses to a sapling, and came up to be a spectator or aider, as the case might be, of the combat. The companion or follower of Arden, however, continued to remain in the back ground. The sharp eye of Zacharie detected him cautiously peeping over the horse's back and gazing at the combatants.

"Now will I have a by−play of my own," said he, crossing the area and advancing towards him; "like master like man. Come, sir," he cried, as he came up, "suppose we take a bout together, just to keep our hands in; 'twill take the rust off our blades, and stir up the blood."

"Nay, most valiant Zacharie, my blade is quite bright, and what pint or two of blood I have left from these bloody wars needeth not stirring," said the voice of Jacques Cloots, his round face appearing at the same time over the saddle like the full moon newly risen.

"Art thou there, man of wax? I thought thy soul had been frightened out o' thy bones at Kip's Bay by the dragoons I quartered on thee."

"By my beard, Zach " stoutly commenced Jacques.

"Zach me no Zach!" cried Zacharie, sharply.

"No, valiant Zacharie, I will not. Not I! Art not my old comrade and countryman? Not I, by my beard!"

"Tell thy tale, then. Where hast thou been?"

"I was taken prisoner, most valiant! by thy dragoons, after giving and receiving divers grievous wounds on hip and thigh, and was despoiled of my steed. When they found I was a true man and not one o' the enemy, they let me go."

"How found your ass−ship the way here to−day?"

"I then went back to my company to keep from being shot for deserting; and when they came over the water to do battle, I came too. I was drinking here when you great warrior fighting there bid me hold his horse."

"And where is thy company?"

"By my beard! I am the only one left alive," replied Jacques, swaggering.

"Because thou art the only one who ran away. Now, as thou art in thyself, by thine own tale, a whole company, thou wilt not fear a single man. So, draw!"

"Oh, no, valiant "

"Draw."

"Oh, no "

"Draw."

"Oh!"

"Then take a pummelling. 'Twill be glory enough for me to have whipped a whole company."

Thus speaking, Zacharie set upon Arden's esquire with his fists, and left him bruised "hip and thigh," and groaning with the multitude and vastness of his wounds.

While this by−play was going on, the contest between Arden and Burton continued with vigour, characterized still by the coolness of the one and the warmth of the other. At length, by a sudden and skilful pass, by which he laid himself open to his antagonist's point, Arden struck his sword and sent it whirling through the air. For an instant he continued to hold his arm in the attitude in which the movement had thrown it, and followed it with his eye. That unguarded moment was nearly fatal to him. Burton closed with him, caught his uplifted arm, and wrenched his sword from his grasp; then shortening it by the blade till he could make use of it like a dagger, he drove it with violence against his breast. The blow was turned aside by Arden, and the steel passed through the fleshy part of his arm; again it was raised, and descended like lightning; it was a second time averted from the seat of life, but sunk deep into his shoulder. As the warm blood stained Burton's hand, he relinquished his hostile embrace. The clattering of hoofs and ringing of sabres being now heard in a distant part of the forest, he took up his sword, hastily remounted his horse, and, followed by Zacharie, spurred off in the direction he was originally pursuing when he fell in with his rival.

He had but a few moments disappeared when General Putnam and several officers came up at the head of a regiment moving at double quick time, on their way to the heights to support Sullivan in his retreat.

"Ha!" he exclaimed, seeing Arden leaning against a tree; "Colonel Arden wounded?"

"Slightly," he replied.

"You have been hard set upon. Some Hessian, I dare say! You must be looked after. Carmichael, do see if he is badly hurt."

The surgeon examined and dressed his wounds, and pronounced them not dangerous if the patient were prudent. He was then assisted to his horse, and conducted under a small escort to the intrenchments.

As General Putnam now skirted the heights with the small force he had been able to keep together in the general panic, a party of officers, among whom he distinguished General Washington, rode towards him from East River, the whole cavalcade at the top of their speed. They drew up as they met the division.

"A total rout, Putnam?" inquired Washington, with anxiety.

"Total, sir; and not less than a thousand killed in the retreat. Yonder goes, except this, the last regiment, or what remains of it, into camp. If you choose not capture, sir, ride no farther in this direction," he added, as Washington, who crossed over from New−York as the fight became warmer, prepared to move forward.

"Unfortunate day!" exclaimed he, with anguish, looking upon the destruction of his best troops in the plain below, without the power to aid them. "Putnam, we must do all we can to save the remnant of the army. The enemy will no doubt follow up his success by storming the intrenchments. Oh God, what slaughter at the foot of yonder hill!"

"Cannot something be done by a bold stroke with the troops from the city?" inquired General Putnam, with animation.

"And leave New−York defenceless, a prize to the British fleet, which hovers in the bay like a hawk over its victim."

"There are yet a few regiments of fresh troops within the lines," said an officer who rode by Washington's side; "they possibly may retrieve the day."

"True, Livingston. But I dare not draw out a single company remaining in the intrenchments to aid our broken division: if they also should be defeated, the whole camp would be lost and the army totally destroyed. With every soldier both in New−York and the lines at Brooklyn, I should still be inferior in numbers to the enemy; and the whole country might be staked in thus endeavouring to regain a lost battle. Painful!" he added, turning his eyes away from several retreating detachments of the broken army; some at bay, fighting desperately with the enemy's infantry; others flying, pursued and cut down by the British and Hessian horse. "Dreadful to behold such carnage, without the power to aid the brave fellows who fight so well. Putnam, help Sullivan, if possible. I will to the intrenchments, and make an effort to preserve the camp and those who escape the slaughter."

Washington, leaving General Putnam to ride after his regiment, galloped down the hill, followed by his staff, and pursued his way over the ground towards the lines.

"We must ride for it, sir," said Livingston, as they turned an angle of the wood. "See, the whole British army is down upon us."

"And threaten to storm the works. They show a bold front. Our time is brief! Ride!"

The British, who at first had charged tumultuously and in parties, formed as they approached the American intrenchments, and, as General Livingston spoke, appeared marching in close order over the field, but at a quick pace and with loud shouts, as if they intended to carry the American works. Pressing forward as they descried this movement, Washington and his party a few minutes afterward entered the lines.

The British general, however, unwilling to hazard too much, and, perhaps, satisfied with the success of the day, seeing that the Americans were secure within their defences, and being ignorant of the strength of the works and number of the garrison, restrained the ardour of his troops, and pitched his camp in front of their intrenchments.

CHAPTER XI. THE COUNCIL.

The setting sun flung his red beams over the battle−field, tinging the atmosphere with a sanguine hue, as if Nature sympathized with the scenes that had just been enacted there, and glanced also upon the plume and armour of an English horseman, who was riding slowly over the ground towards the British camp. The green fields and the pleasant woods were strewn with the dead and the dying; and the rivulets, which had meandered musically in the morning through glens and over rocky beds, were choked with dead bodies and turned from their natural channels, their bloody waves staining their banks with a crimson hue. Death in its most horrible forms lay before the horseman's eyes for many a mile. Beneath a perpendicular rock, against which, facing his foes, it appeared, he had bravely and desperately fought, lay an old man, his white locks begrimed with gore from a deep cut in his aged temples. He wore the dress of a yeoman of the soil; of one who had thrown down the sickle to grasp the sword in defence of his home. On either side of him lay two youths, also dead, their bodies pierced with many a ghastly wound. They bore the old man's likeness upon their features, and had died, no doubt, in defending the life of him who gave them their own. Beside them lay a gory heap of slain Hessians, the last and uppermost of the pile, with his hand on the breast of the old man, whose sword and that of one of his sons were both buried in his

body. The three seemed to have died in one and the selfsame struggle. Farther on, beside a brook that ran with blood, lay a soldier on his face touching the red water with his lips; he had crawled there, as it appeared from the bloody track behind him in the grass, to quench his burning thirst; but the water was turned to blood, and so he died. At the foot of a spreading oak, beneath whose widely−flung branches a thousand soldiers might, at noonday, stand in the shade, were strewn half a score of combatants. They were lying in every shape of death around the trunk, as if it had been an altar which the devotees of liberty had defended with their blood. Against the tree leaned one pale, and with an expression of anguish on his face; one hand was pressed against his side, from which the blood slowly oozed, and his eyes from time to time rolled upward, and his parched lips moved as if in unwonted prayer. Half way to the summit of a little mound overgrown with fern sat a youth, bareheaded, upon the dank ground, holding in his arms the head of an old man who was already a corpse; but he nevertheless still continued to bathe his brows and lips from his helmet with water, which, with filial piety, he had taken from the stream running past at the foot of the hill.

On the verge of the field where the fight had been thickest, their bodies upright against a hedge, and eying each other with glazed eyeballs, stood, face to face, stark and stiff, two dead men, each with his bayonet buried in his fellow's bosom. Beside them sat a horse on his haunches, with a sword quivering in his breast, both his hind legs broken by a cannon−ball. In vain, with terrible groans, he strove to raise himself to his feet, and with his teeth to draw the weapon from his chest. His forefeet rested upon the corpse of his rider, whose breast he had broken in with his hoofs as he pawed the earth in the fierceness of his rage and pain. Suddenly a bugle wound high and clear in a distant part of the field: the noble animal replied with a loud neigh; sprung with supernatural energy upon his feet; stood an instant, then reeled, tottered, and fell back dead.

Farther on, directly in the path of the horseman, a youth lay upon his side. His face was as calm as if he slept beneath his own peaceful roof−tree, which, perchance, he had but recently left, followed by a mother's prayers, and, perhaps, a maiden's tears. A rifle ball had entered his temples, and, the wound bleeding inwardly, had left but a slight orifice. His hair fell in natural waves over his forehead, which calmly rested in his hand. His marble cheek only told that he slept the sleep that never knows a waking. From his hand had fallen a fowling−piece, which was lying beside him, discharged; his companion in many a rural hunt, and aimed only at forest game, it did not avail him in the field of human contest. The hand that had clasped it was placed in his bosom over a miniature, worn, by a chain of silken brown hair, about his neck. The horseman paused a moment to contemplate the scene, and then rode on.

"Alas!" he said, sighing, "alas, poor maiden! This day has filled thy young heart with grief! Thou wilt see him for whom thou watchest no more! Relentless war! The soldier's steel pierces doubly! It strikes not only through his foeman's bosom, but pierces the heart of wife, mother, and mistress with the same fatal blow. If we numbered the fallen in battle not alone by counting broken heads or gashed limbs, but also by numbering the broken and crushed hearts of those who, in secret and silent suffering, fall with the slain, our catalogue would swell! Oh, war, war! When will an evil that assimilates earth to hell have an end?"

"When the kings and princes of the earth shall learn to fear the King of kings! When justice and the love of the truth shall live in the hearts of those who sit in high places! When men's hearts are turned from the vanities of this world to seek after the realities of the next! When, at the second coming, *He* shall come who came first! *Then* shall the sword be turned into a ploughshare, and the spear into a pruning hook! Then shall all nations know the Lord, that he ruleth in the armies of heaven and over the inhabitants of the earth! Then shall the lion lie down with the lamb, and the child play with the adder! Then shall men forget war, and the rumours of war shall cease; the nations shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace, and each man sit under his own vine and fig−tree, with none to molest or make them afraid! Then will the devil be bound in chains, and Israel conquer for evermore. Verily, thou art answered, son of Belial!"

The horseman turned at this unexpected reply to his soliloquizing interrogation, and beheld, sitting on a stone a few feet distant, a middle−aged man, with a sallow complexion, and lank, straight black hair, which came over his

forehead nearly to his eyebrows, and was cut perfectly square above them. His face was long, sharp, and thin; his cheeks hollow and cadaverous, with angular bones. His brows were black and shaggy, and a pair of wild, lambent gray eyes glowed beneath them with the expression of incipient insanity. His garments, which were of a faded black colour and much worn, were shaped after the fashion of the followers of Penn. He leaned on a musket, and appeared, by a red silk handkerchief tied around his knee, to have been wounded. The horseman gazed upon him with curiosity as he spoke in a wild, enthusiastic manner, with a sharp nasal voice, and with a volubility of tongue that betrayed familiarity with extemporaneous speaking.

When he had concluded his address, he folded his hands upon his musket, and, shutting his eyes, began, in the same nasal strain, to chant, with a prolonged accent upon every other syllable, a hymn to the tune of Old Hundred, of which the horseman could only remember the following words of the last two stanzas: "Thou my foes hast stroke All on the cheek−bones, and the teeth Of wicked men have broke.

"I with my groaning weary am, And I also all the night my bed Have causéd for to swim; and I With tears my couch have wateréd."

"My good sir," said the horseman, smiling, "methinks your own bones have been broken instead of your enemies', and that you rather have been watering the ground with your blood than your tears."

"Thou art a Gentile! a son of Ishmael and a lost child of Mammon! an enemy of the Lord and his saints, and an oppressor thereof! Wherefore comest thou here with thy proud trappings, which are the livery of the devil, to mock me? Thy voice is yet warm with shouting to the battle against my brethren! Thy sword is reeking with the blood of the slain! Thou hast now conquered! But we have the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, and the day shall come when ye will be driven from the land like locusts! Ride, ride!" he added, sternly, "and leave me to the devotions thou hast interrupted."

"Thy devotions are likely to be again disturbed," said the horseman, as a party appeared numbering the slain, carrying off the wounded, and securing what prisoners they might fall in with.

At this moment three or four of the party, seeing the horseman, rode up, and the foremost, passing him with a respectful military salutation, approached the wounded rebel with his pistol levelled.

"Surrender, prisoner!"

"Verily, I will not surrender to thee, Philistine!" said the man, without moving; "if thou wilt have my weapon, get thee down and take it."

The soldier, with a suppressed oath, sprung from his horse to seize his musket, when, springing suddenly upon him as he was releasing his foot from the stirrup, the man struck him to the ground with a single blow of his fist; then, drawing the sabre of the fallen dragoon, he waved it above his head, shouting, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!"

Before the mounted officer could interfere, one of the comrades of the dragoon levelled his pistol and fired. The sabre fell from his grasp, and, rolling his eyes wildly, he sunk upon the ground, muttering "of the Lord and of Gid " and breathed out his life.

The horseman paused a moment and gazed thoughtfully upon the body.

"When will a war end," he mused, reflectingly, "that draws the patriarch from his fireside, the ploughman from his field, the youth from his betrothed, and the enthusiast from his humble pulpit, to share its dangers? Never will a people be conquered who, actuated by the same feeling, rise as one man, and expose their breasts as a bulwark

to their liberties! From their wonderful Congress and their remarkable leader down to the lowest hind, these Americans seem to be actuated by one sentiment. It must be a long and fruitless struggle to subdue such a people! We have gained a victory to−day, indeed; but defeat will only rally men, engaged in such a cause as these are, in greater numbers. For every dead patriot that lies on this dearly−purchased field, ten men will rise up to avenge his death. A rebel army is like the fabled hydra; new heads spring multiplied from the bleeding trunk. Well, Chester," he said to an orderly sergeant who rode up as he passed the outposts of the British camp, "you look as if you bore a message."

"I do, my lord, and was now on my way to your quarters. 'Tis from General Howe."

"I am riding to meet him. Continue on to his tent. I follow."

They galloped forward and entered the camp, which was not yet quite settled into military order. At one place they passed a party of wounded soldiers sitting on the ground, and a surgeon inspecting their wounds, which were bound up hastily, but firmly and skilfully, by two of his assistants. On the opposite side a company were eating their supper before a half−spread tent that some of their comrades were pitching; while far beyond were regiments or smaller detachments similarly occupied, and all presenting a busy, bustling scene. Farther on, a line was drawn up, and an officer was preparing the report of the missing in the day's fight; the fortunate soldiers themselves unharmed, and perhaps, on that account, the more gay careless, cheerful, and unconcerned. Those among them who in the morning stood far removed from each other by intervening comrades, and now found themselves shoulder to shoulder as they assembled at this roll−call, made even their contiguity a matter of jesting; happy in their own escape, they were forgetful of their fellows who but a little while before had separated them. Companies that now heard themselves commanded by a strange voice obeyed mechanically, nor seemed to mark the absence of their usual leader. The officer made these observations as he slowly rode through the camp; at length he came upon a more open space to the right, and in front of the lines of the Americans, who were silently lying on their arms within their defences, and a livelier scene presented itself. A tall pavilion was spread in an area surrounded by many smaller tents, and above it waved in the evening wind, and flashing in the setting sun, the red tri−crossed flag of Great Britain. Around this tent were gathered several British officers; some in pairs, conversing as they walked backward and forward before the pavilion; others, in small groups, both on horseback and on foot, talking earnestly, and pointing towards the intrenchments of the enemy or the distant city, the spires of which, flaming in the sun, could be distinctly seen from this point of observation; and one or two were sitting beside a third, who reclined upon a cloak, and seemed to be suffering from recent wounds. Around the tent and outside the groups of officers were posted sentinels, who paced their silent round with the formal indifference of automatons. Nearer the tent, and within the groups of officers, was a second chain of sentinels, two of which, with fixed bayonets, stood before the door to guard the entrance. In the door also stood an officer with a drawn sword, as if stationed there in the discharge of his duty. Everything indicated that the pavilion was the headquarters of the conqueror, who had pitched his tent in the face of the enemy on the field he had won.

The horseman rode forward and dismounted at the first station in front, where several richly−caparisoned horses, held by privates, stood in readiness for their riders to mount at a moment's warning.

Here leaving his horse, he walked through the group of officers, who stood aside with marks of deep respect as he approached; while two or three others, whose rank and friendship allowed them the liberty, addressed him familiarly, and congratulated him on the success of the day. After exchanging a few words with them in relation to some individual exploits on the field, and shaking his head at a guess ventured by one of the young officers, that the Americans might make a sally and attack them in their camp during the night, he entered the tent of the British general. The pavilion, though conspicuous in the tented field, was only so from its size and peculiarly beautiful shape; otherwise it was plain as those of the common soldiers. A straw carpet or Indian mat was laid upon the ground; and several camp−stools, covered with the rich carpeting of Brussels, a portable mahogany table, above which, suspended from the centre of the dome of the tent by a cord, hung a massive bronzed lamp, and a narrow cott bed, with a military cloak thrown over it, constituted the sole furniture of the warrior's abode. A

bass−drum standing near the entrance, one or two bugles, and several swords and articles of uniform lying about on the ground or thrown upon the seats, relieved the air of nakedness it would otherwise have worn, and added to its warlike character.

Around the table, at their wine, sat four gentlemen, three of whom were evidently of high military rank in the British army; the fourth wore the uniform of an American major−general. They were conversing in an animated manner as the stranger entered.

"Good even, my Lord of Cornwallis," said one of the gentlemen, a tall, noble−looking soldier, who sat at the head of the table, rising to meet his guest with an open, frank countenance, and an air of a man of high rank; "I rejoice with you on the success of his majesty's arms this day."

"A great victory, Sir Henry, but dearly purchased with the lives of many of our bravest officers, and some four or five hundred men."

"No, no, my lord, not dearly purchased with all our lives. Freely would I sacrifice mine to end this war, and bring back these erring colonists to their allegiance. I beg your pardon, General Sullivan," he said, turning with courtesy to the American officer, "but you must train your ears to hear plain language in a royal camp. My lord," he continued, "I have the honour of making known to you our brave enemy, for such is the fortune of war, and distinguished prisoner, Major−general Sullivan."

The American bowed with cold and distant politeness; the English earl with a cordial and friendly manner, as if he respected his situation, and, so far as politeness would extend, sought to lessen his embarrassment. With one of the other gentlemen he shook hands, at the same time addressing him familiarly as Percy; to the fourth, who appeared to be a foreigner, he slightly and haughtily bent his head, a salutation that was returned with equal hauteur; and then, seating himself between Sir Henry Clinton and the American general, the conversation, which had been interrupted, by his entrance, was continued:

"So, general," said Lord Percy to General Clinton, "you do not attempt to force the lines in the morning?"

"By no means. I am not adviser of the actual strength of the enemy, and am unwilling to commit anything to hazard."

"It ish kreat victoories, vat ve gain by our swort dis day," said the foreign−looking officer, whose breast was covered with insignia of military rank, prefacing his remark with a tremendous oath, "ant it were petter, lords and gentlemans, to holt on vat ve have cot; von pird in de push, as you English proverb say, wort two in de hant."

General Sullivan stared at the speaker, and a smile of contempt curled his lip as he glanced from him to the British general. Clinton understood him, and whispered in his ear,

"You don't admire my Hessian ally. But in him you see how ignorance of a language undignifies, as it were, and lays a man of education, sense, and talent open to contempt and ridicule. I cannot hear De Heister speak English without laughing and losing my respect for him; but, when I hear him converse in his own tongue, I am forced to respect his eloquence and admire his genius. He is as noble in German as he is low in English. It is for this very reason I never speak a language that I do not well understand. We wear foreign languages like foreign garments, awkwardly and ridiculously."

General Sullivan assented with a nod to the truth of this remark.

"I do not quite agree with you, General de Heister," said the Earl of Percy in the blandest tones, and with the smile which usually prefaced his remarks, "if it is your intention to be satisfied with beating about the bush to carry out

your very happy figure and not enter to catch the bird. It is my opinion," he continued, turning, with his usual formal dignity, to General Clinton, "that we should make an attempt at daybreak to force the enemy's lines. Men that could fly I intend no offence to your feelings, General Sullivan," he said, bowing apologetically, "as they fled this day, can have little stomach to withstand a well−directed charge from their victors. What says my Lord of Cornwallis?"

"As I am a late participator in your councils, gentlemen," replied this nobleman, "I will listen further to the expression of your several opinions before I decide. Will General Clinton oblige me by informing me of the course he has decided to pursue?"

"It is to encamp here until to−morrow night, and refresh the army, and then break ground in form. General Howe has been riding over the field, and reports that, within six hundred yards of a redoubt on our left, we can work with ease and be defended by the shipping. We shall press them so closely, that, with the sea behind, their only alternative will be to surrender prisoners of war."

"I coincide with you," said Cornwallis, after a moment's reflection. "It will not only save bloodshed, but ensure the entire dispersion of their force, which even a successful attack might not do. Howe is of the same mind, you say?"

"He is, and should now be with us. He left shortly after the fate of the day was decided to communicate with his brother Lord Howe, who had returned on board his frigate. They will, no doubt, soon be here to aid our councils. Percy, you are silent," he added; "shall we not be honoured with the weight of your influence?"

"I resign my opinion, being in the minority," he said, bowing to them; "but," he continued, pleasantly, "if the rebels escape our hands thorough our delay, I shall be sure, like the good wife in the tale, to remind you that I told you so."

"The responsibility rests with me, and I cheerfully assume it," said Clinton. "There is no danger, judging from their play to−day, that they will outgeneral us. I have never been more astonished than at the carelessness shown by the enemy. They left their passes open as if they had invited us to enter. The genius of your chief, General Sullivan, appears to have deserted him on this occasion."

"A judicial blindness," said Percy, dryly.

"Not so," said Sullivan, his eyes kindling with animation; "it was no fault of Washington. In my presence he charged General Putnam, who took the command at Brooklyn, in the most earnest manner, to be in constant readiness for an attack, and to guard most strictly the passes through the heights. His orders were explicit, and so often enforced respecting the defence of these outposts, that he evidently regarded them as of the last degree of importance, and seemed to foresee the consequences of their being left without a sufficient guard."

"Then Putnam's laurels are somewhat tarnished," said Lord Percy.

"Nor was it Putnam's fault, my lord," said Sullivan, turning to him. "If any are tarnished, they are my own, for I commanded the troops without the lines, although during the action I was joined by Putnam. Detachments of troops occupied by my direction all the highland passes, and should have interrupted the advance of your column."

"Our patrols, it is true, encountered a small body of troops before daybreak in the eastern pass; but, after discharging their firearms, they threw them down and surrendered, and we entered the gorge without interruption. No doubt one or two must have escaped in the darkness, and I am sur prised you had no intimation of our approach till we came upon you."

"It is alone owing to our entire destitution of horse. Our army did not contain a single corps of cavalry. Had we been in possession of a few hundred lighthorse to act as videttes, stationing them at each of the passes, your approach would have been communicated to us in time to have prevented this movement from being so fatal to our army."

"But, Sir Generale," said De Heister, "dere vas no use for de horse ven de van vas drawn off vrom Vlatbush to Vlatland last nicht. Den you no see de column move ah! de horse no see in de dark more petter nor von rebel."

"Videttes, General de Heister, seem to me to have been equally necessary then," said Lord Cornwallis; "foot are of no use half a mile in front of lines. Videttes are the antenna of an encamped army; they are as useful, and are of better service to a general than the hundred eyes of Argus would be."

"It is entirely to the want of videttes that the fortune of the day has been decided against us," said General Sullivan; "and to no other causes can be ascribed our ignorance of your movements."

"Dere be no use of de vidette now for your army, Generale Sullivane," said De Heister, ironically; "dey can see us plain if dey poke de top of der head above de parapete."

"Horse neither will be useful, nor will they have room for action in the lines, I allow," replied Sullivan; "so you will be met on more equal terms."

"How think you, general," asked Percy, twirling like a top a wineglass on the board as he spoke, "the news of this battle will affect Congress? Such a defeat, with your forces besieged on a small peninsula without resources, must bring this body to our own terms, if only to save its army from certain destruction."

"The events of this day, doubtless, will give a gloomy aspect to our affairs, both in Congress and Parliament; but, after the first shock is over, they will have a tendency to bind the colonies more firmly together. The safety of our army is a light weight thrown into the scale, my lord, against a nation's freedom. New armies will rise from the ashes of the old, and, like the young phoenix, in renewed strength and vigour."

"Here be generale my Lord Howe," said De Heister, tossing off a glass of wine, and going to the door of the tent as a trampling of horses' feet was heard without.

The next moment voices were heard at the door, and a stout, handsome man, in the prime of life, with sun−browned cheeks and a cheerful and benevolent countenance, wearing the uniform of a British admiral, accompanied by a taller and sterner man in the dress of an English general officer, entered with some haste.

"Ah, De Heister," he said, "I am told your German blood was up to−day: no doubt you wore out two good Toledos. Cornwallis, your most obedient! Why, you look as grave as if you were a prisoner and not a conqueror. My Lord of Percy, you've got something worth smiling at to−day! Clinton, I see you are at your Te Deum. Well, my old chaplain says wine maketh the heart glad. Ha!" he added, his countenance suddenly changing to one of deep respect and sympathy as his eye fell on the American general, "have I the pleasure of seeing General Sullivan?"

"You do, my lord," said the American; "our present meeting is not like our former one."

"It is not, sir; but such is the fortune of war," answered Lord Howe, seating himself at the table. His companion, after bowing with dignity and in silence to the gentlemen present, took a seat a little to one side, as if from habit or natural reserve he shunned communion with his fellow−men, and chose rather to be an observer than a sharer of their pursuits. Yet his voice was equal with the noblest in that council by his rank as the brother of Lord Howe, and his opinions entitled to high consideration from the extent of his military talents.

"Gentlemen," said Sullivan, rising, "permit me to leave you to your councils, to the freedom of which my presence, I fear, will be a bar."

"Remain, if you please, General Sullivan," said General Howe, taking his hand as he passed him; "we have an important trust in prospect for you," he added, with gravity; "our discussions need not now be kept secret, even from our enemies."

"From which," said the American, smiling, and resuming his chair, "I must infer that we are too feeble to take any measures to oppose the accomplishment of your decisions."

"It is dat very truth, mine Generale Sullivane! dere is too much ob defeat total for de rebel to be wort noting more. You be altogedder vat ve say in de Fransh, *hors de combat*. Is it not so, my lor?"

"You have made it out very clearly, De Heister," said Lord Howe, in reply. "Gentlemen, I beg leave to solicit your opinions in relation to the use we are to make of this victory. My brother, the general here, and myself, you are aware, have full power to compromise this unhappy misunderstanding between Great Britain and her colonies. It was to obtain this authority I was detained two months in London; unfortunately, too long; for the Congress of the states had declared their independence when, at length, I reached here. This was sincerely to be regretted, as, before this decisive step had been taken, our differences could have been accommodated on terms mutually advantageous to both."

"Were those terms taxation with representation, my lord?" asked General Sullivan.

"Not exactly; but the conditions of pacification would no doubt have been acceptable to the belligerant parties."

"Never, my lord," replied Sullivan, firmly; "for taxation and representation cannot, on the principles of the British constitution, whose privileges we claim, be separated."

"We will waive, if you please, this point of discussion, General Sullivan," said Lord Howe. "Although your Congress has assumed the attitude and dignity of a political body, I cannot treat with them in this character, and thereby virtually acknowledge their claim to be so considered. I am desirous, however, of having an interview with two or three of its prominer members, whom I shall look upon only as private gentlemen met to consult on mutual public interests. If I can obtain the consent of some of these gentlemen to a conference, especially of Franklin, I will meet them in a private capacity wheresoever they shall appoint."

"It is our duty, gentlemen," quietly observed General Howe, "to avail ourselves of the impression the defeat of their army will make in the Colonial Congress, and to open a negotiation in conformity with our power as the king's commissioners; although, as his lordship has just observed, we are not empowered to recognise them as a constitutional assembly. Can you, gentlemen, perceive reasons why this step should not be taken?"

"It meets with my cordial approbation," said Clinton.

"And my own," replied Lord Percy; "but I fear your interview, gentlemen, will bring forth little fruit."

"My lord," said Sullivan, as Cornwallis, Clinton, and De Heister severally gave this proposition their approval, "there is one objection, and, I think, an insuperable one, to this plan. Your lordship is aware that the Congress represents several free and independent governments, uniting only for mutual protection against a common danger, and cannot, therefore, with more propriety than the British parliament, send a deputation of its members to confer with commissioners of a hostile country in their private characters. Could it, however, do so, a restoration of the connexion between the colonies and Great Britain, without representation, is impracticable. Even your eloquence, my lord, would fail to subdue, in this case, its rebellious obstinacy," he added, bowing with

a smile.

"I will, nevertheless, attempt to bring about a negotiation after some fashion," replied Lord Howe, "and communicate with the Congress at once, while the freshness of defeat intimidates and startles it; and, as General Howe has intimated to you, we offer you your parole, General Sullivan, and beg that you will convey a verbal message from us to your Congress, and inform it, either by addressing individual members or its assembled body, of our wishes."

"Your lordship honours me by this confidence and high trust," replied Sullivan; "I am equally desirous with yourself to have this unnatural dispute amicably and speedily terminated. I accept my parole, and will bear your message to Congress, and will exert all my influence, as a true lover of my country, towards bringing about an honourable adjustment of our unhappy differences. But I fear you must be very liberal to get Americans to waive their independence, my lord."

"Then you think, General Sullivan," asked Sir Henry Clinton, "that, unless we grant the colonists equal rights with native−born Englishmen, that Congress is immoveable in its determination to maintain its independence, which it has so rashly declared?"

"I do, sir. Nevertheless, I shall faithfully represent to them the wishes of his majesty's commissioners."

"Then, General Sullivan," said Lord Howe, rising, and speaking with much animation, "you will be pleased to state to this Congress what you have in part already heard; that General Howe and myself, three months since, obtained, through the benevolence and goodness of King George the Third, full powers to compromise the dispute which has brought on hostilities between the mother country and her American colonies; and that they were such as would have been for the mutual advantage of both countries; that the difficulty and delay which unfortunately attended the obtaining of these powers detained me in England two months, and prevented my arrival here before the promulgation of its declaration of independence: nor, indeed, as you are aware, General Sullivan, was I deterred, by this open act of Congress, from exercising the powers of pacification with which I was intrusted. The result you know."

"Your lordship alludes to your circular letter dated off the coast of Massachusetts!" said Sullivan, with a slight, scornful movement of his upper lip.

"Yes, sir," said, somewhat sharply, General Howe, who had observed this expression; "and, if it had been obeyed, it would have restored to his majesty his rightful colonies, put a period to a disgraceful war, and saved the blood that has this day been so freely spilled."

"You are right, sir," replied Sullivan; "it is a disgraceful war, and one that will for ever tarnish the escutcheon of Great Britain."

General Howe was about to reply, but bit his lip and remained silent.

"There you have it, William," said Lord Howe, laughing; "you should know it is our business to fight our foes, not talk to them, especially when fortune has made them our prisoners. Nay," he continued, turning to Sullivan, "it was the wish of his majesty that a compact should have been settled at this time, when no decisive blow had been struck, and neither party could allege being compelled to enter into such agreement. Say to the Congress, if you please, whether individually or collectively, that, on account of the unfortunate attitude they have now assumed, our negotiations must wear somewhat of a different face; but, if they are disposed to treat, many things which they have not as yet asked may and ought to be granted to them."

"Will what they have already petitioned for be granted, my lord?" inquired the American general.

"Tell them that if, in our private conference (provided they see fit to grant one to the commissioners his majesty has been graciously pleased to appoint), we find there exists any probable appearance of effecting an accommodation, their authority as a political body may be afterward acknowledged."

"But should there be no ground of accommodation, or, at least, such as will meet your views, my lord?"

"Then," replied General Howe, sternly, "the compact will be incomplete, and there would be an end to further negotiation."

"Except, my lor and generales, py de cannon mout and de point of de swort," said De Heister, with a fierceness to which his repeated draughts of wine had not a little contributed. "Onse vader! Neuve Amsterdam is de city of de Deutsche. Tell Mynheer Congrish we men of de Hesse will take it back at de point of de bagonet. 'Tis our own city, Neuve Amsterdam!"

"Then you are fighting for your own domain, De Heister?" said Lord Howe. "If you and your bearded Hessians take New−York, as reward for your share in the conquest you will no doubt be chosen burgomaster. By St. George! I will swear you would keep a good wine−cellar."

"Himmel!" shouted De Heister, in a rage; "does dat mean for one tamn insult, mi lor? De Heister von name from de classiker, mi lor! tree undred year ol', mi lor! I von burgomaster? Sapperment! ve vill settle dis pretty quarrel wid de swort. Generale Sullivan, you vill oblige me to pe my secont," he said, turning to the American officer, and laying his hand with drunken solemnity upon his heart, while, excepting a fierce glow in his eyes, his face was as unmoved as if he had asked for a pinch of snuff.

"My dear De Heister," said Clinton, soothingly, laying his hand upon his arm, "General Sullivan is to leave camp immediately. I myself will see that you have the satisfaction of a gentleman in the morning."

"By St. George! De Heister," observed Lord Howe, with a smile, as if amused at the serious and hostile countenance of the Hessian general, "I will then give you, if your anger abate not before dawn, what shall suffice the honour of all your ancestors, from Von Brom de Heister, the first of the name, down to your own valiant self, in whom doth centre all their honour. So, general, let us take wine together in token of our friendly consideration for each other."

The Hessian smoothed his mustache and pledged his antagonist amicably, in anticipation of the morning's hostile meeting; and, as he replaced his glass upon the table, his face wore an air of inward satisfaction.

General Sullivan now took leave of the council, and was accompanied without the tent by Lord Howe and General Clinton. As he mounted a horse to accompany his escort to the American lines, he said,

"You don't think of giving this Hessian a meeting, even if your rank would permit it?"

"No, no! he is now on his high German horse; he'll forget it in the morning, and be as courteous as a well−bred bear."

Lord Howe again enforced his instructions: "You will meet me, general, the fifth day from this, at the late quarters of Lord Percy on Staten Island, and inform me of the result of your interview with Congress?"

"I will do so, my lord; but I think, if Congress confers with you at all, it will do it only by delegating a committee of its body to wait on you in an official capacity. But *nous verrons!*"

He bade them adieu as he spoke, and rode forward to join his escort.

For the answer of the American Congress we refer the reader to history, our tale following General Sullivan no farther in his mission. Clinton gazed after him a moment as he disappeared in the darkness, and said,

"A noble gentleman! 'tis a pity he should defend such a cause."

"The devil's in it! since this rebellion broke out, extraordinary men have sprung up among the rebels to meet the exigences of the times, as if it were a second crop of warriors from the teeth of of deuse take it! this salt water rusts one's classics, Clinton." Thus speaking, Admiral Howe re−entered the tent.

The council broke up after a free discussion of the plan of attack upon New−York. It was decided that a part of the fleet should sail round Lond Island, coasting the southern shore and entering the Sound by doubling Montauk Point, approach NewYork through Hell Gate, the entrance to East River being protected by the batteries of New−York, Governor's Island, and Red Hook; that, on the arrival of their fleet through the Sound, instead of making a direct attack on New−York, they should land at Kingsbridge, and take up a position across the island of New−York, cut off all communication with the mainland, and, blockading General Washington by land and water, compel him to capitulate on their own terms.

"You speak, admiral," said Cornwallis, as Lord Howe detailed his plan, "as if Putnam and his army were already in our hands."

"He will be, with every man in his garrison, before ten days. He cannot escape us. I am so sanguine of our success, that I should be willing to anticipate it, and write to England that we had taken the whole army prisoners of war."

Lord and General Howe and the Earl of Corn wallis now mounted their horses, accompanied by De Heister. The Hessian was formally polite to his antagonist, and equally remarkable for his blunt address to the others; for men are never so punctilious in their bearing towards each other as when they are on the eve of blowing out one another's brains.

Taking leave of Clinton and Percy at the door of the pavilion, the party rode away to their respective quarters Cornwallis to his tent on the heights; De Heister to seek a pillow in the midst of his bearded followers; and the noble brothers, accompanied by a small party of officers, who joined them without the line of posts, to go on board the admiral's frigate, which, with the majority of the British fleet, lay at anchor nearly a league below the field of battle.

CHAPTER XII. THE CONSPIRACY.

After the clattering hoofs of the departing cavalcade had died away, the silence of the pavilion was only disturbed by the measured footfall of the sentinel, a distant challenge of a patrol, or the more distant and confused sounds of the enemy at work strengthening their defences against the morrow's anticipated assault. Sir Henry Clinton and the Earl of Percy reseated themselves by the table. The former commenced penning despatches: the latter sat opposite to him, sometimes absently sipping from a glass of wine before him, or, placing it down and still holding it in his grasp, gazing fixedly and admiringly upon the noble features of the British general as his face was bent to his task, the lamp shining upon them, and relieving, by strong lights and shadows, every lineament of his marked and intellectual countenance. At length, when he had completed, folded, and had risen to melt the wax by the light above his head preparatory to sealing his letters, Percy said, with a meaning smile,

"Sir Henry, I have pleasant news."

"Ha! indeed, my lord?" said Clinton, placing the wax upon the letter and deliberately impressing the seal.

"No less than a surety of the success of our former plan, for the failure of which Carnet was strung up."

"I'll have nothing to do with it, my lord. I like not any concernment with such underhand plotting, especially now that we have come to an open and fair warfare. If you choose to persevere in your scheme, I have no objection, although I wash my hands officially or personally of the whole affair. To say truth, I don't think it, as my Lord Howe would say, all fair and above board."

"And yet you will profit by the result. But I have no delicate compunctions of this sort; all is fair in war. To be sure, it would be more chivalrous to take our enemy in the field in open fight than by stratagem."

"Such a plan as you propose is deemed right and proper by all nations; but, in my opinion, it is unworthy of Englishmen. It is on a par with the base principle that influences some barbarous nations to cut off their prisoners' right hands to prevent them from bearing arms against them."

"Well, general," replied the Earl of Percy, smiling, "I am not quite so scrupulous as you profess to be. I hope, if I present you to−morrow the right hand of this rebellion the head and front of this offence you will receive the distinguished guest into your tent and give him a good welcome," he added, rising and enveloping himself in his cloak.

"If the presence of this guest would terminate the war, he should be cheerfully welcomed. What guarantee have you of success?" inquired Clinton, with some interest.

"Your curiosity is awakened, but I will be charitable to your prejudices, Clinton, and not implicate your conscience by making you a confidant in so dangerous a matter. Good−evening, sir."

"Good−night, my lord," said Clinton, resuming his writing with undisturbed equanimity. Lord Percy, after leaving the tent, passed the guards unchallenged. Having gained the outer circle of sentinels, he stopped near a tree within bowshot of Clinton's quarters, listened a moment, and looked anxiously around as if expecting some one; but, after making the circuit of the tree twice without meeting any object, he stopped and gazed thoughtfully upon the long lines of tents stretching duskily away on either side till lost in the distance. The camp had settled into a deep and noiseless repose.

"How profound this rest!" he mused. "Ten thousand men are sleeping heavily around me! The whitened ground is heaving with mailed sleepers; men who a few hours since were shouting the battle−cry, and bathing their arms in the blood of their fellow−creatures! They peacefully sleep, oblivious of the past, unanxious for the future. Thousands, who now sleep in their blood along the hillside and skirts of yonder forest, last night laid down and slept as now sleep these, who to−morrow night, perchance, will sleep, like them, in a bed of gore."

"Mi lor!" said a voice at his side.

"Ha, Pascalet! are you there? I have waited for you. Where is Major Ney?"

"Le Mazhore Ney, mi lor, 'est occupé in de dressin ov deux slash in de skin. Mais c'est nothin much!"

"Wounded, Pascalet?"

"Eh, un leetle. Une affaire no grande. He hav' un heart ver' brave; tres fort, wit de glorie he make contre de ennemee."

"I must, then, visit him in his tent. Lead on."

"Oui, mi lor," replied the man, turning to the right, and gliding rather than walking to the rear of the pavilion, and through a lane formed by two rows of tents. Every few rods they were intercepted by two sentinels, who crossed their arms before them, demanding not only the password, but also to see the faces of the strangers. After walking a few minutes rapidly and silently in a northern direction, they crossed a small brook rippling over its pebbly bed on its way to discharge its tributary waters into Gowan's Cove, and, after answering the challenges of the sentinels stationed on either bank, they entered an open field bordered on the east by tall trees, and surrounded on every side except on the south by marshes: here it was connected by a low ridge with the elevated ground they had just left behind, and on which was encamped the centre of the British army.

"Ici, mi lor, be de first detachment of de de what you call no de lef? ah, de wing right," said the guide, as they skirted a spur of the main encampment. "Ah, dere de maison," added he, after they had advanced a few paces farther, pointing to a low, dusky farmhouse nearly hidden in the dark shadows of the wood to the east, and surrounded by tents, some of which were pitched close to its threshold.

They made their way through these tents, which were placed with less regularity than those about the headquarters, as if they had been planted hastily and late; and some soldiers they saw still engaged fastening the pins of one or two, as, challenged at every turn, they thridded the intricacies. Passing a sentinel at the door of the farmhouse, Pascalet spoke in a low tone to a soldier standing in the hall, who, without replying, walked to its extremity and knocked at a side door.

"Pascalet, wait my orders," said Percy, as he obeyed the summons to enter.

"Oui, mi lor," he replied, with a gleaming smile, which seemed to be confined wholly to his black, bloodthirsty eye, mechanically, at the same time, placing his hand into his breast as if grasping a concealed weapon.

The room into which Percy was admitted was a small bedchamber in a wing of a house in which several British officers had taken up quarters for the night. A single bed, with a military cloak thrown over it for a coverlid; a semicircular table standing beneath a small looking−glass, with a white dimity cloth upon it; two flag−bottom chairs, with high oaken backs; a picture of a curly−headed little girl, in a pink frock, kneeling on the grass, holding a vessel, out of which a pet lamb was quietly drinking, an old gnarled oak forming the back−ground; a framed sampler, with the alphabet displayed in every hue of the rainbow, in every variety of size and form; an oilcloth−covered combcase on one side of the little glass, symmetrically in keeping with a pin and needle cushion on the other; and, finally, two strips of carpeting, economically made of patches and shreds of variously−coloured broadcloth, one lying by the bedside, the other before the tall, half−moon toilet table, constituted, in part, the ornaments and furniture of the little chamber. On the mantelpiece was a New Testament, much schoolworn, a volume of Isaac Watts's Psalms and Hymns, and a well−thumbed copy of the Book of Martyrs. A volume of the "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul" innocently flanked a little glass case of French gaud, containing a tawdry waxen image of the Virgin Mary, holding in her arms an infant arrayed in pink and roses; a prized ornament of the little bedroom, doubtless, not a deity for the worship of its former occupant. In addition to the furniture just mentioned, there was a little workstand in one corner, white muslin curtains to the humble windows, and a flower−vase containing a daisy upon the shining red hearth before a flaunting paper fireboard; all of which showed that it was the rustic boudoir of some humble maiden, whom the fortune of war had rudely dispossessed, for a time, of her quiet home. The floor was as white as the driven snow; the walls were whitewashed, and even the rafters which stretched across the low ceiling were free from the webs of the busy spider, whose labours are but little respected by the broom of the diligent, brushing, and bustling housewife.

"Good−evening, my lord," said Major Ney, rising from the bed on which he had been lying in his uniform as Lord Percy entered; "you come to narrow quarters."

"Neat and homely," said his lordship, whose quick eye had taken in at a glance all the details we have taken so much space to relate. "You have been a sad and unwelcome intruder here, sir. Where's the pretty coquette who

each morning reflected her rosy and sunbrowned cheeks in this mirror? No outrage has been committed, I trust, by the soldiers? This war is bitter enough, of necessity."

"None, my lord. The tenant is a loyalist. His family are in quiet possession of the opposite wing."

"Didst not find a pretty lass curling her locks in paper at that half−moon of a table, major? Tut! but you are a father, with a tight, pretty lass of your own; what cares an old widower for bright een and sunny hair? Hast heard of our spy of late, the fair Isabel?" he asked, throwing himself into one of the highback chairs, but immediately vacating it as if he would choose a more comfortable seat, and placing himself on the foot of the bed. "No, major, don't rise. That villain of mine, Pascalet, tells me you are hurt but not badly, I hope."

"A slight wound in the temples, received singularly enough from a four−pounder thrown from hand by a young gallows−bird. I shall be in my saddle in a day or two."

"I am glad it is no worse. You have heard nothing from your daughter since she was spirited away to Kingsbridge?"

"Indirectly, that she is still there and well."

"'Tis a pity Washington's sagacity should have marred our plan, which seemed to tend to so fair an issue. But we have laid a deeper train now, and I think 'twill hardly fail us."

"Have you heard from our friends in the city?" inquired Major Ney.

"Not for two days, when Bellamy sent word that all was nearly ripe, and that by six this evening we should hear again, when and where to meet them with our boats; but, if no tidings came from them, to believe their messenger intercepted, and endeavour to send one to them who could be sure of returning safely; further, he stated that a single boat would find no difficulty, with proper caution, in effecting a landing near Crown Point after nightfall."

"'Tis now eight, my lord. You should have seen Bellamy's messenger ere this. Whom did he send on the first message?"

"Impatient at their delay and the long interval of news, I despatched the Frenchman's valet, Pascalet, who has taken a fancy to attach himself to my person. "He returned to me with their message."

"Who is this Pascalet?"

"A very villain, if nature ever made the pattern of one. A compound of craft, impish shrewdness, malice, and meanness. His eye gleams with the serpent's cunning, while he wears the look of idiocy. He would stoop to lick my shoe if I bade him, but would rise to strike his dagger in my breast in atonement for the servility and in revenge for the insult. He has no human soul, but is only, for the moment, magnetized into humanity by contact with his fellow−creatures."

"You describe a dangerous man, my lord!"

"True; but I fear him not. I do not have him much about my person; he still serves his own master, and only myself since the desertion of my valet. His master, by−the−by, is his very prototype, with the same dark spirit refined and made more dangerous by education. They seem to have been in each other's society so long, that, if one was originally the greater devil, they have now become like bodies of unequal temperature placed in juxtaposition, equally diabolical. Like master like man, in very truth."

"Your lordship is aware that this is an enterprise in which intelligence as well as craft is necessary. The information of the valet I would not rely on, nor trust him too far. Suppose you send the chevalier, as he styles himself, on his parole, and promise him his liberty if he successfully fulfils the object of his mission. His politics, at least, are on our side."

"Parole?"

"Is he not now on parole, my lord, within the bounds of the camp? He is doubtless a bad man, but he holds those lofty sentiments of military honour, in a case where his word is pledged, which so peculiarly characterizes the enthusiastic, incoherent Frenchman of the day. As a soldier, he will give and keep his word; as a man, I would not trust him a tether's length."

"You may be right. He seems too like one of those men such stirring times as these create, who are ever ready to plunge into excitement and adventure, `*tojours pres*' their motto. I believe you are in the right, Ney. It strikes me he is the very man to serve our purpose; and then, if it fails, we can make him the scapegoat. Our friends ashore, in that case, will be glad to have a neck between them and a rebel gallows. Call him, Ney. We'll have him into our councils, and, by a show of confidence, bring him glibly over to our purpose."

Pascalet was summoned, and sent to a group of tents in the rear of the house; after a short absence he returned, and ushered a dark foreigner into the little room where Percy and Ney, leisurely discussing the events of the day and the prospects of the morrow, were awaiting his appearance.

"Messieurs," he said, bowing low, and almost cringingly, and speaking in tolerable English, "your servant! Ah, mi Lord Percy! pardon me! I am your very humble servant."

"Chevalier," said Percy, rising and approaching the bowing foreigner with one of his blandest smiles, "you do us great honour. Pray be seated. Pascalet, you need not leave the room thrust in your whole body! We have occupation for some of your leisure hours."

"Oui, mi lor. I vill stan', mi lor, here by de door de l'appartement," he said, shutting the door hesitatingly, with the timid air of one who felt himself in the presence of a lion, and felt that he was closing the only avenue of escape; yet he could not conceal from Lord Percy that all this humility was the artful guise of confidence and impudence.

Pascalet approached the presence of his superiors ke a whipped dog who is called back to further discipline of the lash by his master's voice; among his equals or inferiors he was as ready with bark and teeth as the same cur snarling among its fellows or tyrannizing over whelps of lower degree. He could be likened only to a snake that goes crawling among men, ready to strike its fangs into their heels. He was about thirty years of age, low in stature, with broad, square shoulders, but his figure was as straight as an arrow: he was slight but muscular, and as active as a cat. He wore a coarse blue frock without a collar, small−clothes of French cassimere, yellow hose, and paste shoebuckles. His neck, which was encircled several times by a soiled yellow silk kerchief, was long and scraggy, and surmounted by a triangular−shaped head, covered by a mass of black hair, thick and rough like a bear's fur. His forehead was low, narrow, and projecting, but entirely concealed by his hair, which overhung the penthouse formed by his bristly eyebrows. His eyes were sunken and bloodshotten, with little restless pupils, the lustrous gleam of which resembled a rattlesnake's; their general expression was that of wily cunning and active suspicion. His thin face was sallow, and half hidden in enormous black whiskers, and disfigured with scars. His hands were remarkably small, yellow, and thin, with a nervous, assassin−like look, and seemed to be almost as expressive of the restless character of the man as his countenance. His passions seemed to be impulsive in their nature, but deliberative in their operations. He was quick to decide, cool to act. During the conference, he stood with his hand on the latch of the door; his head sunk on his breast, but his eyes taking note of everything that passed around him. Altogether, he was one of those men who, at the first glance, strike the beholder with revolting and painful emotions, which they can neither account for nor express.

The master of this man, the *soi−disant* chevalier, was a tall, exceedingly spare−built figure, upward of six feet high, erect and military; dressed in a long surtout of coarse French cloth, in shape somewhat similar to the Canadian *capote*, but differing from that garment in its length by reaching nearly to the ankles of the wearer; and at the waist, instead of being girdled by a sash, a broad military belt was buckled round him. In the place of boots, so essential to the costume of an officer, he wore high−heeled shoes adorned by a pair of costly buckles; his belt was without a sword, and the chains to which it had been appended were hooked together in a loop. Under his arm he carried a richly−laced chapeau, and, judging alone from his dress, the observer might have set him down either for an officer or a civilian. His face was oval, colourless, and wholly divested of whiskers or beard; his forehead was high and bald; his brows abrupt and prominent; his eyes were of a light hazel colour, and wore an unpleasing, sinister expression, and never directly encountered those of others; his nostril was thin and transparent, and expanding at every emotion, as we have seen those of a mettled courser; his under lip had a sensual fulness, and the upper, which was finely chiselled, wore a short, malignant curl; his look was wary and alert; and while he observed everything and studied others closely, he was, apparently, the most indifferent and unobserving. His face presented a singular combination of ferocity and mildness, frankness and suspicion, candour and craft, pride and humility, manly strength and feminine softness. Over all the exterior man there shone a lustre of courtly polish.

He entered the room bowing and smiling; took the chair offered him by Lord Percy, and, at first, accommodated himself to its uncomfortable shape with habitual politeness; but, finding his attitude left him lower than the others, he rose again, and, with an apology that he had been sitting all the evening, took his station behind it leaning upon its back.

"Chevalier," said the earl, "I have taken the liberty of sending to invite you to join our discussions."

The chevalier bowed, looked inquiringly and suspiciously from one gentleman to the other, and then said,

"I am honoured, mi lord. The Earl of Percie has but to speak to be obeyed."

"When our frigate captured you in an enemy's ship, you were, if I remember, bound to Quebec?"

"Mi lord is very correct."

"You have frequently desired to be exchanged, that you might accomplish your original intention; at least, I am so informed by your valet, Pascalet."

"It is true, mi lord. Mais, mon Dieu!" he added, quickly, "I am no subject for exchange. I am no enemy to King George, but a loyal Canadian sujet."

"You have not proved it, chevalier, and we must treat you as a prisoner, although we sincerely regret to do so," said the benign earl, with affability. "But I desire to propose to you a means of at once obtaining your freedom. There is a plan ripe for the abduction of a rebel officer of high rank. The conspirators are now assembled in a certain house in New−York. I wish to communicate with them. We have seen fit to extend your parole, which, like a Frenchman and a man of honour, you have so long kept sacred, on condition that, with Pascalet as your guide, you will see these gentlemen, and, as soon as possible, return and report their proceedings; this faithfully done, chevalier, your liberty is in your own hands. You hear the terms?" continued Lord Percy, after a moment's pause.

The chevalier eyed the two gentlemen, and even glanced to mark the expression of Pascalet's face, like one who always looks in men's countenances for a construction that shall contradict or convey an opposite meaning to their words, as if he regarded these as riddles which crafty penetration would unravel. Discovering nothing to prevent his taking their words in their obvious meaning, he said with complacency, but carefully guarding his countenance,

"Mi lord, I accept the mission with pleasure."

"You have, then, your parole, chevalier! Pascalet will be your guide, for he has been to the city before. Take this seal as your authority, and bring me, by letters or verbally, the condition of affairs. Pascalet's wit will find a way of crossing the water. He hung to the rudder of one of the enemy's barges, Ney, two nights since, and was safely towed across. A wet jacket is not, however, a part of the conditions, chevalier."

Scrutinizing their features once more, as if he would find something in their faces that had not escaped their lips, he bowed courteously, received a sword handed him by Major Ney, and, after some further instructions from Lord Percy, left the room, followed by Pascalet.

"There go a precious pair of villains, my lord."

"And they, or the greater one of them, is like to stay; farewell to that sword, Ney."

"'Twere well gone if 'twould keep him away."

"I wonder at Lord Howe's whim at keeping him so long a prisoner. But we must hear from our friends, and English blood has been shed too freely to−day to risk more of it in this enterprise. But, my lord, you go not forth to−night?"

"I have matters to talk over with Clinton, and must leave."

"Do we force the lines in the morning?"

`No; but we shall break ground in form tomorrow night."

"Thank Heaven, by that time I shall be fit for the saddle. So, then, my lord, if you will not share my quarters, good−night."

"Good−night, and may your dreams be of the fair rustic pshaw! I forget thou art a pater−familias. When this chevalier returns, send word to my tent."

Thus speaking, Lord Percy wrapped his cloak around him, and, with his drawn sword concealed beneath it, left the farmhouse, and, without interruption, gained the quarters of Sir Henry Clinton.

The chevalier and his companion pursued their way silently but rapidly across the field, the latter taking the lead as guide, and, after a walk of half a mile, they entered a wood bordering on a brook that emptied into Whaaleboght Bay. Descending the steep bank by clinging to bushes, they turned short to the left, following the course of the stream before mentioned, now scrambling along it by a rough track strewn with stones, now crossing and then recrossing it when their path was shut in by approaching banks, and now leaping from rock to rock. They at length arrived at the outlet of the creck, and beheld the little bay of Whaaleboght stretching before them; the campfires of the Americans were on their left; and, far distant, the lights of the city flung their spiral, wavy lines over the water. Even to this retired spot the fight had penetrated; and several bodies of Americans, who had fled to the shore to take boats, lay dead on the beach where they had struggled in vain for their lives.

Not finding any boat, the two proceeded higher up the beach until they came to a point of land where the East River was narrower than below, and from which, favoured by the tide, they could cross obliquely to the city. After looking about for some time, Pascalet found a small wherry concealed beneath a clump of willows in a narrow inlet worn in the sand by a torrent.

"Mon Dieu!" he exclaimed, as, in taking hold of the wherry to drag it from its concealment, he heard a heavy groan; "c'est le diable!" but the next instant, as if comprehending the cause of the noise, he thrust one hand through the foliage and grasped a man by the breast; with the other he drew his stiletto, brandished it in the air, and, with "sacr−r−r−e!" rolling from his tongue, was about to bury it in his body, when the chevalier caught his arm.

"Hold, Pascalet! You've killed rebels enough to−day. If he is the owner of the boat, we'll make him row us across. There is time enough to kill him when we've done with him."

"For the sake of the blessed Mary!" cried the man, in provincial French, at the same time struggling to free himself from the muscular grasp upon his chest, "spare my life; I am a true man oh misericorde! Mercy, mercy!"

"By the holy church! we've a bon comrade here," said Pascalet, in French, dropping his arm and releasing his hold, "and a howling one too. Stir out of that, and let us see who thou art that hast a life worth so much yelling for! Out! Crawl, or I will make thee tune thy pipes to some purpose!"

"Patient, good friend," said the man, in Canadian French; "put up that dangerous whinger, an it please thee. It might do mischief of itself. No, no! force me not! I will come out. I am coming! Thank the saints! ye are friends and true men. Bless me, how sweet er words sound; 'tis long since I've heard such sweet words! Prithee, friend and countryman, be not over hasty! Seest thou not I'm coming?"

At length, after very manifest reluctance, he placed his feet on the ground, trembling and talking all the while in tones dolefully pitched to disarm the dangers with which he felt himself surrounded. He had no sooner shown himself, than, dropping on his knees, he began to plead piteously for his life.

"Hist, thou liver−loon!" said Pascalet; "if'twere not for thy Canadian tongue, I would whisk off thy head as I would a garlic top! Whist! or thy speech shall not longer keep thy head. Who art thou, villain? Tell me thy name and country, and why thou art here?"

"A poor peasant of Chaudiere, whom the devil has driven out to the wars, who never did harm to living soul, so save me, mercy! 'Twas to save the lives of many, who would else have been slain by me had I continued in battle, that I hid my valour aneath this boat! No, I am no ill−hearted man, friend! I would not harm a hair o' thy head if I were to get the strampado for not doing it. By my beard would I not!"

"Thou art the most valiant coward and most cowardly braggart these ears ever listened to. Sacre! I know not if thou art the more knave or fool. But wert never christened? Thy name, villain?"

"Jacques Cloots, courageous sir."

"Cloots? Jacques Cloots? and from Chaudiere, sayst thou?"

"Even so, your valiancy; and now a rebel that is, if thou beest un; if not, I am one o' the enemy, as it suits your valour's humour."

"Mon Dieu!" cried Pascalet; "art thou that Jacques Cloots whom I have ducked for pastime in the Chaudiere; tied by the thumb to a tree in June, sticking thy nose with honey; made thee swallow tadpoles and swear them oysters; fed thee with pebbles for sugarplums, and pounded thee at my pleasure? By the head of St. Peter, Sir Chevalier! I have caught a Tartar."

During this address, Jacques, who, after his discomfiture, had chanced to find and occupy the hiding−place from which he was so ceremoniously dragged forth, groaned in agony. At each enumeration of Pascalet's exploits and

his own martyrdoms he would mutter something between an exorcism and a prayerful ejaculation; when he ended, he clasped his hands and emitted a deep groan, like one who had resigned himself to some dreadful destiny that was in waiting for him.

"Speak, clown! art thou not that veritable Jacques Cloots who, with the soul of a mouse, would make thy fellows believe thou wert a lion; while thou couldst not bear to see me, in mere sport, tear a live frog's hind−legs off?"

"I I am. Art thou Pascalet Pascalet le Diable?"

"Pascalet le Diable? Dost wish to taste my steel? I am Pascalet Layet, peasant."

"By my beard!" cried Jacques, briskly, "I thought thou wert hung."

"There you have it!" said the chevalier.

"Fiend take thy thoughts!" exclaimed Pascalet, grasping his weapon; then, relinquishing the hilt, he laughingly said, "I hear it was so reported. Which side boasts your sword's exploits in this warfare? Speak; art thou a rebel?"

"No, good Pascalet, not I. I am a true man."

"We must not delay here, Pascalet," said the chevalier; "if he is thy countryman, press him for our service. He can wield an oar as well as a musket."

"A musket? I'll warrant he never put finger to one in his life," said Pascalet, as he proceeded to draw out the boat. "Hast thou e'er pulled trigger, peasant?"

"I have pointed my gun many a time at the enemy," replied Jacques, stoutly; "but, somehow, I couldn't have the heart, when I knew 'twas loaded with a bullet, to fire it right against men's broad breasts. I haven't loaded with bullets since I like to ha' fired and killed a red−coated soldier once. 'Tis cruel wicked to kill folks; and I thinks it be just full as wicked to kill a good many in a heap, like to−day, as to slay one at a time; but the great uns don't think so, and they knows best."

Thus speaking, he put his shoulder to the boat, and, with the aid of Pascalet, floated it.

"There's philosophy for you, Pascalet. Your friend is not so green as you think," said the chevalier, stepping into the boat.

"A mere suckling! Balaam's ass speaking by dint of beating. Take that oar, peasant, and see if thou hast the wit to pull it. A greater miracle than thy presence here has not been in Rome. Thy dam should not have weaned thee till thou hadst cut thy wisdom−teeth. Now dip deep! Look not round if thy oar happen to knock a fish on the head, or thou wilt suddenly feel thy bones sorer than thy conscience will be at the deed."

Jacques mechanically seated himself on the thwarts, and pulled at the after−oar by Pascalet's order. Pascalet placed himself behind him and pulled the bow−oar, which he brought with violence against his back at every "feather" caught by the sweep of the inexperienced rower, like one with whom cruelty was habitual, and who was gratified at having an old victim once more in his grasp.

The headland they left was directly opposite Crown Point, now called Corlear's Hook, then halt a league above the town. A few scattered houses, with pastures, gardens, and forests, were its features at that period: now it is in the centre of the city, which has grown more than a league beyond it, dense with houses, thronged with population, and its shores lined with wharves and shipping.

The water was perfectly smooth, reflecting the minutest stars in its clear mirror as the boat glided out from the land and held its way to the opposite shore, with many a curse from the cruel Pascalet, and many a groan from the patient, enduring Jacques, against whose back his old tormentor kept up a regular system of annoyance the pastime of a spirit that, like his own, found delight only in inflicting pain.

The river was deserted. No vessels rode at anchor in the stream or lay by the shore. Commerce had folded her wings at the approach of war, or, spreading them, had taken her flight to other seas. Their boat seemed to be the only inhabitant of the waters. At length the shores of Long Island became more indistinct, and the trees and an occasional dwelling on the side towards which they were steering stood out from the obscurity, till at length the dark outline of the edifices of the city could be traced against the sky. They shot close into the land where the trees overhung the water. After looking cautiously around, they landed, and, securing their boat to a projecting root, covered it with branches. The chevalier now questioned Pascalet respecting the course he intended to pursue, and then bade him lead on.

Without ascending the bank to avoid some detachments of the enemy stationed not far from the river, they traversed the beach until they came to the place from which Arden had embarked to escort Eugenie to Kip's Bay.

Pascalet skulked along the shore with the confident pace and direct advance of one familiar with the localities. When he came in sight of the platform before mentioned and the boats moored around it, he suddenly stopped, discovering that it was occupied by a sentinel. After delaying a moment to reconnoitre, making a gesture of caution, he crept forward on his knees, bringing a tree in a line between his course and the soldier; then, carefully watching his opportunity, as the man turned in his walk he put off his shoes, bounded forward with the lightness of a cat, and sprung upon the platform. The next instant he was on the man's back, with his fingers firmly grasping his throat. The soldier, in surprise and agony, dropped his musket into the water, and, after a brief struggle, fell to the platform; but the noise of his fall was skilfully broken by the cool and cautious assassin, who drew his knife as he fell and buried it in his heart: he then pitched the body over into the water. This was all done in a moment of time.

"That was a needless blow, Pascalet," coolly said the chevalier, who now came up; " 'twould have been enough to take his arms."

"Ay, and so let him loose to set a party of dragoons upon our heels. What's one man's blood, more or less, in the count of to−day's sport?"

"Hast thee, in verity, slain the soldier I but now saw walking so bravely here?" inquired Jacques, trembling and breathing with difficulty from terror.

"In verity have I," answered Pascalet, wiping his blade upon the skirt of his frock; "and I will send thee to keep him company unless thou keep thy tongue and curiosity to thyself. Am I to account to thee for every fool's blood I chance to spill? Follow, and, if thou art wise, shut thy jaws and use thy feet!"

Pascalet again took the lead and passed up the lane along which the carriage had driven with Arden and Eugenie; and, turning to the left into the road leading to the city, the party proceeded at a swift pace towards the place of meeting chosen by the conspirators.

CHAPTER XIII. THE MISER.

In a quarter of the town to which the reader already has been introduced, and at the outlet of the steep street opening into the square which the Arden Eugenie crossed to gain the mansion of General Washington, stood, at the period of our tale, an ancient brick dwelling, with sunken foundations, and a steep tiled roof projecting far

over the sidewalk. It looked on the square, and had the air of having been, in earlier days, a mansion of the better sort, although now displaying broken sashes, shattered hinges and shutters, and dilapidated steps leading to the only door in front, which seemed to be nailed up and never used.

The side bordering on the steep lane which, with a short descent and a longer ascent, led to Broadway, was a plain dead wall, tarnished and crumbled with time, perforated in the midst by one small square window, set with four glass panes of the kind called "bull's eyes," admitting light, but impervious to vision. At the termination of this wall of the house, and about thirty feet down the alley, was a low, narrow door cut in the angle, apparently done after the house was built, and sunken beneath the pavement several inches. The door was strong, of thick oak, and had once been painted red.

About nine o'clock on the evening of the battle of Brooklyn, and just before we took leave of the chevalier and his party on their way to their rendezvous, a man in a military chapeau, and wrapped in an ample Spanish cloak, rather worn for disguise than for comfort, suddenly turned from the square into this lane. Glancing hastily up, and seeing a faint light shining through the little window of the house we have just described, he quickened his pace down the steep sidewalk, and, approaching the little wicket, knocked deliberately four times, and, after a brief pause, repeated two additional strokes in quick succession. In a few moments a shuffling footstep was heard within, a light glimmered through the keyhole and shone over the top of the door, which was on a level with the applicant's eyes, and a croaking voice asked his business at that hour of the night.

"Unbar, Father Gerret! Dost not know, old skinflint, how much IV. and II. make?"

The noise of a falling bar was followed by that of the clattering of a key, applied with trembling hands to the lock, and the creaking of the bolt; the door slowly turned on its hinges, and an old man appeared with a haggard face, sharp features, and sunken eyes, in whose countenance fear and suspicion were mingled. He bore a piece of tallow candle, placed in a gourd, in his hands, which also grasped a bunch of keys, securely attached to his skinny wrist by a leather thong. He appeared about fifty years of age, to which care and imaginary want had added full ten more. His garments were composed of elements widely differing from each other in texture and hue. His breeches represented every variety of bombasin that ever was given away from shops in the shape of patterns, and his broad−flapped coat, which buttoned so closely to his chin as to leave his property in under teguments a matter of doubt, as if determined not to be outdone by the nether garment, vied in the variety of its shape, in the texture and colour of its component parts, with the party−coloured display of the smallclothes: the coat, being the more honourable garment, was, however, a patchwork of broadcloth, with an economical intermixture of cassimere. His shoes, plainly, were never made for his feet, but doubtless the fruit of some forage in the suburbs; one was too large, and the other as much too small, having to be worn down at the heel, which protruded some two inches behind. His stockings were a labyrinth of darns, defying anal ysis for the detection of their original hue. His head was covered with a coarse brown wig; it was worn awry, and long had been oblivious of powder. Altogether, in wig and breeches, stockings and shoes, *miser* was written as plainly upon the external man of Joseph Gerret, or Dom. Joseph Gerret, as he was called from the circumstance of his having taught Latin in his earlier days, as if each article of apparel stood forth in an individual letter to form the word. His face wore an anxious air, and his glassy gray eyes were at all times restless.

"Enter, enter quick, that I may shut to the door," he said, in a querulous voice; "this opening o' doors o' nights is awful. I shall be robbed murdered in my bed! For tenpence more than you give me for the sue of my lumber−room, will I not have thee here another night."

"Peace, old man, and light me up," said the stranger, sternly. "Are they all here?"

"God be praised, they are. Heaven ha' mercy! I shall yet be robbed among ye!"

The old man led the way through a passage so narrow as not to admit two to walk abreast; at the extremity was a winding, dilapidated stairway. This they ascended with some difficulty from the obstruction of empty boxes, bags of feathers, and broken furniture, which Joseph seemed to have placed there to break the necks of robbers who might venture to ascend to his stronghold. The stranger moved on, however, in silence, while Joseph muttered to himself,

"Must let um out soon! But how do I know what I may let out with um? They haven't got hold of my keys; they're safe, thank the good angels! I was at my chest not five minutes gone; that's safe. Pecunia, sacra pecunia! Mind that hole in the floor, sir! Don't strike your head and knock down that basket; it holds my mushrooms for ketchup. I glean um in the fields; twelve pence a bottle! That's not the door, sir; oh Lord, sir, no! Nobody opens that door, not I even!" cried the old man, in the extremity of alarm, as, on gaining the head of the stairs, and entering a large square room, with several doors opening into it, the stranger advanced to open one of them. "This, this door; this is your room; not that door; no, no! I haven't been in that room for a year. This is the door. Don't you see the lights through the chinks? Two lights, sir; think of that; two lights when one will do! money wasted, gone to air!"

The stranger opened the door, and, entering, closed it after him, while Dom. Joseph, with a grin of exultation, muttered,

"He don't suspect, he don't suspect! Oh, merciful Father, if he had opened that door!"

His voice sunk at the thought, and, shuffling to the interdicted door, he applied, with agitated fingers, one of the keys hanging to his wrist to the lock; then looking round to see if he was observed, he glided into the room, closed the door after him, barred, and locked it. Drawing a wretched cott from one side of the apartment, he exposed a large square oaken chest, the front edge of its lid and a large space about the keyhole having a smooth, oily look, as if much handled. Crouching down before it, he applied a key, which was as bright as silver from constant use, to the wellworn wards, and with an eager hand turned the bolt. It moved easily and noiselessly, as if it had never known that rest which rust invades. He raised the cover, and his eyes glistened as they rested on its bottom paved with small piles of gold and silver.

"Bless the mercies!" he said, scarcely above his breath, " 'tis here, three, four, five, seven yes, twelve piles of Spanish gold." Then passing his attenuated finger nicely over the level surface of upright roleaus, and feeling no cavity, he continued, "All is here! None gone! No false keys yet. Kind Heaven keep me from them! Wretched man that I am, if I should be robbed! Heaven save us! what was that? a stitch breaking in my coat! 'Twill cost thread and wax to mend it! Lord, everything goes to wreck and ruin! It is so expensive to live, and then it costs so much to bury one when dead. So much for digging the grave; so much for shroud and candles; so much for hearse and sexton; so much for coffin! Lord, Lord, dreadful! I could not stand it! I'll I'll have it in my will to be sunk in the North River. Coffin and shroud? Never! I could not rest in my grave with such a load of extravagance on my conscience. Let me see; I'll count over my money, and see how much 'twill all come to with the sevenpence ha'penny I put to it to−day that I got for the pocket−handkerchief one of these gentlemen left in the lumber−room last night. I will then clip; 'tis three months since I have clipped, and times are getting harder. I'll begin with the gold. One, two, three guineas; four that is something light; five that's heavier; six," balancing it on his finger, "good 'twill bear to lose full two grains and a half; seven even weight, 'twill lose half a grain."

In this manner, with his whole soul absorbed in his occupation, his eyes twinkling with pleasure at a weightier coin than ordinary, and changing their gleeful to a sad expression on balancing a lighter one on his finger, he pursued his eager task. The room fronted on the square, but its two windows were not only closely barred, but nailed, the light entering by day through two circular holes three inches in diameter cut in the top of the shutters. These apertures, which a cat could not pass through, were also secured by strong wires woven across them. The walls had once been hung with paper, but they were now nearly divested of it; a strip here and there, too firmly adhering to the plaster to yield to age, bedimmed with smoke and grease, showed the original blue rose of cabbage dimensions which had constituted its pattern.

Besides the cott, which was scantily supplied with miserable bedding, a chair without a back, and with a leathern bottom, the polish of which indicated it to be the usual seat of the inmate of the room, there were ranged along the mantelpiece a cracked teapot; an earthen cup and saucer; a wooden bowl, with the remnant of soup in it still, and a pewter spoon; a pipe, which seemed never used; and a pair of horn spectacles, with one glass wanting. On the hearth was a broken washbowl, where also stood a gridiron, with its ribs jammed together, as if screwed up with the rheumatism; a spider with one leg, like a warworn veteran; and an iron pot in good preservation. A three−cornered hat, foxy and greasy, and a staff which had belonged to some man of fashion, divested of its gold head, a piece of smooth horn supplying its place, stood in the corner as if for ready use.

In a remote corner of the room stood a jeweller's workbench. Upon it were a pair of thin copper scales, and half a dozen instruments of the trade, which had the appearance of being frequently used. By the wall were piled a score of old and half−worn boots, shoes, and slippers of all sizes, not only of men and boys, but of females, mingled with old spurs, bitts, knives, straps of leather, stirrups, chapeaus, and swordbelts; and stowed in a box near by were a score of coats, waistcoats, breeches, cloaks, and linen, as heterogeneous an assemblage as if a boarding−house had been drained of all the refuse and pledges of defunct boarders, and Dom. Joseph had fallen heir to them. These, doubtless, were his stock in trade, the mint and mine of his fortune. At the head of his cott was suspended a huge old blunderbuss, charged to the muzzle, the formidable defender of the miser's premises.

He at length completed his nightly orisons before the gold and silver idols of his worship; and, taking a pile of dollars and a lesser one of sovereigns, which he had gradually accumulated beside him as he threw down coin after coin that would bear the loss of a ninth part of a grain without the loss being detected, he said, "Twenty−one sovereigns and a half; seventy−three dollars and three quarters. Very well! These have come in to me this three months past," he added, rising, carefully locking his chest, and replacing his cott over it. Going to the little workbench, he seated himself, and, placing the money before him, he continued,

"Twenty−one sovereigns! Very well! This chap looks as if he would bleed a little! Pay a small tax, hey? A sovereign is no rebel! he! he! he! that is facetious! he! he!"

If one could imagine Maelzel's automaton trumpeter to break into a giggle at his own music, then he might have some conception of the automaton−like merriment of Dom. Joseph Gerret at his own facetiousness. It was a laugh or an inward chuckle in which no part of the outward man shared except his tongue. The muscles of his face were innocent of any participation therein.

"A brave coin, this! 'twill bear full three grains," he said, balancing it on his finger; "three at the very least; no less;" then, taking up a pair of clippers, he placed the sovereign in a vice, and began to nibble with his clippers a little off the elevated rim; to clip, with a different tool, a period from the inscription; to cut a tail from a capital G, and points from the raised part of the figure, the clippings and dust falling, as he worked, into a buckskin tray accurately fitted to the pillar of the vice. After every half dozen clips he placed the coin in the copper scales and carefully weighed it, and then proceeded in his work. As the skilful physician from time to time coolly tries the pulse of a victim of the Inquisition to see how much more he is capable of enduring, so did Domine Joseph Gerret apply his little square, punctured grain and pennyweights to test the constitution of the victims which, in the course of things, chanced to pass through his hands. In process of time, half the currency of the York colony, probably, paid "tithes of mint" to this "snapper−up of unconsidered trifles."

Suddenly a knocking at the outer door disturbed him in the midst of his employment; the clipped and unclipped, or, as he used facetiously as well as professionally to term them, the whipped and un whipped lads being pretty equally divided. His lower jaw dropped; his eyes rolled at the ominous sounds; tremblingly he gathered up his coin in one hand, and, taking his deerskin tray in the other, he hastened to his chest, and placed the money in with careful haste. Then springing a lid on one side of the interior, he drew forth a bladder nearly filled with silver dust; into this, with the tip of his bony finger, he brushed his silver clippings; taking also a second bladder of smaller dimensions, and, to appearance, equally heavy, he carefully added to it the golden fruits of his night's

industry. Hurriedly closing and locking the chest, he seized his candle, now low in the socket, and, unbarring his door, went out, turning the key carefully behind him; and, as the knock was repeated a third time still louder, he prepared to descend the steps, when a door on the opposite side opened, and the man who had last entered came forth with a naked sword and demanded the cause of the noise.

"God in heaven knows not I," said Joseph; "is't the IV. and II.?"

"Dotard! 'tis none of our party; they knock again. Go and demand their business. I will follow you."

The miser tremblingly obeyed.

"Who is it? who's there at this time? No honest folks would be hammering at a lone house at this hour," cried the terrified domine.

"Sacré!" said the voice of Pascalet; "I am le diable! Open votre porte I say o−pen!"

"Mercy! 'tis robbers and murderers! oh! oh!"

"Hush, old man! 'tis he I wish. Is it Pascalet?" he inquired, in French.

"Oui, monsieur," was the reply, in a more respectful tone. "I conduct one messenger to you from mi lor."

"'Tis well! Open, Joseph. Unlock unlock, I say, or I must do your duty for you!"

The old man obeyed, and Pascalet stood before them.

"In, in, and close the door! In: I know thee now," said Dom. Joseph, hurriedly.

Pascalet, however, stood in the threshold, and said to the stranger,

"The messenger is here, and bears a token."

As he spoke the chevalier, who stood in the street, where the form of Jacques, to the increased terror of the miser, was also visible, advanced, and, presenting the ring, was instantly admitted, while the door was closed on Pascalet and Jacques, the lock turning upon them with an emphasis that seemed to express in a marked degree the pleasurable sensations of Joseph at leaving them on the outside.

CHAPTER XIV. THE PATIENT.

Eugenie had been received by Mrs. Washington, after the death of the unfortunate Caroline, with benevolent sympathy. She took her to her arms rather like a recovered daughter than a stranger whose strongest claims to her kindness were only her gentle beauty and misfortunes. In return, she made her the confidant of her young heart's affections, and expressed her determination to forget one who had proved so unworthy of her. The ensuing morning, which was the day preceding the disastrous battle we have briefly sketched, she took leave of Arden, who, by the indulgence of Mrs. Washington, was allowed to see her for this purpose, and whose noble character she had taken opportunity to paint to Eugenie in attractive colours. With her affections so rudely torn from the heart around which they had so fondly entwined themselves for many months, Eugenie yearned for sympathy. The heart of Mrs. Washington was indeed a refuge. But the kind tones of Arden, his softened looks and devoted manner, struck a deeper chord in her bosom than any female sympathy could awaken; and it was with much tenderness and sorrow that she parted, perhaps for ever, from one who had already awakened an interest in her

heart. When, after lingering long with her hand clasped in his, he suddenly pressed it with a hurried farewell and left the apartment, Eugenie hastened to her room and gave way to a shower of tears.

During the day she became calmer, and able to reflect upon her false lover's conduct with suitable resentment; while, turning from time to time from the unpleasing picture, she loved to dwell upon the noble person, respectful tenderness, and tried virtues of Arden. As she compared them, her admiration of the latter increased with her contempt for the former; till at length, when she had whispered to herself, "Does Arden love me?" and her heart had answered in the affirmative, she had nearly banished the image of the unworthy Burton from her mind, if not torn it from her heart; and Arden, if she had not placed his own there instead, became at least the theme of her thoughts, the sole subject of her hopes, fears, and anxieties.

It may appear like temerity in the romancer to permit his heroine to substitute one lover for another in so brief a space. It seems, indeed, pretty generally admitted, that heroes and heroines can love but once. Nevertheless, there have been exceptions; and, as we have Nature for our model in this instance, we must be guided by the facts with which she has furnished us. It would, no doubt, have been very fine for Eugenie to have stabbed herself with her dagger, like a true heroine of romance, when she became convinced of her lover's perjury; and it would, doubtless, have been a very pretty dénouement. But, considerate reader! there existed one or two obstacles to this. The first and foremost was, that we are drawing Eugenie from life, and, the truth is, she did not come to the tragic end aforesaid. The second, and, perhaps, equally forcible, is, that we should give you only a volume and a half of matter, whereas we are bound to our publishers to produce two respectable duodecimos, of neither less than two hundred and sixteen pages each nor more than two hundred and eighty−eight. Having promised so much, our tale will proceed, we trust, without further interruption or digression.

That night, before Eugenie sought her pillow, the name of Arden was mingled with her prayers. When, towards the dawn, the roar of cannon roused her, with a thousand others, from sleep, she sprung to a casement which overlooked the intervening roofs. Distant flashes, which for an instant, like heat lightning, illuminated the gloom to the southeast, followed, after the lapse of a few seconds, by the dull sound of cannon, assured her the battle had already begun; and then she felt how deep an interest she took in the fate of Arden. Kneeling at the open window and shuddering at every report, she clasped her hands and gazed upward in silent but eloquent prayer, forgetting, in the energy of the time, the Roman auxiliaries to her worship, her crucifix and rosary, and looking directly to the source of life for aid in her lover's extremity. But she prayed not alone for Arden. Without breathing his name, after a moment's trembling hesitation, she sought mercy for *him* who, from time to time, like the returning recollection of an unpleasant dream, intruded upon her thoughts, and made to bleed afresh the heart he had wounded.

Although her earlier affections were crushed, they were not wholly destroyed. Eugenie's affections, notwithstanding their growing interest in Arden, would still, perhaps, have turned into their former channel if Burton could at once have been proved innocent of all of which she knew him to be guilty. In that case she would have thrown herself upon his bosom with the undiminished strength of her first love.

Her lips moved as she prayed, but they could not articulate his name. "Oh, have mercy on *him*, and shield him from the storm of battle! Let him not die in his guilt! Oh, protect, protect him!"

The entrance of Mrs. Washington at this moment alarmed her, and, blushing, she hid her face in her bosom.

"Be not ashamed, my dear Eugenie!" she said, affectionately; "the prayers of youth and innocence will aid our cause. I feel for you. We have both deep interest in this battle. Heaven protect our country, and let not the breasts of her sons be in vain exposed to the fury of war! Come with me, dear child! You shrink at every flash and report, as if the cannon were aimed at your own breast! Alas, they may reach both our hearts through those that are dear to us! But I am a sad comforter. Come with me to my room; 'tis remoter from the sound, and your nerves will not be tried so sorely."

Eugenie accompanied her maternal friend in silence. With the alarmed household they were for hours listening and trembling at every report, and flying, at the slightest sound heard in the street, to learn tidings from the field. The day dawned, and with it came louder and more confused the sounds of battle; and hour after hour, occasionally relieved by reports from the field, was passed in anxiety and increasing terror. Towards noon the report came that the Americans had been defeated with great slaughter, and the remnant of the army driven within their intrenchments at Brooklyn; but there came no tidings of the killed and wounded of rank. At length an officer, with an arm in a sling, advancing from the river, was seen by a party of ladies, who, having husbands, brothers, or lovers on the field, had flown to the headquarters of the commander−in−chief for tidings, and were now standing in the door of the mansion. Some of them hastened to meet him, and others uttered exclamations of mingled hope and fear, without the power to move. Mrs. Washington awaited the approach of the messenger with a colourless cheek, but with firmness.

General Washington, early in the morning, finding that the enemy had concentrated all his forces on Long Island, and evinced no immediate intention of landing at New−York, as the battle grew warm, had left his post in the city and crossed the river to the field. It was with no little anxiety, therefore, however she might conceal her emotion, that she watched the approach of one who was about to remove or confirm her worst apprehensions. Eugenie, unable to encounter the moment that should also confirm her worst fears, fled into the library, and, throwing herself into a chair, buried her face in her hands. In a few moments Mrs Washington entered, and approaching her, said,

"Eugenie, my love, the general is well; but, alas! the battle has been disastrous. We must not despair, however, but endeavour to bear nobly up under these reverses."

"Madam, my dear madam," said Eugenie, grasping her hand and suddenly addressing her with energy, "if you have aught to say, speak out. I see there is sympathy for me mingled with your regret for the fortune of your country's arms. Tell me, is he "

"Slightly wounded, my dear Eugenie. Nay, do not turn pale! He rode into camp afterward unsupported. You shall be his nurse, and I dare prophecy he will yet thank his wound."

Eugenie received these tidings with a suppressed cry, and then, clasping her hands, looked heavenward with a grateful countenance. Her mind, by long anxiety prepared for the worst, was able to bear the tidings of a lesser danger with greater equanimity than she would have shown if she had looked only on the sunny side of the picture. The concluding words of Mrs. Washington brought the colour, long a stranger to them, to her cheeks; and blushingly returning the kiss placed upon her forehead by her affectionate friend, she suppressed tears of mingled joy and sorrow, which came unbidden to her eyes, and with some degree of calmness asked,

"Where is he now?"

"On his way in a boat, with some other officers, crossing the East River. You will assist me, Eugenie, to prepare the room for the invalid's reception, and you must be his nurse. I am told nuns are the best nurses in the world. I think he will soon recover under your tender hands, Eugenie."

Eugenie blushed and smiled, but made no reply.

"See" she continued, "that you do not inflict a deeper wound than the English swords! Forgive me, Eugenie, this is no time for raillery! but you must keep up your flow of spirits. Arden will need all your sympathy. The general, who is unhurt, has sent word that he is to send two or three other officers here also; so, with nursing and other duties, Eugenie, we shall have little time to think of our own griefs."

About an hour after this conversation Arden awoke from a sleep into which he had fallen in the boat after his wound was dressed, and, to his surprise, found himself in a neat chamber, the windows, tables, bed, and furniture of which were furnished with delicate chints and snowy muslin, and all wearing that air of comfort and repose peculiarly grateful to the feelings of an invalid. The room had been partially darkened, but the rays of the setting sun pierced the interstices of the blinds, and diffused throughout the chamber a subdued but cheerful light. A second glance around assured him that he was in his own apartment, but suddenly converted from a bachelor's dormitory to a comfortable sickroom. Everything had such an air of quiet, that he was about to yield his senses to the pleasing influence, and sink once more to sleep, when, through a half−closed door at the foot of the bed opening into the hall, he spied the tip of one of the prettiest feet in the world protruding just far enough to intercept the range of his vision. His heart bounded with the force of a trip−hammer, and it would seem that the owner of the tiny foot had heard it, for it instantly disappeared; it was, however, the next moment substituted by a fair hand laid negligently upon the balusters, the fingers holding an open book, as if the reader was occupied in thinking. The appearance of the hand gave additional velocity to the throbbing heart of the lover; and, at the risk of destroying the vision, he was about to speak, when a deep sigh from the hall was echoed involuntarily from his own heart, and the sounds which were trembling on his lips escaped with it, in the tremulous, scarcely−audible word "Eugenie!"

The hand disappeared. Now aware of his imprudence, he closed his eyes and feigned sleep as Eugenie herself, with a hesitating step and crimson cheek, appeared at the door, and first looking in, as if to be satisfied that he was asleep, softly approached the bedside and gazed on him for a moment with sympathy and tenderness. A smile gradually mantled the lip of the conscious lover; and slowly opening his eyes, he fixed them, beaming with love, gratitude, and admiration, upon the face of the surprised maiden. Her temples were suffused with a deep blush of pleased embarrassment; and half retreating, half lingering, she placed her finger on her lip to impress silence upon him, saying, with an arch smile,

"Hush, Colonel Arden; the doctor has left express orders that you do not speak."

"Eugenie!"

"Not a word."

"Kind Eugenie!"

"Not "

"Cruel Eugenie!"

"Then I shall send the doctor to you."

"Oh, no, not for the world! Stay here, and I am dumb."

"On that condition I will remain," she replied, playfully. The next moment, with a face of anxiety, she asked,

"Is your wound better, Arden? Are you in any pain?"

"Here, very great!" he replied, laying his hand upon his heart, with a look of mingled seriousness and gayety.

"I will, then, call Mrs. Washington," said she, warningly, and with an arch smile; "she bade me call her if my patient woke up in pain."

"No! oh no! by no means," he said, attempting to take her hand; but Eugenie perversely flew out of the room, and soon returned with her benevolent friend.

The swoon into which Arden had fallen after his wounds were dressed continued, as we have shown, until after he was conveyed to his chamber. His wound, however, was not deep, although attended with great loss of blood. When he awoke from the sleep into which he had passed, he felt free from pain and in good spirits, which were not in any way diminished by the presence of his nurse; yet he was still very weak. He nevertheless, after a spirited and playful altercation with his kind nurses, in which he was supported by General Washington, who then entered the room, having just arrived from Brooklyn, where he had remained to secure the safety of the army, was at length permitted to remove into the drawing−room, and substitute a sofa for his bed.

About eight o'clock the same evening he was lying by the open window, towards which the sofa had been wheeled at his request, that he might, half shrouded by the drapery, enjoy the pleasant summer breeze. The night was clear, and the air soft and grateful to the senses of the fevered invalid. The surgeon had just left, assuring him of a speedy recovery with care and attention, saying, as he took his leave, glancing at Eugenie, who entered with a cooling drink,

"You are in good hands, but beware of bright eyes, bright eyes! they are worse than bullets, colonel, worse than bullets! Bah! all tongue and eye, tongue and eye! these women are a walking battery! do immense execution, colonel; mischief, great mischief! kill and cure, kill and cure! Better in a day or two; take care of yourself; good−by, good−by!" and so the man of instruments and lint bustled from the room.

Eugenie, taking a seat by him in the window, relieved a slave of the gorgeous feather fan which, for the last hour, she had been waving to and fro over the head of the invalid, and involuntarily assumed her duties.

We have said that the softened intercourse of young watchers in a sickroom insensibly leads to love. But when a youth and a maiden are thrown into each other's presence, the one an invalid, the other a nurse, an interchange of hearts must inevitably be the result. The soft hand laid upon the temple; gentle fingers stealing among the hair about the forehead; the soft voice attuned to pity, which is akin to love; the tender assiduity; the dependant state; the thousand open doors for kindness and affectionate words; all are feathers to love's shaft, each one contributing to direct more fatally the barbed arrow. The hour passed by Eugenie near the couch of Arden did the work of years of ordinary intercourse towards the progress of their loves. The slave had fallen to sleep on the carpet, the house was silent, and, save an occasional horseman passing across the square, or riding up to the door and leaving a note with the sentinel, ordering him, in brief tones, to give it to General Washington, all was still. Insensibly their hands had stolen into each other's, and they had abandoned their hearts to the full tide of feeling with which they were filled. They had neither asked nor pledged their love. Instinctively they understood the state of one another's affections, and were happy in a love which, although it needed no words to express its existence, was, perhaps, the more genuine.

It is seldom that love, which operates like an instinct in young hearts, seeks assurance of its mutual presence from language. Innumerable marriages are formed, the candidates for which have never known, otherwise than by intuition, that their affections were reciprocal, by whom the word love has neither been sought for nor spoken. The eye, and not the tongue, is herein the medium of expression. The eyes of Eugenie and Arden casually met as her hand was putting aside the hair from his pale temples, which her fan had blown over them; and by that mysterious communication, whose power is acknowledged, but the operations of which are incomprehensible, their souls mingled, united, and became one. Silently he drew her to his heart as she bent over him, and, touching his lips to her forehead, sealed there their unspoken loves.

Eugenie rose blushingly, and, looking from the window to hide her confusion, her attention was attracted by a confused noise of voices at the extremity of the square; the next moment a party of men, dimly seen through the darkness, advanced with the heavy, measured tramp of soldiers. As they continued to approach, she could discern

that they were a party of soldiers. Arden raised himself upon his elbow to look out, and then said faintly, as if the effort had been beyond his strength, sinking back on his pillow,

"Merely the relief guard; but a somewhat noisy one, it would appear."

As they came closer to the headquarters their voices gradually ceased, and, when they halted before the gate, only one voice could be heard, lifted alternately in the tones of complaint and threat.

"Injure me not, men, I am your fellow−soldier! Oh, I'm no spy. Don't hang me don't oh, oh! By my beard! I'll tell the great general. Help, oh help! I am a true Canadian." Then, in Canadian French, he continued, "A habitan of Chaudiere, and a true man; and, by my beard! I'll fight him that denies it! Oh, good, brave, valiant warriors! draw not the cord so tight. I tell you I'm a true man."

"Arden, what can they mean to do with the poor fellow?" asked Eugenie, as she heard his exclamations. But, when the patois of her native land fell on her ears, an interest in his fate was at once awakened in her breast, and suddenly addressing Arden, she said, with warmth,

"Oh, Colonel Arden, let him not be injured! He is from my own country! He can be no spy. Do permit me, before the guard is relieved, to see him and ask him a few questions! 'Tis so grateful to hear, even from a poor peasant like this, one's native language. You can then ascertain if he is really a spy, and prevent injustice from being done him, should he be innocent, by these rude men into whose hands he has fallen, with their passions, too, so exasperated by the evil fortunes of the day."

While she was speaking they advanced to relieve the guard at the door, when Arden spoke:

"Sergeant, bring that man in and let me question him."

The soldier obeyed, and the next moment came into the drawing−room conducting, securely guarded between two soldiers, that unfortunate warrior Jacques Cloots. Arden glanced at his face, and, studying its expression a while, said, with a smile,

"Sergeant, you may take off your guard, but leave a soldier at the door. I will answer for the appearance of your formidable prisoner."

The soldiers, save one who kept guard without the hall, departed, and, rejoining their comrades in the square, the whole party, with a heavy tramp, disappeared around the corner of the street.

CHAPTER XV. THE ROBBER.

The simplest and most direct style of narrative is doubtless the most pleasing. It is legitimately, however, only adapted to those romances in which the hero is never lost sight of, and when, therefore, there is no necessity of returning to bring forward incidents that have been delayed to advance other portions of the story. As this novel is not dependant for its interest solely upon one train of events following another in regular order of progression, but upon several parts which go to make up one whole, we are occasionally under the necessity of deviating from the directness of narrative, to return and take up the threads which we have but temporarily dropped, but which are necessary for the farther progress and completeness of our woof of fiction.

We therefore return to Pascalet and Jacques, and explain the cause of the appearance of the latter as a prisoner. When the creaking lock was turned on them by the eager and delighted fingers of Domine Joseph Gerret as he admitted the chevalier into his dwelling, they stood for a few moments together without speaking. At length

Pascalet, leaning carelessly against the wall, began to question Jacques of his native valley and of his adventures.

"Now, mort de ma vie!" he suddenly exclaimed in French, after Jacques had given an account of his career as a soldier, "if thou dost not deserve to die for being a rebel, and then swearing by thy foul beard that thou wert a true man!"

"Have patience, most worthy friend and countryman Pascalet! I made not oath that I was no rebel; but, look ye! only that I be a true man, like thyself."

"Ciel! if thou hadst sworn thou wert a true goose thou wouldst have hit it. But hark ye, Sir Rebel, thy life shall be spared, and thou mayst yet go home and spend thy old age in tending ducks and chickens; but thou shalt earn thy carcass!"

"That will I, by my beard! if it be to march into a cannon's mouth at the point o' baggonet."

"Out upon the boaster! Thou durst not look into a pitcher's mouth, lest thou shouldst pitch in and drown thyself. Hark ye," he added, coming close and whispering in his ear; "thou hast helped me rob birds' nests and unearth foxes ere now?"

"Yes, birds' nests; but, by my beard! only birds' nests, good Pascalet."

"True. Mort de ma vie! true; a foxcub would have scared the life out o' thee! Say, thou hast helped me rob?"

"Thou didst pound me to do't, valiant Pascalet, or I wouldn't ha' done't," said Jacques, in a deprecating tone.

"Wouldst thou not?" he cried, fiercely; "thou shalt now rob with me, or thou'lt not get off with a pounding. Wilt do't?"

"Mort dum ma vee! will I," said Jacques, with desperate courage. "Mort dum ma vee! 'tis a brave oath, by my beard! braver than Luc Giles could swear by."

"Luc Giles? Sacre! I had forgotten my old comrade Luc. Where is he, peasant?"

"Dead, by this hand!" answered Jacques, stoutly.

"Dead by thy hand?" he said, fiercely grasping the breast of the trembling braggadocio.

"No, good Pascalet, I slew him not. He fell in battle, but not by my hand."

"Fool that I am, I might have known it," he said, thrusting him from him. Then going up to him and suddenly taking him by the ear, he said,

"Didst mark that old man just now?"

"Ay, did I, worthy Pascalet."

"And the keys at his wrist?"

"The keys I marked not, valiant Pascalet."

"No matter. Those keys will unlock a mint of gold. The old man's a miser, and he has heaps of the coin, Jacques. I am inclined to transfer a portion of his wealth into my pocket. Thou shalt aid me. Hear'st thou?"

"I hear, your valiancy. But," added Jacques, hesitatingly, as Pascalet set his ear at liberty, "thou wilt not harm the poor man?"

"What is that to thee? Do as I bid thee. Stand thou here by the door, and, if any one approaches, clap thy hands twice to give me warning. I shall hear thee. When I come back, take what I give thee, and follow me without a word. Dost hear?"

"Verily do I, brave countryman! But how art thou first to enter? 'Tis locked as tight as old porter Nicholas ever locked bolt at St. Claude; and methinks I did hear something like a bar."

"Dost think I have seen the world to no purpose?" said Pascalet, taking from beneath his belt a steel instrument of curious construction, with many grooves and slides. "I saw the shape of the door−key," he continued, taking from his pocket a bag of loose wards, from which, after several trials, he selected a set and fitted them firmly to the key. "Now see how I'll get in! There is no bar. I heard him remove it, but am sure he did not replace it, unless 'twas done softer than a fly could tread."

He then applied the key to the door; it entered the lock; but, after several attempts to turn it, he drew it out with an oath and fitted a second ward. Again applying it, the bolt yielded with a creaking sound as he slowly turned the key, and, to the surprise of Jacques, the door swung open. Pascalet then, after holding his finger up warningly to Jacques, and ordering him to guard the door and secure his retreat, glided in. With the stealthy pace of a cat he moved along the passage, feeling his way by the walls until he came to the foot of the stairs. On his former mission he had been admitted even into the room of the conspirators, and was familiar, therefore, with the details of the passage: with this advantage, he was enabled to mount the stairs with celerity and without noise. The light from the room in which the conspirators were assembled found its way through many a gap between the upright boards of the partition and beneath the door; a faint glimmer also was emitted from the keyhole of the door in which Domine Joseph was industriously at work clipping the superfluous metal from the currency.

Pascalet paused a moment to ascertain accurately his position in relation to the different rooms; and then stealing softly to the miser's door, he placed his eye to the keyhole, but could see only the naked fireplace, although he could hear the nibbling sound made by the miser, who was at work at his bench, and occasionally the faint ring of the precious metal. Grasping the hilt of his dagger, while his eye gleamed with a murderous light, he drew it half way out of his bosom to bring it more readily within reach of his hand. Then measuring the size of the keyhole with his eye, he searched in his bag, muttering,

"Ciel! I didn't see his key, and must guess at the ward! But *n'importe*. Trust to thy name−sake, Le Diable, as thou hast often done before, Pascalet! By the holy twelve! it works," he added, within his teeth, when, on inserting the well−oiled ward, the bolt gave way without noise to the steady pressure. The door partially opened as the bolt left its bed, and through the crevice Pascalet saw the old man at his bench intently occupied in his labour, with his piles of gold and silver glittering before him. He looked down and clinched his dagger; then, glancing again at the miser, seemed to hesitate whether he should become both assassin and robber. The helpless appearance of his victim seemed to plead even to him for lenity. Replacing his stiletto, which he had taken from his bosom, he drew up his sleeves, and opened and contracted his fingers, as a leopard does its claws when about to spring upon its prey; then applying his foot lightly against the door, it flew wide open in two bounds, that gave back no sound as his unshod feet touched the floor, he was at the old man's side, with his fingers clasped around his throat.

His eyes started from their sockets; his lips vainly essayed to articulate; a sovereign which he had just taken up fell to the floor; the clippers dropped from his hand; pain and terror were horribly depicted on his withered visage. For an instant Pascalet held him thus; then, gradually relaxing his grasp before life should escape, he held him by

the throat with one hand, while, suspending his knife over him with the other, he threatened him with instant death if he moved or spoke. Joseph clasped his hands and silently pleaded for mercy. Pascalet knew not the meaning of the word. Leading him, exhausted by terror and suffering, to his cott, he caused him to lie down upon his face. "I'll bury my dagger in thy withered carcass," he whispered in his Franco−English but, for the sake of energy, we give the purer English in his ear, "if thou stir hand or foot. Tell me where thou hast hidden thy gold, or thou diest."

"Gold? Oh, I'm not worth a ha'pence in the world!"

"Thou liest! and, speak above thy breath again, and thou shalt taste my knife! 'Twas of my mercy thou didst not feel its edge e'en now instead of the gripe of my fingers. Whose gold is this, if not thine?"

"Oh, the colony's, the colony's sent to me to be weighed," he cried, rolling his eyes in despair towards the pile.

"The colony's? Then I'll be debtor to the state the full sum, and not burden my conscience by robbing a poor wretch," he said, advancing to the bench heaped with coins. "Ha, mort de vie!" he exclaimed, as he detected the tray of clippings; "is this the way thou servest the state's money? I'll drag thee before the governor, and have thee hung higher than ever Haman was."

"Mercy, good youth," said Joseph, his eye brightening; "'tis not the state's! I meant it in jest. And, since thou sayst it will go against thy conscience to rob a poor wretch, 'tis mine own!"

"Ciel! thou art, then, no poor wretch if thou ownest all this gold; so my conscience will be clear on this score."

"But 'twill make me a poor wretch if thou rob me!"

"Then, when thou art made a poor wretch, I will not rob thee. So conscience hath it both ways."

Domine Joseph groaned in bitterness of spirit. Pascalet, unheeding him, proceeded, still keeping an eye on his victim, who seemed to be paralyzed as if under the gaze of a basilisk, to convey the dollars and sovereigns to his pocket, without being nice in selecting the clipped from the unclipped.

"Now, old Nicodemus," he said, "I'll leave thee thy clippings for thy pains. But thou hast more than this coin, I'll warrant me."

"As true as there's a Heaven above and a judgment−day to come! I have not another penny. I am impoverished, and must beg my bread about the streets. Oh, mercy, good youth! mercy! Do not rob an old wretch; think on thy conscience!"

"Have I not argued that point with thee? so, hush, and give me thy keys," he added, approaching the cott, where the old man had lain trembling and groaning, with his eyes directed towards the robber, as sovereign after sovereign disappeared in the capacious repositories in the habiliments of Pascalet. "Untie that thong, or my knife shall do it for thee."

"'Tis but the key to the outer door. Oh, mercy! oh!"

Pascalet pressed his hand roughly upon his mouth, and with his dagger cut the string. Having possession of the keys, he began to examine the room. After making an unsuccessful search, he suddenly advanced upon the miser, and said, with terrible emphasis, placing his mouth close to his ear,

"Tell me where lies thy money, or thou diest!" and the point of the dagger pressed painfully against the skin of his victim.

Domine Joseph, as if terrified into compliance, pointed to the chimney, crying, in the accents of despair, "There! there!"

Pascalet seized the light to explore it, and the old man's face lighted up with something like a smile at the temporary delay he had gained. He closely searched the fireplace, turning up every loose brick, and even looking up the chimney, but in vain. "Old man," he said, advancing to him fiercely, "thou hast deceived me!" He raised his arm to strike the dagger into his back, when Joseph, in the extremity of unfeigned alarm, cried out,

"Mercy! mercy! I'll tell thee!"

"Where?"

"Be−beneath my my cott."

Pascalet bent down, and, seeing the box, his eyes sparkled with pleasure. Finding that it was secured to a bolt, he made the old man, lest he should assail him while at work, lie on his face upon the floor. Dom. Joseph stretched himself upon the boards as if he were lying down to die, trembling and tortured with the prospect of losing his wealth, yet his eyes anxiously and with curiosity watching every movement of the robber as he displaced the cott, kneeled, fitted the key to the lock, and raised the lid. Then did the heart of Joseph Gerret grow faint within him; but, as he heard the silver ring in the sacrilegious hands of Pascalet, who surveyed his treasure with delight and wonder, he cast his eyes desperately upon the blunderbuss which hung at the head of his bed. He then glanced upon the wellknit frame of Pascalet and his glittering dagger, and, shutting his eyes despairingly, groaned aloud.

Pascalet, after surveying for a moment the glittering heaps he had discovered, proceeded to transfer them to his own person. He filled his pockets, and then, stripping from his neck his yellow handkerchief, commenced filling it with Spanish dollars. He at length became so absorbed in this delightful occupation, that he forgot Domine Joseph, his own situation, and, indeed, everything but the piles of money before him. Not so Domine Joseph. As his alarm subsided his alertness and presence of mind increased, and he began to mediate, even at the risk of his own life, defending his property. He therefore saw with no little pleasure that the attention of the robber was wholly fixed upon his treasure, and that, in the eagerness of transferring it, he had not only forgotten to watch him, but had laid down his dagger by his side. He desperately resolved to gain possession of the weapon. Therefore, to ascertain what prospect he had of succeeding, he made a slight noise with his shoe upon the floor. The robber did not notice it. He then moved his whole person, but Pascalet only heard the sound of his gold and silver. A third and somewhat noisier movement attracted no attention; and the old man, imboldened by these successes, muttered something like a prayer, and his face became rigid with desperate determination as he drew himself along the floor towards the bed, which stood between him and the robber. Inch by inch he worked himself along under the cott until he came within reach of the dagger. He stretched forth his arm and seized it in his long, bony fingers with the resolute grasp which the terrible urgency of the occasion gave him, and then, with equal coolness, drew himself back from beneath the cott until he could stand upright. He now grasped the dagger more firmly, rose to his feet, and, leaning over the bed, raised it in the air.

"Mort de vie!" said Pascalet to himself, "I shall ride in my gilded coach."

The next instant the dagger was buried to the hilt in his back. He fell as he was transferring the last gold coin to his handkerchief, glared wildly at the old man, clinching his fingers as if he would grasp him, and then, with a curse trembling on his lips, he died.

Jacques, to whom we now return, after remaining a few minutes at the door, deeply pondered on the events in which he had been involved, and his reflections took the following philosophical cast.

"I begin to think I'm a great ass, as I have often been told that I am. Why can't I get the knack of this roaring and blustering, this swearing and loud talking, this cutting of throats and killing with bullets, like some of my comrades, and, more especially, this Pascalet le Diable? I am ever at the beck and nod of some one. Here was Luc Giles: his parts didn't lie in his tongue, for, by my beard! and by mort de ma vie! as sweareth this Pascalet, I have sworn as stoutly as Luc, betimes, and yet I could never make woman, cat, or chicken heed me. Then here's this little jackanapes, Zacharie! He blusters, and has a way o' speaking quick and short, and makes one mind him whether he will or no; and yet he's the lesser by fifty pounds, and ought to obey me; but, somehow, I can't get the knack o' making people mind. They are always sure to turn upon me and make me do their own bidding. When it comes in my throat to speak valiantly, quick, short, and sharp, there it sticks, and I can't make a single word be forthcoming for the life o' me. When I got clear o' this Zacharie, who should come but this Pascalet le Diable to kick me about as he did when I was a boy. Do this, he says, and do that, says he, and I can never do enough for his bidding. Now here he's gone into this honest man's house to rob, and perhaps to murder, and bids me wait. Now is the time to take myself off; but, then, I fear his dirk if he catch me. But, then, I fear his dirk if I stay; and if he rob and murder, and make me carry his spoil, I shall have my neck stretched for certain. I may yet as it is. From what I can learn, there's a great conspiracy hatching here 'gainst the government. I'd best inform, and go place myself under proper protection; but, then, if I'm ever caught! I should fear to get into the hands of that black−looking master of Pascalet, though he did save my life; but that was to row the boat. Oh, mercie! if I only knew what to do! If I go I shall be killed; if I stay I shall be killed. Blessed Marie and St. Claude! deliver me from evil."

At this moment a party of soldiers coming up the street relieved him from further care about himself by taking him under their charge. Inspired by one of the incipient fits of valour which from time to time possessed him, he at first manfully struggled, but at last was bound; and, we regret to record, roughly treated for this display of valour.

"Whether I fight or don't fight, 'tis all the same," he sighed; "I'm always the football."

Then, overhearing some of the soldiers talk freely of hemp for spies, fear of his life gave him eloquence to plead for it, and in the full exercise of this laudable act he was brought, as we have, in a former chapter, seen, to the quarters of Washington, and subsequently into the presence of Eugenie.

CHAPTER XVI. THE CONSPIRATORS.

When, at the request of Arden, the soldiers had left the room, not, however, without taking precautions to guard against the escape of their prisoner, Jacques gazed around the elegant apartment with mingled wonder and surprise, twirling his bonnet between his fingers, now looking at the ceiling, now at the carpeted floor, and then, again, curiously staring at those in whose presence he stood.

"Well, my good fellow," said Arden, "if your curiosity is quite satisfied, and you think you would recognise the room and our faces when you meet with either again, oblige me by giving an account of yourself. You look not very formidable. How is it that they made such a noise of their capture? You appear very harmless and simple."

"As simple a body, your valiancy," replied Jacques, looking at Eugenie and giving her an oblique bow, "as ever burned powder."

"I will safely answer for it; but how came you in the hands of the guard? It might have gone hard if this lady had not pleaded for you. Canst tell a straight story?"

"That can I, you valiancy's worship; and sorry am I to see your valour wounded! These wars are bloodthirsty things."

"You speak truly," said Eugenie, in the Canadian tongue; "tell me if you be indeed a Canadian of Chaudiere, as I heard you say but now?"

When Jacques heard the accents of his native tongue he turned about with a sudden start of delight, while a broad grin overspread his features. After she had ceased, he continued to stare as if struck dumb with pleasurable emotions.

"Speak," she said, laughing, "if you have not lost your tongue. 'Twas loud enough ten minutes since."

"May the blessed Virgin bless your valian no, your ladyship, and your ladyship's sweet lips! By my beard! be'st thou from my country?"

"Tell me your country, and I can tell thee better."

Here Jacques proceeded, with considerable elevation of spirits, to relate his adventures, commencing from the time of his becoming guide to the monk, the allusion to whom at once awakened an interest in his narrative in Eugenie's bosom. She therefore listened with attention till he related the outlines of his campaign, his escape in that day's battle, and his impressment in the service of Pascalet, and their visit to the rendezvous of the conspirators.

When he began to speak of a probable attempt against the state, Eugenie became more attentive. Jacques spoke in his Canadian patois, which was not altogether intelligible to Arden, who had insensibly closed his eyes, and fallen into a revery between sleeping and waking.

She now questioned him closely in relation to his late companions and their probable object, but she could only elicit further that there was some thing dropped by Pascalet about General Washington. This intelligence alarmed her; and she believed her benefactor, if not one far more dear to her, to be in danger from this secret meeting. She therefore determined, urged by the native strength and energy of her character, which at times changed her from the tender, confiding girl, to the self−possessed and heroic woman, to try to save him from their machinations. Ascertaining minutely from him the position of the rendezvous, she ordered Jacques to remain, and, if Arden awoke, to say that she would soon return. Enveloping her person in Arden's cloak, and taking one of his pistols, she placed his foraging−cap upon her head, and warning Jacques to keep secrecy, she left the room. Bidding the guard placed over Jacques, as she passed him in the hall, to follow her, he mechanically complied, as if obeying the order of a superior officer. She passed the sentinel with a firm step, crossed the square, and, turning the corner, discovered the little window, with its faint glimmering light, which Jacques had learned from Pascalet was the conspirators' room, and had described to her; then, observing the position of the door, she was satisfied of its identity with his description.

"Soldier," she said, stopping at the door and disguising her voice, "remain here! On the least alarm, hasten to me."

With a bold heart she determined to enter and see if she could learn or overhear anything to confirm her apprehensions. Strengthened in her purpose by her hopes and fears, she softly opened the door. With a trembling but onward step, she carefully felt her way along the wall till her foot touched the lower step of the flight of stairs. She carefully ascended, and, gaining the loft or entry above, was directed by the light streaming from the illarranged partition of the room in which the conspirators were assembled. Dom. Joseph's door was closed by the cott which Pascalet had drawn against it in getting at the chest. But her observations from the street showed her that the room opposite the miser's contained the little window. Gliding with a step, light as the fawn's upon the grass, past the door of the miser's room (within which she could distinctly hear the faint voice of Dom. Joseph,

and the ringing of silver in the hands of Pascalet, at which she closer wrapped her cloak about her form, and grasped her pistol with a firmer hold), she crossed the room and stood before the door of the chamber. Cautiously she bent her ear to listen to deliberations which she believed threatened the peace of the government, if not the safety of an individual who was its right arm in the field, and to whom she herself was bound by every tie of gratitude. She heard voices within as of men in earnest conversation, but could neither distinctly hear nor see. Apprehensive of being discovered before she could convince herself of the truth of her suspicions, she softly moved along to the extremity of the partition where a ray of light streamed through a crevice, and, to her surprise and delight, obtained, by placing her eye close to the aperture, which extended from the ceiling to the floor, a full view of the interior of the room.

Gaining confidence as she found that she could remain unobserved by those within, who were closely engaged in debate, she took a survey of the apartment. The floor was composed of rough plank; the walls of exposed rafters and boards; and the ceiling was brown with age, festooned with cobwebs, and garnished with bundles of herbs, dried mushrooms, and strings of onions. The windows, of which there were two fronting on the square, were closely secured; and the little four−paned aperture to the right, the light of which was visible without, was covered with a network of wire. The apartment was destitute of furniture save a rough pine table, and two benches equally rude, placed on each side of it, crossed at one extremity by a piece of board that served as a seat.

These details were rapidly embraced, and the eyes of Eugenie now rested upon the inmates of the apartment with anxious alarm. On the transverse board which formed the seat at the end of the table, and directly opposite to her, sat a stout, dark−looking man, with a broad brow, firm mouth, and stern countenance; his hair was highly powdered, brushed back from his forehead, and gathered in a queue behind. He was busily writing by the light of two meager tallow candles, placed in tarnished tin stands before him, the only lights in the gloomy apartment. Two gentlemen, one in the ordinary costume of a wealthy citizen, the other in the undress uniform of the British army, sat on his right in low conversation. Opposite to these sat the chevalier, playing with Percy's signet−ring, and with his face turned towards the individual who was writing, although his eyes constantly travelled from face to face with suspicious glances. Beside the chevalier, and nearly hiding his person from the observation of Eugenie, was seated an elderly man with a ferocious countenance, deeply marked by lines of passion, but with the manners of a man of rank and one used to good society, dressed in blue broadcloth, and wearing a long queue tied with a broad black riband. Eugenie remembered to have seen him that day in the square before the headquarters in conversation with General Washington. He seemed now attentively listening to the conversation of the two opposite. All of them, except the gentleman at the head of the table, wore their hats and cloaks; all carried side arms, and several pistols lay upon the table. Eugenie gazed upon the scene with intense interest, her most extravagant suspicions confirmed by this aspect of the meeting.

"Colonel," said the elderly gentleman, waving his hand impatiently to one of the gentlemen opposite in reference to something said by him, "I beg your pardon, sir! but Washington himself told me, not four hours since, that he should be at headquarters at half past ten to−night, and would there receive any communications from his friends, in relation," added the speaker, with a sinister smile, "to the affairs of government. It is better that we visit him as the deputation from the citizens in relation to the preservation of property in the threatened capture. I have prepared him for this, and he will receive us as such: then our purpose will be easily effected."

The individual addressed was a slender, gentlemanly man, about forty years of age, with a clear hazel eye and high forehead, made still higher by the prevalent fashion of wearing the hair brushed back from the temples; his dress was scrupulously neat and rich; his forefinger displayed a brilliant of great size and beauty; and the belt of his sword, protruding from his cloak, glittered with costly settings. Altogether, he was a military bean Brummel.

"Your plan, my dear major," he said, in a slow, lengthened, affected tone, as if he felt that he was dignifying language by condescending to adopt it in expressing his ideas, "has certain objections, although, no doubt, it is concocted with the admirable penetration for which you are so remarkable. As I was but even now observing to my friend and present neighbour, Mr. Walheim, when you honoured us with your observations, it is my opinion

we had best make a sally upon our expected captive as he passes through the area or square from the river−side unto his headquarters. He is never attended except by an orderly. One of his aiddecamps is wounded, and the other, that modern Adonis, Burton, has left him, I learn, in consequence of some misunderstanding."

"Since the exposure and defeat of our last plan, colonel," replied the old gentleman, tartly, "he has always been attended by several officers or a few soldiers. He never goes out alone, sir."

"A pretty brush with some of these rebels in the street were a pleasant adventure. We shall have the more honour in taking our game at bay. I like not this surrounding a man's house like a bailiff, and entering it like a thief. By the sword of Hercules! 'tis not cavalierly, nor to be thought of by gentlemen."

"We plain citizens," replied the gentleman who sat beside him, with some asperity, "had rather sell swords and pistols than use them, colonel. It is now ten o'clock, and quite too late to follow your suggestion if we could. We must act at once and unanimously, or our plan, which has been postponed now to the fourth night, will be abortive. To−night or never! The only plan is to seize him in his house. There are but two guards stationed at the door, and two or three wounded officers lodged there. As a deputation come to consult on civil affairs, two of our number will be admitted; the remaining two, with the four British soldiers concealed in the adjoining garden, can master the guard, and secure to us free egrees with our prisoner. The governor is, I believe, with me?" he concluded, casting his eyes, with a look between assurance and inquiry, on the gentleman at the head of the table, who at that moment laid aside his pen, and looked around as if he was about to ask the nature of their conversation.

"In what, Mr. Walheim?" he asked, drawing up with an assumption of dignity and with a formal look; "in what is the governor with Mr. Walheim, pray?"

"In seizing General Washington in his own house at half past ten to−night."

"Certainly, Mr. Walheim! certainly, gentlemen! I supposed this to be perfectly understood. Major Breadhelt and you are, I think, to gain an interview with General Washington. You, colonel, and myself, are, at the same time, to disarm the guard, and conduct our captive to the boat, which for four nights we have kept in waiting. Instead of rowing with him to Staten Island as we at first intended, we shall cross to Brooklyn in Waallaboght Bay, where Percy, so says this Canadian gentleman, will be in waiting with a suitable guard. If you are guided by me, sirs, our plan cannot miscarry like the last. It was disunion alone that defeated that. Unanimity, gentlemen, is the soul of all great enterprises, and what greater than the one in view, which is to crush this rebellion in its bud?"

"Who, your excellency," drawled the colonel, "is to notify the Earl of Percy of the proper time and place for his co−operation? We learn from this Gallic gentleman that he received not our messenger."

"For that reason, as you must have learned already from him, Colonel Howard," replied the governor, "Percy has sent him to us to learn our proceedings. Thanks to my vigilance, all is now ripe! I have written to my Lord Percy. This French or Canadian gentleman will take leave of us in the square; and while we proceed to the execution of our great enterprise, he will take boat to Long Island and bear my letter to Percy. I will read it to you, gentlemen, and see if, as I doubt not, it meets with your cordial approval."

Here the governor rose up, and, after clearing his throat, began, in a declamatory, but slow and pompous tone, to read what he had written:

"We FOUR to you TWO, greeting. These, by the bearer of the signet ring, will inform you that we will place in your possession the American lion, which we are now sure of capturing, at two o'clock this night, it being now ten or thereabout. Your l dship, with Major N., will meet us at that hour on the shore in Waallaboght Bay, where the stream debouches into the aforesaid bay. You will know the spot by a large umbrageous tree overhanging the

point of junction. Expecting soon to have the honour of meeting my friends again in my old gubernatorial mansion, I am your l d p's humble servant.

Signed T. Also signed T. W. B. H.

"This is sufficiently plain, and, at the same time, cautious enough, I opine, gentlemen," he said, in a tone of exultation. "'Tis almost `veni, vidi, vici!' Ha, gentlemen? I will beg your indulgence while I prepare one or two more in a similar style, to be forwarded express to our friends and coadjutors in Albany so soon as we have secured our prize. By that time we will be ready to proceed on our enterprise. I see you are examining your arms, Mr. Breadhelt," said the gentleman, resuming his seat and pen. "I trust we shall not have need for more than their silent eloquence. We must not use them."

"But if he resist?" asked the chevalier, quietly.

"Not even then," said the governor, in a decided tone.

"Let me join you, messieurs," said the chev alier.

"Humph! Chevalier, I will detain you while I write and seal another note to Sir Henry Clinton, which I beg you will request Lord Percy to forward directly on your arrival. When you are set at liberty, monsieur, I shall be very happy to have you present at my first gubernatorial levee. Our possession of Washington's person will soon reinstate us all in our usurped rights. Ha, gentlemen?"

"Your excellency is very obliging. I shall be forced to proceed to−morrow to Quebec, whither I am called by circumstances communicated to me by letter while I was in France, materially affecting my patrimony."

His manner was gracious as he spoke, but his eyes grew dark and scowling as if from the thoughts associated with what he had uttered.

The governor was about to reply, when a slight noise near the partition drew an exclamation from the chevalier, whose ready hand grasped a pistol that lay before him.

"Messieurs, we are observed," he said, half rising.

"'Tis the old domine stumbling in the dark," said the governor, arresting his hand; "he watches us as if we were plotting robbery."

The chevalier laid down the pistol. The other conspirators, who had not been moved by a noise easily referrible to the movements of the occupant of the house, impatient of their stay, continued to converse to while away the time till the moment of action arrived, while the governor became again busy over his writing.

Eugenie, with extraordinary self−possession, listened and impressed upon her memory the conversation she overheard, although trembling at each new development of the plans of the conspiracy. Every line of the governor's letter she engraved on her mind, and mentally ran over the characters forming the signature, which she suspected was the initials of the names of the conspirators, and treasured these up in her memory with a fixedness and facility which were the natural result of the extraordinary circumstances in which she was placed awakening all the energy of her character, and calling into exercise faculties that she knew not, until the moment of trial, that she possessed. She was about to retrace her steps, and had gathered her cloak about her for the purpose, when, as he heard her move, the voice of the chevalier, whose person had been wholly screened from her sight by the interposition of the elderly gentleman by his side, arrested her steps as if she had suddenly been converted into a statue; and trembling, she knew not why, she leaned against the partition for support. Alarmed for her safety, she

at once recovered herself, wondering at her strange sensations at the mere sound of a voice; it was, however, a key to painful emotions which she could neither trace to their source nor account for. After vainly endeavouring to connect the voice with some link in memory's chain, she lightly crossed the floor to the stairs. At this moment a heavy fall, and a low, glad cry, as if of exultation, from the miser's room, startled her, and, quickening her pace, she soon gained the street−door. With a lighter heart she rejoined the soldier, and bade him remain and follow the first person who should come forth from the house, and, if possible, singly or with assistance, arrest and convey him prisoner to Washington's headquarters.

"You came out o' the general's house, and you speak like an officer, but a some'at young un," said the soldier, respectfully, but as if he should like to know who commanded him; "if I only knowed your authority, or who gives orders "

"Silence, sir, and obey!" interrupted Eugenie, firmly; and, leaving him, she hastened across the square, and in a few moments stood in the presence of Washington.

He was seated in the library in full uniform, which was marked with the traces of recent severe duty in the field, his arm leaning upon a table covered with despatches, messages from Congress, maps of fortifications, gazettes, and piles of open letters. His military hat lay beside him, and an open letter was in his hand, which supported his head, as he sat in an attitude of deep and, as it seemed, of painful thought. At the abrupt entrance of Eugenie, disguised in hat and cloak, he looked up; but with that dignity which never deserted him, and without giving any signs of being taken by surprise, he permitted the intruder to approach close to the table and communicate his purpose. She saw by his looks that he did not recognise her. Recollecting her disguise, she threw aside her cap and mantle, showing him her face covered with the most beautiful confusion.

"What, Eugenie," said the chief, sternly, "more masquerading?"

"Forgive me, my noble benefactor!" she said, at once recovering her self−possession; "I know you will do so when you know all."

Then, with remarkable precision and directness, she detailed to him what she had discovered.

"Brave, heroic girl," said Washington, with a smile that repaid her for all her dangers, "you know not how you have served my country. Half past ten, did you say?" he asked, with coolness and with an air of decision, as if conscious of successfully defeating the machinations of his enemies.

Eugenie made no reply. He turned towards her, and discovered that she had nearly fainted.

"Her noble spirit," he said, tenderly and with sympathy, "has been wrought up to this crisis, and now the strained chords are broken. Eugenie, my noble Eugenie, try and recover your energies."

She burst into tears, but instantly brushed them away.

"'Tis but a momentary weakness. I'm better now," she said, smiling, and gratefully returning, with her eyes, his sympathy; "but my heart was so full of joy that I was enabled to tell you all! Oh, lose not a moment, sir. Would it not be best to try and seize the messenger with the letter if it be not yet too late?"

"It will, my heroine," he said, smiling and taking up his sword and cap; "you are a true soldier's daughter. I shall give the deputation a different reception from what the hypocritical Walheim and our tory ex−governor anticipate. Return, Eugenie, to Mrs. Washington's room, or," he added, playfully, "to your patient in the drawing−room; but not a word of this conspiracy! You and I must share all the honours of defeating it."

Eugenie left the room, while General Washington hastily wrote a line on a slip of paper.

"Sentinel," he said, going into the hall, "take this to the quarters of your captain at the barracks in Beekman−street. Make no delay."

After the soldier had hastily departed with the order, Washington threw on a cloak, and, taking his sword under his arm, crossed the square and approached the soldier left by Eugenie at the corner of the street.

"Has your man come forth, soldier?" he inquired.

The bearing of his general could not be mistaken by the man; and, although his face was purposely hidden in the folds of his mantle, he replied, paying the military salute at the same time, "He has not, general;" adding, to himself, "Now I see I am under orders." At this instant a man appeared at the door, who, after saying "Adieu, Monsieur Governeur!" to one who bore a light, but was not visible to those without, sallied forth.

"Pascalet! Pascalet!" he called, as the door closed upon him, and rapidly advancing up the street.

"Ha, Pascalet! you are here?" he said, softly, as he reached the corner. "Mon Dieu! no!" he exclaimed, starting back and laying his hand upon his sword as he discovered the figures of two strangers. The powerful arm of Washington was at the same instant upon his arm, and the bayonet of the soldier against his breast.

"Surrender, sir!" said his captor, in a deep, stern voice; "I hold you my prisoner."

Unable to offer any resistance to an assault so unexpected and so well enforced, he changed his manner, and said politely,

"There is some mistake, monsieur!"

He however gave up his sword, and was conducted by Washington to his quarters and into his library. After closing the door and placing a guard over him, he demanded his papers.

The chevalier drew forth his pocketbook and presented it, saying,

"It contains only the title−deeds to my estate."

The general hastily ran over its contents, and was about to throw it down, when his eye was arrested by a superscription. Eagerly taking out the paper, he opened it, and glanced hastily and eagerly over it; then, fixing his eyes sternly for a moment upon the chevalier, whose own sunk beneath their steady gaze, he, with a smile of gratification, replaced it in the pocketbook and locked the whole in a drawer of his secretary.

"They are the titles of my property, monsieur," said the chevalier, with earnestness.

"We will examine into your titles by−and−by. Deliver me now, if you please, the letter you bear to Lord Percy from Governor Tryon."

"Sacre! how knew you that secret?"

"I know your whole conspiracy. The letter, sir!"

The chevalier, with a shrug, took from his breast the packet and gave it to him in silence. The general tore open the envelope, and while he was reading the full confirmation of Eugenie's statement, the prisoner, after gazing at

him for a moment, turned to his guard and said in a whisper,

"Who is this gentleman?"

"Who, but General Washington!" bluntly answered the soldier.

"Ma foi! c'est le diable!" he ejaculated, lifting his eyebrows in surprise and curiosity, and drawing the corners of his mouth down in despair.

"I am sorry, sir," replied Washington, folding the letter, and placing it on the table before him, "to place you under arrest as a conspirator against the state."

While he spoke the sentinel, accompanied by an officer, entered the room.

"Captain Carter, you are in time. Are your men at the gate?"

"They are, general," said the captain, a tall young man, with a frank and resolute countenance, the manners of a student, and the eye of a soldier.

"Your ready compliance with my orders shall be remembered. Take six of your men and let them lie upon their arms within the yard. I have certain information that, in ten minutes from hence, my sentinels will be assaulted, and an attempt made to disarm them by four resolute men. I depend upon you to defeat their object. Permit them to secure the guard, who has his instructions, and then surprise and take them prisoners. Do it, if possible, without bloodshed. If, in the mean while, two persons desire admittance, allow them to pass in unmolested and without suspecting your presence. There is a plan to take me prisoner in my own house, but I have had timely news of it. Send the remaining six men into my library." These orders were given with coolness and decision.

The young captain bowed, and, with a sparkling eye, left the room to execute his orders.

In a few seconds a file of soldiers marched into the library, followed by Jacques, whom Washington ordered to be set at liberty. They were placed against the wall, behind the open door, with fixed bayonets, and, by the arrangement of the lights, were thrown into deep shadow. The chevalier, with his guard, also stood aloof in the dark part of the room.

Washington, with the letter to Lord Percy open in his hand, seated himself by the table in the full light of the lamp, and composedly awaited the entrance of the conspirators. In a few moments footsteps were heard without, and the sentinel at the door repeated, in a tone of more than usual confidence,

"Pass."

A low knock at the door was answered by the clear, calm voice of Washington.

"Come in."

The door opened, and the two conspirators entered and advanced towards him. He rose from his chair, surveyed them with his usual dignified composure as they approached, and said,

"You are welcome, gentlemen. I have been for some time expecting this honour."

"And we, George Washington," said Breadhelt, in a loud, stern tone, levelling a pistol at his breast, "have been long anticipating this triumph. Your guards are already disarmed, and you are our prisoner."

"We will leave that for these gentlemen to decide," said General Washington, with a smile of triumph, as he turned aside the sliding shade from the lamp and pointed behind them.

They turned and gazed upon each other in despair. At a look from Washington the captain of the file advanced and received their arms, which they resigned in silence.

"I congratulate your excellency upon being the favourite of the fickle goddess," said the colonel, as he tendered his sword. Then looking at his friend, who stood folding his arms gloomily on his breast, he continued, "We must bear this with philosophy, my dear Breadhelt. Bah! there stands our friend the chevalier. By the foot of Hercules!" he said, as a struggle was heard without; "let us not be discomfited; we are like to have company, which will proportionably lessen our misery."

As he spoke a soldier entered, and said,

"They are secured, your excellency."

"Bid Captain Carter conduct the two leaders in, and closely guard the soldiers."

"Ha, Walheim," said the colonel, "you are welcome. Misery loveth good company. You see we are circumvented, and quite hors du combat."

"Where is the governor?" demanded Washington, quickly, of the captain.

"One escaped, sir, but I have sent two soldiers after him. I think they will yet take him."

"Deceive not thyself, worthy youth," said Howard; "the fugitive hath legs, and knoweth the use of them. He hath learned it in this rebel war."

"There hath been treason," said Walheim, as he entered guarded, and saw the situation of his friends; "it never could have been discovered without some vile treachery." Breadhelt scowled, and Howard deliberately said,

"Citizen Walheim, I have no sword, or I would chastise thee for thy tongue's impertinence."

"Gentlemen," said Washington, sternly, "there has been sufficient treason manifested by you all, of which there is sufficient proof in the act in which you have been taken. I presume you know something of this, Colonel Howard?" he asked, displaying the open letter taken from the chevalier. Here are four initials which, I think, may fit names known to you."

Howard looked down, and seemed to be admiring the mounting of his empty scabbard.

"'Tis no proof, sir!" Walheim said quickly; "no names! nothing in a court of justice. A jury could do nothing with it! no overt act, sir."

"Sir," said Arden, who had entered the room and seated himself by the table during this scene, "your confidants were taken with their pistols levelled at the breast of General Washington."

The citizen stared, and, growing pale, clinched his hands in utter hopelessness. The exhibition of the letter, however, had a different effect upon the silent and moody Breadhelt. He started from the sullen attitude he had fallen into when he found himself so unexpectedly ensnared: seizing the letter, and looking a moment at its contents, he said earnestly,

"General Washington, how came you by this?"

"There is the bearer, sir," said the general, directing his eyes towards the extremity of the room, where the chevalier stood leaning in an easy an apparently unconcerned attitude against the window.

Breadhelt turned and fixed his eyes steadily upon the chevalier, and his countenance gradually lighted up with a glow of satisfaction. Suddenly seizing his own pistol from the hands of Captain Carter, he levelled it at the chevalier, shouting,

"Die, traitor!"

The ball entered the chevalier's breast, and, clasping his hands over his heart, he fell upon the floor.

"Murderer, what have you done?" exclaimed Washington. "This foreigner did not betray you; he was my prisoner as well as yourself. Carter, see that these traitors, who deal so lightly in blood, are safely secured in the common prison to await their trial."

"Shall I bind them, general?"

"Ay," he said, with indignation, "with chains, if you will. I make you responsible for their safety. Morton, ride for the surgeon."

The conspirators were each guarded between two soldiers, and led from the scene of their signal defeat. At the gate they were joined by the other prisoners, and marched to the prison a short distance north from the head of Beekman−street. Washington's resentment against the agent in this plot was now turned into compassion for the victim of revenge. The last of the soldiers left the room as Mrs. Washington and Eugenie, alarmed by the report of the pistol, rushed in. The former tenderly embraced her husband, who had advanced to assist the two soldiers that remained, in raising the wounded man, while Eugenie instinctively sought Arden and would have flown also into his arms had she not recollected herself. Taking his hand, she said,

"Thank God, it is not you!"

"That poor gentleman," said Arden, returning the pressure; "one of the conspirators shot him on suspicion of treachery."

The soldiers now placed the wounded man on a sofa, and endeavoured to stanch the blood.

"'Tis to no purpose. I am mortally wounded," he said.

"Do not hold me, Arden," cried Eugenie, with energy. "That voice I know! let me see him!"

She broke from Arden, who would have prevented her from beholding a scene of suffering so unfitted for the eyes of one so young and sensitive; and yielding to a strange and sudden emotion, she rushed forward and gazed fixedly on the changing features of the expiring chevalier. Her brow gradually became rigid, and her eyes lighted up with increasing intelligence. At length, clasping her hands together, she faintly murmured,

"'Tis my uncle."

"Who? what do I hear?" cried the dying man, raising himself on his elbow and gazing wildly in her face. "Eugenie? 'Tis Eugenie! Oh God, forgive me! Niece," he continued, extending his hand, "I have wronged thee, and was on my way to wrong thee still further, even to the taking of thy life. But justice at last has got her victim.

Have I your forgiveness?"

"Yes, yes! all all," she gasped, yet shrinking from his outstretched hand.

"God bless you! I am dying. May the saints intercede for me. The deeds are are," his eyes turned towards the secretary, and his head fell over upon his shoulder.

A moment after, and the chevalier ceased to hold any further interest in the hopes, fears, and anxieties of this world; and the future, with its great secret, to which we all look forward with mingled curiosity and dread, was unfolded to his dark spirit, the destiny of which, either for bliss or wo, was now unalterably and for ever fixed.

CHAPTER XVII. THE REVENGE.

After remaining on the ground the whole of the day succeeding the disastrous battle of Brooklyn, the English general the second night prepared to attack the works. Washington was advised of this; and, aware of his inability to resist an assault, he resolved to attempt to draw off his troops to the city.

They were, as we have seen, closely blockaded in their intrenchments; the only passage open that offered to them the least prospect of escape being in their rear across the East River, at that point nearly half a mile wide, to York Island. This avenue, however, was commanded by the guns of the British fleet anchored not far below. The whole army was considered by the English as already in their power, and the American Congress gave it up as irrevocably lost.

Notwithstanding its apparent impracticability, Washington determined to make the attempt to effect a retreat, and, upon its success or failure, to stake his reputation and the fate of his troops, if not, also, the safety of his country. The conception and masterly execution of this plan proved it to be worthy of his military genius. On the night preceding the anticipated assault, he drew off his whole army, numbering nine thousand men, in such silence and secrecy, that the first intimation General Howe, who commanded the besieging force, received of their escape was by the alarm conveyed by his outposts when, in the morning, they saw the rear guard of the retreating army half way across the East River and beyond the reach of their fire. He therefore prepared immediately to attack New−York, and Washington to evacuate the city and retire to the northern part of the island.

Having taken up this historical link to our chain of fiction, we will now return to our hero, whom, for the sake of bringing our heroine and Arden more prominently before the reader, we have purposely neglected. After leaving his wounded rival, he executed the order given him by General Putnam, and through the remainder of the day distinguished himself by his fearless courage and military talents. In the retreat from Long Island he was eminently conspicuous by his activity, coolness, and presence of mind; displaying at that trying time the experience of a veteran soldier guided by the well−directed energy of no common mind.

Would that the romancer were called to unfold alone his military career! to hold up only the bright side of the shield! But this is the enviable province of the historian. The novelist must follow his characters from the senate and the field; enter with them into the cabinet and into the hall; and be beside them in their most sacred retirements. It is his province to lay open the heart, unfold its secrets, and let all men read, as in a printed volume, what is written thereon. Invisibility and ubiquity are his attributes, and the magic wand he bears endows him with power over all earthly mysteries. The bright, the beautiful, and the grand are but spirits of his will and pleasure. At his bidding the earth lays open her gloomy caverns and crystal palaces to his eye; the mountains clothe themselves with purple and roseate clouds, or bellow with thunder; the lakes, the rivers, the trees become animate and spiritual. The visible universe is not so vast that his wonderful power will not embrace it and bend it to his pleasure. But here is not the limit of his power. He can create! He waves his wand, and creatures, beautiful or hideous, glorious or base, appear. He speaks, and they are animated. To their number there is no limit. They are

the ministers of his will and the instruments of his vast power, which is as unbounded as the firmament, as unfathomable as the sea.

When the American army were safely landed in New−York after their extraordinary escape, Burton hastened to Kingsbridge, where Isabel Ney had been retained, not to say imprisoned, since he escorted her there a few days before.

The quarters of General Mifflin were in a villa formerly occupied by a tory gentleman, then in arms under General Howe. It was in the midst of a lawn adorned by noble oaks, and sloping on one side to the Hudson River, on the other to an inlet or stream called Spuyten Duyvel Creek, over which was thrown a light wooden bridge, nearly hidden in the foliage of overhanging willows and elms. The dwelling was two stories high, surrounded by a piazza, with spacious barns and outhouses, and, altogether, wore an aristocratical air. Time had soiled its original snowy white, and given to it a sober hue, which added to its venerable and baronial aspect. A cupola surmounted the roof, commanding a view of the villages of Harlem and Bloomingdale; the needlelike spire of Trinity Church in the distant city; Hell Gate and its shores; Long Island; the North and East Rivers; the picturesque bay and its green islands; the beautiful Jersey shores, and the gigantic wall of the Palisadoes the vanguard of the Hudson Highlands crowned with its bristling fortress. It was the first of October, and autumn had flung its gorgeous drapery over the forests, which seemed to shine with their own golden light.

The room occupied by Isabel was in the southwest corner of the mansion, in the second story, with Venetian windows opening out of it upon the piazza. She was not kept a close prisoner, but suffered to walk the grounds during the day, and, accompanied by General Mifflin, ride a mile or two along the river's banks. From this officer and his family she received those attentions and that sympathy which her circumstances demanded; and, altogether, her seclusion, aside from its compulsory character, was not disagreeable.

Burton's first impulse, after he was temporarily released from the duties of the soldier, was to hasten to throw himself at the feet of the fair captive. She received him with undisguised pleasure. The privacy of the family of General Mifflin and the seclusion of the spot were favourable to the devotees of Cupid. The good−natured general was easy and unsuspicious, and permitted them to ride and walk together, trusting to the honour and patriotism of Burton for the security of his prisoner.

We will briefly pass over the growth and maturity of a passion, the only tendency of which could alone be the ruin of the trusting one: the enemy were in possession of New−York, and the American army had taken its position near Kingsbridge, throwing up lines across the island, not only to blockade the English by land in the city which they had captured, but also to check their farther progress into the country. The headquarters of the American general were therefore removed to this part of the island, and now were not far from Kingsbridge. Burton consequently became a more frequent visiter to the villa. We would gladly withhold our pen from recording it! in a few short weeks the proud and haughty Isabel Ney became the victim of the fascinating libertine Edward Burton.

In the mean while Arden recovered from his wound and was again in the saddle. But in his duties as a soldier he forgot not those of a lover. Inmate of the same mansion with Eugenie, he had a thousand opportunities of bringing that love to maturity which he had hailed with delight in the germe. Day after day beheld their growing affection. Their hearts at length became indissolubly united. She adored him without impiety; he worshipped her without forgetting that she was mortal. Their love was such as would bear the test of time and trial that virtuous union of souls which earth and Heaven unite to render permanent and happy.

Six weeks had elapsed after the evacuation of New−York, when one morning Isabel Ney, no longer the pure but haughty creature we first beheld her, yet equally as proud and still more beautiful, was leaning over the balustrade of her prison, watching the majestic movement of an English frigate that was making demonstrations as if it were about to pass Forts Lee and Washington, which guarded the entrance to the Highlands. Her thoughts were

wandering, but all were tinged with the dark cloud that had passed over her spirit and tarnished the purity of her young mind. Alas, that the proud, the beautiful should fall! Where virtue exists not in the mind, nor purity in the heart, it seems pride alone should be woman's plate of proof.

She was to meet Burton that evening; and her thoughts, how far soever they would stray, constantly turned back to him.

The sentinel below was pacing backward and forward before the door; the distant roll of drums, and occasionally the warlike note of a bugle from the far−distant camp, and, at long intervals, the dull sound of cannon fired as signals from the fleet, anchored two leagues below, fell upon her ear, but as if she heard not. Her bosom heaved painfully, and her eye was fixed on vacancy. A horseman, who galloped along the avenue without attracting her attention, drew up almost beneath her before she noticed him.

She started with surprise and confusion, but looked down with eager curiosity, and recognised in the visiter Major Dearborn, whom she had once seen for a moment at the quarters of Putnam.

"Good−morning, general," he said, in reply to a voice from the door as he reined up. "I see you hold your spyglass, and have been watching the motions of yonder frigate. Do you think she will have the temerity to attempt to run the gauntlet?"

"She is only coquetting," replied General Mifflin, in a gay tone of voice. "There! she has already tacked ship. John Bull is too wise to put his head into a lion's mouth. Dismount, major."

"I have some official business with you which will take but a moment, but it must be in private," he said, glancing up at the balcony; and then, dismounting, he disappeared within the house.

In a few minutes he came out and threw himself on his horse.

"By−the−by, general," he said, as he was about to ride off, "do you honour Colonel I beg his pardon, these promotions confuse one General Arden with your presence this evening?"

"Presence? Where?"

"Have you not heard that he is about to be united in the bonds of Hymen to−night with the lovely Canadian who has lately fallen heir to a French title and estate?"

"I thought Colonel Burton was to carry off that prize."

"Burton!" repeated Dearborn, with a laugh; "the earl has drawn so many lefthanded prizes of this sort that he ought to resign this to his rival."

"Earl?"

"So much for rusticating here out of the world, general. It is a soubriquet the staff confer upon him in honour of his prototype, Rochester; a *nomme d'amour*. By−the−by, you have heard that Arden's wounds were received in a snug little duello with Colonel Burton, as a sort of by−play or episode in the grand battle; and all for this pretty runaway nun!"

"Yes. But did Colonel Burton really run away with her?" asked General Mifflin, with homely simplicity.

"That did he. The whole affair was sufficiently romantic. What is more, after he left Canada, she followed him out of pure love, and Arden saved her from one of those plots he sometimes lays for the young and lovely of the sex. Faith! Burton should have been a pacha with three tails; not one less."

"Is it true that he betrayed Captain Germaine's daughter?"

"Most true," replied the officer, with warmth; "and true, also, that he intended to replace her by Eugenie de Lisle, if her own virtue and Arden's good sword had not protected her."

"I shall keep an eye on him when he next comes here. It's well there is no game here for him except this English miss, who has got spirit enough to take care of herself."

"The very women that soonest fall. Better keep an eye on them both, general," he said, as he rode off.

"Keep an eye on them?" he repeated, musingly; "I fear 'twill be shutting the stable−door after the horse is stolen. If there's mischief in the wind it's over before this. This Colonel Burton has not been here for nothing, it seems. Too late! too late!" he added, as he entered the house.

"Not too late for revenge!" said Isabel, slowly articulating each syllable through her compressed lips.

Not a word of the foregoing conversation had escaped her ear.

"Burton, then, has wooed and won Isabel Ney," she said, with flashing eyes, "as another instrument of his pleasures. Then leaving my feet yes, my arms! to throw himself into those of another! If my love be a guilty one, I will have no rival in it!"

She entered her chamber and paced the room for an hour with a swelling heart and burning brain. At length the rigidity of her brow relaxed; her flashing eye assumed a steadier expression, yet parted with none of its indignant light; her closed lips, save a slight curl of the upper one, resumed their wonted expression; yet there was no colour in her cheek, and her bosom rose and fell as if her heart were pressing outward with its unnatural fulness. Fearful, wonderful was the settled calmness of her look and manner! But it was the quiet of the volcano the moment before it bursts into flame.

A noise of horsemen without drew her to the balcony. A British officer, the same noble−looking cavalier who had tilted with Burton, at the instant drew up on the plateau beneath, bearing a flag of truce. He was courteously received by General Mifflin and invited into the house. From a few words that escaped him as he entered the hall, Isabel learned that his mission was to treat for her release. All at once, as if she had come to some sudden resolution, she re−entered her room, seated herself at her escritoir, and hurriedly, yet with a steady hand, wrote with her pencil upon a slip of paper the following words:

"At eight to−night send a boat with four men to the grove of maples two hundred yards below the bridge. An American officer of rank shall be there placed in your power. Hide your men on the shore beneath the overhanging rock. When you hear the signal, `seize your prisoner,' obey it. Bring no firearms, lest you alarm the guard. Be secret and punctual.

Isabel Ney."

She returned to the balcony and awaited the officer's reappearance. In a short time the door opened and he came forth.

"The proposition shall be made known to the commander−in−chief, sir," said General Mifflin, "and I have no doubt of his compliance with it."

"To−morrow, then, I will return for your answer."

"Have you just landed from yonder frigate, Major Andre?"

"I have, sir."

"I thought she was trying to dodge up the river; but was only manoeuvring, I see, to land you."

The gentlemen courteously exchanged parting salutes; the officer turned to ride off, and the door closed. As he was passing beneath the balcony Isabel waved her handkerchief, which startled the horse and caused his rider to look up. She placed her finger on her lip, displayed the paper, and, hastily folding it in her handkerchief, dropped it. He caught it, smiled, bowed, and galloped out of sight.

A few minutes before nine o'clock the same evening, Burton and Isabel stood together on the bridge, beneath an elm which grew on the banks, and cast a deep shadow over the spot; Zacharie, holding a horse and mounted on another, was on the roadside at a little distance. The night was the loveliest of the mellow American autumn; the stream rippled past musically, loudly complaining as it encountered the piers of the bridge which entered its placid breast; the air was motionless; the woods moved with a pleasant sound; the stars were out; and the moon, high in the east, threw vast masses of light and shade over the scene.

Burton leaned upon the railing as if in thought; Isabel hung on his arm seemingly in all the confidence and artlessness of innocence and affection. A guilty pair! The one cold and indifferent with possession, yet feigning the semblance of love; the other breathing the language of affection in his ear, while her heart was filled with the bitterness of hate, and her insulted spirit burning with the triumph of anticipated revenge.

"My dear Burton, I fear you love me less; you do not bear that look of devotion you once did. I have madly loved you, and my affection should meet a kinder return than this cold manner."

Isabel spoke with sincerity and with feeling.

"I am not changed, Isabel," he replied, rousing himself with an effort and passing his arm around her; "it is only your idle fancy that leads you to think so. I love you, dear Isabel. You alone share my heart and fill my thoughts."

"'Tis false!" was the reply that came to her lips, but she suppressed it. At this instant the faint dip of an oar caught her vigilant ear, and she fondly said,

"Let us walk farther. The night invites to ramble."

Leaning upon his arm, she turned down a path leading by the side of the water, and shortly after they entered a grove through which the road pleasantly wound. Not far from the entrance of the wood was a large rock, with aged trees growing upon it; its base was washed by the waves. Towards it she carelessly led, as if she guided him not, the moody and silent Burton.

"Edward," she said, with energy and feeling, as if continuing a conversation, "I do not blame you. You have broken no vow. I asked not, you promised not, marriage. All I sought, all I cared for, was your love. Happy in that, I looked not beyond it. But," she added, with a sudden change of voice and manner, her tones sinking into a low, distinct, energetic whisper, "Edward Burton, you have been false to me!"

"False?"

"Do you know Caroline Germaine?" she fiercely demanded.

"Ha!"

"Eugenie de Lisle?"

"Isabel!"

"You are a villain, sir!" she cried, in a voice of settled yet fearful passion. "I hate you. Love has fled from my bosom, guilty though it might have been. Hatred revenge has taken its place."

"Good God, Isabel, be calm."

"Calm? Ha, ha, ha!"

"You are in error."

"For what pastime, pray, did you cross blades with Colonel Arden?" she asked, with lofty scorn.

"Isabel!"

"Silence."

"Forgive "

"Never."

"The flawed chain that bound me to you is well broken, then," he said, carelessly. "'Tis a kindness for which I stand in your debt."

"The debt shall now be cancelled," she exclaimed triumphantly; and then, in an elevated tone, she cried, "Seize your prisoner."

Instantly four soldiers, headed by an officer, appeared from behind the rock and advanced with drawn swords upon him.

Although taken by surprise, Burton's coolness and presence of mind did not forsake him. He threw off Isabel's hand, which she had forcibly laid on his wrist, and sprung back, at the same time drawing a pistol from his breast and firing upon the leader. Then unsheathing his sword, he prepared to receive his foes. The ball from his pistol missed the officer and wounded one of the soldiers. Enraged at the fall of their comrade, they furiously advanced upon him. He retreated till he gained a large tree, when, placing his back against it, he waited to receive their assault.

"On your lives, wound him not," said the officer, who, from his uniform, was a captain of marines.

Burton received them with spirit, and met their efforts to disarm him with skill and success. At length he severely wounded one of his assailants, when the others, forgetting their officer's injunction, vigorously pressed him with the determination to cut him down, and gave him, though not without receiving, several severe wounds. He was nearly exhausted, and was about to tender his sword to the officer, who had stood by Isabel as if to detain her,

when Zacharie's voice was heard in the entrance of the wood,

"Hold out! There is rescue at hand. Hasten, you lubbers. Will you see an American officer hacked up?"

While he was speaking he came down the path at full speed, holding in each hand one of his master's pistols, which he had taken from the holsters, and followed close at his heels by half a score of soldiers with fixed bayonets.

"Leave your game, and to the boat," cried the officer, as they came in sight.

The men precipitately retreated to a barge concealed behind the rock, not, however, without receiving the contents of one of Zacharie's pistols. The other was wrested from his hand by Isabel.

"You shall not escape, Burton. My revenge is not yet complete," she fiercely cried, levelling the pistol at his breast. "Perish thy false heart!"

Zacharie caught her arm as she fired, and the ball passed through Burton's shoulder. He instantly fell.

"My revenge is complete. I can now forgive myself for my folly in loving you. Adieu. In after years we shall meet again."

The next instant she sprang into the boat as it was putting off from the shore, and was swiftly carried by the rapid current into the dark shadows of the trees out of sight.

The soldiers had presented their muskets and were about to fire, when Burton faintly said,

"Hold! There is a female in the boat. Let them escape. I have deserved this."

He muttered a few words of self−accusation, and then sunk into insensibility.

A few moments after Burton and Isabel had left the bridge, the relief−guard passed on its way to the quarters of the commander−in−chief, which were situated on a rising ground about a quarter of a mile distant. When Zacharie heard the report of the pistol fired by Burton, and the loud, quick voices of the assailants, he suspected that he had been attacked; and, governed by the first impulse of his active mind, he rode after the guard and gave the alarm, though not certain that it might not be a false one. As he advanced before the soldiers he heard the clashing of the combatants' swords, and, hastening forward, effected the timely diversion in Burton's favour.

He now raised the form of his master and stanched the blood. The soldiers, hastily forming a litter of boughs, placed him upon it and bore him towards the headquarters, to leave him under the charge of the surgeon.

Slowly they wound their way through the dark woods; the moonlight, struggling through the foliage, glancing at intervals over the pale features of the wounded man. As they approached the mansion occupied by the military family of the American general, lights from the windows, which were brightly illuminated as if a festival were within, shone through the forest and guided them to the place of their destination.

At length they passed a soldier on guard, and, reaching the lawn before the house, came full upon the gay scene. Advancing towards the portico, the soldiers rested their burden before the open windows, while Zacharie hastened to give information of the condition of his master. The scene that met the eyes of these men was exceedingly brilliant. The long windows, which reached to the ground, were thrown open, for the night was warm, and displayed the interior lighted up with great splendour. Officers in rich uniforms, and ladies in flowing white robes, glanced before their eyes. It was a reunion of beauty and valour. All was dazzling bright, and gayety and

happiness. How great the contrast between this scene and the rude litter! its insensible burden and rough bearers!

All at once, through a door at which stood Jacques and the servants looking in upon the scene, a dignified clergyman, in the robes of the Church of England, entered the room. He was attended by several officers of high rank, distinguished among whom stood General Washington.

At their entrance a young officer, in the rich uniform of one of high rank, came forth from the crowd, which gradually formed into a circle. His handsome features were chastened by a quiet smile of inward happiness. He led by the hand a female of dazzling beauty, with downcast eyes and a conscious, delicate blush upon her cheeks, like the reflection of a roseleaf upon a lily. He gazed upon her with pride as she stood tremblingly beside him. They were Arden and Eugenie.

The clergyman opened his book. General Washington advanced and placed the hand of the maiden in that of her lover. The service was read; a ring was placed on the finger of the maiden, and she became a bride. A murmur of pleasure ran through the assembly. A short prayer was offered up by the holy man, when the buzz of delight again filled the room.

Many were the beautiful lips that pressed the cheek of the happy bride, but none so beautiful as hers; and many were the brave soldiers who grasped the hand of the bridegroom and wished him happiness, but none of so gallant a presence.

When the clergyman entered the room, Burton revived and looked around. The glare of light attracted his attention. He raised himself convulsively upon his elbow, and gazed with burning eyeballs on the whole ceremony; beheld the proud and happy look of Arden; the subdued, virgin joy of Eugenie.

His hand instinctively sought his sword; the blood spouted from his lip as he pierced it in the madness of his impotent rage; and making an effort to rise to his feet when he saw Arden place the ring on Eugenie's finger, he fell back again insensible, with his hands clinched and a curse dying upon his tongue.

The subsequent destinies of Isabel Ney and the remaining characters of our romance, as well as that of our hero, are familiar matters of history; but possibly may afford materials for another story, to be laid a quarter of a century later. Father Bonaventure, Porter Homfroy, and our monkly brethren in the valley of the Chaudiere, lived to a good old age, died, and were buried. Sister Agnes died a maid. Zacharie eventually listed in the wars; and after a restless and adventurous career, in which he gained great reputation as a soldier, became conspicuous in a famous conspiracy against the state. As for Jacques, though he contrived, by a sort of fatality, to figure in all the subsequent great battles of the war, he was deterred by his praiseworthy philanthropy from arriving at that distinction which, to believe his own words, he had earned by numerous sanguinary conflicts in season and out of season, and by countless wounds and bruises both on "hip and thigh."

THE END.