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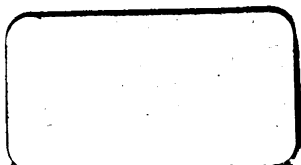
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QUAKER BEN



HENRY C. MCCOOK

1. Pennsylvania — Hist. — Colonial
period — Fiction



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Oct. 29; 1916.



“Does thee remember, Dorothy, the Spring days?”

QUAKER BEN

A TALE OF COLONIAL PENNSYLVANIA
IN THE DAYS OF THOMAS PENN

BY

HENRY C. McCOOK

AUTHOR OF "THE LATIMERS," "TENANTS OF AN OLD FARM,"
"OLD FARM FAIRIES," ETC., ETC.



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PREFACE

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1944
The period of the administration of Thomas Penn, (1737-1742) in the colony founded by his distinguished father, was one of great historic interest. The infamous "Indian Walk" which led to the cruel and criminal expulsion of the Delaware Indians by their warlike conquerors and masters, the Iroquois, at the instigation of Thomas Penn, was an incident that led to serious consequences. The attack by Great Britain on the Spanish Main in the unfortunate Cartagena campaign, in which the American colonies, with their customary loyalty, heartily joined, was another incident that sorely vexed the peace-loving spirit of the Friends, though it had the co-operation of the belligerent citizens of Penn's colony.

Bellevue
The outbreak of the yellow fever in Philadelphia was a third occurrence of the period, which, united with those mentioned, seemed to the author to furnish the elements for an historic romance that would be alike interesting and instructive. Indeed, the entire condition of Pennsylvania and Philadelphia at that particular period, both in the city and on the frontiers, was one of transition, of civil and social and religious evolution that invites the attention of intelligent readers.

The great interest expressed by many readers of the author's earlier romance, "The Latimers," in the Scotch-Irishman, Andy Burbeck, suggested his introduction as a boy in "Quaker Ben," with members of his family to furnish the environment in which the lad was developed.

Any literary treatment of the Quaker element of this period would not be complete without some representation of the historic views of Friends upon the operation

PREFACE

of the Divine Spirit in the religious conversion of men. The spiritual experience of Robin More is not wholly fictitious. It does not represent the author's views, nor, indeed, the views of most Friends whom he knows, upon the ordinary Divine method in that phase of the spiritual life of man therein depicted. But it represents with substantial accuracy, the experience of Stephen Grellet, a French nobleman, one of the Emigré, who became a convert to and an eminent preacher of the peculiar religious principles of the Friends.

The Quaker wedding at the close of the tale, with the exception of Arthur Burbeck's speech, which of course is purely imaginary, is drawn from the life in its essential features. It is an interesting phase of social life that seems to be passing away.

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PART ONE

QUAKER BEN

A Tale of Colonial Pennsylvania

CHAPTER I

A TRANSPORTATION TRAIN OF COLONIAL DAYS

From the stable yard of the Black Horse Inn near Bala, on the old Lancaster road of Pennsylvania, a pack-horse train had just set forth. As the road was heavy after the spring rains, traveling was labored and slow, and an early start was made. On each side of the way thick woods extended down to the Schuylkill River, the noble survivors of which are well remembered by old residents of West Philadelphia; and, indeed, here and there a venerable white oak or chestnut still remains.

The day had fairly broken, a bright warm day toward the close of April, 1737. The tokens of an early spring showed plainly in the deepening green of the willows, the reddening buds of the swamp maple, and the wild flowers,—spring beauties, dragon's-tooth, anemones and violets, that bloomed abundantly along the edges of the road and woods. The air was athrob with the season's new-born life. Robins, thrushes and meadow larks filled the meadows and woods with music, for the first flush of the mating days stirred them to their love-calls. Our travelers, in sympathy with nature, and having that uplift of spirits which comes with the nearing close of a tedious journey, and the anticipation of new scenes, were in gay mood.

Theirs was a typical pioneer caravan of the period.

The horses — a dozen of them or more — were laden with peltry and ginseng, heaped up in well-balanced bales that projected from each side. Their attendants were two bronzed frontiersmen, a boy and a stout negro. The lad's lively sallies and high spirits seemed to add to the gayety of his companions, and drew the attention of the two principal members of the party who rode a few yards in front.

One of these was a young man above the medium height, habited in a short coat, riding-breeches and boots. He wore a laced cocked hat, and carried a sword at his waist belt. His dress was a cross between that of soldier and merchant. His features, which barely escaped being handsome, were marred by an expression of sensuality that appeared despite their open *bonhomie* and intelligence. He rode a mettled sorrel horse somewhat uneasily, often turned back to note the pack train, and threw restless glances into the woods on each side and in front.

"I don't see what more I could have done!" he said, turning to his riding companion, a tall, broad-shouldered frontiersman who rode a bay mare unusually large and spirited, on which he sat with the ease of an expert horseman. "I am sure the horse and pack were lost through no fault of mine. You can assure our people of that, can you not?"

"Thee seemed to do thy best, friend Oster." The strong quiet voice that responded had that full, manly ring which is apt at once to win confidence in the speaker.

"It was most unfortunate!" continued the person addressed as Oster. "A good pack horse and a valuable load gone,— our richest and best furs — just as we are nearing the city! Our firm will not be pleased at that, Ben-Thee!"

"*Thy* firm, please!" was the unruffled response.

"What!" exclaimed Oster, "would you go back on me? You came as an escort,— to protect me and my goods from damage and loss — didn't you?"

“ True: from open attacks of Indians, robbers, and violent men. Not from night thieves at wayside inns. That was thy own lookout, with the attendants, who are at thy command also. And so we agreed—did we not?”

Oster was silent. And while his companion waits for a reply to this straightforward statement, we may consider so startling a contrast as an armed rifleman with a Quaker dialect, bearing so odd a title as “ Ben-Thee.” In the spring of 1719, an adventurer from the north of Ireland settled in the beautiful Cumberland Valley. He was one of that great human tide which flowed from Ulster to Penn’s province, attracted by the lure of religious liberty and the liberal terms for rich lands. His wife died shortly after the voyage was over, leaving him with an infant daughter and two small sons. Within a year he also died, and left without a protector save the God to whom he committed them, his helpless family of orphans. He was an utter stranger. The nearby settlers knew almost nothing of him and his affairs,— for he was a reserved man— but did the rude office of burial as best they could, and kindly received the children into their own homes.

In course of time they were widely scattered. The farm of five hundred acres of excellent valley land reverted, through default of payment apparently, to the sub-agents through whom it had been bought from the Proprietary. Rumors sped that this transaction was not above suspicion, and that the orphans had been wronged. But the neighboring farmers were sorely pressed by their own hard struggles to subdue the earth, none had time to look into the affairs of a stranger, and so what seemed an idle rumor died out, and the affair was forgotten.

The oldest child, a boy of five or six years, was taken by a kindly Friend, who reared him with his own children as one of them. The lad’s name was Benjamin, and he took the surname, Owen, of his foster-father.

As he grew up, the hereditary racial temperament developed so strongly, that in spite of his Quaker teachings and surroundings and absorbings, he attached himself to a Scotch-Irish hunter and trapper named Arthur Burbeck; and finally, with Friend Owen's consent, for he could not divert the lad's natural bent, took up the life of a frontier scout and guide. He became an expert in woodcraft, with the reputation of being one of the best shots, and surest and steadiest guides, on the border.

Amid these changes, he often fell back upon the Owen farm in the Cumberland Valley as home, a feature comforting to him, and not unpleasant to Friend Owen, who found himself gradually drifting out of unity with his strenuous Ulster neighbors, with whom Benjamin was an apt and willing mediator. At last the good Quaker, no longer able to endure his religious isolation and that of his family, rented his farm, removed to Philadelphia, and set up as a merchant, in which business his frontier experience and connections greatly aided him.

Benjamin carried with him into his forest life the characteristic plain language to which he had been bred in his adopted home; and so it fell out that the soubriquet "Ben-Thee," which Burbeck, his instructor in woodcraft, had given him for this peculiarity, passed current among his comrades of the forest, and finally came into general use, though it was varied, among many by the title of "Quaker Ben."

And now, in the maturity of his young manhood, he was here in the course of duty and service as a ranger, conducting a goods train into Philadelphia for the head clerk and representative of a firm of traders and land agents.

"So you decline to share responsibility for the loss of the horse and pack?" queried Oster, taking up the conversation.

"Verily!" was the laconic and emphatic reply.

"Have you a theory as to how the loss occurred?"

Ben-Thee hesitated: "Yes, I have a theory; or rather a conjecture."

Oster gazed backward, seemingly to look after the packmen, and nodded significantly toward them, as though to ask, "Which one?"—then turned his eyes toward his companion and shot forth a keen glance as if to read his inmost thought.

"However," continued Ben-Thee, who appeared not to notice these movements, "as I have not followed up my conjecture with care, and would avoid the injustice of hasty decision, I shall not make it known. But I fear we are in danger of a more serious loss, just now. Has thee noticed the forms moving back and forth among the thick trees just beyond us? They are not friendly, or they would not try to hide themselves, as they are doing. I suspect a purpose to attack us, and yon heavy clump jutting into the road well favors an ambush. I advise thee to fall back."

"Surely, not so near the city!" rejoined Oster. "I have noted nothing alarming. Perhaps you have seen some straggling hunters. They come out from town as far as this."

Ben-Thee, not accepting this view, rode back to the pack-train, and telling his suspicions, bade the men draw together closely so that the horses might be a compact group. "If there's trouble ahead, we must be ready for it. Let Cato and the boy give particular attention to keeping the horses well together to prevent stampeding, which, if we are attacked, the assailants will doubtless attempt. The others may stand on the defense. Shoot low; to wound, not to kill. A dead man removes one enemy; a wounded one may dispose of three; for his companions will care for and probably remove him. Besides, it is ever ill to take life unless necessity requires it."

These precautions had scarcely been taken ere they approached the bend in the road which Ben-Thee had indicated as a danger point. There was a rush from

the thick wood of a gang of men shouting like Indians, and hurling a volley of stones upon the horses. Oster, who had insisted on riding ahead, whipped out his sword and attacked three of the robbers who had seized his bridle reins and laid hold upon him. He was speedily disarmed and dragged from his horse. But his assailants were driven off by Ben-Thee, who rode among them, and swung his big belt hatchet with such advantage that the bandits gave way.

Meanwhile, at the sharp crack of the packmen's rifles there rose an echoing cry of pain from two of the bandits, and this was followed by a call from their leader to fall back and retire. In a few moments they had disappeared in the depths of the forest carrying with them their wounded comrades.

Evidently they had expected to surprise the train, and make off with the loot without loss or special danger. But the vigorous resistance showed that the trainmen were on their guard, and that more would be lost than gained by further action. Retreat was therefore ordered. Oster was soon upon his feet with a few bruises as a result of his share in the *mêlée*; and the only other injury was a slight cut upon the left arm which Ben-Thee had received. Highly satisfied at so fortunate an escape from what might have been a serious affair, the packmen resumed their journey in even better spirits than before.

"There," exclaimed Ben-Thee, as they approached the banks of the Schuylkill River, "see the quarter from which our assailants came!" He pointed to a brig just under way down stream, with full sail set before a fresh north-west wind. "A smuggler's ship, I daresay; for our assailants were seamen. It seems odd that they should have turned into foot-pads and have attacked us. Now I think of it, there were a couple of guests at the inn last night who seemed to be seafaring men by their dress and speech. Doubtless they suggested the attempt."

They stood for a while and watched the graceful vessel

as she tacked in the narrow channel, and then addressed themselves to crossing the stream. Beyond the river the road still pursued its course through dense woods,— now covered with solid blocks of city houses— though here and there were breaks in the forest where venturesome settlers had marked out homes.

A deer that lay basking in the sunny road a few rods before them, started up at the train's approach, and ran into the forest. A flock of wild turkeys scampered after them, their bronzed feathers glistening a moment in the sunlight. The boy of the party raised a shrill halloo, and started after the turkeys, his short rifle a-trail.

"Back, Andy, back!" cried Arthur Burbeck, his father, one of the packmen. "Bide by your trust, lad! Would ye break loose in the vera teeth o' the town? You're in over-high sperits the morn; an' A'm feared ye'll have a down-settin' afore night. One niver climbs a height but he's sure to hit a hollow, by and by. Mind that now!"

The boy turned at this rebuke, rubbed his shocky red hair, picked up his coon-skin cap which had dropt off, and went back to his place with a crestfallen look at the laughter of some of his elders.

"Ah, well!" he said. "Let them laugh that wins; and that's nayther you nor me, but yon fat torkeys scud-din' away intil the wuds. For I could 'a' got one as aisy as rollin' off a log! Sure, father, yerself t'ached me that a full hand aye brings a fair welcome. An' A' thocht a fat fowl would no be an ill gift at the inn we're gawin' til."

"Much cry, an' lettle wool, Andy, Ah'm doubtin'!" the father retorted. "It's ill braggin' aforehand, though it may be warse afterward. In troth, however, you're no so bad a shot with your wee rifle,— for a ten year auld!" A commendation that helped to soothe the lad into his usual good temper.

CHAPTER II

OLD FRIENDS IN NEW LIGHTS

At what is now Market (then High) Street and Tenth, the pack-train crossed a pretty run that went babbling by the way of Walnut Street and Washington Square, into Dock Creek. Holding along the pleasant banks, whose fresh greenery was besprinkled with wild flowers, it turned into Chestnut Street at Sixth. Clark's Inn stood in the space between Fifth and Sixth Streets on Chestnut, opposite the new State House, since of glorious memory as Independence Hall. It was well out of town; for the old city of Penn, even at that date, more than fifty years after its founding, was limited to the bluffs close along the Delaware.

"A coach and horses, hey?" quoth Arthur Burbeck, as he noted the rather pretentious sign that swung before the inn door. "Coaches are scant belongin's in this crowd; though we're well acquent wi' Shank's mare an' pack horses. But if they'll tak' good care of them and Mr. Ben's roadsters, A'll be content."

The riding-horses were well bestowed under the care of black Cato, and the pack-horses with their back-country cargo, under the guidance of Mr. Alfred Oster, went on to Front Street to unload at the shop and warehouse of Messrs. Windall and Bete.

Mr. William Windall, the senior partner, was a man beyond middle age, of medium size, spare of flesh, with keen black eyes, and a rather swart visage which he had brought with him from the Barbados, where he had settled before the promise of liberal pickings in Penn's new colony drew him to Philadelphia.

Mr. Olean Bete, the junior partner, had come over

as a youth with early adventurers, and though not a professed Friend, affected the Friendly dress and style, which, indeed, was part of his stock in trade. In personal appearance he strongly contrasted with his partner, being tall and stout, with blonde complexion and light hair. He was as smooth and deliberate in ordinary manner as Mr. Windall was abrupt and crisp.

Oster, whose disturbed demeanor showed his inward uneasiness, formally delivered his packages, which were soon unloaded and carried into the store-room. Then he presented Ben-Thee, who had quietly awaited his leisure. "Mr. Benjamin Owen, gentlemen; our expert guide and escort."

Ben-Thee's reception was cordial enough, for his towering form and formidable proportions were apt to invite a stranger's respect. His manner was reserved, but respectful, and had a native dignity and grace which marked his casual relations with his fellowmen. Meanwhile Mr. Windall went on noting the tale of the goods, from an invoice.

"One bale short!" at last he exclaimed.

"Yes, sir," said the clerk, assuming with some effort an "as-a-matter-of-course" manner. "We were unfortunate enough to lose one pack-horse and his load en route."

"Ah? How came that?" snapped out Mr. Windall, turning his piercing black eyes upon Oster.

"Indeed? How came that?" echoed Mr. Bete, somewhat more deliberately, but no less emphatically, and looked at Ben-Thee.

The guide waited for Oster's expected answer; but as that person seemed to have none ready, he took the part upon himself: "The horse and goods were stolen by some parties unknown, during the night, while we were lodged at Eagle Inn. Thee will find the account for my services herein," he continued, handing a paper to Mr. Windall.

The merchant glanced over it. "You have charged

us with the value of your horse!" he exclaimed. "Do you expect us to pay for that, as well as stand the loss of our goods?"

"I verily do!" was the calm reply. "Thy agent will tell thee that it was agreed between us that all ordinary natural damage, and losses by night thievery and providential accidents, should be borne by his firm. I agreed only to protect him and his goods from straggling Indians and assaults of violent men, risking loss of life and limb therein, and to furnish horses and men for carriages and service at a fixed charge. All this I have done. Damages to the same, not due to my manifest neglect or incompetence, were to be paid by his firm. Thy clerk and representative will confirm this."

"Is this so?" demanded Windall, throwing another keen glance at Oster. With Ben-Thee's steady gaze fixed upon him, the clerk dared not deny the agreement. But before Windall, whose scowling face showed a gathering storm, could speak again, Mr. Bete broke in with his quiet, unctuous voice:

"Well, Friend Benjamin,—for thee seems to be of Friend's persuasion by thy speech—this is a matter for some deliberation. We will go over it carefully. Thee can come around to-morrow and we will talk over the settlement of thy account."

"Be it so!" said the guide. "Thee will find no change on my part. But let me set thee right on one point. I am no professed Friend, though my speech does savor somewhat of the Meeting. I was raised from childhood in a Friend's family, being an orphan, and his manner of speaking comes natural to me."

"Your name, I see," said Windall, looking at the invoice, "is Owen — Benjamin Owen."

"That is my foster-father's surname, and I commonly go by it. I am not a Friend — but an Irishman, at least the son of one. My real name is Hannan."

Windall started. He looked at his partner. He, too, had been startled by the name. It seemed to have re-

vived some past associations; and in the momentary hesitation produced thereby, Ben-Thee gravely bowed, and walked out of the room.

As he slowly moved along Front Street and thence to Second, he was a picturesque figure to many who observed him—a model of wholesome, handsome life. His erect form, solid and vigorous in every fiber of the more than six-foot frame, was clad in the hunting shirt modified by American frontiersmen for forest use from the English peasant's belted frock. He wore doe-skin breeches, and his legs were encased in leather leggins. A powder-horn and a fur pouch hung over a shoulder, a hunting-knife and a hatchet were at his belt. A plain, broad-brimmed, three-cornered hat, such as leaders among Friends had kept in use, covered his light brown hair that, guiltless of a queue, hung in wavy masses almost to his shoulders. Many a savage brave had looked with covetous eyes upon that splendid scalp, and wished that it might some day hang at his belt!

He left Front Street, which was a scene of busy commercial life, though so lately redeemed from the wilderness, and entered a merchant's shop on Second Street near Dock. The apprentice-clerk, who received him, was not a little startled at the stalwart armed figure that stalked into the store and asked if the master were in. He led the visitor into a little office at the rear of the place, and as he lingered to catch some fragments of the interview, he was surprised beyond measure to see the sedate merchant rise from his chair with an alacrity that belied his advanced years, hasten with a radiant face to meet the scout, and clasp his outreached hand with both of his own.

“ Benjamin, my dear boy, is this indeed thee? ”

“ It is I, indeed, Father Owen; fresh from the valley with a pack-train; and thee can't complain that there isn't enough of me.”

“ Verily, my son! What a monster thee has grown to be! Thee has not been to the house yet? No?

Lydia and the children will be delighted to see thee! And so am I, so am I! Sit down, sit down!—Thee need not wait, Obadiah, close the door; thee may call me if needed.—Sit thee down, man, and tell me the news of the valley. How thee has grown!”

The good Quaker seated himself opposite his adopted son, and gazed fondly and fixedly upon him. Then he plied him with questions about friends and affairs in the valley, about himself and his own affairs, until quite satisfied. He listened quietly to the account of the interview with Windall and Bete, and remarked:

“Thee will need to have all thy wits about thee; and mayhap to consult a bit with me. But thee will come to stay with us. Surely, surely!”—as Ben-Thee shook his head—“Lydia will expect it. Thee must not say nay!”

“No, it may not be—not now, at least. The horses and men are at the inn, and I must be there to look after them. But I will see Mother Owen and the family directly. And now, I have a little business with thee. Here is the yearly rent for thy farm, which Robinson took occasion to send by me. See that it is correct.”

The tale was right, and the two parted. But the good merchant could not settle down to business; and after sundry trials, closed his desk, and leaving word that he would not be back till after dinner, hastened to his Spruce Street home to tell the news.

Ben-Thee had anticipated him. Having left his weapons at the inn, and looked after the horses and men, who were all doing well, he could not restrain the desire to see the friends and companions of his childhood; and Friend Owen found him at the house, where he had just arrived. He was surrounded by the family, and in the midst of the flurry and tongue-clamor that such an event is wont to evoke.

It was a charming scene. The restraints of formal habits which commonly fettered a Friend's household at that period, before strangers, were quite broken down.

The onrush of natural feeling after a long separation from one who had been held as brother and child, had now full play and course. Indeed, among the younger members of this family, born after his coming to it, Ben-Thee was counted a brother as truly as any other child. All had grown up together; and as a child and brother, Mother Owen and the two girls present, Phoebe and Grace, received Ben-Thee. The motherly embrace; the sisterly kisses; the fond hanging about his person, fingering this article and that of his strange equipment with half-mocking and half-curious interest; running fair hands caressingly through his shock of silky hair; the volley of questions and rattling replies; the laughter and merry comment, the swift interchange of news and the wondering exclamations; now one, now two, now three chiming in at once—this was indeed a comely and heart-stirring scene! For nature is nature, in secular or Quaker; and innocent high spirits will break bounds, and frisk and play beneath plain drab gowns and white folders, as well as under gay silk robes and jeweled necks.

“But where is Dorothy?” Ben-Thee asked, when the first gush of emotion had somewhat abated.

“She has just run over to see Rhoda Reagan, one of her nearby familiars, and will soon return,” said Mother Lydia.

Dorothy was the daughter nearest his own age, and the feeling of kinship and comradeship with her had always been especially warm and strong. The interchange of pleasant and loving chatter ran on again until a click at the door and a light tread in the little hallway announced the coming of the absent one.

“There’s Dorothy!” cried Grace and Phoebe in chorus, and therewith the maiden entered. She started back at the vision that met her, and in her surprise dropped a bunch of wild flowers she had plucked as she passed along. Her face for a moment paled with the shock, and then reddened under the returning flush.

Ben-Thee stepped toward her eagerly and picked up the fallen flowers; but instead of clasping her in his arms, as he had done with the others, and greeting her with a hearty kiss, as he had purposed, he paused and took (all that he was offered)—the maid's outreached hand. It was a warm pressure that welcomed him, very warm! And his sister's eyes were beaming with affection and her cheek was wet with tears; but why had she not kissed him?

The query had no time for lodgment. For, if any of the family had noticed this by-play and interchange of embarrassed emotions, it made but light impression, and the sweet gayety of old-time loves renewed, at once broke out again.

Yet Dorothy seemed unwontedly demure, and more than once Ben-Thee found his eyes wandering to her face, with an inward wondering: "How she has changed! Those large hazel eyes peering beneath the broad smooth brow; the brown hair parted smoothly over the even oval of the rounded dome of the head, and laid in a thick braided roll at the back! The cheeks, pink as the wild rose, on a skin as clear and smooth as a sea-shell's coil, but with just a touch of brunette amber! Those rosy lips; teeth white as milk; and dimples in chin and cheek alike! Who would have thought my little sister and playmate would have turned out such a beauty!"

But that was the judgment of brotherly kindness, for Dorothy was surely not what experts would call a beauty. Yet, that her face was exceedingly comely, and under the play of thought and feeling might even be called handsome, no one could well doubt. As to form and carriage, which are so large a factor in personal comeliness,—if grace and ease of quiet pose, and that lissome and vigorous and joyous action which comes naturally from perfect health and wholesome exercise in the open air; and the muscular freedom of well fitting but unhampering dress; and simple food, and healthful rest and

habits, and wise mothering,— if all this might win the palm of good looks, then might Dorothy Owen have deserved it. Surely so, if Ben-Thee were arbiter.

His partiality was natural; for although Grace and Phoebe were both fair maidens, and counted by many fairer than Dorothy, the latter had been playmate and companion in those happy childhood days on the valley farm; and that is a bond which rarely fails to draw closely, and which strengthens with gathering years.

Now the time drew near for the mid-day meal, and Mother Lydia and Dorothy must leave to prepare for it. Soon the boys began to drop in — Paul, the oldest, and Gaius next, and Marcus the youngest,— and the gay greetings and lively clatter of questions and answers were renewed, only interrupted by the call to dinner. It was a joyous repast, though the fare was frugal and the wine was spare. For the flow and blending of happy and innocent spirits are the most savory sauce of a family meal, be the viands what they may.

CHAPTER III

WILLIAM PENN'S SON AND SUCCESSOR

When Ben-Thee called on Windall and Bete, on the day following his interview, he found them in a different mood from that in which he had left them. He had girded his mind for a stormy meeting, judging by the threatening signs of the day before. But something had changed the temperamental atmosphere. Mr. Windall received him smilingly; Mr. Bete with more than usual effusiveness.

"Good morning, Mr. Owen!" said Windall, extending his hand. "Good morning, Mr. Owen!" echoed Mr. Bete, extending both hands. The real name as revealed by Ben-Thee, had apparently left no impression on their minds.

"We have gone over your accounts," began Mr. Windall, when all were seated, "and find them correct. We have also been told of your feat in driving away a gang of pirates and protecting our goods from being plundered. As to the question between us on the cost of the missing horse, we have concluded to meet your views. We will pay for the lost animal, as our agent seems to think that was the agreement, and we wish to deal fairly and honorably with all men."

"That's it!" ejaculated the junior partner. "Fair and honorable!—and just! Our firm wishes to be known as that!"

"Here is your money," continued Mr. Windall. "You will find the count correct, I think. But we would like to have it understood between us that should the horse be recovered hereafter at any time, his cost shall be refunded."

"Certainly, sir!" said Ben-Thee. "That would be but common honesty! The duty of restitution is recognized by all honorable men."

"By all *honorable* men! Yes, yes!" ejaculated Mr. Bete.

"That is agreed, then. But it is not quite all. We would like very much, and would take it as a great favor —!"

"A great favor, indeed!" interjected the parenthetical Mr. Bete, whose characteristic asides Mr. Windall rarely noticed, treating them rather as negligible soliloquies. He now went on with his own remarks.

"If you would use the great skill which our Mr. Oster tells us you are reputed to have in scouting, to ferret out the thief or thieves. We have stronger reasons than the mere value of the horse and pack for wishing this. It is not the first instance of mysterious loss of this sort which we and other merchants have lately experienced. We would like you to run down the robbers, and help us to break up the gang, for a gang we suspect there is. What say you? Have you any theory or suspicions that might lead you to trace the criminals? Would you undertake this affair?"

Ben-Thee hesitated. He looked at his interrogator carefully and caught his keen glance riveted upon him. He turned to Mr. Bete and thought that he noticed his eyes in the stage of quick transition from cunning penetration back to soft friendliness, their habitual cast. It appeared a perfectly frank and proper request; yet somehow he suspected an occult purpose.

"You should know, gentlemen," at last he replied, "that such a search as you purpose might require much time and trouble and expense, which I am not now prepared to give it; certainly not at my own charges. However, I will say that I did give some little attention to the matter, and even made a few investigations on the morning after the robbery. But your agent, thinking it important to reach Philadelphia promptly, was anxious

to push on, and not add to the loss by waste of time in unpromising research. My scant investigations, therefore, led me to no conclusion, and as I have already told Mr. Oster, not even to a suspicion that it would be fair or right to mention."

"Were your suspicions directed toward any of your employés?" Mr. Windall asked, speaking up abruptly and sharply, somewhat like a cross-questioning lawyer with a reluctant witness.

Ben-Thee had not forgotten his foster-father's warning to keep his wits about him, and answered quite as sharply, "I have positively no information to give you. But I promise you, gentlemen, that if I fall upon anything that justifies me in communicating with you, I shall do so."

He rose to retire. "One moment, please!" said Mr. Windall. "We have been highly satisfied with the way in which you have conducted our business; save the matter of the lost horse and pack, now well settled, we think. We would like to throw a bit of good business in your way. Our Proprietary, Mr. Thomas Penn, yesterday asked us—"

"One of our most valued patrons!" interposed Mr. Bete.

"—If we could recommend to him two or three frontiersmen of athletic habits and skilled in forest lore, for some special service. He is also wanting a couple of good hunting horses,—for he is fond of riding to the hounds—and he has heard through the host of Clark's Inn, that you have one or two that would probably suit him. I have arranged for you to meet him, if convenient to you, at his office this morning. Could you manage to call at eleven o'clock?"

Ben-Thee readily consented. Mr. Windall agreed to meet him at the appointed time, to present him to Mr. Penn. As an hour or more remained ere the hour fixed to meet the Proprietary, he dropped in upon his foster-father at the office and informed him in de-

tail of the fortunate issue of the morning's business.

"Thee is to be congratulated, I think," said Mr. Owen, "and thee has acted discreetly. But now that thee is about to visit Thomas Penn, it seems fit that I should tell thee something about him. It may help thee if thee knows him with whom thee has to do.

"Thomas Penn is not such a man as was his venerated father, our beloved Founder. He is no longer in fellowship with Friends, but has cast his lot with the Church of England. That would not be a matter to speak of, were he a worthy churchman. But his conduct is a sore grief to the brethren and true friends of William Penn.

"He is still a comparatively young man, not above thirty-six or thirty-seven, but old enough to have gained discretion and to have put away the excesses of youthful spirits. His breaches of personal purity give a sad example in one of his high station to youth who are prone to chambering and wantonness. He is a shrewd and competent man of business, no doubt; active and diligent in worldly affairs. But, in his lust for land and money, he is tempted to over-grasping, and designs that reach beyond the bounds of honor and honesty. Nor does he show that public spirit, and generous regard for the people and welfare of the province, that becomes one in his exalted office.

"But what gives us most concern, is that he so often eschews the fair and wise principles of dealing with the natives, upon which his father founded our province. He turns a deaf ear to the just complaints of the Indians concerning the encroachments of settlers upon their lands, and the sale of large tracts that were never included in any treaty with the original Proprietor, and have never been purchased or ceded by the lawful owners.

"Leading Friends and other thoughtful men in our city have watched these things with troubled hearts, doubting whereunto they may grow. I fear that some Friends of influence have been carried away by undue

regard for the high name of our Founder, and the honorable estate of his successors, contrary to the simplicity of Friends, and their protest against carnal self-seeking."

This was a long speech for Friend Owen, and carried away by the impulse of grief, and righteous indignation, and high aspiration, and kindly recollections of better days under his illustrious friend the Founder, he had dropped into the rapt manner into which the Quaker preacher was apt to fall.

"But, enough!" added Father Owen, resuming his natural tones; "whatsoever dealings Thomas Penn may have with thee, thou wilt do him no injustice and wilt get none, by being on thy guard. It is strange thee thus should have been thrown in his way. It may well lead to thy advancement and higher prosperity; or it may lay temptation in thy path which I trust thee is strong enough in righteousness and honor to meet as becomes thy manhood, and, I hope that I may say without vanity, thy training."

He bowed his head for a moment or two as if in silent worship. Ben-Thee also bowed, and thus the two men, the young and the old, the man of peace and the man whose profession was arms, engaged together in that "silent pause" so impressive in the devotions of earnest Friends. It seemed like the benediction of a prophet and a parent to the young man, as he left the merchant's little back office. The noblest impulses of his nature had been stirred by this colloquy; and the free monologue of his foster-father had so lifted his thoughts into the atmosphere of high principles and purposes, that he was well toned for any assault upon them that was likely to be made.

He found Mr. Windall at the Proprietary's office promptly at eleven o'clock, and after a brief delay was presented. The utter lack of sympathy, even of courtesy, which marked the reception of a respectable visitor who was engaged with Mr. Penn when Ben-Thee en-

tered, was not a promising forecast of his own interview. But he was agreeably disappointed; for Thomas Penn, although he had just given a display of the ordinary manners which had gone far to make him unpopular, knew well how to practice the graces of courtesy and affability when they served his pleasure or advantage, and at his first greeting Ben-Thee plainly pleased him.

There was somewhat in the tall, strong, erect figure before him, with his massive head, clear, honest, blue eyes, flowing locks, clean-cut visage, and martial port, with every trace of pugnacity screened by his frank and modest bearing, that won the great man's approbation. Perhaps, unconsciously the young scout awakened in Thomas Penn a responsive touch of the sentiments that animated him.

Mr. Windall having presented Ben-Thee, immediately retired, and the Proprietary invited him to be seated. Then in a frank and engaging way he began to talk about the life of the backwoods, deftly drawing out his visitor's love and knowledge of the frontier, its pursuits and dangers, and especially its sports.

"Are you fond of hunting?"

"Yes; but one loses his zest for it, when it comes in the way of business; and to secure peltry for the market is more or less a business with me. Deer are yet too plentiful to give much excitement to their chase. But hunting bears and panthers is not without danger, and so have relish to a keen sportsman."

"I have done little at hunting the larger game," the Proprietary said, "but would like it sometime under the guidance of such an expert forester as yourself. Yet I have something of the English gentleman's love of fox-hunting. Have you ever ridden to the hounds?"

"No; I have had little leisure for that sort of sport, and must confess that I and my hunters take foxes and beavers by the ignoble method of trapping."

"Would you like to join me and my friends on my

manor in Bucks County in a ride, and see my horses and hounds? We are going out to-morrow morning and would be gratified to have you with us. By the way, I have heard that you have brought to Philadelphia some fine riding horses. I am in need of one or two, and perhaps you would be willing to part with one?"

"Yes, I am rather proud of my horses, and think them a fine breed; at least for my own purposes. But they have not been trained to the hounds, and that might be a fatal defect."

"Not at all," Mr. Penn replied. "If a horse has speed and spirit and bottom, he can soon be trained. Most horses take naturally to the sport. But I am wondering at your care for horses! Is there not small use for them in the backwoods? I have fancied there would be greater call for expert footmen than for expert horsemen there!"

"On the contrary," Ben-Thee urged, "there is great use for horses on the frontier; for hunting, for traveling, for pack-trains, for farm service, for the use of the women who ride alone or on pillions behind the men. And they are more available than appears at first thought, for the forests are kept fairly open by the Indians, who occasionally burn out the dense undergrowth. But the ranger must have good use of his legs also, for much of his work is done with them, and often with them alone."

"Are you fond of walking?" asked Mr. Penn.

"Yes, I count that the noblest exercise. Horseback riding comes next, perhaps; though canoeing is highly enjoyable, a craft in which red men are expert. But when walking, the whole realm of nature is at one's command;—the wild flower on the edge of the trail; the spider's dainty web stretched across it; the bird,—nesting in the bush, or whistling from a bare limb on a tree-top; the ants' thatched dome on the hillside—everything small and great one can note, pausing therefor, and loitering at will. Yes, I love walking best, not

only for the wholesome exercise, but for the disclosures that come therewith in the whole field of nature!"

"Doubtless," the Proprietary observed, "your views are correct, in the main. But my own training and mode of life in England has made such exercise quite unsatisfactory here. I must keep to riding for my recreation. But I see how a ranger's life would develop the muscles and harden the whole system, like the Olympic games of the ancient Greeks. Do you think our modern frontier athletes could have competed on even terms with those Olympian heroes? Absurd, that, perhaps! Do you count yourself an expert in walking? What physical effect has your wood-craft and wild life had upon you? You certainly look stalwart enough!" And Thomas Penn gazed admiringly upon Ben-Thee's finely molded physique.

"No; I do not hold myself an expert footman," Ben-Thee replied, "though I might hold my own on a long march with most foresters. But I could hardly cope with one of the pack-men I have brought with me. He is a famous land-louper; and few could equal him on a forest tramp. Indeed, on the frontier he goes by the name of Louper Jan."

"Ah! by the way—" Mr. Penn turned to a gentleman who sat at a table in another part of the office, engaged in drawing a large map of Pennsylvania. "Mr. Scull, do you remember the name of the scout who was with you in your engineering service two or three years ago, and who boasted so of his pedestrian feats?"

"Do you mean Marshall?"

"Ay! that is it! Edward Marshall is the name. Do you remember how far Marshall could walk in a day?"

"About forty miles!" Mr. Scull answered.

"Do you think that a fair stent for a vigorous woodman?"—turning to Ben-Thee.

"That would depend upon the condition of the trail," was the reply,— "whether rough or smooth, open or brushy, firm or swampy, level or mountainous. But, even

woods and weather being favorable, forty miles a day would be far more than an average man's average daily march over an ordinary forest trail. Few could do as well, except under high pressure and favoring conditions, where some might do better."

Here the venerable James Logan, then acting Governor of the Province, interrupted the interview, and called the Proprietary to him on some matter of pressing business. This gave Ben-Thee an occasion to retire. As he left the office, Mr. Penn gave him a cordial good-morning, and bade him not forget the engagement to ride to the hounds with him, and to bring with him his riding horses, which he would like to see and try. "Farewell, till then!"

Could this affable and open-hearted gentleman be the same person that Father Owen had pictured to him? Could prejudice go so far to blind the judgment of one of the wisest, kindest and best of men? Ben-Thee wondered!

CHAPTER IV

A MEETING AT PENNSBURY

William Penn came to America in October, 1682, on his "Holy Experiment" as a *bona fide* settler. He purposed to make Pennsylvania his home, to unite his life and destiny with the colony, and have his family grow up with it.

He chose for his home-manor a beautiful site in the county of Bucks (one of Penn's three original counties), some miles distant from Philadelphia, and planned his house on the Delaware River bank. He called the place "Pennsbury," and began at once to give it the features of an English seat.

Before his second visit to Pennsylvania, he sent on gardeners and mechanics to carry out his plans, and his letters to his agents in Philadelphia give full and interesting directions covering details as to the building, the furniture, the garden and grounds, and landscape effects. These clearly reveal that he was infected with that enthusiasm for home-making which so many persons have felt in planning and erecting their own houses, and laying out lawn and orchard, walks and drive, and planting shrubs and trees.

To many of the colonists this seemed an untoward fancy, as they thought the Proprietary should have made his permanent residence in town, thus sharing more intimately the fortunes of his associates. But the power of old ideas and habits was strong upon him. His love of rural life was almost a passion. So the alluring dream of "my pleasure, poor Pennsbury," as he called it, went on. For, after all, it was little more than a dream. As one of his letters to his secretary and ad-

jutant James Logan shows, his wife and daughter Letitia, had an invincible dislike to colonial life, and could not be induced to make Pennsylvania their permanent home. Indeed, all Penn's children appear to have shared this feeling.

So it befell that Pennsbury was practically abandoned as the Proprietary "palace." It ceased to be a country home for the Penns, and in the days of Thomas Penn, was held only as a sort of hunting lodge, his residence being in the "Governor's House" in town. But there he kept his horses and hounds; and there appears to have been the residence of his "occasional companion," Lady Jenks. And there, on the morning after his interview with Ben-Thee, the two men again met.

Ben-Thee rode his big bay mare "Nelly," and Arthur Burbeck came with him on the spirited sorrel horse "Major," that had been Mr. Oster's mount on the journey from the Cumberland Valley. His military accouterments, except his hunting-knife, Ben-Thee had laid aside. For his broad-brimmed hat he had substituted a rimless riding cap of beaver-fur, as more fitting for the sport in hand. He was a little more carefully dressed than usual; a silk tie was knotted in the broad, loose collar of his hunting-shirt, and his leggins were new, and fringed and ornamented, the gift of an Indian friend, as were his high, beaded moccasins.

As he rode up to the entrance with Arthur, Thomas Penn was already in the saddle. A small pack of hounds, bred from imported English animals brought over by his oldest brother, William, were held in leash by two keepers and were keen for the day's hunt. Penn himself wore an English riding-suit of the period, and several of the gentlemen who were wont to share his sports and revels were grouped around him, similarly clad.

In the midst of the greetings and presentations, a lady walked down the stone steps of the handsome porch, and joined the party. She was robed in a

woman's riding-habit then fashionable—a beaver hat in the style of a gentleman's top-hat, but lower, around which was looped a veil with floating ends; a short coat and waist-coat, and the long riding-skirt intended to fall over the feet, and which, as she walked, she held up gracefully around her body. It was the waist and head-covering of this habit that had given this lady the reputation among colonists ignorant of the fashions, of "riding about in men's clothes."

"My friend, Lady Jenks,—Mr. Owen!" was Thomas Penn's brief introduction. Ben-Thee was not a little surprised to see this handsome and distinguished looking woman in the hunting party, and apparently at home in the house, and made his obeisance with some confusion, but with due deference.

"Lady Jenks would like to try your sorrel horse, Major, Mr. Owen. It is for her use that I particularly designed him, if he suits. Have you any objection to her mounting him for part of the chase?"

"None at all. I shall esteem it an honor," was the courteous reply. "But I fear the lady may find him somewhat unmanageable. He has been trained for the ruder sex, and has never been backed by woman. But,"—turning to the lady—"if thee ventures to try him, thee is welcome."

He dismounted, and bidding Arthur take charge of Nelly, stood by Major until the lady's saddle was transferred from her own mount to the horse's back. Meanwhile Lady Jenks exchanged pleasant greetings with Ben-Thee, whose unusual hunting-dress and general appearance interested her. She had a kind word for Arthur Burbeck, who had echoed Ben-Thee's anxiety about Major's behavior.

"Do not fear for me!" she exclaimed with a bright smile. "I shall ride him easily, I dare say!"

"Sure, my ledy!" Arthur replied. "Yet they say one had better not whistle 'til he is out of the woods; though troth, it's jist gettin' intil the woods we are! If

Major disappoints ye, he'll well deserve a batein', which I believe he's niver yet had; for Mr. Ben is aye dingin' it intil us that a marciful man is marciful to his bastes. But I'll trust Major! He's sich a beauty himsel' that he ought to have due respect for beauty whan he sees it. Mind that, now, Major! Remember that beauty is as beauty does; an' if you disgrace your trainin' the daay, ye'll give us all a shamed face. Go softly now, laddie, for ye're to carry fair freight!"

"Gramercy, good man! I did not know you grew courtiers in the backwoods! Your tongue savors of Scotland; but your blarneying words betray the Irishman!" A slight burr in her own speech, softened by English usage, bespoke a Scotch descent. "I'm ready to mount now!" she added, turning to Ben-Thee.

"Aye," interjected Arthur who had the freedom of a privileged employé and companion, "a bonnie bride is soon busket! An' that's both Scotch and Irish, my lady! — as I am mysel'!"

The blood mounted to the lady's cheeks, though seemingly she was not displeased at the compliment, which came with a heartiness that marked it as genuine. Perhaps the proverb and the dialect together had awakened associations of bright and better days! She raised a dainty foot which Ben-Thee took upon his hand (in lieu of an upping-block), and lifted her easily into her seat. Then he deftly adjusted her riding-skirt and placed the reins in her hand.

Lady Jenks beamed upon him a glance that showed her an adept in the arts of coquetry. Certainly, Arthur's undisguised compliment was merited by beauty, grace and high accomplishments, which would have won applause in any society.

Thomas Penn now approached, and saying that they were about to set out, asked Ben-Thee to accompany Lady Jenks for part of the course, until she had got the new horse well in hand, as Major would be apt to go more quietly with his old companion by his side. He

sounded a few notes on the horn swung over his shoulder, and away went the merry company pell-mell, horses and hounds, men and lady.

Over the lady and her new mount there need have been no anxiety, for her mastery of Major was complete from the start; and he, as if conscious of the fair burthen that he carried, bore himself with due courtesy as well as spirit. Are not horses capable of such a sentiment as courtesy? Something like it surely we see in the forbearance and tenderness so often shown by family dogs towards very young children. And horses have close rank to dogs.

Noting how things went, Ben-Thee expressed his satisfaction, and congratulated the lady on her good horsemanship. "I am well used to such exercise," was the reply. "But my credit is less with an animal to ride of such gait and spirit as your Major. He is no backwoods bumpkin, but a blooded courtier of the finest breed! Hey, good fellow?" She stooped and patted the shining coat of Major's neck.

Now the horn sounded a merry mot, the riders' view halloo rose cheerily, and the hounds gave tongue. Look! Away in the open, perched on a big fallen oak-trunk, was Reynard the fox, looking back at the coming cavalcade. Did he really enjoy the excitement, as foxes are said to do? Was his curiosity so strongly stimulated, that he ventured the risk of capture, to indulge it? Had heredity not yet wrought in this creature of the wild the sense that the herd of whooping, baying, horn-blowing animals, so strange in a New World forest, meant harm to him? Or, was he simply taking the measure of the coming event, and devising some foxy stratagem to thwart the designs against him?

His cogitations and observations, whatever they may have been, were soon done. He was off with a mighty bound into a bosky clump, and away and away through the wood. Away, too, leaped the hounds, away galloped the horsemen, and away flew Lady Jenks, putting Major

to his highest speed.

"A reckless rider!" muttered Ben-Thee, whose mare could not vie with Major in fleetness. He gradually dropped behind in the chase. Indeed, he was not a keen sportsman after that kind of game, though he enjoyed the wild run a-horseback. "But,"—so ran his thoughts—"is this a manly sport?—a dozen men and horses and as many hounds all hard bent after the life of one fox? For that matter, are any sports manly that have for their end simply the harrying of helpless animals, and whose pleasure-giving quality rests solely on the pains of the inferior creatures?"

Thus meditating, he relaxed his horse's pace. The sound of the chase died away in the distance. He followed leisurely, and ere long the faint notes of a French horn came to him through the sunny open, subdued by distance and intervening objects. A pleasant sound! Yet there is a strain of sadness therein as it floats in from afar. It stirs up that seemingly contradictory mixture of sentiment, a pleasure tinged with pain, which makes the emotion more exquisite; as one mingles the sweet of a confection with bitter or acid elements, as a foil which brings it out more vividly. Sorrow always hurts; sadness is a compound emotion, a pleasant pain.

Ere long, Thomas Penn appeared, and seeing Ben-Thee, as he stood on a swelling knoll in the full sunlight, rode toward him.

"You are not a keen sportsman, I fear?" he remarked. "At least, you were not in at the death."

"No, I confess I lack enthusiasm in pursuit of such small game; although I feel and appreciate the influence of the society and the surroundings, and the gallop in the open air, which, with its ancient traditions and associations, are perhaps the chief elements of pleasure in fox-hunting. But was thee in at the death? Thee does not carry the brush, I see."

"The prize went to the lady; thanks to your superb nag, as well as her fine riding. But we are well met

here. I have a matter for your private ear, which I wish to impart. Let us jog on together, and leave the others to follow; or if they so choose, to beat up another fox, as I believe they have planned, for there is no lack of such game on the manor."

CHAPTER V

THE FOX TURNS HUNTER AND MISSES THE GAME

"You must know," the Proprietary began, "that my father adopted the principle that, in settling up our province, no lands bestowed upon him by our sovereign should be conveyed to purchasers without first having been bought from the Indians, and their right thereto thus extinguished. In accordance with this policy, several treaties were made and duly signed by both parties. Among these was one made in 1686 between William Penn and the chiefs of the Delawares, which granted or confirmed the titles to certain lands lying to the north and west of Philadelphia. About this some misunderstanding has arisen which I deem important to have settled.

"In the original deed of 1686 the boundaries of the tract in question were described in general terms as to be extended from the Neshaminy Creek back into the woods as far as a man can go in one day and a half, and thence in a line to the Delaware River.

"Now, in carrying out this agreement it is plain that the extent of lands thus granted must depend largely upon the physical ability of the person or persons employed to walk the purchase. A day and a half walk of an old and ailing man would be a far different matter from that of a strong and active one. And as between two men of equal vigor, the results would vary much, according to their experience and expertness as footmen. The space covered by a rapid and seasoned forester, thoroughly used to tramping the woods, would be considerably greater.

"You will therefore see that it is highly to my in-

terest that when the boundaries of the aforesaid treaty come to be marked out, in the manner agreed upon, the person or persons appointed to walk the day-and-a-half determining line, should be men who can make the very best record possible as footmen.

“To come now at once to the point. It has occurred to me that you or one of your companions would be a most available person for my interests. Will you consent to act for me in walking the purchase? I have fixed as the honorarium for such service 500 acres of the best land in the purchase or elsewhere. What say you?”

As Thomas Penn gradually developed his scheme, Ben-Thee's temper began to wax warmer and warmer. He recalled the interview of the day before, and its intent and bearings now began to appear. It flashed upon his mind that the whole affair had been planned to trap him into a false position. Yet it had been done so artfully, one remark leading to another with such deftly cloaked simplicity, that he had not suspected the real trend thereof. Now he saw! All the time, he was being sounded, pumped, weighed by Thomas Penn! And his conclusion was—this proposal! What could the Proprietary have seen in him to encourage such an estimate of his character? His cheeks burned at the thought of it!

He was fairly well acquainted with the ideas and modes of speech and public action of the Indians, and at once inferred what would be their view of the situation. While the Proprietary was slowly unfolding his plan and approaching the final question, Ben-Thee had already made up his mind that the Penns were hatching a vast fraud by putting an unfair construction upon “the Walking Purchase Treaty.”

He was grieved that such a wrong should be designed. He was indignant that he should have been so far misjudged by Thomas Penn as to suppose that he, Ben-Thee, could become a willing tool in his hands to carry out the fraud. Yet as the Proprietary went on, he had time

to subdue his resentment so far as to answer with coolness and some deliberation, though his voice trembled with the intensity of his emotion and suppressed anger.

"Thomas Penn, thee has mistaken thy man! My vocation as forest ranger carries no function of a common hireling pedestrian, such as thee calls for. But beyond that, which is a small matter of offense, thee has asked me to do what no just and honorable man ought to ask or accept."

There was a deep pause. The pleasant smile that had played about the Proprietary's lips and eyes, suddenly darkened into a frown. His face flushed with anger. "Stop!" he cried. "You are insulting! What have I said that could justify such strong words? Beware! You are making a serious charge. I have the power — do not tempt me to assert it!"

"I fear neither thee, nor thy friends. No power can long prevail against the truth. Listen!" And there was that of commanding authority in Ben-Thee's tone and bearing that compelled even the proud Proprietary to attend. "Thee asks what thee has done. I will tell thee. The treaty known as the Walking Purchase calls for a boundary line to be measured by a day-and-a-half's-walk. I know the figurative language of the Indians, and doubtless thee is not ignorant. They do not yet understand our exact engineering methods and terms. They speak in figures drawn from their daily life and experience. Yet in forms well understood among them — almost as well understood as our alphabet or multiplication table, or foot-rule — they convey facts and ideas with substantial correctness.

"'A day's walk,' 'as far as a man can go in a day,' are phrases that to an Indian have a significance almost as fixed and definite as 'a mile' or 'ten miles' or 'twenty miles' to us. It means an ordinary average man's ordinary average walk during an ordinary average day of ordinary travel. So they all have understood it.

"What does thee propose? To put on the trail a

seasoned and expert walker. To spur him by a large reward to his utmost exertion. To walk, perhaps to run, or half-run the whole course under the highest stimulus, and thus cover a distance probably twice as great as that of an ordinary traveling gait. Was that the intention of thy father, William Penn? Was that the intention of the chiefs who signed the Walking Purchase Treaty? No, no! Thy plan, disguise it as thee may, is unfair, unjust, fraudulent, and so will be held by every honest native and every honest white man.

“Has thee thought of what is like to follow should thy scheme succeed? When the Indians awake to the knowledge of how they have been deceived and defrauded — as they surely will! — with the sense of injustice and wrong burning hot within them, what will they do? Thee knows well! The horrors of an Indian war will break out upon this province. The innocent settlers who have bought and settled ignorantly the fraudulently gotten and sold lands; the helpless women and children on the frontier; even they who share in the Indian’s righteous indignation at the wrong done them, will suffer the chief brunt and burden of aroused savage wrath and cruelty; and men like me will be called upon to breast and beat back the storm, in order to save them from the vengeance which thee and thy partners in the fraud, alone should bear!”

From time to time the Proprietary shifted uneasily in his saddle — for both men had halted and sat their horses during the colloquy — and tried to interrupt the scout. At last he broke forth in an oath and ejaculation of fierce anger and dismay.

“What! Thee does not believe me?” retorted Ben-Thee. “Thee counts all this the spawn of an idle and heated imagination? Nay; it is because thee will not believe! The love of gain, the lust for lands have blinded thee. But, remember! I have warned thee. I reject thy offer with scorn. And were I to follow the impulse of my just anger, I would smite thee to the

earth for the insult thee has offered and the wrong thee proposes." He touched Nelly with his riding whip and galloped toward Pennsbury.

Thomas Penn sat, motionless as an equestrian statue, his horse reined up, on the elevated spot where this interview had occurred. Had a bomb burst at his side, he could not have been more astonished. So sudden, so wholly unexpected had been this outburst of rebuke and denunciation that he was for the moment powerless to think or act. What! This man whom he had hoped to wield as a puppet in his hand, had turned out a prophet of denunciatory wrath! He, the Proprietary and Governor-in-chief of Pennsylvania, the son and heir of William Penn, had been scorned like a beggar, threatened like a schoolboy! This scout, this wildwood ranger, fresh from the mountains and backwoods of his own province, had denounced him, dared him, defied him! This nobody!

Astonishment, anger, wounded pride, revenge, raged within him. He flung his clenched fist into the air, and shook it at Ben-Thee's fast retreating form. He would follow him! He would crush him! He dashed down the slope in pursuit.

Then Conscience appeared, silently thrust up through this swirl of passions. "Ought I to do this thing? Is the man right?"

Then came Fear in the wake of Conscience; an undefined dread, a — something, that stirred within him a sense of the judgment of his fellows, of Philadelphia, of England, of the King, of the Indians! Could there be aught of truth in that awful prediction of savage wrath and revenge? It might be, judged by his own feelings toward that forester! Ah, if he could smite him! In the hot returning surge of that thought he spurred on his horse again.

Then came Avarice, creeping up amidst the chaos of contending emotions, throttling this, urging on that; soothing one, stimulating another. In the effort to grasp

more, might he not indeed lose all? Again he reined up his horse. What, will Avarice, his evil genius, come in now to serve him as a friend?

He halted. Ben-Thee had disappeared around a dense clump of projecting woods. In the opposite direction Penn heard the well-known sounds of the chase—the yelping of hounds, the tantar-a-a of the bugle, the view halloo of the huntsmen, the thud of galloping horse-hoofs over the virgin turf. Another fox had been raised.

The whole cavalcade swept by, hounds and huntsmen. Lady Jenks caught sight of him, there, upon the knoll, motionless. “Why does he not join the chase?” she wondered. She checked her horse’s speed, and signaled to him to come on.

Penn made no sign. She understood him well enough to know that something had greatly disturbed him. Something serious it must be, to hold him thus unmoved in the face of hounds in full cry. She turned her horse’s head toward the knoll where the Proprietary stood. His flushed face, his dark and scowling brow, his distraught manner, revealed his agitated spirit and aroused temper.

“What has happened?” she asked. Then ere her query was answered, she remembered that when she had seen him last, he had been riding with Ben-Thee. Her woman’s telepathic instinct at once associated the Proprietary’s mood with the scout, and his absence seemed to give the key thereto.

“Where is Ben-Thee?”

“We have quarreled; he is gone! Curse him!” The reply was snapped out fiercely.

“Quarreled! About what, may I ask?”

“Not now! He has insulted me; defied me! I will—”

“Come! Do nothing rashly. I think I can guess. It is something about that Indian Walk. I have never favored your scheme, as you know, fearing it would

breed trouble. But I will stand by you now! Come; let us join the chase. You must not let this quarrel get wind. It will stir up no end of gossip. I will try to hush it up. Come, let us away at once. We can pretend interest, even if you have no heart in the chase. Let us smooth the quarrel over — keep it from guests and men.”

She laid her hand upon the bridle rein of Penn's horse, and put her own steed in motion. And so she constrained him. Into a walk — into a gentle trot — into a quick canter — into a rattling gallop — the two rode away; down the slope, across a wide mead strewn with wild flowers, over a rippling creek, into an open wood where the hunters had come to a halt. The fox had taken to earth. A deep den it was, by all tokens, the huntsmen thought. No one could tell how far into the bulging bank it might run.

“Heigh, ho!” cried Lady Jenks merrily, and sounded a recall on her own bugle. “Let the sly fellow have his liberty. The hunt is up for the day. Luncheon awaits us at Pennsbury. Come away!”

“So be it!” said Thomas Penn. “The lady's will is law.”

He had gained control of himself by this time, and although his features were anything but clear, his gloom and silence were credited by some, to disappointment at the escape of the fox and the breaking up of the hunt; by others, to “one of Penn's moody turns.” Lady Jenks kept close to him during the homeward ride, and deftly fenced against all questions and remarks that threatened to betray the Proprietary's misadventure; thrusting and parrying with such inimitable skill, that by the time they had come to the manor-house, Penn had regained full command of himself.

As the lady dismounted at Pennsbury, she turned a smiling visage toward Arthur Burbeck, who was at her side to receive Major from her hands.

“Tell your master — I beg pardon, your *friend*,” said

the lady, and there was a delicate stab in the change of titles which Arthur was shrewd enough to note, and quickly interposed:

“Both, my lady; both master and friend; and rarely good in ayther relation!”

“Aye; tell him that his horse Major is as noble and courteous and serviceable an animal as one could wish himself or any other person to be, as man. And say that I have thanked you for his use to-day, on trial of his fitness for purchase as a hunter. The scout has just received word of pressing affairs that have compelled him to ride home directly, and I am to give you a message to join him at your convenience.” Escorted by the Proprietary she led the way into the house, followed by the hunting guests.

Arthur stroked Major's neck while the saddles were being changed, keeping up meanwhile a monologue of petting phrases. “Sure, my gallant sorrel, there's a clock within me that strikes the hour o' luncheon, and after your morning ride and keen gallop with the hounds, you must be ready for your oats. But whist, laddie, you must een wait a wee! For dinner must aye give way to duty, says I; though, faith, I count dinner a sort o' duty, too!—and one that folk are not often backward in comin' forard til! But jist now we'll let the dinner wait, an' follow your master at wanst.”

The manner of Lady Jenks had seemed hearty enough, with no outward sign of ruffled temper, or change of attitude since the early morning. Her dissembling had been flawless. Yet to Arthur's sensitive nature there was an indefinable something that showed that the personal atmosphere had somehow changed. He could not see, but he could feel it. He had that delicate antennal faculty which all insects, many men, and most women possess, but which is more highly developed in some than in others. Therefore he exchanged good-by greetings with servants and keepers, and turned into the river road to Philadelphia. He hoped that Ben-

They would await him at the inn just beyond the manor, where they had spent the night, having ridden out the evening before, in order to report fresh and early at the hunt.

And so he found it. Ben-Thee had stopped to bait his horse and order a snack for himself. Nelly and Major exchanged friendly greeting-whinnies, and having rubbed down and cared for the horses, Arthur joined the scout in the inn.

As he sipped his beer and attacked the good remainder of a venison pie, he cast many a sly but searching glance at Ben-Thee, whose looks, as well as his unwonted silence, showed that something had gone wrong.

"I got the message you left for me with Lady Jenks," at last he said, "and so foll'ed you at wanst. I hope that's nothin' sayrious —"

"What is that?" cried Ben-Thee, aroused from his reverie. "My message to Lady Jenks, did thee say? I do not understand. I left no message with the lady; indeed did not see her, before leaving!"

"No message! Not see her? Whoo! Then for sure she must 'a vended a whopper a-purpose to desave me! For she telled me you had resaved news of some pressing matters, and left word that I was to join you."

"There's not a word of truth in it!" exclaimed Ben-Thee. "I am surprised that such a lady would descend to such false statements."

"Sich a lady, indade!" Arthur at last remarked. "I would not wush to think or say ill of her or anny one; for it's always well to be ceevil, as the old woman said whan she curtsied to the devil. But, an all I've h'ard from sarvants and kapers the daay be true, the lady is no better nor she should be."

"Take care, Arthur!" said Ben-Thee sharply, "a woman's reputation is her fairest treasure; and once the breath of slander blows upon it, it is hard to right the wrong done. The bearing and speech of Lady Jenks showed her to be a person of culture and breeding."

“ True enough ! ” Arthur rejoined ; “ an’ aven the de’il is niver so black as he’s painted ; let alone a fair an’ erring woman. An’ yit, I dread it’s all true they telled me. Who should know if not thim ? It’s a marriage over the broomstick, I doubt. The lady is not his wife, though she lives with him as sich. You obsarved, yourself, that he did not greet her with his own name. She is Lady Jenks to the public, not Lady Penn, whatever she may be in private. Though the fellow is manly enough they say, to acknowledge and provide for his by-blow of a son by her, whom I saw in the sarvants’ charge and talked wi’ him,— an’ a fine young lad he is, at that, wi’ more in him, I venture, nor iver his father was or will be ! ”

Ben-Thee was more than surprised, he was shocked by this revelation. He had not suspected anything unusual in the presence and demeanor of Lady Jenks, though for a moment he had wondered at her appearing among them. That she was a friend (as she had been introduced), a kinswoman, a cousin perhaps, at all events a person whose propriety was certainly beyond challenge, he had at once accepted.

But Arthur he knew to be a man of careful and trustworthy habits, clear-headed and observant, not easily deceived, not given to tale-bearing, and though companionable and inclined to be convivial, warm-hearted and chivalrous toward women. Ben-Thee therefore, though most unwillingly, gave credence to his report.

He had received the lady in good faith as his host had introduced her, as her supposed rank and character might warrant, and as her manner fully justified. The fact that he had thus been deceived, viewed from the standpoint of one used to the simple life and unsullied morals of his puritan and Quaker training, added fuel to his indignation against the Proprietary.

He concluded to make a confidant of Arthur, and as they quietly rode toward Philadelphia, told him of Thomas Penn’s proposition and how he had treated it.

Arthur gave his cordial sympathy, and confirmed, by his riper judgment and wider experience, his view of the wrong and danger of the Penn policies.

"It is a'most past belafe," he said, "that a son of William Penn would go so far astray from the principles and practice of his honored sire. The whole Penn tribe, by all accounts, act more like the spawn of dissolute English gintry, whose ways they ape, nor like the sons of a righteous man and an honest Quaker.

"As to Lady Jenks — well, I wud niver 'a' thought it from her manners an' conversation, which are those of a born ledy. Howiver she foregathered wi' Thomas Penn is a mystery to me! Annyhow, it's my opeenion that the gray mare's the better horse. But jist try, Mr. Ben, to forgit the whole pedojerie! An' go ye on your own blameless way, an' l'ave one de'il to ding another. Though, poor ledy, I dar be sworn she has been more sinned agin nor sinning. An' let us both thank the Good Bein' that we are not consumed wi' the lust o' riches, which, true enough, is the root of all avil."

CHAPTER VI

REMINISCENCES, A RESCUE, AND A ROSE IN BEN-THEE'S PATH

After his Pennsbury experience, Ben-Thee was agitated and restless. In his craving for sympathy he found his way to Father Owen's office, but he was not in. He walked up to his house which, unlike many merchants of the period, he kept wholly separate from his store-rooms. Only Dorothy was at home, Mother Lydia, with Phoebe and Grace having gone to "Mrs. Fishbourne's Ladies' Store" on the wharf back of her house at Water and Walnut Streets, then well within the fashionable shopping-quarter.

Dorothy received him with the old-time sisterly warmth, though checked still by the unwonted reserve which he had noted at the first meeting, and which had sorely puzzled him. Yet, just as in the days when they were child-comrades, he felt drawn to her with that freedom and fullness of sympathy which had always led him to open his heart to her rather than to anyone else. Dorothy had ever been the first and chief repository of his boy vexations and troubles. His plans, his pleasures, his triumphs, in whatever pursuits, he had shared first with her. And always he had found in her just what he sought—a full response of sympathy; pity for his petty griefs, gladness in his equally petty pleasures; that is, if one may lawfully think of any child-affairs as "petty." How vast some of them had seemed to him; how almost overwhelming in their burden!

He laughed now, and wondered, too, recalling it all as the two walked together through the spacious garden and grounds, and indulged in delightful reminiscences of

dear bygone days. "Petty affairs! aye, small enough they seem now, but they filled all our world then," quoth Ben-Thee. "Does thee remember, Dorothy, the spring days — just such as this has been — when we together gathered the first wild flowers of the valley, and came back home with chubby hands full of blue violets and spring beauties and wild columbine, and arbutus from the mountain-side?"

"Indeed, yes!" the maid replied. "And does thee remember the warmer days when the laurels bloomed on the edge of the mountain, and we climbed thither, and made wreaths, and thee crowned me as thy 'sister queen'?"

"Aye," said Ben-Thee, "and when thee took the wreath off thine own head and put it on mine, and said, 'Nay; it is the man that must wear the laurel crown!' For Father Owen had been reading to us the apostle Paul's use of the victors' crowns in the Greek games, and telling us about the Olympian contests. And I affirmed that truly I would be thy hero, and fight for thee if bears or Indians should come!"

"Tut, tut!" said Dorothy. "Does thee keep in thy memory such foolish trifles as these?" But her face glowed with pleasure, for all that, and her eyes grew soft and moist.

"Indeed, I mind it all!" Ben-Thee replied. "And how thee cried out that thee would not have it! — for it was not right to fight, and thee would not have me put in peril for thy sake! And just then a rabbit ran out of its hole with a great rustle and rattle of loose stones, and thee cried in alarm, 'The bears and Indians are coming now!' and seized my hand and pulled me down the mountain slope, and we both raced home hand in hand." How heartily they laughed at that episode! Ben-Thee ran on:

"Does thee mind the days when the Blue Mountains were a mass of color from base to dome, glowing against the early October sky in varied autumnal hues?"

"How beautiful they were!" exclaimed Dorothy. "I often long to see them once more! Philadelphia has some splendid hills nearby, and its forest foliage is fair to look upon — but, oh! my heart goes out to the mountains of dear Cumberland!"

"And the nutting days!" Ben-Thee continued. "After the first October frosts, does thee mind how we took bag and basket, and away to the big trees in the grove to gather chestnuts? How pretty they were as they lay in their smooth open burrs, the deep brown nuts just peeping out of their yellowish, velvety nest; or lying around on the grass, their glossy brown shells shining in the sun."

So the talk ran on, gradually mounting from early rural days to the present and the town. Thus, at last, in the glow of confidence aroused by these remembrances, Ben-Thee told Dorothy, as he had always done when a boy, the matter that then most concerned him — the affair at Pennsbury, omitting only the advent of Lady Jenks. He listened eagerly to her voice lovingly consoling him over the offered indignity. He saw the flash of her gray-brown eyes and the flush of pride on her cheeks, as she listened to his rejection of the Proprietary's offer and bribe! How her form straightened up, — that form so petite! — and seemed to grow visibly before him under the stimulus of her admiration and approval!

Ah! That delicious emotion which thrills the soul at hearing a noble achievement wrought by one we love! And how fine and sweet is the feeling in one's breast when a worthy deed is thus rewarded! This is the best reward, next to approval of one's own breast. And in woman's power it lies, most of all, to mete out such reward, and make men's souls nobler, truer, stronger for all good ways.

In the exaltation of the moment and the rapture of Dorothy's commendation, Ben-Thee could scarce refrain from taking her in his arms as in the old days of which they had been talking. Yet, there was that in the

maiden's manner which restrained him. He was puzzled more than ever. Surely, here was no lack of sisterly interest and sympathy and fondness! And as for himself, he had not changed. No, *he* had not changed — a brother still and always! But Dorothy? — A passing whim, perhaps! He had heard that maidens were liable to such. It would clear up, by and by!

Now returned the absent ladies, and the talk was all of the Fair so soon to open. Would not Ben-Thee await it? It seemed, perforce, he must, for the load of goods for the interior stores, which he had hoped to bear on his pack-horses from Philadelphia merchants, was slow in making up. Ere the party broke up (he had waited for the mid-day meal), he promised to return in the evening.

Early in the afternoon an errand that required the aid of the negro Cato brought Ben-Thee to the neighborhood of the London Coffee-house at the corner of Walnut and Front Streets. A crowd of men had gathered there at a slave auction, in response to an advertisement for the sale of a shipment of negroes from the Barbados. A large packing-box set in front of the tavern served at once as a platform for the auctioneer and an upping-block from which the negroes one after another could step upon a hogshead, where their physical qualities could be displayed to purchasers.

A group of negroes of both sexes and sundry ages, huddled together at one side, presented a pitiful spectacle to one who, like Ben-Thee, was not hardened to such scenes, and whose feelings and principles were alike opposed to traffic in human beings. But little of that sentimental view of the situation appeared in those present. It seemed like an ordinary business affair, as the sale of horses and cattle. Even the city negroes, drawn thither by curiosity, if they felt resentment or pity at the treatment of their fellows, showed no signs thereof in their bearing.

The auction was just beginning. Two men and a

half-grown boy had been sold, commanding high prices after lively bidding; for the need of labor in the colony was great and pressing. The auctioneer next announced, reading from the advertisement, "a likely breeding woman with her two-year-old boy."

A comely young matron loosely and lightly but neatly clad in linsey-woolsey, mounted the cask, holding her little child by the hand. Several men stepped forward to make closer inspection, feeling the limbs to test the firmness and fullness of the muscles. The woman cast anxious glances from one to another of her inspectors as though to penetrate their character and calling, and thus catch some glimpse of her impending fate.

A lull in the auctioneer's vending calls, to answer questions of the several buyers, was broken by a loud cry from the fringe of the crowd. It was a strange, half-savage shout. The alarmed company turned toward the point whence the sound had come and saw Cato, Ben-Thee's hired servant, rushing like a madman through the crowd, elbowing men to right and left as he made toward the auction-stand. The woman upon the cask, startled, like others, looked at the excited man coming toward her, and with a shrill scream leaped to the ground.

"It is my wife!" shouted Cato to bystanders who tried to hold him off. "It is my wife and child!"

He shook his opposers from him, and pushed on toward the woman, frantically making her way to him. In a moment they had met. He clasped her in his arms and covered her face with kisses, while both sobbed aloud, in a passionate flood of tears. The child, held to his place by the auctioneer, was weeping violently.

A great silence fell upon the crowd. Men were awed by the scene. Some were in tears. Some muttered curses against a system from which such happenings could spring. Then, out of the silence, the voice of Ben-Thee, who had pushed to the front, trembling with emotion but clear and strong, was heard.

"Gentlemen, this man was bought by me in the interior of the province, and at once freed, though I keep him on wages as a servant. He is a trusty and faithful man. I will buy his wife and child and free them also, that they may live together, if thee all will permit the public offer to be withdrawn that I may purchase at private sale."

"Yes, yes! Permit, permit!" rose in a volley of voices from the crowd, while men wiped their eyes and swung their hats, mingling cheers with their tears. Meanwhile, Cato and his wife threw themselves on their knees, and clasping Ben-Thee's legs, poured out thanks and blessings.

Even the auctioneer was affected, as indeed were the merchants for whom he acted. But the commercial spirit, for the moment swept away by the rush of sentiment, was soon recovered, and the cool voice of one of the slave-dealers remarked:

"I do not know this gentleman. He is a stranger here. What guarantee can we have that he can and will fulfill his promise?"

"Does thee know Kersey Owen?" Ben-Thee asked, "And will he be acceptable guarantee?"

"None better, sir!"

"Come then with me to his store-room, which is hardby, and thee shall have thy money at once. Name thy price!"

It was not an uncanny stroke of business, as the event proved, to put the question then and there. "Good!" cried a man from the ring in front of the auction box. "And see that it be a fair one! We will tolerate no unjust dealing with such a generous man as this."

A fair price was named and accepted; and Cato, proudly bearing his boy in his arms with his wife at his side, accompanied the merchant and Ben-Thee to Friend Owen's store, where the price was paid. Ere the sun had set legal papers of emancipation were made out, and the happy pair were lodged at the inn, until such time as

they would return with their generous master to the Cumberland Valley.

The moon had risen over the Jersey bluffs, and was flooding with light the broad bosom of the Delaware, when Ben-Thee reached the Owen home. The day had been unusually warm, and for the first time that spring the family had gathered upon the covered porch before the door and beneath the balcony, to enjoy the soft evening air. Their friends, Angus Reagan and his daughter Rhoda, had joined them on the porch for a neighborly visit.

The affair of the slave auction had already been discussed; and as generosity is a sort of heroism with well-organized folk, Ben-Thee was received with unusual warmth.

"I have heard of your kindly deed," said Mr. Reagan, as Ben-Thee was introduced, "and commend your humanity. I trust it will not be abused by the recipients of your bounty."

"No fear of that, if the wife is at all like Cato."

"My dearest friend Rhoda Reagan — our brother Benjamin!"

It was Dorothy who thus presented him to Rhoda. The young woman, who had risen at his coming, advanced into the full light of the moon and offered her hand. A warm hand it was, and as it lay in his for the moment the contact was so vital and soft that it left a pleasant sensation, the like of which he had not felt before. Is there indeed a species of palmistry that determines at times the lines of destiny by the touch of palm to palm?

"May I venture to add my hearty approval of your humane act?" said Rhoda.

That voice! How sweet it sounded in his ears! So low, so musical, so perfectly modulated, with just a trace of the ancestral Scotch burr therein! It seemed to ring up ghosts of dearest fancies long entombed in the cells of memory. It was not like Dorothy's — no, not at all!

Yet it made him think of her; and of those childhood days which they had so lately revived together. Whatever the secret of its quality, it stirred his heart and drew it out as never voice had done before, since his mother had soothed his boyish ills and sung to him the Psalms. Touch and voice alike had strangely moved him, as he stood looking into that fair face bathed in the moonlight.

His answer came slowly. "Thee must not make too much of such an act. I take no credit for it, for I could not have done otherwise. How could I have left my servant in such sore stress without relieving him in the only way possible? Could I have left his wife and child to be sold and separated far from him? Could he have wrought willing service for me thereafter? No, no! my action was a simple and necessary one."

"It well becomes your modesty to say as much," Rhoda replied. "Yet I dare say you did not reason the case so coolly as that, but acted upon the first kind impulse of your heart." She stepped to her seat in the shaded background, leaving Ben-Thee standing in the full moonlight looking at her.

"Thee is quite right, Rhoda," said Mother Lydia. "Our Benjamin has done worthily, as we all agree. Yet we must not take the blush off a good deed by undue praise. It is enough to know that the Master of us all hath said, 'Well done!' But what will thee do with the woman and child, Benjamin? Thee has some plan, I am sure."

"That is easily settled. Thee knows that I now have a farm and cabin in the valley. It is a sort of bachelor's hall; for Cato has a man's awkwardness in housekeeping, though a most faithful creature. With his wife we will get on better, I doubt not; for in his talks about her — of which the poor fellow never tired — he always spoke of her as used to house service in the Barbados and handy therein. I will build them a cabin for their own quarters, where they will be contented and happy; and they will care for my house when I am absent, which is

pretty often, and make me more comfortable when I am at home. I count it rare good fortune that we happened to stop at the slave auction just when we did."

"Nothing *happens*—to a child of Heaven, Benjamin!" said Mother Lydia. "Let us thank Him whose providential ordering set both thee and Cato at the right place in the right time! Has thee found a name for the woman?"

"Name? Oh, yes!" said Ben-Thee laughing. "She has one already, and a grand one—Cleopatra. Though Cato clips it to 'Cleo,' I have noticed."

"Cato and Cleopatra!—philosopher and queen!" said Rhoda, joining in the laughter. "You will not lack for wisdom and sobriety as well as royal grace in your back-woods cabin; at least, if there's anything in a name."

"Indeed," quoth Mother Lydia, "I hope he may have them both in good time, in a more substantial form than his servants' names!"

It was a pleasant remark, and the smiling matron who made it from a heart overflowing with love and goodness, had no one maiden in mind as she spoke of the ideal blessing that might come some day to her foster-son's cabin. Yet one wonders why Ben-Thee's eyes wandered across the separating band of moonlight to Rhoda Reagan's shaded chair; and why Dorothy should have blushed, though unsuspected thereof, and have been conscious of a faint fluttering at the heart.

That night, as Ben-Thee entered his room at the inn, it struck him as unwontedly lonely and unlovely. "Rhoda! The name means a rose, I am told. Well named, truly; whether for beauty or for sweetness!"

He fell asleep while thinking over the day's incidents, and dreamed that he was walking with Rhoda Reagan near the clumps of wild roses, which grew in a corner of his cabin garden. He stopped to pluck a bunch of the sweet briars, which he gave to Rhoda; and she, after smelling its wild fragrance, placed a spray in her knotted

hair, and pinned another on Dorothy's bosom. Though how Dorothy had dropped into the scene, seemed strange to him even for an incident of a dream.

CHAPTER VII

AN OLD-TIME MAYING FAIR

Among the importations from the old country that for a while Philadelphia clung to lovingly, were the public fairs. After the War for Independence they ceased. Their disappearance was due to various causes; but especially to the better organized conditions of commercial life that diverted traffic from public to private places. Progress in the same direction is modifying and will probably destroy or greatly limit the system of public markets for which Philadelphia has long been so famous.

However, as against this tendency to specialize and distribute trade are the "department stores," a highly developed return to the ancient public fairs, and to the frontier and country stores where one could buy in a limited space almost everything needed and purchasable in the vicinage.

Fair week was a season of great interest in old Philadelphia. Its approach filled the town with lively anticipations. Homes and shops resounded with preparation. Visitors from rural parts of the colony flocked cityward. Even the ports of adjoining colonies and of the Barbados and Jamaica sent contributions to the public barter, adding thus to the shipping anchored in the Delaware before the city front. Inns were crowded. Private hospitality was general.

It was a holiday time; and that large part of the community given to amusements,— for the powerful Quaker element was a numerical minority — though a political majority — gave free rein to their pleasure-loving tastes. Special liberties were allowed the slaves, and on the last day of a fair one might see hundreds of them gathered

in Washington Square dancing, singing and merry-making, much after the wild fashion of their savage ancestors.

Twice a year, in May and November, these fairs were held, and now the Maying Fair was at hand. From the Owen house came a blithesome band. Dorothy, Grace and Phœbe, Rhoda Reagan, the Owen boys, Paul, Gaius and Marcus and Ben-Thee, set forth to the Market House on May-Day morning. The clear, warm weather of the last few days still prevailed. The market stalls were fancifully decorated. The proprietors and renters had vied with one another in sharp rivalry to make the finest display. In some cases, patch-work quilts and coverlets, favorite articles of domestic industry among colonial ladies, were used to inclose the spaces taken by merchants for their wares.

As the little company, in full flush of buoyant spirits, approached the Market House, they found a great crowd already gathered. The opening of the fair was about to be proclaimed. Taking his stand upon a meat block, a generous chunk sawed from the butt of a large oak tree, the mayor's representative began in a loud voice:

"Oyez! Oyez! Silence is commanded while the fair is being proclaimed, upon pain of punishment! Oyez, Oyez! Know ye all that Clement Plumsted Esquire, the Honorable Mayor of the City of Philadelphia, doth hereby, in the King's name, strictly charge and command all persons trading and negotiating within the fair, to keep the King's peace; and that no person presume to set up any booth or stall for the vending of strong liquors within the fair; that none carry any unlawful weapon; or gallop or strain horses within the built up part of the city. And if any person be hurt by another, let him repair to the Mayor here present. God save the King!"

"*God save the King!*" The prayer was echoed in hearty chorus by the great company, the men standing with uncovered heads; for the early colonists held the highest type of loyalty. Then came pandemonium.

Ear-splitting calls broke forth in every quality of voice from high tenor to deep bass, here suavely fluting, there harshly grating. Shrill screams, and raucous yells arose from venders of goods. The sellers of children's toys racked the ears with the blare of trumpets, the screech of hautboys, the squeaking of fiddles, the tooting of horns, the shrilling of whistles, the rattle of drums — whatever noise might lure children to their stands to get their promised fairings.

The Owen party slowly moved through the thronged passageways, joining in the prevailing gaiety, and stopping now and then to price the wares or to make a purchase. There was enough to tempt them — dry-goods, millinery, cakes, confections, knick-knacks and notions, meats, game, vegetables, chandlery, books, toys,— a great multitude of fancy and useful things from the old country and the new colonies.

At last they passed a booth wherein was displayed a choice collection of skins and peltry. As Ben-Thee was particularly interested in such articles, he stopped and entered; and as Rhoda humorously remarked, "like Gad, a troop did follow him." Here he greeted his late fellow traveler Alfred Oster, not cheapening goods like others in the booth, but talking with a handsome young man about his own age whose deeply bronzed face betokened an open-air life. Their conversation was earnest, indeed seemed to be verging upon anger, when interrupted by the coming of the Owen party.

Oster was known to the Owens, through his sister Agnes, a school-friend of Grace's, and he presented, in a stiff and somewhat constrained fashion, his "friend Mr. Robin More." This gentleman seemed to have some special interest in the booth. The salesman was a man of ruder bearing and riper years. He was dressed in a frontiersman's deer-skin hunting-shirt, a fitting garb, as among the goods displayed were several unusually large and fine bear-skins, with skins of panthers and wolves and furs of beaver and foxes. A number of shoppers

were before the large table that served as a counter, examining the miscellaneous goods, which appeared to be mainly from the West Indies and the Spanish provinces. But Ben-Thee's attention was fixed upon the pelts.

"This is something in your line?" remarked the salesman, glancing at Ben-Thee's hunting-suit which somewhat resembled his own.

"Yes, I have done some hunting," was the reply, "and still follow the business betimes. Where were these skins taken?"

"In the mountains beyond the Susquehanna; but I cannot speak for all of them, as some were purchased by Captain More from a roving hunter. That is a fine bear-skin, sir. And the price is not high. Shall I put it up for you?"

Ben-Thee called Dorothy to him. "Would not this suit Mother Lydia?" he asked. "See what a large and perfect skin it is; and admirably dressed! I would like to present her this for a rug. What say thee?"

"It would be welcome, I am sure; and most good of thee to think of a fairing for her."

"Have you looked at this sample, Mr. Ben?" said Oster. "I think you would like it better than the other." He laid his hand upon a large bear-skin that hung against the booth just by him.

"It is certainly the hide of a noble beast," Ben-Thee said. "Yet my fancy turns to this one."

"But see!" Oster persisted. "It is not only the extraordinary size of the skin that I remark; but the fur is so thick and soft!" He rubbed his hand along it. "I would like you to examine it."

"It is not many merchants," remarked Phœbe with a light laugh, "that are fortunate enough to have a customer act the part of a salesman!"

Oster recognized the trace of raillery in her words and replied: "But you see, Miss Phœbe, I had an opportunity to learn Mr. Ben's skill and taste in these matters, when

we were fellow travelers; although I did not then know his close relation to your family. I am all the more anxious to have him served with the best things, so that he may carry back a favorable opinion of Philadelphia and her trade."

"Besides," said Rhoda, catching Phœbe's bantering spirit, "Mr. Oster is so thoroughly a merchant that the ruling passion persists in other shops than his own. When he cannot sell his own goods he enjoys selling another person's."

"Or who knows? These may be his own," Phœbe remarked, keeping up the quizzing. "Perhaps he has made a venture in the fair, as our young merchants sometimes do, hoping thereby to turn an honest penny."

"Oh, not at all! By no means!" Oster rejoined with more heat than the occasion seemed to require. "Do not think of such a thing! I was thinking of Mr. Ben; and merely wished —"

"I am obliged to Mr. Oster for his suggestion," Ben-Thee interrupted, "but I will bide by my first choice." Turning to the salesman: "Tie up this bear-skin, these two panther-skins, this wolf-skin and these two beavers. My man Cato will take charge of them."

So the party passed on down the crowded way. Mr. Oster took the privilege of former acquaintance to join the Owen group, and attached himself to Rhoda Reagan, to the evident discomfort of Paul Owen, who had assumed the post of squire to that young lady, apparently to her content.

Robin More, who had been holding an animated conversation with Grace Owen, begged permission to walk with her friends through the Fair, a favor which Miss Grace took pleasure in granting. More was a comely and manly looking youth, with the easy manners of an English gentleman somewhat sobered by the more courtly and stately style of the Spaniard. His frank and open military bearing was accounted for by Mr. Oster, who explained that he was an officer of the "Heather," a trim

looking vessel in the West Indies trade, that had come to Philadelphia with goods for the Fair. As its skipper was a Scotchman, the father of young More, the name was readily accounted for.

As the party moved down the Market-House aisle, although it did not so occur to them, nor perhaps to others in the Fair, they presented what now-a-days would seem a picturesque group. The Owen girls were dressed in Quaker drab silk, with plain bonnets to match, though not so pronounced in depth as those of their seniors. Rhoda, not restricted by her religious views, wore a bright chintz with high waist, and skirt lacking in fullness what it made up in length, with a wide-rimmed flaring hat of the period. The Owen young men wore the Quaker coat, with long flapped waistcoat, knee breeches, and silk stockings. But they followed their generation rather than their sect by mounting silver shoe and knee buckles instead of ties. Oster's dress was rich and gay as an English gentleman's, while Robin More affected that of a naval officer's undress uniform with a modest display of gilt braid. He and Oster, alone of the men, had dress swords. All wore ruffled shirt-fronts and sleeves; and wide beaver hats looped up by cords behind and at the sides; and all but Ben-Thee had queues, varying only in length, and in the color of the ribbon bows. Ben-Thee's hat showed prominently, perhaps by its great size and plainness and contrast with his dark green hunting-shirt; and beneath it flowed his long, wavy, brown hair.

Thus appareled, they mingled with the people who, in holiday dress and in high holiday spirits, filled the booths and aisles, and clustered about the various games and devices for extracting coin from the pockets of those who had come a-fairing.

They were elbowed by the pushing throng, good-natured then, as they are to-day in the city's great crowds on public occasions; but with their van of stalwart youth to serve as a sort of breakwater and buffer, they made good headway. Now and then they stopped to examine,

to price, to buy, or to halt where an ever-gathering and dissolving group showed some special object of interest. There they craned over heads, or strained around obstructing personages, or peered through openings in the mass, to see or try to see what might be the attraction.

Now the party moved on; and as the hour approached for the midday meal, after a whispered conference with Rhoda about Oster and More, all were invited to the Owen house. The May Fair was a time for the largest hospitality among householders, and as these young men had shared so much of the morning's pleasuring, it seemed inhospitable not to include them in the breaking of bread. So away they all trooped, and soon Mother Lydia and Father Owen were giving them welcome to a board that groaned with the good things abundantly yielded by the waters and woods, as well as the gardens of Philadelphia. It was a light-hearted company and a large one that gathered around the table; and no approaching shadow darkened the merry hour.

Do such records seem trivial to the reader? Be pleased to remember then,— for surely your memory will vindicate the author's herein!— that of such seemingly small affairs the web of life is spun; light threads and single of warp and of woof, entering in here and there, day by day. How fair in the retrospect such holiday trifles seem! Aye, and what momentous events, the very pivot of our destiny, have turned upon the chance meetings and incidents of such a day as brought this May-fairing.

CHAPTER VIII

FOOT RACES AT THE FAIR

It would be hard to cast together on the current pathways of human life two characters whose early training and outward estate differed more widely than those of Grace Owen and Robin More. Yet the fates that out of such far-diverging origins at last had brought them together, seemed to be drawing them more closely to one another. What would the issue be?

Grace's life for all its nineteen years had been shielded in a home that even among Friends was marked by its high character for purity, peacefulness and love. The perfect unity of Kersey and Lydia, the parents, had never been broken by a word of domestic discord. If ever there had been an inward difference, it had not come to the surface. Theirs was a unique existence of congenial spirits united in marriage, and held in one by mutual love, esteem and forbearance, ruled by consciences developed to the highest sensitiveness.

That unity was reflected in their children's relations to their parents and to one another. As the youngest child, Grace had gained from every member of the household some touch of influence tending to add sweetness and symmetry to a character that was the rarest charm of the Owen home. What might that character develop in the future? her parents had sometimes wondered. Certainly, with all her affectionate placidity, she was not a weakling!

In all these conditions of life Robin More was the sharpest contrast. His earliest recollections had been of the sea. Dim and confused they were, shot through with a brief and imperfect vision of other scenes. But it

could have been said of him, almost literally, that he had been "rocked in the cradle of the deep." He could not distinctly recall a time when his father had not been an officer or a commander of a sailing vessel.

He was a motherless lad. No recollection of a mother's fondling and care was lodged — most sacred tenant! — in his memory. He was an only child. No brothers — no sisters — no kindred, had he known — no home, after his brief school days, save the little cabins of the "Heather" and her predecessors. No companions were his, from the period of youth on, but the men and boys that made up the ship's crew, for the most part, a dissolute and disorderly lot.

His father was a hard but kindly man; kindly at least, to him. He was not bred a common seaman, that was plain. From childhood Robin could note the difference between his father's manners and those of the men around him. The reserve, the courtliness, the general bearing of a gentleman, which impressed all who met him, were reflected in that rare demeanor of his son which differentiated him also from others on shipboard, and indeed from most whom he met.

Passionate, though self-poised; profane, though not obscene; a free drinker, though never drunken, Captain More had reared his boy to temperance, clean speech, and self-control. In his dealings with his men he was just and firm; was absolutely fearless, and he knew how and when to relax the reins of discipline, of which, however, he never lost command. In these respects Robin More was an apt scholar under his father, whom with all his traits of mingled strength and weakness, he held in high esteem and affection.

As he grew in years and began to think and reason, Robin discovered that the "Heather" was something more than a West India trader, or a trader of any sort. She was a free sea-rover. Not a pirate — no! She flew the English flag — always. But whether or no open war existed between England and Spain or France, a Spanish

or a French vessel was apt to be held as a lawful prize. In short, the "Heather" was an uncommissioned British privateer, whose captain took large liberty in interpreting the articles under which he sailed. Always a trader; habitually a smuggler; at will a privateer; always intensely loyal to its own country and colors, Captain More's brig was a rare mixture of merchantman, smuggler, and man-o'-war.

More and more, as he grew to manhood, Robin had grown to dislike and disapprove the mode of life to which he had been bred. True, it was tolerated by many, perhaps by most citizens of the colonies. They recognized its value as providing "wooden walls" of defense for their ports, against aggressive Spanish and French ships, that were as free with American and British vessels as the "Heather" was with themselves. And this was considered by the multitude as quite covering any occasional left-handed revenue transactions.

All these points his father had pressed upon him, in conversations that recently had become more earnest and animated. Yet well as he knew them, he could not overcome his feelings; and at last had persuaded his father, in view of war that seemed now inevitable, to apply for a regular warrant as a recognized privateer, and to abandon all that had been irregular in the ship's career.

It was pending this request that the meeting with the Owens occurred at the Maying Fair. Like a night moth to a burning lamp the young sailor was attracted to Grace Owen. He had made himself her escort through the booths, and in various games. He had carried her little purchases, and gained permission to add thereto a trifling fairing as a gallant's favor. He had kept at her side on the way to her home, and it so fared that he was placed next to her at table. His dark cheeks glowed with pleasure and his black eyes flashed with admiration as he looked (not too boldly) into Grace's blue eyes, and watched the color deepening and paling, in play of animated converse, upon her pink cheeks. It was a notable

contrast that the pair exhibited — the tall, handsome officer, with his black hair skillfully dressed and queued, and the lissome maid whose locks lay smooth and golden brown upon her well rounded brow, and whose benignant face and winning smiles beamed upon him with undisguised pleasure.

In the afternoon, after a brief rest for the young women, the Maying party sallied out again, their special point of interest being the races of the schoolboys. Our common school system was not then established. The current views of the civic duty to educate the public were yet in the future; but private schools existed, and the crude beginnings of the "Academy" which was afterward to develop into the University of Pennsylvania. If champions of foot-ball and other athletic sports fancy that they represent a modern American movement, they are mistaken. The better part of two centuries lies behind them; and the lads of the infant Academy were as keen for the Fair-time races as ever were present-day schoolboys for so-called "Marathon races," or modern collegians for autumn bouts at foot-ball on Franklin Field and elsewhere. As Paul Owen was a tutor in the Academy, the sports of the afternoon were committed to him as arbiter, to see that all was done fairly and becomingly, and without harmful venture.

The race track was the circuit of the square including Third and Fourth, Market and Chestnut Streets. That quadrangle was the scene of a merry spectacle. The booths were for the time well-nigh forsaken. A mixed crowd of whites, Indians and negroes, among whom were many young people, and all in holiday mood, thronged the sidewalks. Some two-score boys of fourteen and fifteen years, were assembled on Market Street in front of the finishing line. They were *sans* shoes, *sans* coats, *sans* waistcoats, collars and hats, keeping only breeches and shirts, and having their loins girt about like ancient runners. There was a deal of clamor and outcry for this and that and the other favor, in placing

the candidates and arranging conditions of the race, after the manner of human younglings in all ages.

All was in order at last, and the hour for beginning the race at hand, when a small boy approached the arbiter and asked if he might not run, too. He was a sturdy looking lad, and as he waited before Paul Owen with his coon-skin cap in his hand, his stiff carrot hair stood up on end around his crown. His face was deeply freckled and he wore a pair of moccasins, and doe-skin breeks and jacket.

He repeated his request: "Plaze, may I try my hand at the races? — beg pardon, sorr, I mane try my fut!"

Paul turned and looked good-naturedly at the boy, who stood just before our Maying party. "Why, my little fellow," he said, "I fear thee is too young to compete with these boys."

"Well, sorr, maybe I'll be old enough by the time the races are over. Besides, you don't nade for to know my age, for I ha'en't tellt it yet! Ye may just enter me as under fourteen, an' that'll be the truth."

"Ah! That would be a trick indeed!" said Paul, smiling. "But I fear some folk might think it would be 'whipping the devil around the stump'; and we want no such races just now. Besides, you are not one of our scholars, and the prizes are for them alone. What is your name?"

"Andy Burbeck, sorr, at your sarvice. An', sorr, if you plaze, I don't mind the prizes!" was the reply. "It's only for the fun of it I'm cravin' a place. An' when I bate the other b'ys, I'll claim no prizes, but let 'em all go to the rig'lars."

This remark was greeted with shouts of derision by the schoolboys who stood near and heard the colloquy. "Thee conceited little jake!" said a lanky, sallow-faced chap who seemed to be a leader among the lads. "Does thee think thee could beat a lot of trained runners like us? Ha, ha! Thee better go home and get thy head combed, little tousle-top!"

Andy was not in the least disconcerted; but thrusting his fingers quite unconcernedly through his stocky red hair, gave answer: "Wall, Mester Sass-box! Ah'm no' a consated bubblyjock, like yourself, at laste. Jest gimme a chance, wanst, an' let him laugh who wins! Maybe ye'll laugh on the wrong side of your mouth afore ye're done wie it, Mester Spindle-shanks!"

The laugh was turned now, by Andy's apt nick-names and keen retort; for in truth, "Spindle-shanks" was not popular among the boys and they were pleased to have him turned down so deftly.

"Let the youngster go, Teacher!" cried a hearty looking lad whose prominent nasal development had won him the nick-name of "Nosey." "What difference will it make? It'll be fun to see him run. The more the merrier, say I. And he'll be well waxed ere the race is over!"

"Thanks, young Master, for your courtesy!" said Andy with a smile and a bow. "I wush you success in the race. But my father has a sayin'—praise the fair day at avenin'! Ye can't mostly tell how things are to and, till they're anded. An' if the Teacher lets me run, I give ye warnin' (jest for your own ear) ye'll nade for to put your best fut foremost!"

Here Ben-Thee interposed, and having explained who Andy was, spoke a good word in his behalf. Rhoda and the Owen girls joining the plea, the arbiter yielded the point, and Andy was allowed to enter the race. It seemed to be a merry joke among both spectators and runners as the Irish lad marched to his place. He was greeted by the boys with mingled cheers and hoots and laughter as he entered the ranks, with bantering (not unfriendly) calls of "Sorrel-top," "Tously-top," "Jakey," and "Freckles," to all of which Andy answered only by a good-natured nod and grin.

As he passed by the little group where his father stood with Cato and Jan Cole, Arthur gave him a word of encouragement. "Don't waste your stren'th at the out-

gang, laddie! Keep well to the front, but save your best licks for the last. An' de'il tak' the hindmost! which manes, I reckon, God bless the foremost!"

"Are you ready?" asked the arbiter.

"Ready!" was the cheery response in chorus.

"One — two — three and — Go!"

The boys had been ranged across the street, stooping, their bodies well forward, left leg to the front, and at the word "Go," off they went like a flight of arrows, amid the shouts and cheers of the spectators. The level front was soon a broken line; then a frazzled row, and ere long a straggling string of runners whose twinkling feet beat a pattering tattoo upon the road.

When the first lap around the square was made, ten of the lads passed the arbiter's stand well together, "Spindle-shanks" and "Nosey" in the lead, and Andy several yards behind. As the latter approached the Owen party, Robin More noted the wide interval, and expressed a fear that their little champion seemed likely to be badly beaten.

"Ye can't mostly tell how things are to and, till they're ended!" said Grace, smiling and quoting Andy's remark to the arbiter, with an admirable imitation of his accent, which the hearers greatly enjoyed.

Just then the boy came by, and answered a hearty cheer by turning his face toward the party. Putting his hand to his mouth, he uttered an Indian war-whoop, leaped high into the air and, smiting both thighs as he came down, crowed like a rooster, and sped on without checking his gait. This exploit was greeted with laughter and hurrahs by the folk near the finishing-line, while Arthur nodded his head approvingly and assured his neighbors that the lad was "all right and as fresh as a daisy!"

At the next lap a number of the boys had fallen far back and some had dropped out. The leaders had shifted places, "Nosey" being in front, "Spindle-shanks" following, a third academician close by, and Andy a little

behind. However, he executed another demi-vault in passing, which showed that his vigor was unabated.

"Upon my word!" said Ben-Thee, "I believe the lad is just playing with them. Mark me, he'll come out first!"

Quoth Louper Jan, who was near enough to hear the remark: "He will that, Mr. Ben, as sure as shootin'! I know his paces well, having trained him myself."

As the last lap neared its end the interest had grown intense. All around the crowded square the leaders were cheered by friends and well-wishers, who urged on their favorites by name. Glancing down the side of the square, Robin More noted that Andy had dropped just behind "Spindle-shanks" who was a couple of yards back of the two leaders. He had taken a great fancy to the lad, and several times had offered to bet sundry sums on "little red-head," an act from which Grace had quietly restrained him. Now Robin was quite discouraged. "It's all up with my little champion," he said. "He can never pick up that distance. He's at least ten feet behind!"

"Ye niver can tell mostly how things'll and—" began Grace dryly, starting again to quote Andy's words. But the quotation was cut short by Andy's Indian war-whoop. With a prolonged yell the lad dashed forward, passed the leaders like the wind, and as he crossed the line, flung a double hand spring, and tumbled into his father's arms. Looking up, unblown and with unruffled face, he asked:

"Isn't there goin' to be a fut-race here, the daay? I'd like to have a hand—beg pardon!—a fut in it, plaze!"

In the shouts of laughter and cheers which greeted Andy's performance, the arrival of "Nosey" at the line was for a moment forgotten; but Arthur Burbeck and Andy led the cheering, and it was hearty enough. "Spindle-shanks" came in a bad third, a classmate who had practiced Andy's tactics, having followed in the wake of such an excellent pilot, and come in second.

The arbiter announced the names of the victors, who were called to the front and given the promised prizes. Spindle-shanks received complimentary mention; and in that connection Paul Owen paid a warm tribute to their "little friend from the back country, whose remarkable fleetness and endurance had surprised and delighted them all." He regretted that "the rules of the races would not allow him to do more than speak these words of appreciation and praise."

"Step out, lad, and make your manners to the arbiter!" said Arthur. Whereat Andy came forward and made a low bow. Everybody cheered except Spindle-shanks, who apparently had not yet recovered from his disappointment.

"Well, my bonnie lad!" said Robin More as the boy returned, "You shall not go without some sort of a prize. I beg you to take this souvenir with my warm congratulations. You have given us all a great deal of pleasure this afternoon."

Thereupon he unclasped a golden anchor which he used as a scarf pin, and fastened it upon Andy's breast. The pleased bystanders applauded the act, and many spoke a kindly word to the boy.

Grace shot a gratified glance at her sailor escort, and moved by one of those impulses which often prompt maidens to a graceful act, stooped and kissed the lad upon his bare forehead. Thenceforth, for many a year, she had one loyal lover, at least; and for several days, when Andy washed his face, he vigilantly guarded from the profaning towel the spot which Grace's lips had touched. To the several names by which he was greeted that day, as "Freckles," "Tousle-top," "Red-head," his father added another—"Grace's Kiss!" And this he always heard with a flush of satisfaction, and wore as a title of honor.

CHAPTER IX

AN INTERVIEW WITH FRANKLIN

“Take this advertisement to the ‘Pennsylvania Gazette’ office,” said Ben-Thee to Arthur Burbeck, “and ask the editor to print it twice. The office is at High Street, near the Market House; but you will have no difficulty in finding the place; for everyone knows Benjamin Franklin.”

Arthur found the philosopher with a printer’s “composing stick” in his hand, standing in a working-jacket and leather apron at a printer’s “case,” setting up from his own manuscript an article for the “Gazette.” He read over the paper handed him:

“Strayed or stolen on the night of April 27th last, from the Eagle Tavern in Chester County, a good horse and valuable pack. A liberal reward will be paid to anyone who will give information leading to the recovery of the same, at the store of Kersey Owen on Front Street near Second. Merchants having goods to send by pack-train to interior points, will find a favorable opportunity by applying at the same address.”

Franklin handed the paper to a journeyman, and having receipted for the payment, he asked:

“Have you any clue to the missing property, or any suspicions as to the thief?”

“None at all, your honor; an’ A’ opine it’s only throw-in’ good money ahfter bad to advertize for it. A’ tried it wanst, some years agone, an’ a burnt bairn, you know,

shuns the fire. What can't be cured must be andured, says I; an' a loss like that's quite oncurable. But Mr. Ben-Thee didn't agree with me; he thinks there's a chance to get back part of the loss; an' a half loaf is better nor no bread, says he."

Franklin's steel-gray eyes lit up with that humor which in him never lay far from the surface. He cast a pleased look upon Arthur, whose flow of proverbs not only amused but interested him.

"You are a Scotchman, I observe?" he remarked half-inquiringly.

"Ye might 'a' made a warse guess, sorr; for A' 'm an Ulster Irishman, and that's a Scotchman wance removed. Though A' make the claim modestly, your honor; for a genuine Sawny wance telled me, whan A' said the same, that A' beeta mind that all 'Stuarts' are not cousins to the king. Howiver, my forbears were from the land o' cakes."

"Well," said Franklin, laughing, "you're good enough a Scotchman for me. You came from the back country, with your master, I suppose?"

"Aye, from the Cumberland Valley, sorr, beyant Harris's Ferry, a bit."

"And what is the news from that quarter? You have had a good deal of trouble with the Proprietary and his agents lately, I learn."

"An' ye larnt the truth, your honor, warse luck! We're no fri'nds o' the Proprietary out our way; for nayther Irish nor German settlers can get satisfaction from the Penns. An' A' reckon there's no love lost atween us, for the Penns have small opinion of us. We kape on tryin' to have them right our wrongs and clane up our vexed titles; but it's like goin' to the de'il for a dish-clout. He's rather for clutterin' nor for clanin', is Thomas Penn!"

"But, my friend, William Penn was a good man and a just ruler," Franklin remarked, wishing to draw out his visitor, whose quaint style he highly relished.

“ Ah’m no denyin’ that, sorr. He was all that you say, an’ more. But Thomas Penn’s a gray horse of another color. It’s a thousand pities the Founder couldn’t ‘a’ willed his private and public vartues to his sons as well as his property and his province! A’ don’t understand how sich a good man could be sire to sich a brood as his sons are! A’m thinkin’ it’s the auld story of the cuckoo-bird a-droppin’ her aigs in the brown thrasher’s nest. Maybe, as our parson says, it’s a case o’ raprobation instead of election accordin’ to sovereign grace. Doesn’t your honor think there are some cases that look amazin’ like dominie may be true? Annyhow, A’m sure that whether the Proprietary’s wan o’ the elect or no, his head’ll niver fill his father’s hat!”

Franklin smiled, and quietly ignoring the theological bog into which Arthur had invited him, replied: “ I’ll not stay to defend Thomas Penn. Perhaps I may have as poor an opinion as yourself of his way of conducting our colonial affairs. But just now I am much interested in the public defense. Indeed, you found me at work upon an article on that subject. How do the frontier settlers look on this matter? There is no telling when we may be embroiled with France and Spain. And though Indians are now peaceful, the grasping policy of Thomas Penn may egg them on to hostile acts.”

“ Aye,” your honor; an’ most of us, both Irish an’ Germans, are well inclined to some military preparation. Weel soaped is half shaven, as our folk say.”

“ Quite right, my man!” said Franklin, laughing. “ An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure, as Poor Richard says.”

“ True enough, sorr. That Poor Richard must ‘a’ been a wise-like man! I’ve h’ard of him afore. But what can you do with Quakers, an’ their non-resistance doctrine? You can’t make a silver whistle out of a pig’s tail; an’ it’s ill gittin’ breeks off an Highlandman — seein’ he disn’t wear ‘em. The Quakers are clane for- nent all outlay for aven defensive warfare. That’s

foine policy, an all the world were Quakers! But seein' the heft of humanity's as crooked as a dog's hind leg and crookeder, we must e'en fight the de'il with fire, for all I can see. But A've taken too much of your honor's time; an' Mr. Ben-Thee warned me agin that very thing; for, says he, you know fine, you've got a loosely hung tongue, Arthur Burbeck."

"Good morning, my friend! I have much enjoyed your visit," said Franklin. "But before you go let me assure you that there are some Quakers—though not of the strictest sort, perhaps,—who have quite reasonable views on the subject of colonial defense. Tell your master that I would be pleased to talk with him about public affairs on the frontier, if he will honor me with a visit."

As Franklin turned back to his printer's case, and took up his "stick" and adjusted the leaden guide to his copy, his benignant face was lit up with a broad smile. Indeed, the workmen in the shop noticed that more than once, before he settled down to steady work, he softly laughed to himself. He had chanced upon a new and most interesting type of human nature in this unsophisticated frontier philosopher, and his inquisitive spirit was putting it through a mental analysis that gave him high satisfaction.

Arthur's account of his visit to Franklin's printing-office was racy, and greatly stimulated Ben-Thee's wish to meet the man. He had already laid the foundations of his remarkable career as a servant of his country and his race. He was now in the prime of his young manhood, at twenty-nine. At twenty-one he had founded the famous Junto, a club of twelve members devoted to personal improvement, that became the model for scores of thousands of literary and debating societies in the United States, which ever since have been training schools for multitudes of young Americans. It developed into the first circulating library in America, which Franklin founded in 1731, and which continues to this day.

In 1732 he had published his "Poor Richard's Almanac," which obtained an annual circulation of 10,000, a wonderful figure for that day, and continued with unabated popularity for a quarter of a century. His "Way to Wealth" had appeared in 1736, in which he developed the principles of sane, independent, industrious and honorable acquisition of a competence. The same year saw him chosen clerk of the Colonial Assembly, an office which he held continuously thereafter for ten years. The present year (1737) brought to him the royal office of Deputy Postmaster. For eight years he had been the editor and proprietor of the "Pennsylvania Gazette," which he had raised from a subscribers' list of ninety, to one of the most widely circulated journals in America, as well as a decided factor in the shaping of colonial opinion.

It was not strange that this strong and influential public character, whose great destiny the knowing already predicted, should have attracted a man like Ben-Thee. After an early supper, he walked to Franklin's house and was cordially received. The simple yet courtly manners, the combined dignity, ease and geniality of the sage's bearing, which later were to charm alike courts, parliaments, philosophers and commoners of Europe, impressed Ben-Thee, as Franklin stood before him in his sagathee coat of silk and wool-mixed fiber, lined with silk; his long flapped waistcoat, fine homespun linen shirt, and broadcloth breeches lined with leather.

And Ben-Thee with his strong, clean face, frontier garb and modest, soldierly bearing, at once won Franklin's interest. Both men were wigless and queueless — a departure from the custom of gentlemen of the period — wearing only their natural hair, which flowed loose and unpowdered toward the shoulders.

"Thee was good enough to send me word that thee would like to see me," said Ben-Thee as he introduced himself, "as thee wished to talk with me about the protection of our colony from possible or impending dan-

gers. I feel pleased and honored to wait upon thee, and am at thy service."

Franklin looked at his guest in surprise,—the old surprise that Ben-Thee rarely noted now, so common had it become, at a Quaker speech on a warrior's tongue. "No backwoods bumpkin this!" was the sage's unspoken reflection as he marked the young man's address. "Surely a leader of men! So much the better!" Then aloud—"I thank you for coming, sir," he said. "We are greatly exposed to both foreign and domestic foes. There is a chronic irritation between Spain and France and our mother country, which is liable to break out into war at any time. The English colonies will be the first point of attack, and they are quite vulnerable. Philadelphia is especially exposed. We have little or no defense against ships that can easily sail up the Delaware to our port. Of course, our first aim should be to mount suitable and sufficient batteries to defend our city from such attack; and this we are planning. And none too soon, sir—none too soon! A stitch in time saves nine!"

"As says Poor Richard!" Ben-Thee interjected, smiling.

"Aye; Poor Richard sometimes hits the mark," Franklin rejoined, his eyes lighting up with their well-known merry twinkle. "Has the Almanac traveled as far as your inland valleys?"

"Indeed, yes. Next to our Bibles, we know and love Poor Richard's homely philosophy. And I fancy some of our folk are even more familiar with his sayings than with Scripture."

"Well, I am pleased to know that my 'pilgrim' is making such 'progress.' I am more than ever convinced of the wisdom of Solomon in instructing his people by proverbs and parables. They carry the condensed wisdom of the race. By the way, your pack-man, who came to the office this morning, seems to be a sort of backwoods Solomon, for his tongue fairly ran with

the racy proverbs of his Scotch-Irish stock. He is a character, I take it, and I greatly relished his talk."

"Thee has judged rightly. I often am puzzled whether most to admire his wisdom, or enjoy his wit. He has an unfailing fund of good humor; and he has a son with him, a mere lad, who promises to be a chip off the old block. Moreover, Burbeck is as brave as he is witty. He will be one of your first and ablest recruits for frontier defense."

"Ah! Thank you! That brings me back to my theme. I am fearful for the safety of our back country. There are growing tokens of disquiet among some of the Indian tribes. Perhaps they have good reason for uneasiness in view of certain encroachments planned and in progress. We have a good knowledge of our possible means of defense here, but we are not so well informed about the condition of things on the frontier. Yet we know that it is poor tactics to defend our front while our rear is exposed to assault and ravage. An Indian war would be even worse for us than a war with Spain. Your life doubtless has enabled you to observe the state of affairs on the border and to suggest the best means of protecting it. I want your advice and co-operation; for as a good citizen and an officer of the Assembly, I have taken upon myself to urge some sort of organization. We have no regular troops, as yet. Will your people respond to a call to organize a militia service?"

"I have no doubt of it!" was the prompt reply. "Most of our borderers, especially those who have been longest on the ground, and are inured to its hardships, can handle firearms freely and many of them exactly. Their manner of life has trained them to independent thinking and action. Many are not friendly to the Indians, I regret to say; though I count the policies of Thomas Penn and some of his eastern advisers and yoke-fellows mainly responsible for the ill-feeling and occasional clashing between the races. This condition

will strongly appeal to our men to organize for the defense of their families and homes.

“The chief difficulty lies in the sparse and scattered population, which makes it hard to assemble at one point for united effort. This is only partly met by the erection, at convenient centers, of block-houses at which to assemble in case of attack. But the wisdom of appointing officers around whom public effort may at once be rallied, is beyond question. I not only approve, but will cooperate with you and other citizens in efforts to put the colony in a just condition of defense. Could the peril to our own homes be removed, many of our young men would flock to the seaboard to embark in any adventure that the government may attempt against a foreign foe.”

Nothing could have been more satisfactory to Franklin than this clear statement and vigorous endorsement of his general views and plans. In course of time, a major's commission in the Pennsylvania militia reached Ben-Thee; and to his great satisfaction, a commission as ensign was forwarded through him to Arthur Burbeck. Both men bore their new honors without pretense, and assumed them without parade, but with a due sense of their importance and responsibility in case of issues which they hoped might never arise.

The conversation drifted into other themes; especially the need of studying the French and Spanish languages, which Franklin had just begun,—perhaps in view of the close relations of Americans to men of those tongues, and the utility of personal communication with them. When at last Ben-Thee withdrew, there had been formed between these two congenial spirits a bond of mutual respect and friendship, which was not broken until both were old men.

CHAPTER X

BEN-THEE STRIKES A TRAIL

Having determined to return to the valley, Ben-Thee was much exercised as to his duty in view of certain facts within his possession. He felt the need of skilled advice, and the morning found him in the office of Angus Reagan, Esq. The clear, acute mind and strong upright character of this gentleman had greatly impressed him; and his own judgment was fortified by the confidence of Father Owen, whose legal adviser he was.

"To what do I owe the honor of this visit?" Mr. Reagan inquired; for he at once discerned that the young man had something to communicate. There was an undertone of anxiety in the inquiry, which disappeared when Ben-Thee broached the object of his visit.

Ben-Thee began by relating the loss of his pack-horse and its load at the Eagle Tavern. "The next morning," he continued, "I started out to find traces of the animal. Of course, it was not a mere case of a stray, for the pack, which had been taken off at night, as usual, had disappeared with the horse, which showed the hand of a thief. It happened that, on the evening before, the horse had lost a part of a fore shoe, which had not been replaced. I could therefore trail him with considerable ease by the peculiar impression made by the hoof. I also marked the tracks of a horse accompanying him, which I readily identified by his stride as those of my own horse, Major, who, however, was in the stable. On inquiry I learned from one of our men, Arthur Burbeck, that he showed marks of having been used during the night, by whom, he could not even guess. Jan Cole, the other pack-man, had been on guard and had slept in the

stable. Burbeck felt sure he had not left the inn, though Jan confessed he had been up late drinking with guests, and perhaps had not slept as lightly as common. The two sailors who were a part of our company were in their rooms, and left after an early breakfast.

"I followed the course of the thieves for a mile and a half westward, where it diverged to the southeast. I did not keep the trail far in that direction, but enough to show that the parties were making toward the river and the city. At this point Major's tracks separated from the other and he returned at a brisk pace to the inn.

"I resolved to say nothing of my discoveries and inferences to my companions, for a still hunt is apt to be a successful hunt, and I dread unjust suspicions. But I conferred with Mr. Oster as to what it were best to do, since, according to our engagement, he was principally concerned in the loss. He thought it better not to risk further expense by delay in what might prove a fruitless search, and requested that the train push on.

"Ere we crossed the Schuylkill we were attacked by a band of robbers who, finding us prepared for an adventure, withdrew after a skirmish, in which at least two of their party were hurt. When we reached the river we saw a vessel under full sail down stream. Apparently it had not long raised anchor. As some of our assailants were in sailor garb, this led me to associate the two seamen at the inn the night before with this vessel, and with our attack in the woods, and with the theft of the pack-horse."

Ben-Thee paused to allow Mr. Reagan to bring up the notes he had been taking. "Your conclusion seems a just one," the lawyer remarked. "Did your scouting stop there? It is a pity you could not have followed it to the end!"

"I would certainly have been at a disadvantage," said Ben-Thee smiling, "had I tried my backwoods' tactics on the water, an element that leaves no trail. Moreover, I am so ignorant of all manner of sea-craft

that I would doubt my skill in anything pertaining to ships and seamen. Yet I carefully noted the style and makeup of the vessel, marking points after my own land-lubber fashion; and I think I could go so far as to identify her."

"We may test that, by and by," Mr. Reagan observed, "for it appears to me an important point. Is this all your case?"

"No; not quite. I have what strikes me as probably another link in the chain of evidence. During the May Fair I dropped into a booth in which, along with sundry foreign goods, was an assortment of furs, to which naturally I gave special attention. Imagine my surprise when I saw among these some of my own captures, for I have a private mark — a sort of totem sign — which I put upon my choice skins. Not only so, but these were some of the furs that made up the pack carried by the horse stolen at Eagle Inn, which furs I had sold to Mr. Oster!"

"Stop a moment!" Mr. Reagan exclaimed. "Repeat that, please! That is a most important fact."

"So I think," said Ben-Thee. "But there is more to follow. I bought a number of the furs having my mark, and sent them to Mother Lydia and the girls. They are thus where they are available for testimony, if needed. While bartering for these goods, I made another discovery. The face of the man who acted as salesman seemed familiar to me, but as he was dressed as a frontier hunter, I did not think it strange, for I might have met him somewhere in the back country. At last, however, it flashed upon me that he was one of the two seamen who stopped with us over night at Eagle Inn! Before I left the booth I was confirmed in this belief."

"That adds another link to your chain!" Mr. Reagan remarked. "Your case is gathering interest as it goes."

"I have more to tell thee. The first person I saw in the booth, as I entered, was Mr. Alfred Oster, the agent of Windall and Bete with whom I had made the contract

for bringing the pack-train to Philadelphia. He was talking with a handsome young person dressed as a naval officer, who appeared to have some sort of interest in the booth. At least, the salesman several times spoke to him as though in consultation. In fact, I inferred from the peculiar interest that Mr. Oster expressed in some of the sales that he also was personally interested therein. Perhaps there is nothing suspicious in that, as young merchants are apt to try ventures in the markets at Fair-time. Still, when one is 'scouting' as you term these disconnected observations, he must mark all indications out of the ordinary. One can never tell what may prove valuable, or where the gathered facts may fit in.

"By the way, I became greatly interested in Oster's friend. As Oster was acquainted with my sisters and Miss Rhoda, he ventured to present the young officer to the ladies. He made a pleasant impression. His manners and address are polished and gentlemanly and his whole bearing frank and engaging. It was the beginning of an acquaintance which has, I greatly fear, grown into friendship, and it may be a warmer feeling between him and Grace Owen. Perhaps it is but a passing fancy; yet I confess I have been anxious."

"What name does this young man bear?" asked Mr. Reagan.

"His name is Robin More. He is an officer on a vessel called the 'Heather,' of which his father is the captain, and which is anchored in the Delaware below the city, having come to the Fair with a cargo of Spanish and French goods from the West Indies. He is certainly a well-bred, manly and intelligent youth; a Scotchman, like yourself; at least, he says his father is. I confess I have taken a great liking to him personally. But —"

"Have you seen his ship?" Mr. Reagan interrupted.

"No; he has invited me to visit it with him; but as yet I have not done so."

"Then I advise you to go before you leave the city.

You said a while ago that you carefully noted the vessel on the Schuylkill from whose crew you supposed the men had come who attacked you. Do you think you would recognize her if you saw her again?"

"I think I would."

The lawyer, while talking, had been taking from a drawer a small bundle of sketches. He selected a drawing of a sloop, and laid it before Ben-Thee.

"That is not it!"

Another sketch followed, a schooner-rigged vessel.

"That is not it!"

A third was laid down. Ben-Thee examined it carefully. "I cannot be certain, of course," he said, "for I am so unfamiliar with seagoing craft. But I would say that the ship which we saw was of that type—between fifty and sixty feet long."

Mr. Reagan reversed the drawing and read aloud the endorsement on the back: "'The brig Heather, Alexander More, Master. Applies for letters of marque, as a privateer against the vessels and property of Spain.' There follows a note in my own hand: 'In the West Indies trade; is suspected of being or having been a smuggler; but loyal to the colonies. The commission is approved.'

"That looks very much as if you had run down your quarry. May all your scoutings be as successful as this! The 'Heather,' you observe, has applied for a warrant as a privateer, and the case was referred to me for examination and advice. I had concluded to recommend the commission. But your revelations have put a different phase upon the case, and I shall hold it for further advisement, and probably recommend that it be refused. It is most discreditable that the ship's crew should turn land robbers, and prey upon our own people."

"Yet there is this to say on the other side," interposed Ben-Thee. "Suppose the petition be refused? What will result? The applicants have made a step forward toward respectability and social regularity. It is an ef-

fort to leave all disreputable ways and enter an honorable occupation. Is there not danger that thee may drive them into open piracy by thy refusal of a warrant? I believe the young man wishes and is determined to escape from his inherited life and surroundings. The father for the son's sake, if for nothing else, shares this purpose. I cannot conceive why, pending this application, they should go into such a criminal act as an assault upon our train. But I suspect that it may have been brought about by some deft management of Oster. I venture to plead for the charitable construction of the case, and if possible a favorable examination."

"Well," said the lawyer, "you are as good at pleading as at scouting. Your view of the fascinating character of Robin More, is true, without doubt. He has cast his spell even upon you! But I sympathize with your view of opening the door rather than barring it against men who are turning toward a worthy career."

"Thank thee! There is one other feature in our case, which we have not yet considered — the relation of Alfred Oster to all these conditions. Will thee give me thy legal opinion on that?"

"I do not think that I am yet prepared to do that. I wish first to hear whither your thoughts are leading."

"I will speak them with perfect freedom," Ben-Thee rejoined. "Of course, my communication is a confidential one, as between attorney and client. Should my suspicions prove ill-founded, as I trust they may, thee will not let my words prejudice thee against an innocent man. I believe that Oster is in some way mixed up with all that is criminal in the case. He met the two men of the 'Heather' at Eagle Inn, and arranged with them the theft of the horse and pack. He accompanied the person or persons who had come to receive the stolen goods, and set them on their way to the river and the ship. He arranged with the two sailors the attack upon the train, intending to stampede the horses and secure a large amount of plunder. His own resistance was a pre-

tense; the particulars were all arranged beforehand. He tried to divert and separate me from the train and its keepers; and had I not been fortunate enough to catch a view of some of the assailants ambushed in the deep woods, his plan might have succeeded. It was a bit of excellent acting, but it failed. He shares with the freebooters their illicit gains, and has acted as a procurer for them. He probably has been carrying on his nefarious business for some time, and is largely responsible for the mysterious losses of which merchants have complained lately. And yet, I would not have my opinion declared openly and him brought to justice until the proof is beyond doubt. He has a worthy mother, a widow, and an amiable sister of whom he is passionately fond; and I verily believe that his rogueries are prompted by his wish to provide liberally for them."

"Well, Mr. Ben," remarked Mr. Reagan, as he rose, and gathered his notes together, "you would make an excellent lawyer, as well as an admirable scout. I can, as now viewed, see no flaw in your reasoning upon the facts in hand. I will take care to do nothing without your consent, unless manifestly compelled by your interests and the demands of justice, in your absence. As to the last point raised by you, the relation of Oster to his mother and sister, that is the sad factor which is sure to appear in all such cases. It is, indeed, a hard fling of fate! And yet, notwithstanding what you say about his apparent devotion to them, my long experience leads me to say that when you probe to the core of criminals like Oster, you are sure to find sheer selfishness and self-indulgence, not love, the goading passion of their lives."

CHAPTER XI

A CONFLICT ON DECK AND A VICTORY

The flame that had been kindled so suddenly within Robin More, burned with an intensity that greatly surprised him. At first he had not recognized it. It was a pleasant sensation that the meeting with Grace Owen had awakened, and a new one. His roving life had kept him largely apart from women; and the few whom he had met were of the sort that stirred within him no sentiment beyond that of a passing interest. But the emotion that Grace had aroused was such as he had never felt, had never expected to feel. And now he had set himself face to face with it as something he must meet and dispose of — if he could!

The brig "Heather" lay at anchor well below the old city bounds, not far from where the Schuylkill enters the Delaware. Captain More wished to keep an inconvenient visiting distance between his ship and the town. It was one of those days toward the close of May on which, in this climate, the sun opens out with all the fervor of mid-summer. The greening banks on each side of the great stream were already fresh with the new spring verdure. On the nearby western shore the wild flowers chequered the grass, and birds were athrob with mating songs and nesting labors. There was little breeze; only that gentle breathing of the air that stirs along the water's surface. The lipping of the stream as the brig swung lazily to the water's movements, played monotonously against the hull. Sailors were sleeping, or lounging, or fluttering about the ship's furniture, putting to rights what already seemed to be faultlessly spick and span.

Robin More walked the deck, slowly, soberly, noting

now and then in a mechanical way the affairs around him, for it was his watch, and the vessel's discipline was rather that of a man-of-war than of a merchant-man. He was pondering the most important question that he had ever yet been forced to consider—his feeling for Grace Owen. Was this that Love, upon which the poets and writers in the little library in his small cabin, had given him some light? It could not be! That was quite a different emotion from the passion which possessed him. For even their most fervent words were tame expressions of what he felt when he thought of Grace. A few weeks ago he had not known her. That seemed strange, too! And now, there was no sacrifice he would not make for her; no suffering he would not bear for her; no task he would not undertake for her; nothing he would not do for her—nothing, within the reach of honor! That was even stranger. What had come over him? Was he quite himself?

Yet, what could it all come to? Surely there never was a vainer hope than that Grace Owen would think of him as he thought of her. Not that he felt himself unequal to, or unworthy of her. He had tried to live a clean and honorable life. He felt that within him which could rise to the plane of even her pure and noble nature—if she could be with him to inspire and aid him. Ay, and that he would try to do, come what may! The very love he felt for Grace had already pledged him to a better life.

Even if it were possible to win her love, could he ask her or expect her to forsake her home—and such a home!—to share life—and such a life!—with him? Would it be honorable, even if he could gain the consent of her parents and family, to ask her to make such a sacrifice? If he loved her truly, surely not! He would give her up; yes, he must abandon all thoughts of Grace Owen!

Ah! that was easier said than done. It would be like giving up the larger part of himself. That mysterious

heat in the blood, that fervor in the brain which consumed him, could it be cooled at once, and by a bare resolution? To him, at that moment, there was but one woman in all the world. She was Grace Owen. Life would be a blank failure or a bright success as he could spend it apart from her or with her. Yet he must give — her — up!

There was a catch in his throat, a spasmodic movement, a choking sensation, as though he were about to weep. "Fool!" he exclaimed, in a rush of indignation at himself. "Would you cry for a girl's love? For one who cares less for you than for the dog she fondles? Shame on your manhood! Put away this folly, and be yourself again!"

He had paused in his walk during the latter part of his soliloquy, and leaned over the vessel's rail. But in a moment he drew back with a passionate gesture, and resumed his walk, not slowly and soberly but with quick, impatient pace. Just then his father came on deck. He stood a moment unobserved, and watched the young man with keen interest. As Robin turned, he saw the Captain, and his hand went to his hat in salute. His father joined him and the two paced a round of the short walk together in silence.

"Well?" said the Captain, at last, "what is in the wind?" He knew Robin's moods, and that there was something seething within him that would soon find utterance.

"Father," the youth began, "have you heard aught from your petition for a commission as a privateer for the 'Heather'?"

"Not a word, further than that it was referred to a legal expert for examination and report."

"Have you any idea of how the matter will end?"

"I hope favorably. I know no reason why it should be refused. The 'Heather' is a tidy craft with a good crew and four guns, and the Spaniards are threatening mischief. The province needs some such vessels to pro-

tect its coasts and the approaches to its harbor. For, in case of war, the home government will be too busy with its own plans to give ships and men and money to defend the colonies. It will be more likely to call on us to aid its general schemes. May I ask if you have any special motive for anxiety in the matter at this time?"

"I cannot say that I have. At least, there is little beyond the reason which I have heretofore urged fully, and which you were good enough to consent to act upon. Only, if I may speak confidentially, I confess that I have been somewhat uneasy about the movements of Lieutenant Braun. There is something in his manner that I do not like, though I cannot clearly explain it or describe it. There is a reserve, a seeming effort to hide something, as though he were pushing some secret plot or transaction for his own private benefit, whose nature and details he is concealing from you, and, of course, from me. I have so little confidence in his integrity as a man, and his devotion to any interest but his own, that I thought it my duty at least to mention my suspicions."

Captain More was slow in replying. At last he spoke. "I am not surprised at what you say. Perhaps it cannot be otherwise. I would not wish it to be otherwise on your part. I simply ask you and urge you to keep strictly to your present attitude."

"I will certainly do so; I think you may depend upon that. Though I confess I have been anxious lest he might commit us, even if he has not already done so, to some act that may thwart our plans to rectify wholly the status of our brig, and give us a better standing before the government and—and—persons of the strictest principles." He hesitated and blushed at these closing words, and cast a sidelong glance at his father.

But the Captain did not wince; nor did he show any signs of anger or disapproval. He smiled as he asked, "Have you said all you care to? Is there nothing else on your mind?" Captain More was a shrewd

observer of human nature. He had noted that for several weeks Robin had been mingling rather freely with some of the young people of Philadelphia, something that heretofore he had not done. A little inquiry had acquainted him with the facts as to the persons in whom he was most interested; for the young man took no pains to conceal his movements. He had always been open in all his acts, for dissimulation was alien to his nature.

"Thank you!" Robin replied; "I think I have said all I care to say just now, or need to say. Unless—"

"Well?"

"You have been a young man yourself, sir, and have encouraged me to be frank with you about all my feelings and relations. Perhaps I ought to say that I have lately met some most attractive young women. At least, they have interested me more than any of the sex I have heretofore met. Their personal character, their family connections, their standing in society have brought out more clearly to my mind and made me more sensitive to those whisperings and rumors about the 'Heather' as a smuggler, and have made me more desirous of hastening your efforts for a privateer's commission. I would count it a serious disappointment were we to fail. Much as my heart was set upon it before, it is even more so now."

"Very well, my lad, I am glad you have been so frank with me and hope you will always be so. Be sure that I will leave nothing undone to carry out my purpose concerning the 'Heather.' As to Lieutenant Braun, I will look after him a little more closely." The Captain touched his hat in token that the interview was ended, and as Robin saluted, he walked away.

Somehow, the little talk had eased the young man's disturbed mind. True, it had settled nothing. But this it had done,—and to him that seemed much at the time,—it had taken or seemed to take a step forward in the plan to make himself more worthy of Grace Owen. He

had indeed settled the matter; — every wise and honorable consideration required him to abandon all serious thoughts of her. He would do so! He had done so. But — he would not cease to make it one great aim of his being, henceforth, to be worthy of her. That, at least, was not beyond his reach. That would bring no injustice to her. This reflection soothed him. The conflict of passion that had raged within him quieted down. A subdued melancholy fell upon him. But he had the consciousness of well-doing. He felt that he had gained a victory over selfishness and folly, and the quickened sense of worthy manhood that results therefrom.

A few days after, Captain More received a note, advising him that his application for a letter-of-marque commission had been referred to the undersigned (Angus Reagan) for examination and report; that it had thus far been considered favorably, but before final action it was important that he have an interview with Captain More. Would he do him the honor to call soon?

The Captain handed the note to Robin. "I cannot go," he said. "Indeed, I believe it is well that I should not. You have met Mr. Reagan, I have heard you say, at the house of your new friends the Owens. You must act for me in this matter. I have no idea what it may be. Some lawyer's technical quizzing, perhaps, which I do not care to face. You can do so freely."

"I will gladly serve in this matter. Have you instructions?"

"No. Tell him the truth as you know it. I leave all to your prudence and candor."

When Robin entered the lawyer's office, and explained his errand, Mr. Reagan replied, "I was particularly anxious to meet your father. But I daresay you will answer my purpose. Of course you know of the application for a privateer's commission?"

"Fully."

"And are you in sympathy with it?"

"Entirely so."

“You will pardon me for mentioning this, but are you aware that there are suspicions that your brig has not always held to legitimate trading, but has at times made free with the King’s revenue laws?”

“I am, sir, and not without good reason.”

Mr. Reagan started. He was almost thrown off his guard by this frank confession. Seeing his surprise, Robin continued: “My father bade me tell the truth, sir; and as far as it may be required to form your judgment of the question before you, I wish to do so. I rely upon your honor to use the information, given freely and confidentially, simply for that purpose. But let me say, sir, that whatever the past has been, it is — the past! My father wishes to serve his King and country loyally and most efficiently. He apprehends that the simple question is: Can the ‘Heather’ with its Captain and crew, do this in the emergency rapidly approaching, indeed already upon us, and will they do it? I am authorized to assure you that they will.”

“If it were to depend on you, my young friend, I believe you. But —”

“Excuse me, sir: you can equally depend on my father. He has his faults, no doubt; for Scotchmen are not all saints. But, sir, I never knew him to tell a lie; and when his honor is once pledged, his word is as trustworthy as Scripture.”

The lawyer was plainly gratified. He smiled at the reference to Scotch sainthood, and bowed affirmatively, as though he had had some experience in that. He looked over his notes, and said, “Passing that point as satisfactory, there is one matter about which I would like to be satisfied before I proceed further. Can you tell me the whereabouts of the ‘Heather’ on the 26th and 27th of April last?” At the question Mr. Reagan lifted his eyes from his notes and turned them suddenly and sharply upon the young man’s face.

Robin, though surprised at such a question, never

changed countenance. "I cannot, sir," he replied, returning the lawyer's gaze with a look as steady as his own. "I suppose she was at her anchorage in the Delaware, or not far therefrom. But I cannot speak with absolute certainty. At the time you name, and for a few days before, my father and I were off on a hunting trip in the upper regions of the Delaware. It was an excursion we had long planned, and leaving the ship in charge of the first officer, Mr. Braun, we went off upon our trip, returning just in time for the Fair. I cannot therefore locate the 'Heather' with absolute exactness from my own knowledge. But, if it will be any satisfaction to you, I can get the desired facts, for her log will be pretty sure to show them."

"I thank you, sir, for your offer; and if you will do me the favor to send the information I wish on this point, I think I will be able to complete my report."

As Robin left the office, Mr. Reagan followed him with a strangely perplexed air. "Either he is the most accomplished scoundrel I ever met," he soliloquized, "or a thoroughly honest and most disingenuous young man. Which will it turn out to be?"

The next day a sailor left the following note at his office:

"**SIR:** I beg leave to say that the log of the 'Heather' for the dates you asked about, shows the following: 'April 26, 1737. Left moorings in the Delaware and sailed up the Schuylkill. Landed at the ferry and took in wood, fresh water, some provisions and freight. Remained over night. The mate in charge of brig, as Mr. Braun was back in the country on a piece of business about freight. April 27th. A squad of men were out on shore-leave and got into a fight. Jack Ryan and Bill Griffiths, seamen, were pretty badly hurt. Went back to moorings on the Delaware. April 28th. Captain and

Lieutenant More returned from their hunting trip after seven days' absence.'

"I have the honor to be

"Very truly yours,

"ROBIN MORE."

"MR. ANGUS REAGAN."

Leaving the astute lawyer to work upon his legal problem for the present, let us glance at the early life of his correspondent. For we shall have occasion hereafter to trace some features in the development of the young man's character and destiny.

When three years old, he had been placed in charge of a childless widow of excellent character whose home was in Chester, a port below Philadelphia convenient for Captain More, who, after his various voyages, made Mrs. Naomi Bell's house his headquarters. This good woman who was piously inclined, looked after the religious as well as the secular education of the lad. Thus Robin grew up with a better spiritual training than was apt to fall to the sons of sea rovers like Captain More.

When Robin was old enough to go to sea, being of an active and adventurous temperament, he went aboard his father's vessel, and in due time became a skilled seaman and navigator. At the period when he appears in this tale, he had fairly won his way to the place of second officer, and was much esteemed and respected by all the crew. Though considerate and affectionate in his private relations, Captain More was to Robin the same impartially rigid disciplinarian that he was toward all his subordinates. Thus the young man, unspoiled by indulgence, developed a wholesome and sturdy manhood upon his natural character.

It seemed to be, but was not (taking men as they go) a bit inconsistent that the father, who was by no means as clean and upright in morals as the son, highly disapproved Robin's free opinions about religion, which he suspected, but was not sure thereof. For Robin differed

from many young sceptics in modestly withholding rather than airing and boasting of his unbelief. The Captain was one of the type of men who compounded with their conscience for rather loose living, by strict orthodoxy in believing. For, whatever of his early history lay in mystery, there was no doubt that he was a Scotchman of the true blue Presbyterian sort, though he readily allowed that his principles had not borne their legitimate fruit in his own life. He stipulated with Mrs. Bell, when Robin was left in her charge, that he should be taught his "questions," by which he meant the Westminster Shorter Catechism; and that the lad had managed to master.

As a mariner and an officer of an armed trading vessel, Robin More had found a full, if not sufficient, field for his active nature. If there were in the ship's career occasional transactions that seemed to transgress the bounds of lawful traffic — well, it was an easy age; indeed, a rather loose and ill regulated one in matters of maritime law and morals. Questions of revenue service, and the rights of traditional enemies, as the Spaniards and French, were loosely defined even when allowed at all. A trading vessel then could go far across the bound of legitimate commerce as now understood, and never be thought the worse.

CHAPTER XII

THOMAS PENN'S INDIAN WALK PURCHASE

Thomas Penn's plans for the day-and-a-half walk that should confirm the treaty known as the "Walking Purchase," were completed. His surveyors and agents had made a rough survey of the proposed route, choosing the shortest and easiest trail. This they had laid out through the woods by blazed trees to catch the walkers' eyes. Where the forests had made obstructions, these had been cleared away to allow free and rapid movement.

September 19th, 1737, the day fixed for commencing the walk, was far enough on in the early autumn to give to the trees and shrubs some touch of the bright coloring that marks American woods. The gum trees showed broad patches of red among their branches. The sumachs wore a yet deeper hue. The lance-like leaves of chestnuts were being mottled with flecks of yellowy-brown. The glossy leaves of the tulip-poplar were donning their bright yellow, and the white-oak leaves were slowly winning their rich red-brown. All over the fields and open places in the forests and along the banks of streams, the briery berry patches and clumps of certain low shrubs and vines were already aglow with fervid autumnal hues, while golden-rods lifted their plumes five or six feet high, or flared their yellow bunched heads amid the grasses.

The scenery was permeated with that general atmosphere which indicates the nearing close of the summer's activities, and the summing up of nature's energies for the harvest of nuts and later fruits. It was truly a pleasure to be abroad in the open upon such a day, to

feel the exquisite touch of the ripening year, and breathe in the benevolent spirit of this beautiful season.

From Pennsbury, Thomas Penn set forth early on horseback with a company of his surveyors and others for the rendezvous and starting point, the Friends' Meeting House at Wrightstown. Lady Jenks accompanied them, mounted on a coal black colt, and having a couple of spaniel dogs caracoling at her side. These made spirited diversions now and then, and filled the way with merry yelpings, adding thus to the picturesqueness of the cavalcade as it wended the rude road through the virgin country.

The lady was in lively mood, and her high spirits overflowed upon the party. "How far will you go along with your Argonauts?" she asked Thomas Penn who rode beside her, nodding to the surveyors who were in front. "All the way?"

"It takes an imagination as vivid as yours," Thomas Penn replied, without answering the question, "to transform those sedate and Quaker-clad business men into such heroic personages as the famous Greek comrades of Jason."

"Oh, not at all! That's quite manifest!" the lady rejoined. "Isn't this an expedition after a golden fleece? And I dare be sworn Father William's Indian lambs will be well shorn before you all get back."

"For shame, Lady Jenks!" Penn exclaimed; but in a tone which indicated that his indignation at the sarcasm was not as keen as one might have looked for; a fact which the lady doubtless had discounted. Perhaps, indeed, he may have secretly taken it as a compliment.

"Why for shame?" she retorted. "Mr. Thomas Penn's Proprietary shears are of the sharpest. And what measure of sharpness his keen intellect does not supply, his shrewd surveyors can well supplement.—Here, Towser! Ho, Teaser!" She interrupted her comments by calling to her dogs, who had made an excursion into the woods after a bevy of squirrels.

“Back, you foolish boys! Don’t you know better than to be chasing idle varmints like squirrels, while you’re on the nobler service of escorting a lady? That’s not comely manners, my laddies!” She leaned over in her saddle, and feigned to rebuke the dogs, who had run back obediently to her call, and walked soberly along with drooping tails, as though they had really quite understood.

“They must enjoy such a run as that!” Thomas Penn remarked, as he cast a friendly look upon the beautiful creatures panting from their hot chase. His reputation for enjoying occasional escapades from the beaten track of social order and propriety, may have quickened his sympathy with such animal outbreaks into primitive wildness.

“You mean the squirrels?” the lady said. “Yes; I fancy they feel secure enough leaping there from branch to branch, quite out of reach of their pursuers. Pretty things they are! I think I would not mind such a wild free life in the wide woods myself. Are men really so very much happier than squirrels, after all, I wonder?”

“Oh! You didn’t mean the squirrels?” she continued. “It was the dogs you were thinking about? Well, ye-es; I see! That is the male instinct — the love to pursue and run down things. No doubt it’s pleasant for the dogs. But how about the game? Now, this Indian hunt of yours to-day, I fancy, must be quite exhilarating; especially if you succeed in getting the Golden Fleece! But it wouldn’t be so enjoyable, would it? — if the Indians were to turn Argonauts, and seek for Golden Fleeces, or — oogh! — horrible to think of! —” and she put her gloved hand to her beautiful yellow tresses.

“Scalps, I suppose you mean by your circumlocutory figure of speech,” Mr. Penn interjected. “But there’s no fear. Lippiwinzo, Combush, Tishecunk, Tuneam, and their Delaware tribesmen are not of the scalp-taking

variety of Indians. They are too careful of their own precious scalps!"

"Ay; that may be," was the rejoinder, "and I'm sure I hope so! But who can tell when even they may revert to their primitive savagery, and like my spaniels here,—and mayhap some wiser folk we wot of— fly off into unlooked-for freaks of native wildness?"

In such light conversation, though shot through with a vein of sarcastic wisdom deftly muffled, the early morning hour soon wore away, and the party arrived at Wrightstown Meeting House. Here a group of those interested in the forthcoming walk, were gathered near a large chestnut tree in the Durham road, a few rods from the Meeting House. The county sheriff, Timothy Smith, was there in charge of the affair. The three expert woodsmen and hunters employed by the Proprietary to pace off the purchase, were there,— Thomas Marshall, Solomon Jennings, and James Yates. Marshall, the principal one, had diligently trained himself in walking, determined to win the valuable reward (five hundred acres of rich land near the mouth of the Little Lehigh, promised to whomsoever should cover the longest stretch of distance), or— as he expressed it— "lose his life in the attempt." And there, too, was Louper Jan, on hand as a reserve walker in case his services should be required. Thus was explained his sudden abandonment of Ben-Thee's pack-train— Penn had employed him for this service to hold in reserve his skill as a land-louper. So much advantage, at least, would he get from Ben-Thee!

With the party from Pennsbury had come the surveyor-general Benjamin Eastburn, and deputy-surveyors Nicholas Scull and John Chapman. These men were to ride in front of the walkers, piloting the way to save loss of time through hesitation in making out the blazed path; which they could well do as they had made preliminary surveys of the entire route. Several young Indian braves were also present, among them Combush and

Neepaheilomon, deputed by the Delawares to see that all was conducted fairly according to agreement. On the part of the Proprietary, James Steel, Jr., nephew and clerk of the Receiver-General, came to report the proceeding.

Sheriff Smith had already sent in advance pack horses carrying provisions, liquors and bedding for the comfort of the walkers and the assistants. No precaution was lacking to preserve the walkers from needless waste of energy, and to tone them up to get the best work out of their muscles.

Satisfied that all was in such shape as he wished, Thomas Penn gave word to the sheriff to start the Walk, and having watched the first dash for a little while, rode back to Pennsbury with Lady Jenks and their personal attendants. Meanwhile, the three walkers had set off at a rapid pace. It seemed more like a foot-race than a measured walk such as the Indians had calculated upon. Yates, at the start, won a decided lead; and this alarming Marshall, lest he might lose his coveted prize, sent him forward at such a pace that at once the Indian Tuneam cried out, "It is not fair!"

On the party pushed, following the surveyed trail through the forests. A little after one o'clock they had crossed the Lehigh River (then better known as the West Branch of the Delaware), at a ford below the present site of Bethlehem. Their course now lay northwest. A glance at a map of Eastern Pennsylvania and the course of the Delaware therein will show the policy of this; for the farther to the northwest the stopping point might be, the wider would be the space and the larger would be the area between that and the point where the base line drawn therefrom would touch the river.

At 6:15 P. M., when the walk stopped for the day, the athletes were so exhausted, that Marshall affirmed that he could not have held out much longer. The pack horses were on hand and were promptly unloaded. Fires were kindled in the woods, and refreshments were pre-

pared for the walking experts, though no provision was made for the Indians. However, the night camp was but a half mile distant from an Indian town called Hockyondoquay. The shoutings of an Indian "cantico" held there were plainly heard, and to this place Combush directed his steps, his associate representatives having left the company several hours before, thoroughly disgruntled and disgusted, declaring that they had been badly cheated, that the so-called Walk had been a "run," and that the walkers had already cut out all the land worth having.

The next morning was dull and rainy, and to add to the discomfort, several horses had been permitted to stray, and two hours were lost in hunting them. Another cause of anxiety was the absence of the Indian representatives, which finally led Benjamin Eastburn and Nicholas Scull to go over to the neighboring Indian town and ask that other men be sent to represent the Delawares in place of those who had left.

Lappawinzo's reply was more honest than courteous. "You may go to the devil with your bad land!" said he. "You have already taken from us all our best land, and we will send no more Indians to be humbled by seeing themselves robbed." However, Combush did return with two other Indians, and followed the Walk about ten miles farther. Then, the rain increasing, they dropped out for good and all.

From 8 A. M. until the prescribed eighteen hours had been completed, the company pressed on, the footmen piloted by men on horseback, carrying a compass to keep the course straight and northwest. When the time expired, the north side of the Pocono mountain had been reached. Yates had given out, being too lame to continue to the end; but Marshall finished the course. The distance achieved was nearly seventy miles. Here the limit of the Walk was marked by scoring five oaks with the name of the Proprietary and the year 1737.

The next point in Penn's orders was to adjust the northern boundary so as to include the greatest area pos-

sible. Instead of running a base line directly to the Delaware River, as the Indians had expected, and which was plainly the purpose of the original deed, Messrs. Eastburn and Scull, Chapman and Steel, who completed this important feature of the survey, inclined the line so far to the northeast that it made an acute angle with the Delaware, terminating near the mouth of the Lackamaxon. The length of this line was sixty-five miles, and it is noteworthy that the engineers who completed it, striking it out on horseback, reported that "it employed them four days," although the distance was not quite as great as that traversed during the day-and-a-half Walk.

The climax of this act of thieving and oppression was not reached for several years. In the state of irritation into which Thomas Penn's policy had wrought the Indians, it was not easy for the Proprietary to reap its anticipated fruits. The Delawares refused to be dislodged from their pleasant hunting-grounds and homes. Nor could the Colonial Assembly, dominated by members of the Society of Friends, be persuaded to eject them by force. Again recourse was had to that sort of diplomacy in which Penn was an adept. The Iroquois tribes, the conquerors and masters of the Delawares, were appealed to, to enforce the Walking Purchase treaty.

Their chiefs were heavily bribed. A perverted account was told them of the treaty, the agreements, the manner in which the Walk was conducted, and the conduct of the Delawares generally. A deputation of the Iroquois chiefs held a council in Philadelphia (1742) and summoned the Delawares before them. The relations between the two parties and the unhappy dilemma of the subjugated Delawares can be learned from the language in which the latter were addressed by the Iroquois orator, Canasstego:

"How came you to presume to sell land? We conquered you. We made women of you. You can no more sell land than women can. This land you claim, is

gone down your throats. You have been furnished with clothes, meat and drink, by the goods furnished you for it. And now you want it again, like children that you are. What makes you sell land in the dark? Did you ever tell us that you had sold this land? Did we ever receive any part from you for it?

“We charge you to remove instantly! We do not give you the liberty to think about it. You are women! Take the advice of a wise man and remove immediately. You may return to the other side of the Delaware whence you came. But we do not know whether you will be permitted to live there; or whether you have not swallowed that land down your throats also. We therefore assign you two places to go. You will go either to Wyoming or Shamokin.”

There was no appeal from this judgment. The Delawares were disarmed and powerless. Resistance would have meant annihilation. There was but one thing they could do — obey. And they obeyed. From the ancient seats of their tribe; from the broad river and its teeming fishing-grounds, from the valleys and mountains filled with game; from their corn-fields and cabins and ancestral haunts, they rose up with their wives and children, and went as ordered, some to the Susquehanna, some to Wyoming — ill-omened name!

It would be hard, perhaps impossible, to find in the history of our native tribes so tyrannical and humiliating a decree, so remorselessly carried out by men of their own race, as this order of the Iroquois enforced upon the unhappy Delawares, at the instigation of the son and successor of William Penn. It was years before the full and awful harvest of this iniquity was reaped by the white men and women and children of Pennsylvania. But the suppressed anger and vengeance which these exiles carried with them to their new seats smouldered in their bosoms thenceforth. And it broke out at intervals in deeds of violence, that fell not upon the guilty, but as is so often the case, upon the innocent.

The ship-loads of Germans and Scotch-Irishmen then and afterward swarming into the port of Philadelphia, and making their way thence to the valleys and mountains of central Pennsylvania, no doubt added to the sense of wrong and the strong race antagonism that had developed. They had paid hard-earned money for their lands to those who claimed the right to dispose of them as purchased from the proprietors. Most of them were innocent of any personal injury intended or done to the natives. They sought only the quiet enjoyment of their property, and the right to gain therefrom a living for themselves and families.

All, however, were not so considerate and peaceful, and causes enough for friction were continually arising, in which the white men were not infrequently the aggressors. But underlying all, as the outrage and aggression in which the others had their chief origin, was the great Walking Purchase swindle concocted by Thomas Penn and carried through by him, his aiders and abettors. That the Iroquois, men of their own race, were the last efficient instruments in executing the Proprietary's policy did not weigh so much with the Delawares. With the simple logic of the primitive man, they went straight to the real guilty cause, the perfidious ruler of the province; and with that lack of detail and with the broad generalization which are apt to mark crude reasons, they saw not the individual, but his community, his race. And at the community, the race, when their time was ripe, the victims of the Walking Purchase struck.

CHAPTER XIII

A STARTLING DISCLOSURE

September found Ben-Thee once more in Philadelphia at his old quarters in Clark's Inn. Thither business had drawn him, and the far stronger magnet of his interest in Rhoda Reagan. His intended visit of a few days had lengthened into weeks. For besides the attraction at Angus Reagan's house, the Owen mansion, thronging with beloved and loving young life, was an unfailing source of delight to him; all the stronger for its vivid contrast with his lonely life in the Cumberland Valley and Mountains.

Among the friendly conversations and conferences with the Owens, those with Dorothy were perhaps the most frequent. Rumors of the "Indian Walk" as conducted by Thomas Penn and his agents and instruments, had become current in the city. The conditions thereof and its probable results were discussed with much feeling, and with grave doubts on the part of many. Dorothy Owen was particularly interested in this matter.

"Thee knows," she once said to Ben-Thee, "how long and earnestly, in my quiet way, I have wrought to bring our Indians into nobler views of duty, and more Christian ideas of righteousness and religion. But what headway can one make in the face of the injustice of such an act by one who is held to be the representative of Christian character? In fact, I find that the chief hindrances in advancing Gospel teachings and behavior among our Delawares, are the evil lives of many white men."

"But it is not fair," exclaimed Ben-Thee, "to take the worst among us as samples of the true disciples of Christ!"

"Not fair; but most natural!" Dorothy responded. "And thee will find, I think, that white people jump to conclusions concerning red men after the same fashion, and condemn the whole race for the sins of a few. Be that as it may, the Delawares are greatly wrought up over this Indian affair; and they speak bitterly, not only of Thomas Penn, but of the whole white race, who seem to tolerate, if they do not encourage such a gross wrong upon their red brothers."

"Well, Dorothy," said Ben-Thee, "I confess that I cannot feel as keenly as thee in the matter of the social, spiritual and intellectual advancement of the Indians. They are at the best a treacherous race; and, whatever the future may develop, are still in the thrall of native savagery, though with some right manly qualities which I respect. And I advise thee not to let thy feelings carry thee too far. But I agree with thee as to the injustice and wrong of Thomas Penn's treatment of them, and I condemn its impolicy, and fear its possible danger to the community, perhaps, even to thyself."

Dorothy was silent for a moment or two, as if pondering what had been said. At last she spoke.

"I have a strong concern that some atonement is due the Delawares; some manifest proof to them that the whites are their friends, and the true lovers of their souls for Christ's sake. And I often feel that I may be called to such a duty for their uplifting and saving."

"Thee had best think long and well of that!" said Ben-Thee, speaking up hastily, and with unusual warmth; "and take much good counsel ere thee commits thyself to such a rash act."

Dorothy laughed. "Thee needn't fear for me, Sir Hunter!" she said. "I have full confidence in the Indians, who are grateful to their friends, though, truly, vengeful to unfriends. And above all, I would put my trust in a Higher Power, who would surely protect me, even from 'the terror by night and the arrow that flieth by day,' if it were ever to come to that."

Dorothy always had for Ben-Thee a warm welcome. There was indeed something lacking of her old-time freedom of manner toward him; for she had ere this become conscious that her feeling for him was more than sisterly. And while she noted Ben-Thee's fondness for Rhoda, the sense of maidenly modesty, as well as loyalty to her friend, kept the demonstration of her true sentiments within the bounds of ordered though kindly propriety. It was a curious and perplexing conflict that was being waged within the maiden's bosom, and which she was meeting with the quiet conscientiousness and self-denial that marked her character.

Ben-Thee apparently was unaware of her true feelings. His thought was only of Rhoda. He went to his room one night in a whirl of anxiety and perplexity. He knew now that he loved Rhoda Reagan. He knew that he wished to make her his wife. Yet her demeanor toward him was so strangely contradictory, now cordial, now cool; often indifferent, but at times almost verging upon affection, that while he had no sure ground for encouragement, he had some reason to hope, though with fear, that his love was not wholly unpleasing to her, and that her varying moods were the aberrations of a maiden who had not yet made up her mind. He had never felt the way open to declare his passion, or to make a proposal of marriage.

But he now resolved to put an end to his uncertainty. One way or another he would know his fate, and adjust his life thereto. He could not live this way! His mind was unsettled. Do what he would, plan what he would, the image of Rhoda ever intruded. And therewith his purpose faltered; his grasp upon affairs weakened; he drifted into confusion of thought, aimlessness of will.

But there was a first step which he felt that he must take. He would speak of his love to her father, and ask his consent formally to pay court to Rhoda and ask her hand in marriage. So he fell asleep, and dreamed once more, as on the first evening that he met her, that she

walked with him and Dorothy in his garden in the valley, and he plucked for her a bunch of wild roses. One of these she put in her hair, and then turned and pinned another on Dorothy's bosom. He recalled his dream in the morning as he set out for Angus Reagan's office which, like many lawyers of the period, he kept in a small separate room on the side of his house.

He lost no time in declaring the purpose of his visit; albeit the business was not undertaken with his wonted coolness and steadiness of nerve. He was agitated, and he faced the father of the maid he loved, with a flutter of heart to which he was a stranger. His pulse beat more temperately when he had told his tale; but it started afresh and with wonder this time, as Mr. Reagan rose, and locked the office door.

"I have expected something of this kind, and do not care to be interrupted," he began, as he resumed his seat and turned toward Ben-Thee. There was an expression of seriousness, almost of pain, upon his face that boded ill to the young man's request, since it had little promise of satisfaction therein. "I have noted your growing interest in my daughter, and am not so ignorant of the ways of young men and maids, nor so far removed from my own youth, as not to know that this interest might lead up to such a declaration as you have made. The declaration requires that I should open up a chapter in my life which I would fain have kept hidden. I do this in strict confidence, holding it as between us alone, until I give you leave to reveal it, or until my death.

"I am a Scotchman by birth. My father was a lawyer, and after a partial course in the University of Edinburgh, I became a clerk in his office. Through the influence of some companions, I became involved in certain political agitations, that led up to an outbreak which, since it was unsuccessful, was held as treasonable. My father, whose political views were antagonistic to mine, felt keenly the shame of my arrest, and publicly renounced me as his son, though in justice to him, I

must say that he used his influence to save my life.

“Some of my associates were executed. I, with some others, was exiled to the colonies. Two of us were sold to a planter in Maryland, to be held to service until we had repaid the sum expended for us, together with the cost of transportation and other exactions.

“Here the knowledge of law picked up in my father’s office proved of great advantage, and I was able to do my master a service which saved him from large losses. In gratitude for this, he set me free. Wishing to escape from a community where I had been known as a bondsman, I made my way to Pennsylvania, passing up into the Cumberland Valley. There I bought a farm, and set up a private school. I prospered, won the respect of the settlers, and married.

“A daughter was born to us who died after several months of very happy life. Just then an Irish planter, newly come to the settlement, suddenly died, leaving three orphan children, one of them an infant daughter about our own baby’s age.

“My wife, craving her bairn and in pity for the helpless things without father or mother or kin of any degree, went straightway to the farmer’s cabin, where some neighbors had gathered for such help as could be given. When she saw the poor infant and heard its pitiful wail, she put it to her breast, almost bursting with unused milk. When the wee thing began to suck and gurgle, and softly to press her bosom with its tiny fingers, her heart went out so fondly toward it that she broke into tears, and declared that God had given her this baby to take the other’s place, and that we would adopt it as our own. And so we did; and the child grew up in our house.

“Not long thereafter I closed my school, sold my farm, and moved to Philadelphia, taking my mother’s name, so as effectually (as I hoped) to cover up all traces of my old country record, which I feared might be more readily discovered in a seaport town, and re-

tard my advancement; though, in truth, I found that such political offenses as mine are not looked upon so seriously here as in the mother land.

"In Philadelphia I prospered as a lawyer, having thoroughly fitted myself for service by additional studies. Five years ago my beloved and faithful wife died, leaving me childless, except the adopted daughter, whom we had come to love as our own. Indeed, we never knew any difference. I do not think I could love a child of my own flesh more tenderly than I love her; and well has she repaid all the affection lavished upon her.

"She has no knowledge of her real parentage; I do not wish her to have. Nor would I have revealed these facts to anyone — much less to her — had it not been for the circumstances which brought you in contact with her, and for certain facts in your own life known to me as the lawyer of Kersey Owen."

Ben-Thee had listened attentively to this story. At first with no special interest, except to wonder what it had to do with him; then eagerly, as the narrative progressed; and at last with the most absorbed concern, as the truth began to dawn upon him.

"What was the name of that immigrant?" he cried.

The deep silence which followed the query, as the young man stood gazing upon his senior with staring eyes and pallid, sharp-set features, was broken by the lawyer's brief reply:

"Thomas Hannan!"

"And the infant's name — was —"

"Rhoda Hannan!"

"Then Rhoda Réagan is — is —?"

"Your own sister!"

The words sounded like a death sentence on Ben-Thee's ears. He staggered, as though he had been struck, and sank into a chair. The very foundations of his life seemed to be dropping away. The revelation was so strange, so unexpected, so utterly unthinkable!

The woman whom he loved and would have married was — his sister! An impassable wall had been reared between them.

How could he tear down the old love? How could he reconstruct a new one? A sister! He a brother to Rhoda? He had no feeling — not the faintest of that kind — as yet. Could he ever have? Dorothy was his sister! That love had grown up from childhood. It was a part of his nature. But Rhoda — how could he learn to love her as such? Yet — *he must!*

Must? Did he feel it a hardship? Was that wrong? Was it not ignoble in him not to rejoice in the discovery of a sister whose loss he had so often deplored, and to whose finding he had given such long and seemingly hopeless care? O Rhoda, my new-found sister! Oh, my lost, lost love!

The blood seemed to rush from his heart to his head. His face flushed. The veins stood out like cords. Then backward ran the red tide (or seemed to run) until it had centered and congealed around his heart. He grew deadly pale. He reeled in his seat. He rose, or attempted to rise; then fell back into his chair and placing both hands before his face broke forth into smothered sobs.

Angus Reagan could enter into Ben-Thee's feelings, and appreciate, if not fully — who could do that? — yet to some extent, the awful situation into which the young man was thrown so suddenly, and the great conflict of feeling that was now shaking him. He knew that no one could teach Ben-Thee to adapt himself to such a change in his relations to Rhoda, and that the best way was to let him work out the problem for himself.

He therefore kept silence, while the moments passed, and watched in speechless sympathy the soul-struggle being wrought out before him. He knew enough of Ben-Thee's strong and manly nature (notwithstanding this new phase of his temperament, which he had not suspected), to feel sure that when the first mental con-

vulsion had somewhat abated, his mind would settle into the right mood, and prompt him to the right action. He was not mistaken. The young man lifted his face and withdrew his hands. His first question showed the course of his thoughts:

“Did thee say that Rhoda is ignorant of her true parentage?”

“Yes; and it remains with you to decide whether or no she shall so remain. I have brought myself to this revelation with great reluctance; for no father, I think, could love his own child more tenderly than I love Rhoda; and her love for me is equally strong. I would be well-nigh inconsolable were a shadow to fall between us. But I do not know her feelings toward you. If I thought that she reciprocates your affection, I would not hesitate. I have feared that it might be so. But if not, if not —”

“Sir,” Ben-Thee interrupted, “make thyself easy on that point. I have no reason to believe that Rhoda loves me as I love her. As far as I have been able to judge her affections, she regards me as a friend — nothing more. Let it be so! I would not for any earthly consideration have her life-long love for thee disturbed. The pleasure that might come to me from the open recognition of our kinship, would be a paltry equivalent for what she might suffer, and what thee surely would. I confess that I have been deeply agitated by your disclosure. It has for the moment unmanned me. I seem to be another person; swept by an irresistible force into a new world of purpose and emotions. As to Rhoda, it is better that she should not know more; better for her, better for thee; perhaps, better for me. What good could it do to reveal the truth? To cast this strange romance, with all that it would entail, into the midst of the great, gossiping town? No, no! That must not be!”

Ben-Thee had risen. His last words had been spoken with a voice at first broken with emotion, but which grew firmer as he proceeded. Mr. Reagan also rose, and

as Ben-Thee extended his hand, he pressed it warmly. The two men stood thus silently facing each other.

Ben-Thee was the first to speak. "I appreciate thy motive, honored sir, in doing what thee has done! Thee could not do otherwise. Farewell! We may not meet again. But, if it so chance that we do, I hope thee will find that the seeming unmanliness of this morning has been overcome. Farewell!"

As he went to his room, turning over in his thoughts again and again the startling disclosure which the morning had brought to him, and renewing the inward conflict that had so wrought upon his spirit, one element of thankfulness emerged. The mystery that had overhung the fate of his infant sister, and whose solution had hitherto baffled his keenest research, was now happily solved. The lines had fallen to her in pleasant places. The valley waif, whose destiny might have been a wrecked and wretched life, a benign Providence had protected. She had become a worthy, happy and honored woman, warmly loved, well cared for, well-to-do.

He took from his breast pocket, where he was wont to keep them, the only souvenirs of his deceased parents, preserved for him by Friend Owen,—a small copy of the Psalter after the authorized English version, and a yet smaller copy of the Psalm-book in the metrical version of Rous as used for public praise in the Church of Scotland.

He turned in the former to Psalm xxxvii. He had read it so often that the leaves opened of themselves. A pen had marked on the margin, verses 23, 24, 25:

*"The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord:
And He delighteth in his way.
Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down:
For the Lord upholdeth him with His hand.
I have been young, and now am old;
Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken,
Nor his seed begging bread."*

A few moments of meditation followed, in which he tried to recall his father, of whom he had some remembrance, in the act of scribing with his dying hand around those words of hope. Did he think his children might some day read them and be comforted? Were they the confession of faith of this lonely and bereaved man, a faith unbroken even by the calamities that had overwhelmed him and his?

Ben-Thee opened the Psalm-book. It had been his mother's, a gift from her mother. What a story its voiceless leaves might tell, if they could be made to talk! Voiceless, not speechless leaves; for see! One corner of a leaf is turned down at the twenty-third Psalm, and the page is thumb-worn, as though the verses were well known and well loved. And what child of Scotland's Church or of her spiritual children in other lands, does not know and love,

"The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want?"

"Sublime hope! Invincible trust! Is it mine?" Ben-Thee asked himself. "Have I the manliness, the stout-hearted faith to face life and its labors and trials as did these pious emigrants—my father and my mother? They have not trusted wholly in vain! For two of their children, at least, their confidence has been prophetic. But as to the third, my younger brother? Shall it also be fulfilled?"

Under the spur of this meditation, he wrote a letter to Mr. Reagan and sent it to his office. The answer soon came back:

"My dear Mr. Owen:

"Your younger brother was taken to the home of the companion of my condemnation, exile and bondage, of whom I spoke to you. After I had left Maryland, he was so lonely and restless that he found his situation unendurable, and finally escaped. He made his way to the Cumberland Valley, and applied to me for help, which I readily gave. Work was plenty, workmen

scarce; and ere long he was established upon a little farm of his own. Some time afterward he married a worthy woman, and apparently settled down to a steady and sober life. He was wild enough in Scotland, like so many youth of good family; and while I shared his political fortunes, I had no sympathy with his loose morals and tendency to dissipation, which, however, I now hoped might be wholly corrected. He concurred in his wife's adoption of the little Hannan lad, perhaps influenced by our course toward Rhoda.

"About a year thereafter, I saw posted on a tree in front of an inn in the vicinage, an advertisement of a runaway bond-servant giving the assumed name and a description of my friend, and offering a reward for information leading to his capture. It was headed by a rude cut of a running man with stick and bundle over his shoulder, and signed by our former owner. That evening Macallum (the name he had assumed) came to see me. He was greatly disturbed by the advertisement, and feared he would be arrested and returned, as evidently his master had knowledge that he was in that neighborhood. He was resolved to leave the valley at once, and transferred to me his property, requesting me to dispose of it as opportunity might serve, repaying myself for what he asked me to advance upon it, and hold the remainder until he should send for it. In a day or two he disappeared with his little family, and from that time to this, I have never seen or heard of him or them. They have all vanished as completely as if the earth had swallowed them up. I have never been able to discover through his wife's family or otherwise, the slightest clue as to whither they went or what destiny befell them, except that they went westward beyond the mountains. Doubtless they have been absorbed or lost within the vast and almost unknown solitudes of that sparsely inhabited region.

"I have carefully kept account of the trust committed to me, and after requiting myself for money advanced,

there still remains to the credit of Macallum or his family, should there ever be a proper demand therefor, a snug balance. I regret that this is all that I can tell you of your brother, who of course, disappeared with his foster parents.

“I have the honor to be,

“My dear Sir, your obedient serv't,

“ANGUS REAGAN.”

PART TWO

CHAPTER XIV

RECRUITING FOR CARTAGENA

The chronic state of irritation between the governments of Great Britain and Spain, broke into official war in October, 1739. In point of fact, a condition of actual warfare had existed for some time before. The ill treatment of English log-wood cutters at Campeachy, and the searching of English ships for contraband goods, upon the Spanish Main, may have been the immediate cause, as alleged; but the hostility between the two nations was always latent and near the surface, and little aggression on either part was needed to bring the two people into conflict.

The commercial activity of the English at this period; the restless and adventurous spirit of their merchants and mariners; and the prevailing lax views of maritime law, united with hereditary antagonism to keep Great Britain and Spain upon a fretted borderland of war. At the points of nearest contact, as the British and Spanish West Indies, the American colonies and Florida, and the Spanish Main, the friction was greatest.

The colonial commerce of this period was considerable, chiefly with the mother country, and its West Indian possessions. As Cuba and the Spanish possessions were near neighbors, a war with Spain closely concerned all British colonies and aroused wide-spread interest. When therefore the King's proclamation was circulated, calling for three thousand Americans to enlist for service in the expedition under Vice-Admiral Edward Vernon against the Spanish Main, it caused great excitement. From Boston to the Carolinas men flocked to the standard.

Most of the colonies encouraged enlistments by offering bounties or otherwise. But in Philadelphia, Governor Thomas was sturdily opposed by the Colonial Assembly. There were two reasons for this. The majority of the legislators were Friends, who, being opposed to war on principle, objected to voting the appropriations required for military supplies. The other reason was based upon the fact that a large proportion of the volunteers offering and accepted, were bondsmen; that is, white persons sold to serve for a limited time, in order to pay charges of their transportation to America and other expenses of migration. They were known as "redemptioners," and at that time were numerous. Many were industrious, steady and sober, though poor. In the great scarcity of labor and need for workers, especially during the harvest season, when the chief recruiting was done, the time and labor of servants were most valuable. There was no available substitute but negro slaves. Some scrupled to use such service. Many had all the slaves they could afford. Some could not afford such costly labor at all. None willingly submitted to the unrequited loss of service already paid for and depended upon.

On the other hand, many of the redemptioners were quite content to escape from their condition of servitude, and while receiving the King's pay as soldiers, be absolved from labors due their masters. That some of them, having "accepted the King's shilling," escaped from their new obligations with as scant scruples as from their former ones, and ran away from the colors, appears from a number of advertisements of deserters from companies quartered near Philadelphia, and rewards for their capture, printed in the journals of that date, particularly in Franklin's "Gazette." However, by the middle of September, 1740, the quota of Pennsylvania (seven companies) was filled, and the transports fell down the river; "the companies all full," (as Franklin's paper announced) "the men cheerful and in

good heart," having been reviewed by the Governor before they went aboard.

Philadelphia was agog with excitement during that summer of 1740. The arrival of recruits from other parts of the province; their marchings to and fro; the stir and clamor of recruiting officers, and the drilling of the raw volunteers, kept the juniors, the negroes and the Indians in a ferment. The controversy between Governor Thomas and the Assembly, and the increase of business and population caused by the influx of strangers and the organization of the troops and arrangements for their transportation and subsistence, kept the seniors and the citizens generally on the *qui vive*. Whitefield's visits and preachings added to the popular agitation; and, on the whole, Philadelphia was anything but a dull place. It was indeed a quite animated fringe of humanity, on that eastern border of the great wildernesses of the middle colonies.

One day in June the sounds of kettle-drum and fife, with occasional blasts of a bugle were borne cityward on the southwest breeze. As they drew nearer, a crowd of boys, slaves and redmen thronged outward, and were soon returning, following, along the ragged edges of the rough road, a large squad of recruits. It was Captain Owen's company of riflemen bound for the Spanish war.

In front marched a drummer, fifer and bugler. Next came a tall frontiersman carrying a British flag. Then came Captain Ben-Thee, and following him, marching in double rank, for the road was narrow, forty or fifty men and youth, most of them carrying the long rifled gun of Lancaster, and wearing fringed hunting-frocks and leggins.

The company marched to the vicinity of the State House, where it was inspected by Adjutant-General Blakeny, and assigned to quarters near the eastern bank of the Schuylkill. They were soon quite at home, and settled down to the work of drilling, and recruiting their ranks to the maximum.

The next morning Ensign Arthur Burbeck, with a squad of the most comely and best appareled men, sallied forth on a recruiting excursion. A favorite place for this duty was the street in front of the taverns and ale-houses, of which there was a great sufficiency then as now. These "publics" were favorite lounging-places for mariners, men out of employment, emigrants and floaters upon the social current generally. Moreover, they furnished a convenient source for the supply of those liquid refreshments which were then thought a necessary reinforcement of the arguments held to be both common and proper on such occasions.

It was a new business for our friend Arthur. But with his ready wit and shrewd skill in adapting himself to conditions, he made the rounds of a number of the resorts, with considerable success, and wound up the morning's work at the Market-House on High Street, where a crowd was always apt to assemble, drawn by that strange spell which seems to summon human beings together as if by magic, out of the very solitary paving-stones. Here Ensign Burbeck rested the colors, bade his drummer and fifer play up, and after some stirring notes upon the bugle, opened up in the name of His Britannic Majesty that flood of eloquence which was supposed to befit such service:

"Gentlemen, Americans, Britons!" he began: "It's the call of our Mother Country that I'm bringin' ye. To be sure, it's a step-mother she has been to some of us,—and, not a very tander one at that—God bless her! By the way, it does seem a bit odd, doesn't it?—to be talkin' about our Mother Country or our step-mother country, seein' it's His King's Majesty's government we're representin'? But Mother or Father, the duty an' sarvice are all one. So let that fly stick to the wall! Sure it's good Scriptur' and good morals to 'honor thy father an' thy mother.' We're axed now to honor our Mother Country an' our Father King by takin' a slap at the Spanishers. It's kind o' tit for tat, ye see; for

if we don't slap them, they'll slash us. It's a broad plain way from the Capes to Philadelphia, an' the best way to keep the inimy out is to trail 'em till their own dens an' scotch 'em there!

"What do we promise? says you. The King— God bless His Majesty! feeds you and clothes you and drinks you— Oh, ye naden't laugh; why not 'drinks' you as well as 'feeds' you?— Sure what's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, an' one may do a bit o' recruitin' for the King's English, while recruitin' for the King's army! What I mane is— though perhaps it's not worth the mention to gintlemen like yourselves— there's a spirit ration of a half-pint o' rum a day to be allowed ye.

"What's that you're askin', friend? Are we payin' a bounty for enlistin'? You're barkin' up the wrong tree thar, my man! Our good masters, the Quakers, hold the purse-strings, and they draw them fell tight. They're opposed to war, you know— especially its costs. An' there's no denyin' war is costly business. Nations are great fools iver to get intil it. 'Arthur,' my father uset for to say til me, 'kape out of all quarrels an' scrapes! Niver fight till you're fair cornered. But then, niver give up till you've licked t'other feller out of his boots!' Gintlemen, that's our fix now. We're cornered. We're intil the scrape, body an' breeches. An' we've got to fight our way out! We've got to make a spoon or spoil a horn. Another recruit! Sergeant, hand him the King's shilling and take his name! That's aisy done— as aisy as kissin'! Fall intil the rank, sorr!"

"And what's your trouble, young man?" he continued, turning to a sturdy looking person who addressed him in a rather dolorous tone of voice.

"I am anxious to go to the war, sir; but I've a young wife; and who'll take care of her while I'm gone?"

"Well, an' that's just my fix! But God bless her heart! the dear woman says she'll take care of herself! She did it afore she married me, says she, and if I choose

to go traipsin' to the Spanish Main a-sojerin', she can do it agin!"

"Maybe she's glad to get rid of you for awhile!" someone called from the crowd, at which there was a laugh at the ensign's expense. But he answered good-humoredly:

"Indade, an' I wouldn't be surprised if that were true. I'm sure there's plenty o' good women who would be far better off without their husbands, more shame to the men for that same! Now our friend there, no doubt, spoke out of his own axperience, for the old sayin' 's true: Every fox smells his own hole first! But to win back to our young friend here: My advice to you is, go home to your wife an' take good care of her, an' let the bachelors go to the war. Don't l'ave a wife for somebody else to take care of — 'somebody else' won't do it! Why should he, if you don't? God made the family afore he made the country, an' I don't belave the country is so badly off for men, that it nades the sarvice of young bridegrooms. It was a wise provision of the old Hebrew law that a man was excused from military duty the first year after his marriage. We might stretch that a few months and be the better for it.

"But here's a man whose face I've seen at ivery tavern we've stopped at to-day. I'm out several beers on your account a'ready, my man! An' it looks as though your powers o' suction had just fairly begun. I thought I had you fast once or twice afore; but you're like the Irishman's flea — when he put his finger on him he wasn't thar! Now, my good fellow, there are no more free drinks for you till ye've taken the King's shillin'. Oh! you're ready now, ye say? That's a canny Scot for ye! Get all that's in it, first! Well, here's your shillin'. An' see you stay! For desartion is hangin' business; an' a hempen rope won't agree wi' a Scotchman's windpipes quite as well as a dram o' mountain dew. What's your name?"

"William Blackal of Glasga'—"



ENSIGN ARTHUR BURBECK RECRUITS MR. FRANKLIN FOR THE
CARTAGENA WAR



“ Ah! you mean to sign the papers yourself, I see. You can write, then? ”

“ Write! ” repeated Blackal with a snort of indignation. “ Why not? Every Scot — ”

“ Excuse me, ” Arthur interrupted, “ I should ha’e remembered! The guid auld mither Kirk aye t’aches a’ her childer readin’, writin’, and the Catechiz; an’ they t’ach themselve to tass aff a dram o’ sperits as often as a Provideential opportunity offers! There Will’am; drop into the ranks; an’ see you don’t drop out again in a hurry! You’re all right now; but cut short your screed on patriotism, lest folk think you’re over-doin’ it a bit. Ye ken it’s apt to be long grace and short meat wi’ a Scotchman,— at l’aste so Englishmen say! ”

“ An’ ye couldna’ git warse authority nor that — for me! ” said Blackal, as he dropped into the ranks. But that Arthur’s suspicions were not ill-grounded appeared from the fact that William Blackal’s name appeared among the advertised deserters within two weeks.

“ An’ now here comes a recruit we’re all more nor proud to welcome — the Hon. Benjamin Franklin, whom I saw step out of his printin’ office over there by the market a while back, with our Captain Benjamin Owen. Make way, men! Attention, riflemen! Present arms! ”

As the two gentlemen approached, the crowd fell back, and the recruits presented arms quite handsomely. It must be confessed that Franklin’s face had a somewhat abashed look, and a frown was gathering on the Captain’s brow as Ensign Burbeck continued :

“ Sargeant, get the papers ready, and the King’s shilling! It’s highly commendable, worthy sir, that you’ve come out so promptly to enlist. The example will be most influantial. The Riflemen feel greatly complimented by your preference for them; though one might have axpected that from the known wisdom of Poor Richard. But — sor-r! I beg you to consider afore it’s too late! Men! ” he cried, turning to the Riflemen, “ Mr. Franklin’s our Postmaster! We’re all a-goin’ far

off from wives, an' sweethearts an' friends. We want a man at home that we can trust to take care of our letters and get the home letters to us. I'm dead opposed to his 'listin' just now! Besides he's honorable Secretary of the Honorable General Assembly that votes the military supplies; an' if iver a party will made a friend at Court, we're the b'ys! We must kape him thar, lads — we must kape him thar! What say you, lads?"

Of course, there was a great shout of approval, and turning to Franklin, Arthur said: "Mr. Franklin, sorr! You see how it is! We appreciate your patriotic motives in wantin' to go with the b'ys til the Spanish Main. But r'ally, we canna spare you from Philadelphia, yet a while. I am compelled to decline your application. But, sorr, I have the honor to propose you as an honorary member of Captain Benjamin Owen's company of Riflemen. Come, lads, what say ye — yea or nay?"

A sounding "Yea," rang through the market-place, and bowing his acknowledgments to the men, the philosopher made a brief speech, bubbling over with wit and wisdom, and the sergeant marched them with their new enlistments back to the camp. The perplexed look on Franklin's face had soon melted into mirthfulness, as he saw Arthur's drift, and no one enjoyed the by-play more than he. When the recruits had disappeared up High Street, and the crowd had dissolved, he invited his "Cumberland Philosopher," as he would call him, and Captain Owen into a quiet inn close-by for a bite and a draught of home-brewed ale.

"For if iver there was drougthy wark," quoth Arthur, "it's recruitin'!"

That evening Deborah Franklin had a momentary shock when her Benjamin came home and announced that he had joined Captain Owen's Riflemen for the war on the Spanish Main. But her laugh was the merrier when her husband told in his inimitable way, and often afterward, the story of how he was "recruited" for the Cartagena campaign.

That evening, as Ben-Thee was slowly sauntering toward the camp on the Schuylkill, a friendly slap on the shoulder arrested him. He turned to face Lieutenant Robin More, whose countenance, radiant with pleasure, and hearty hand-grasp, showed how greatly he enjoyed the meeting.

"I am just back from a cruise," said Robin, "and almost the first thing I heard was that you had come to town with a company of recruits, and were off to Cartagena. We are likely to sail together, for the 'Heather' is to act as an escort and fleet tender to transports."

Ben-Thee's attitude indicated surprise. There was a breach somewhere in his information. "The 'Heather,' did you say? An escort?"

"Ay, so I said; and am proud and happy to say so. Our application for a privateer's commission was favorably passed upon, and we made port yesterday with a rich Spanish prize, carrying four six pounders, six swivels and a crew of seventy men! That's not so bad for our little 'Heather,' with her crew of twenty-five men!"

"With all my heart I congratulate you! I had not heard of your vessel's change of status. And this is a splendid beginning of your new career!" said Ben-Thee. He took his hand once more, and this greeting had a warmth that greatly gratified Robin, though he could not quite appreciate the reason for it. He joined Ben-Thee in his jaunt to the Riflemen's camp, and afterward at supper.

CHAPTER XV

HOW A LAWYER RECRUITS FOR HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE

Mr. Alfred Oster presented himself at Mr. Reagan's office with a fluster of expectation. His self-assurance was commonly proof against all demands upon it. But a request from the father of Rhoda Reagan for a private conference was much out of the ordinary, and impressed him accordingly. For, as far as he was capable of so exalted an emotion, he loved Rhoda.

If one could have plumbed to the bottom of his selfish heart, he might have found, among sundry other inducements to his dishonest life, a hope so to fortify his bank account as to make him a favored suitor for his daughter's hand before the prosperous lawyer. And now, as he waited at the office-door— (a waiting whose length was a calculated factor in its temperamental effect upon the caller) — for response to his rap on the big bronze knocker from which an image of Justice stared down upon him — (if blind figures can by a metaphorical strain be said to stare) — his mind was in a mood of vague expectancy of — well, of something quite different from what awaited him.

Mr. Reagan's well-known suavity was even greater than usual, as the young man entered and was greeted and bidden to a seat. After a brief silence during which the lawyer kept turning over a pile of papers on his desk, he accosted his visitor.

"Mr. Oster, I have here a number of bills from sundry clients, sent me from time to time, to see what I could do in the way of collecting them. I have concluded to send for you —"

There was a long pause which Oster interrupted with

a goodly show of dignity. "Really, sir, I am not the collector for the firm; and I fear I can give you small aid in this matter."

"Ah? You do not quite get my meaning. Here is an account from Charles Willing for a bundle of ginseng, on which is endorsed the memorandum: 'Collect from Alfred Oster.'"

"Sir, I never bought the goods!" Oster exclaimed with vehemence. "The bill is an error or a fraud."

"And here is another bill," Mr. Reagan continued in the same unruffled voice and manner, "for certain casks of wine for which they have received no pay, and on which I have endorsed, 'Try Alfred Oster.'"

"Sir, that is also a trumped-up account. I never bought those goods! I never—" He rose in his agitation, and showed signs of kindling anger.

"Be seated, my dear sir!" the lawyer continued in the same cool and suave manner, as he picked up another paper. "Observe, please, that it was not stated that you had bought the goods. Your memory is a little dull just now, but it will awaken by and by, and your recollection of some of these transactions will be more vivid. Now here is a memorandum from your own firm which like the others I have endorsed, 'Try Alfred Oster.' Please give it particular attention: One pack of extra fine furs. Item one bear-skin extra large, prime condition; three panther skins, ditto; two wolf skins, ditto; sundry beaver skins, ditto. These skins disappeared from a pack-train conducted by Benjamin Owen on or about April 26, 1737, but were afterward sold in the May Fair for the benefit of A. Oster and others. What say you to that, sir?"

Mr. Reagan suddenly dropped the affable manner in which he had spoken, and addressed his visitor in a stern, harsh tone.

Like a flash the truth dawned upon Oster. He was trapped! His crimes had been uncovered. All was lost! His tongue clave to the roof of his mouth. A shiver passed over his frame as he stared upon the lawyer who

stood there like a statue of Justice — not blind, oh, no! for his cold quiet eyes seemed to pierce him through and through. Judgment Day had come at last! He always knew it would come! He sank back into his chair.

“Oh, Mr. Reagan! for my mother’s sake, for my sister’s sake, have mercy!” That was his first pitiful plea made through pallid and parched lips.

“Did *you* ever have mercy on them?” was the reply.

“No, no — I see now! But oh, be merciful!” He was wholly unmanned. He would have sunk on his knees if Mr. Reagan’s sharp “*No!*” had not recalled him.

“You confess all these crimes — thefts, robberies, breaches of trust? It will not be necessary to carry the cases to court? You will do what you can to cause restitution?”

“Yes; I confess all. I have been living a double life ever since I fell in with Ruel Braun. I will do all I can to undo the wrongs I have wrought.”

“Will you sign a written confession?”

“I will. I will sign anything you ask!”

“You must know that your crimes, in association with Braun, have wrought suspicion upon Robin More. What say you?”

“He is innocent!”

“Will you sign a statement to that effect?”

“I will. A purer, better man never lived!”

“And his father?”

“I am not so sure, sir. I think he is in the main honest, outside of smuggling. Braun deceived him about many of our schemes, I know; he may have done so about all. But I can’t understand how a man of his parts could fail to suspect something. But Braun is cunning as Satan — he *is* Satan!” he exclaimed with hysterical energy. “A devil incarnate! He tried to ruin young More — tempted him in every way. More spurned him. Then he tried the harder out of hatred. Robin was proof against every assault. O God! If I had been like him!” And the wretched man

bowed his head upon his hands and wept bitterly.

For a while the lawyer was busy with his pen. Then he read what he had written. "We must have a witness to your signature." He stepped to the window and called — O heaven, of all persons in the world! — his daughter Rhoda, who was walking in the garden.

She saluted Oster distantly as she entered, asking no questions, for it was not a new experience to be required for like service, though wondering at his agitated appearance.

"You acknowledge this to be your signature, and that the contents of these writings are true?" Mr. Reagan asked when Oster had signed his name.

"I do; so help me God!"

Then Rhoda sat down, and signed her name near his. "O just Heaven, to think of it! — in this way, so near to his, a witness to his dishonor and ruin — no otherwise than this our names to be joined, while life endures!" With these inward ejaculations he saw Rhoda pass out of the office, and so out of his life.

When Mr. Reagan had collected and adjusted his papers, he turned to the young man. "Mr. Oster," he said, "the past is irretrievable. I know well that you cannot meet the financial obligations which these papers imply. Your illicit gains have been squandered as fast as received. Restitution is not probable, except by penal suffering. You know, of course, that I could send you to a criminal's doom. I suspend my purpose to do this on one condition — that you enlist in the army bound for the Spanish Main, and leave Philadelphia at once. Will you do so?"

"I will, gladly! — only — my mother and sister!"

"They will certainly be no better off if you remain; and I have not forgotten them. You know Captain Benjamin Owen"; — Oster shrank at the name — "you need not shrink. He knows all the facts in your case, and he has promised to take you into his company and give you an honorable position, something like a commissary clerk-

ship, where your business abilities will be of advantage to the company and the country. You will have the chance in this new field to achieve an honest and honorable career. That will depend upon yourself. If you yield to temptation again — remember what hangs over you!”

“Sir, I am not likely to forget. I have longed for deliverance, but could see no escape. I am grateful for your forbearance.”

“There is one thing more,” Mr. Reagan continued. “I am due at the office of your firm by appointment at eleven o’clock. I have resolved to make them care for your mother and sister during your absence. Perhaps you may clear away several points in my memoranda here that will help me to persuade them to accept my advice — if you will, that is.”

“I will, certainly. They are rogues at heart; and it was in their school, that I first learned the lax principles which have been my undoing. I am willing to do what I can to show them to you in their true light. And yet — I would not like to do or say anything that would work them permanent harm; for after all —”

“You need feel no concern on that point. Nothing more will happen from me than the pain of disgorging ill-gotten gains.”

For a little while the two men were busy going over certain papers, on which Mr. Reagan noted sundry memoranda. Then the lawyer called for his chaise and he and Oster were driven out to the Schuylkill camp, where Oster was enlisted, donned the hunting-shirt, and started duty as a commissary clerk at the company headquarters. Mr. Reagan having finished this disagreeable duty, drove to the storeroom of Windall and Bete, where a more difficult task awaited him in dealing with those hardened and wily adepts in mercantile adumbrations.

The briefest greetings over, Mr. Reagan drew a chair up to a large double desk that did duty for both partners. “Gentlemen,” he said, taking a bundle of papers from

his pocket, "this visit is not one of mere civility, as I daresay you have conjectured. I represent certain of our citizens and members of the General Assembly, who believe that some of the merchants of Philadelphia have not been dealing fairly with the government in contracts for military supplies and equipments for the Spanish war. I have been looking into the case a little, and have concluded that a professional visit to you might be of advantage."

"A case of commercial jealousy, sir!" exclaimed Mr. Bete, reaching out a hand for the papers.

"Excuse me, Mr. Teat —"

"Mr. Bete, if you please!"

"I beg pardon! But I am not yet done with these documents; indeed have not yet begun with them, Mr. Peat!"

"Bete, sir, Bete is the name!"

"Ah, yes, Mr. Beat — your pardon, sir! There are some things here that I confess seem to require explanation."

"Sir, our solid standing in this community, and reputation won by strict attention to business, should protect us from such suspicions."

"No doubt they should, sir! But even a *reputation*" — the word was spoken with a slight but significant emphasis — "for unblemished character, can hardly justify a firm in charging from 120 to 160 per centum profit on flour — sugar — molasses — rum — candles — rope — sea biscuit — as in these and sundry other bills in my hands." And with each item named Mr. Reagan turned over a paper in his bundle, and glanced at its endorsement.

"Nor is it," he continued, "quite in accord with your high standing and reputation for fair dealing, to bill to the government an invoice of spirits, on which not a penny of revenue tax has been paid — smuggled goods, in fact — and not only charge double cost for the same, but add thereto the revenue charges as if paid by you at

the custom-house. Considering your solid reputation, Mr. Bleat, that looks —”

“Sir!” exclaimed the junior partner, bringing down his fat hand with a thump upon the desk, perhaps as a strategic diversion. “My name is not Teat, nor Peat! It’s Bleat, sir — No! I mean, sir, it’s not Bleat, sir, but Bete, sir!” And he illustrated it by another smart stroke upon the desk. “Surely you must know it. Such forgetfulness is unpardonable, sir!” His confusion was notable, and under some circumstances might have been amusing.

All this while Mr. Windall had been watching the play between the two men, permitting his partner to put in his usual preliminary work. He observed the slight smile that showed at the lawyer’s lips as he noted the effect which his ruse of feigned forgetfulness of his name had upon a man of high self-esteem. He concluded that Mr. Reagan had knowledge of their affairs even more complete than he had chosen to show, and “to throw to such an old bird as he” — to put it in his idiomatic but scarcely elegant form — “the sort of chaff that Bete had been feeding him, was merely wasting time and opportunity.” He was angry at his partner for the ease with which he had fallen into the lawyer’s snare to confuse him. And he broke into the conversation unceremoniously.

“Curse it, sir, your name makes mighty little difference just now. If it isn’t Bleat, it ought to be! Such a sheep you have been in the claws of this wolf of the law. Well, sir!” — turning sharply upon Mr. Reagan. “I see you know a great deal more of our affairs than is good for us. Out with it, sir! Let us know the worst; and tell us what you want. If we have made mistakes, we can repair them; if we have overcharged, we can repay; if it is proved that we have wronged anyone, intentionally or unintentionally, we will right the wrong.”

Mr. Reagan fixed his full attention upon the wiry, dark-faced, black-eyed man who had just spoken. He

knew now, if he had doubted before, who was the real firm of Windall and Bete. His calm, blue, searching eyes met the keen, black and piercing but restless eyes of the merchant. The latter sustained the gaze for a moment, then gradually fell.

“Mr. Windall, I am glad you take the sensible, indeed, the inevitable view of the matter. The facts are all against you. I take it for granted that in all cases where money can meet the situation, you are ready to settle by payment or compromise?”

“That is correct, sir.”

“There is a view of some of these cases which perhaps you have overlooked. Offenses of this sort wrought against His Majesty’s government are open to the charge of treason. And treason, sir, is a matter of —”

Mr. Reagan did not finish the sentence, but slowly, as if unconsciously, raised a hand to his throat. Mr. Bete made a sympathetic movement of the same sort, but Mr. Windall never winced, though his dark face grew pale. Neither man replied. Manifestly, there was nothing to say.

“I am not here, gentlemen, to push the criminal phases of this case. But you asked me to show the worst and I shall do so. And it is certainly wise policy to look all facts fairly in the face. And now I have another sort of case to present; one that concerns the real estate department of your affairs. I represent a client who claims a farm of five-hundred acres, with rent for twenty years and interest,—”

“The dev —” Mr. Windall began, but cut short his expletive, in which, however, anger, surprise and incredulity were all expressed.

“No; the person to whom you were about to allude is doubtless concerned in the case, but not as my client. Perhaps it will refresh your memory if I state that my client is Captain Benjamin Hannan, better known as Owen, the son and heir of Thomas Hannan of Ulster County, Ireland, a settler in the Cumberland Valley. Not

to tax your patience too greatly, I will remind you that the land was bought from you directly, was fully paid for, a receipt for the money given, and subsequently a deed made out and delivered to Thomas Hannan and duly recorded."

"These are assertions, sir. We challenge you to the proof!"

"Perhaps a copy of your deed to Thomas Hannan would count as proof. Here is one, sir. The original has disappeared, but the official copy is to be seen in the County Records where we saw it, and where you may see it also. I need not inform you that that is authentic, and the legal proof of the transfer of the land. It was not put on record, as you observe, for more than a year after Mr. Hannan's death, due no doubt to neglect or ignorance of the party to whom it was intrusted. Perhaps that may have been the reason why, when you had the records examined, as you probably did within the year following the decease, you found no legal proof of your sale, and may have concluded — but this is in the realm of conjecture, I will push it no further."

"Well, sir," said Mr. Windall after a pause, "suppose, for the sake of the argument, we admit your position. What would then remain to your client's credit, according to your reckoning?"

"The restitution of the land intact, or the present price of the five-hundred acres, plus the rent paid to you during the interval, and the gross interest on such payments. That would be the least that we should expect. But there is one important fact that must be taken into consideration. It appears that you have recently sold a section of fifty acres of the original tract to piece out a neighbor's farm, or for a town site, perhaps. That was an act of indiscretion which I leave you to characterize, but it brings into our settlement a special difficulty. How the difficulty can be overcome I am not now able to say; that must be a matter for future negotiation."

The silence which followed was broken by Mr. Wind-

all. "I need hardly say, sir, that we recognize the situation; and will hold ourselves ready — as we are aware we must do — to make any reasonable settlement within our power."

"That seems satisfactory. I have now another item that requires attention and which concerns you."

Mr. Windall's dark face flushed darker with anger. He lost the remarkable self-control which he had kept hitherto. "Another item, sir!" he cried. "It looks as though you purposed not only to run down your game, but to skin it alive! What more have you charged against us?"

"In the present matter, gentlemen, you are more sinned against than sinning. You have a clerk named Alfred Oster who is in serious trouble. He has been swindling and plundering yourselves and others for two years, and at last is found out."

"The rascal! I have suspected him lately. I hope he is in the grip of the law, and that there will be no let-up on him!"

"On the contrary, he has enlisted, and will soon be sailing for the Spanish Main against Cartagena, the best thing probably that could occur. But this is the point for you to consider; he was your representative in many matters, formally and legally so, and his transactions may be taken as yours in certain cases, the principals being responsible for the acts of their agent. This is a point that will develop later, if it ever comes up. Now, it is quite as much to your interests as to his that he should be away for a year or two; and the one difficulty in his mind is the care of his widowed mother. Some of us are subscribing to a fund to look after the families of outgoing soldiers, and I suggest that it would be highly becoming, in every way, if Messrs. Windall and Bete subscribe say forty pounds yearly to be devoted chiefly to Mrs. Oster's comfort."

"Certainly, sir!" said Mr. Windall with apparent great heartiness.

"I heartily approve!" said Mr. Bete.

"And now, gentlemen," said Mr. Reagan, rising and replacing his papers in his pocket-book, "I have only to say that if you will send me the name of your legal counsel at once, we will promptly take up the settlement of all points at issue."

"We will not delay, sir!" said Mr. Windall, as he bowed the lawyer out with more courtesy than he was wont to show, while his partner exhibited more than his usual unctuousness. But scarcely was the door closed ere the office atmosphere grew blasphemous with the curses which poured from the two men's lips. They swore separately, they swore in duet; they cursed the lawyer and all his works and aids and abettors. They cursed Alfred Oster, including his mother for not bringing him up better. They cursed themselves for their folly in not covering up better the trail of their misdeeds, conscious somehow, doubtless, that the curse upon the misdeeds themselves would come in due time and measure, without their aid. And they wound up their soirée of imprecation by falling into a passion, and cursing each other. In this exercise the junior partner seemed to carry the palm for richness and originality of vocabulary.

"Stop your bleating!" cried Mr. Windall to him in a fit of impatience.

This covert reference to his late mortifying blunder was as a spark upon powder and produced an explosion of wrath. Assuming with monstrous incongruity the Quaker dialect, which he habitually used, he shook his big fist at his senior, declaring: "Stop thy own blank bleating, blank thee! Thee's a blanked fool and a blanked thief of the blankest type in the town, blank thee!"

This Quakerized malediction was too much for Mr. Windall, who retired from the office to a less sulphurous scene. But a few hours thereafter the firm was reconciled, outwardly at least, and after consultation, concluded

that they would not further uncover the secrets of the firm by calling in another lawyer, but settle matters directly with Mr. Reagan, and substantially on his own terms.

CHAPTER XVI

A DIVINE CALL AND ITS ANSWER

The Friends' Meeting House on the banks of the Delaware, hence known as the "Bank Meeting," was the first erected in the Colony. The Founder, in his plans for his "Holy Experiment" had provided for one on what he called Center (now Penn) Square. To-day it is occupied wholly by an immense structure known as City Hall, whose tower is crowned by a huge effigy of William Penn. This statue rises to a height to which perhaps no human image has yet been raised, and looks down upon a million and a half of citizens and their hundreds of costly churches. So strangely does history overturn or reverse the plans of men!

The Bank Meeting was a plain, unpainted wooden structure without adornment of any kind. Along the wall, opposite the main entrance, was an elevated platform divided into three equal parts, rising a step one above the other. On these were placed wooden benches running crosswise, leaving in the middle an open space by which the occupants could ascend and pass to their seats on either side.

This was known as the ministers' gallery, and on it were seated the persons recognized as the public teachers and leaders or "ministers" and elders of the Society. There was no formal "call" to this office, no ordination or setting apart thereto by ceremony. Following the theory of the "inner light and leading" of the Spirit of God, the members of the Meeting waited upon the indications of the Divine Spirit, moving souls to communicate their gifts from time to time. It was the right and duty of the Meeting to "try the spirits"; for Friends knew

that the "inner light" sometimes came from a source no higher or holier than an ill regulated human impulse. In fact, the sober and disciplined common-sense of the Society well controlled the matter. Those who proved by experience to be truly "gifted" were duly "recognized," and in time found their place on the ministers' gallery. It was inevitable that members occasionally mistook their gifts and calling; and the leaders of Meeting exercised their liberty to inform such that their givings-forth were not to edification.

On the gallery was no pulpit, no desk, no altar, high or low; only plain benches like those in the body of the house, distinguished simply by being raised a step and two steps higher. The meeting house was divided into two main parts by a middle aisle, on one side of which sat the women Friends, on the other the men. There were no family pews; no outward recognition of the family relation. At the meeting-house doors such differences and all other social distinctions, dropped away. The sex distinction alone was recognized; a fact which may indeed seem contradictory of a fundamental principle of Friends, but which knowledge of human nature and a dominant sense of propriety, as wise as comely, had fixed.

On a bright May morning in 1742, the Owen family, as was their wont, wended their way to this simple place of worship. They formed a goodly procession as they soberly walked the street together; but they separated at the doors, Mother Lydia and the daughters going to the women's side, Father Owen and the sons to the men's, the father passing on to the minister's gallery. The place was well filled with persons who, though plain enough in outward appearance, and many of them in humble station, were unconsciously taking an important part in history, as founders of a great State.

The worshipers took such seats as pleased them, for none were reserved, and sat in silent meditation until all comers had been placed. Then followed that deeper silence when the rustling of garments and the impact of

feet upon the floor, had ceased. It was "a silence that might be felt." Doubtless it was felt; for such absolute stillness in a large public meeting is always impressive. That it tended to inward devotion, and opening of soul, and sensitiveness to the movings of the Divine Spirit, are Friendly claims that one need not dispute.

The silence was broken by one of the leaders, who rose, removed his hat and offered a devout and heart-stirring prayer. There followed a long interval of silence; then an address from one of the women ministers on the spirit of worldliness that was fast possessing the colony and encroaching upon old-time ways, and wrecking the influence and lowering the testimony of early Friends. "Old time" and "early" were, of course, relative terms, for just sixty years had passed since William Penn landed at Chester with the "Welcome."

Then came an unusually long "silent pause"—so long that some began to irk beneath it, and wonder why, as there were plainly to be no further "movings" that day, the two leading ministers did not shake hands and thus "break the meeting." But a great surprise awaited, one which made that day notable in the annals of the Society, and in the religious experience and destiny of some lives.

On the women's side and well up to the front where the Owens habitually sat, a female form slowly arose. As she removed her bonnet—an act of reverence, as well as of convenience for hearers—the strong, fair face of Dorothy Owen appeared underneath her little Quaker cap. It was pale with suppressed emotion, and those who sat near her declared afterward that it shone with a spiritual earnestness which gave it a sort of radiance. The faint stir made by her action, falling on such dead stillness, drew all eyes toward the maiden. The ministers and elders looked up from their devout abstraction, and turned surprised and questioning eyes upon her, as though doubtful of what might come. Yet, why should they have questioned? Does the Divine Spirit eschew, in His movings upon human spirits, the youth of our

race? Dorothy Owen had a message. And she must speak!

“Friends!” she began; “Friends of God and of man!” The voice was low and it trembled with the intensity of her feeling, but was distinctly heard in all the house. “I have long had upon my heart a burden which I have felt that I must share with my fellow worshipers. Hitherto I have been led by the sense of my youth and unwisdom, and that natural diffidence which a maiden feels before the public. But I dare no longer withhold my message and resist the Spirit that impels me to speak. It is known to many in the Meeting, that for several years I have had a concern for the temporal and spiritual welfare of the negroes and Indians, for whom I have wrought with a measure of zeal, though in a quiet way. Many here have helped me therein, and for this sympathy and aid I have been truly grateful.

“But I cannot resist the conviction that this work falls far short of what is due. To-day I have concern for the Indians. We gained possession of their lands by treaty and purchases held to be lawful and sufficient, to say nought of the gift to our great Proprietor by King Charles. But many among us have been grieved by acts which in later years have despoiled the red men of their seats. Thee all know what I mean. A sense of the white man’s injustice has sunk deeply into the hearts of the Delawares, our nearest neighbors.

“Have we done enough—have we done anything equal to what the occasion demands, to clear our consciences, and make it plain before our Indian allies that we, the Friends, the true brethren and religious representatives of William Penn, whose memory they revere, are innocent of the wrong-doing? Does not neglect to oppose with all our might by remonstrance, by all possible influence and lawful opposition, constitute a sort of guilt?

“There is another concern about which I cannot be in error. We, as a Society, have done nothing for the religious conversion and reclamation of the Indians. We

have established for them no schools wherein to teach our holy religion. We have sent to them no minister in the spirit and manner of our Lord's apostles and evangelists. We have founded for them no mission based upon our assurance of their spiritual equality before God, and their equal responsibility to Him. We have treated them as men and as tribes to be justly dealt with and cared for in all civil business and temporal affairs, and have recognized their rights as members of a common manhood. But higher interests as immortal souls, children of a common Heavenly Father, have we not disregarded, or given so small a place that no serious concern therefor has weighed upon our minds?

"I have long and prayerfully pondered this matter, seeking the Spirit's light and leading. I have yielded thereto at last, under a sense of duty to God and to conscience, even as my venerated teachers have taught me. If I have erred, I will meekly bear the Meeting's censure, while I crave its charity. If I have spoken truth or any measure thereof, let not my youth and inexperience hinder acceptance of a Divine message!

"I might, perhaps, fitly close here. But I am moved to add that I would not be put in a position before the Meeting of pointing out a path of service in which I will not walk myself. If a spiritual mission to the Indians should be deemed a fitting thing, and such feeble service as I can give therein be held worthy of acceptance, 'here am I; send me!'"

For a moment Dorothy stood amid the profoundest stillness, bowed in silent prayer. As she sat down and covered her head, a low sigh, as of relief from a tense strain, was heard in many parts of the house. It showed the intensity of interest with which the address had been followed, and the feeling aroused thereby.

The whole meeting was astir with inward excitement. A rustle of unconscious movements ran through the audience. A low hum, not of conversation, but of half-suppressed murmurs of assent rose from the benches,

broken into, here and there, by a muttered exclamation of impatience or disapproval. Mild and subdued as it was, it was a demonstration of feeling such as one rarely met with in a Friends' house of worship. Into the midst of it fell the deep voice of the head of the Meeting:

“‘Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings God hath ordained strength!’ The Divine Spirit worketh where and how and with whom He will. He has to-day chosen for the vehicle of His message a maiden whose voice has never yet been heard among us, though her face is familiar here, and her good works are known to us as in agreement with her words. Let us take heed that we do not resist the Spirit and despise His message because of the youth of her whom He has chosen to bring it. Remember that Jesus our Master was yet a young man when He offered up Himself for us. Is it not believed that all the apostles, save Peter, were at their first call, young men still below their civil majority? May the God of Youth graciously guide us into all truth; and help us to search our ways as with a candle, and, if we have sinned in this thing, grant us humility to confess it, and to bring forth fruits meet for repentance!”

Then from the ministers' benches arose Friend Owen. He stood for a brief space with eyes fixed upon the spot where his daughter sat. He removed his hat, and having bent his head in silent prayer for a moment, said:

“Friends, if thee have listened with deep interest to the words of this young woman, what must be the emotion with which I, her father, have heard them? Verily, they have moved me to the depths of my soul. I confess that I have been guilty of the things whereof she has spoken. My guilt, perhaps, is greater than that of others; for she is of mine own household, and I have often heard her groanings over this burthen laid upon her, although I have not fully known until now the workings of the Spirit within her.

“It has gone to my heart to have heard her sweet young voice lifted up in our midst, to offer herself for a work

of such labor and danger as would be a mission to the Indians of our frontiers. It would be most unbecoming that she should undertake such a work alone. And who should be her companion, if not her father? If it should please Friends to advise and forward such a service, I beg to offer myself as a joint messenger with her from the Church. I, too, say with Dorothy: 'Here am I, send me!'"

As he sat down, Lydia his wife, who thus far had controlled her emotion, wept aloud, and weeping, swayed to and fro. A wave of sympathy went through the Meeting, and many were in tears.

"Our house to-day is indeed a Bockim," said the venerable minister who sat at the head. "May these tears be a true token that our hearts are touched and made tender by the Grace of the Divine Spirit! I take it as the sense of the Meeting that this matter shall be duly considered at a business session. If Friends are not in agreement with this, there is opportunity to signify their mind."

Not a person rose in opposition. "Then," continued the leader, "I declare it the mind of the brethren that this Meeting assemble on fifth-day evening next, at early candle-lighting, to consider the sending of a spiritual mission to the native Indians of our colony."

Thereupon he held out his hand to the minister sitting on the bench opposite to him, who rose and took it. It was the formal token of "breaking the meeting." The worshipers arose, and with a seriousness even greater than wont, dispersed to their homes.

CHAPTER XVII

BEFORE THE WALLS OF CARTAGENA

The inconveniences and irritating delays of sea travel one hundred and seventy years ago cannot easily be estimated by folk of this generation. But somehow, great as they were, men adjusted themselves thereto, thus proving that perhaps the most mobile organism in all the realm of living things, with the highest power of adapting itself to conditions and environments that cover a vast compass of differences — is the human frame. So, in the course of time, the American contingent arrived at Port Royal, Jamaica, were assigned to their respective commanders, and the fleet sailed southward for Cartagena.

Ben-Thee with Arthur Burbeck and a few riflemen were fortunate enough to make the entire voyage in the "Heather," which acted as a general scout and pioneer, co-operating thus with the British war vessels while voyaging toward the Spanish Main. The friendship which had begun between Ben-Thee and Robin More matured thus into a warm personal attachment. In the long days and nights, while the ship glided through the placid Southern seas, they exchanged the stories of their lives which, while so different in circumstances and conditions, were equally stirring and crowded with interesting adventure.

Cartagena, the strongest fortification and largest town on the Spanish Main, was situated on the coast of New Grenada. It contained a population of about 80,000 of whom 14,000 were natives and 8,000 negro slaves, the others being Spaniards.

From the beginning, the American volunteers occupied

a most disagreeable position. They were regarded with contempt by the British soldiers and sailors although many of these were as raw, undisciplined and incompetent in military and naval acquirements, as the objects of their scorn. This was an unreasonable exhibition of a prejudice which can hardly be called racial, since the Americans were largely made up of recruits from the same stock as men in the regular British service. Perhaps the scantiness of their equipments may have had something to do with this feeling.

One contemporary writer says: "From the first sight of the American troops, they were despised." Another writer, after sharp criticism of his British associates and subordinates, thus pays his respects to the Colonials: "As for the American troops, they were, in general, many degrees worse; who were composed of Blacksmiths, Tailors, Shoemakers and all the Banditti that country affords; insomuch that the other parts of the Army held them in scorn."

Nor were the commanders at all backward in making their feelings known. Another contemporary record says that as many of the American troops "were Irish, and suspected papists," the commanders thought best to confine them to sea service; an ill-founded prejudice, for the Irish were chiefly Scotch-Irish and Protestant. Yet it kept these men swinging to and fro on ship-board while their comrades were fighting and dying on land.

However, the exigencies of the siege required that detachments of the Colonials should be sent out, from time to time, on special duty. Among these were Captain Owen and his Riflemen. The dense woods on the shore side of Cartagena, running back along the river; the bogs formed by the overflow of floods and by high tides, and the pools of fetid water in the low sandy flats, were the nurseries of malaria germs and of swarms of mosquitoes which we now know to be the bearers and propagators of the terrible bacillus of yellow fever, then

making vast inroads in the ranks of the besiegers. The encampments formed in such environment were trying places, putting to the test every quality of the man and the soldier. To these were added, in the case of Americans, the irritating reproaches and insults of the British officers and men, their comrades and associates in a common service and country, who should have been their sympathizing friends and helpers.

One day several English officers were sauntering through the headquarters street of Captain Owen's Riflemen, when Robin More chanced to be visiting Ben-Thee. They belonged to that class of decayed, spendthrift and dissipated sons of gentlemen and persons of rank, whom — as English writers affirmed — government favoritism and nepotism had crowded into the expedition as officers and leaders. These persons, as they swaggered through the street, made loud and insulting remarks about Americans, both officers and men. Ben-Thee had risen and gone to the front of his tent out of respect for approaching visitors wearing the uniform of English officers. He heard the remarks, and stepping forward after a courteous salutation, quietly remonstrated with the party for such open expression of their opinions, especially within the quarters of American soldiers.

"Soldiers, quotha!" exclaimed one of the party who wore a captain's uniform, but whom his companion had addressed as "your lordship." "Would you have us call such men,—soldiers? You must have queer ideas, sir, of what His Majesty's soldiers are supposed to be! Soldiers! A lot of mechanics, farm hands, Irish bondservants, and colonial banditti, the refuse of the whole Kingdom! And the officers, sir," he continued with a gesture of contempt toward Ben-Thee, "are not a bit better than the men!"

"Hear, hear!" cried his companions in chorus.

Thereat Ben-Thee advanced, and seizing the offending officer by coat collar and breeches seat, raised him up as easily as if he had been a doll, and bending him over,

rubbed his face in a small puddle of mud in the sandy roadway.

"There!" he said, in his unruffled manner. "Such a foul mouth as thine merits no better company than the dirt on which our feet walk!"

The British officers at first were so surprised by this sudden action, that they stood appalled, gazing with open mouths upon their prostrate friend. It was but a moment. Then out leaped their swords, and they made, as by one impulse, toward Ben-Thee. Robin More, Ensign Burbeck and several other Pennsylvania officers rushed to the fray. A group of the Riflemen, who had been drawn to the front by the controversy, having heard the insult and seen their Captain's act, broke into a loud cheer, and drew near with threatening attitude as the British officers closed in on Ben-Thee. A serious affray impended, when his lordship, the overthrown captain, sprang up. His face was covered with mud which he tried to wipe off. Spitting, and sputtering and cleaning the sand from his mouth, he exclaimed:

"Hold, gentlemen! This is my affair! I claim the right to settle it by the code. You shall hear from me, sir,"—turning to Ben-Thee—"and we shall see whether a white-livered Quaker will dare to face a Man on the field of honor!"

"Sir," Ben-Thee replied coolly, "I am at thy service at any time or place, in any way thee may elect."

The British officers retired swearing and threatening; but it was noted that as they passed through the remainder of the American cantonment, their insults were limited to mutterings, and were not hurled forth loud-mouthed as before.

"After this, you will have to fight, Captain Owen," said Robin More. "There's no way out of it, now!"

"I am not sure that I wish to find a way out of it. As you know, I condemn the duello as a foolish and ineffective mode of righting wrongs, to say the least. But in this case, I see that there is no other court for

me to appeal to. I recognize that the honor of my countrymen requires that I should meet this brawler in the way dictated by custom, though he is not worthy of serious attention. I shall accept his challenge, and I ask thee to act for me as second."

"I shall do so with pleasure; and my only regret in the matter is that I cannot have the pleasure of being the principal."

There was not long to wait; for the scant noon meal had not been finished when the orderly announced the presence of Major Heathcote with a communication from Lord Pettybren. It was the expected challenge, which was at once accepted. Ben-Thee referred the Major, who was a person of most agreeable manners, to his friend, Lieutenant More, then present. The British officer was pleasantly surprised to find himself met by a gentleman of as courtly address and polished manners as his own, and apparently as thoroughly acquainted with the etiquette of the duel. After a brief conference as to the day and hour of meeting, and some other preliminaries, the matter of weapons was taken up.

"The choice of weapons is of course with you," said Major Heathcote; "but I may venture to suggest that swords or pistols are the usual weapons among gentlemen in our army and navy, and would be agreeable to us."

Robin excused himself for a short consultation with his principal, and soon returned to report that Captain Owen proposed that the meeting be limited to three exchanges; the first with muskets, the second with swords, and the third, with pistols.

"The musket!" exclaimed Major Heathcote, in evident surprise. "Why, sir, that is the weapon of the common soldier!"

"And that is just the reason of my principal's choice," was Robin's reply. "I confess that he has some peculiar notions about certain things. He claims that it is the officers' duty to be masters of the musket, since they

are made responsible for its mastery by the men. It is taken for granted that every officer ought to be familiar, if not an expert, with that weapon. In that regard, therefore, the two principals ought to meet on equal footing."

"As you undoubtedly have the choice, and I cannot urge that the weapon is absolutely unreasonable, I cannot deny your right. But you will pardon me if I still hold the view that in the Army and Navy at large the musket will be held to be a most unbecoming weapon for gentlemen to settle their difficulties with. I fancy my principal knows little or nothing about its practical use except in the drill exercise; though I daresay your friend is a capital shot with it."

"Excuse me, sir!" said Robin. "You will probably find that Captain Owen is as thoroughly at home with sword and pistol. I do not certainly know of his skill with the musket; though with the rifle I know him to be a dead shot. May I venture to suggest that Lord Pettybren should have considered that point before he deliberately and so grossly insulted American officers?"

"Sir, you surprise me!" said the Major. "If I have heard aright, the insult came from Captain Owen, who committed a personal assault upon my principal."

"It is quite true! — but not all the truth. I fancy you have not heard of the provocation. As I chanced to be a witness of the whole affair, permit me to relate it, in a few words." And that he did without varnish or partiality.

"Of course," Major Heathcote remarked, "this does not affect my duty to guard my principal's interests, in every detail; though I confess it puts Captain Owen before me in a different light."

All the details of the meeting having been agreed upon, the Major withdrew after courteous salutations, and with a far better opinion of American officers than he had heretofore entertained. In fact, he had had little personal association with them, and his unfavorable judg-

ment had been formed, not by the facts, but by the rumors, and the atmosphere of prejudice that he had breathed in well-nigh the whole British Army and Navy.

Next morning, shortly after sunrise, a small group of officers passed the American guard lines, and made toward the deep forest beyond. Not far from the river bank they entered a sort of *cul-de-sac* within a thick growth, which showed a level space of ground surrounded on three sides by trees. It was a secluded spot, and so well suited for the purpose, that already it had become the favorite meeting-place for officers called to settle their quarrels by the then prevailing mode.

The Americans reached the dueling ground first,— Captain Owen, Lieutenant More, the regimental surgeon and Ensign Burbeck accompanied by an orderly. They had not long to await the coming of the English officers, and after mutual salutations and introductions, the seconds retired to arrange some remaining preliminaries. They then paced off the ground, forty yards, for the musket meeting.

“I need give you no instructions as to your use of the weapon,” said Robin More, when he had placed his man, “since you understand that much better than I. But might I suggest that you avoid a mortal wound, if possible? A disabling wound quite serves the same purpose, and does not involve the unpleasant consequences to all concerned in the meeting, of a death, especially of so prominent a person as Lord Pettybren. If you can use a musket half as well as a rifle, you can easily wing your man; and I advise you to do it.”

“Thank thee, friend Robin!” Ben-Thee replied. “Thy advice is good. But I shall neither kill nor wound my adversary. I shall cut the epaulette from his left shoulder, unless my wonted skill shall fail me. Farewell! In case of accident to me you know what to do.” His voice was without tremor, showing that his nerves were unshaken.

It had been arranged that Major Heathcote should give

the word to the principals standing with muskets at ease. At the word "ready" the pieces might be lifted from the ground into the position of "aim." Between the command "fire" and the count "three" the muskets might be discharged but not before nor thereafter.

Both principals being now placed, Major Heathcote took post at one side, with both parties in view, and called:

"Gentlemen, are you ready? — (a brief pause) — Fire! One — two — three!"

Both pieces exploded almost simultaneously. The epaulette on Captain Pettybren's left shoulder was clipped off, lifted up and dropped to the ground behind its owner. Captain Owen stood like a rock, apparently untouched.

"Gentlemen," said Major Heathcote, "you are entitled to a second exchange of shots. Is it your pleasure to claim it?"

"I leave it to his lordship," said Ben-Thee.

"What says your lordship?"

"I am not satisfied. My bullet seems to have missed. I will try it again, and I trust with better luck."

The seconds advanced to their principals to receive their weapons, which after being loaded by their orderlies in their presence, were returned. As Ben-Thee reached out his left arm to receive the gun, Robin noticed a slight spot of blood upon the hand.

"Are you hurt?" he asked.

"Hush! It is a trifle — a mere scratch upon the left arm above the elbow. I felt the sting, but didn't know there was a wound until I felt the trickle of a few drops of blood, and then I noticed the little hole in my sleeve. It was not a bad shot for his lordship. But I am in no wise disabled."

"Very well!" Robin replied. "But as Captain Pettybren has such a great advantage over you in the size of the target presented to him, I advise you to show him as little space as possible by taking a sidewise position."

"Thank thee again, for good counsel. As I do not

purpose to kill, so I do not care to be killed or disabled from duty. I intend that his lordship shall lose his other epaulette this shot, however, if I can draw a fair sight upon it. If not, I think I shall have to nick one of his ears — though that is dangerous sport.”

The ear-nicking was not necessary; but his lordship's right epaulette went spinning after the left. Captain Pettybren's aim was less fortunate than before, for his bullet flew wild.

“An odd coincidence, that!” Major Heathcote remarked, pointing to the dislodged shoulder ornament.

“No coincidence, sir!” said Lieutenant More, and informed the Major of the facts. That officer was greatly impressed, not only by the American's skill, but by his generosity in sparing his principal's life and person, while that individual was avowedly doing his best to slay his adversary.

The engagement with muskets being over, and both principals ready for action, the meeting with swords was arranged. As the gentlemen took their stations, the disparity in personal appearance was more noticeable. As Lord Pettybren was a rather small man, Ben-Thee towered quite above him. However, the Englishman was remarkably agile, had the reputation of being one of the ablest swordsmen in the army, and had large experience in affairs of this kind, in which he had been almost invariably the victor.

Now the opponents saluted, and at the word, fell to. The first passes were deliberate, each combatant feeling his way to the other's skill and method. Greatly to the surprise of the Englishman, Captain Owen proved remarkably dexterous in the management of his sword. His skill in musket-firing was so near akin to backwoods use of the rifle, that it had excited little wonder. But that in this, the chosen weapon of gentlemen, he should hold his own, even for a brief space, against one of the best swordsmen of Europe, was truly noteworthy. After the preliminary and testing passes, and as both

parties began to warm to their work, and cut and thrust grew more frequent and vigorous, it began to appear that the easy victory predicted for the Englishman was not to be realized.

The effect upon Lord Pettybren was to irritate him; and this was increased by several pricks that he received, and the apparent ease with which Captain Owen stood on the defense and held off his opponent's attacks. At last, with a dexterous twist of his wrist for which the Englishman was wholly unprepared, the American seemed to wrap his sword blade around that of his adversary, and with a turn of the arm that was resistless as the grip of a vise, wrenched the weapon from his hand and tossed it into a bunch of young royal palms nearby.

An involuntary exclamation of mingled surprise and consternation and exultation arose from the onlookers, who had become keenly interested in the combat with its doubtful issue. The cry was punctured by a voice not recognizable, "Run him through, sir!"

His lordship was game. Whatever his vices or defects, he was not a coward. He folded his arms across his breast, and with a dignity of manner that was rare with him, looked his opponent firmly and fully in the face and coolly said:

"Strike, sir! It is your right!"

But Ben-Thee had lowered his weapon at once, while Robin More ran to Pettybren's side, and proffered him his own sword.

"Take it, sir!" he cried, putting it into his hand. "We are not butchers, to kill in cold blood. My sword is of the same or even greater length, and of equally good metal. My principal does not wish to strike an unarmed man!"

Lord Pettybren accepted the sword with a profound obeisance. "Thanks, most generous sir," he said, "for your great courtesy!" Then he faced Ben-Thee once more, and raised the sword in salute. Ben-Thee immediately responded; but before the swords were crossed,

Major Heathcote stretched his arm between them.

"Hold!" he cried. "This is hardly regular. I admit that we are fairly vanquished, and forbid further action on his lordship's part."

Captain Pettybren at once lowered his sword. "I accept my second's decision," he said. "I am vanquished by the high courtesy as well as the unsurpassed skill of my opponent. I was roughly handled, sir!"—turning to Ben-Thee, "but I confess that my language deserved it. I now withdraw it, and apologize for it. Had I known as much then of American officers as I do now, be assured the offense wouldn't have been given."

Thereupon he offered his hand to Ben-Thee, who took it with a warm pressure and a bright smile that lighted up his strong and handsome face.

"Sure," said the Ensign, "all's well that ends well; though the good ending here sames to have come more by good luck nor by good guidance. It's ill jokin' with the watch dog, saith the proverb; an' its warse jokin' wi' Death, the Doctor and the Devil, as we have been doin' here, and as duelists always do. There's a dale more wisdom shown in our outgangin' nor there was in our incomin', I take it. For what call was there for us to contribute to the Expedition's mortality report by killin' one another, since Yellow Jack is busy enough in that line to make our aid superfluous?"

Meanwhile Major Heathcote had told his principal the facts as to the loss of his epaulettes. This led to renewed thanks for the consideration, and admiration of the skill in shooting shown by Captain Owen; to which Lord Pettybren added an apology for his own wild work.

"Not so wild as you suppose, your lordship!" responded Ben-Thee. Thereupon he called for the surgeon, and removing his coat showed his shirt sleeve stained with blood.

"You are hurt, sir!" exclaimed Lord Pettybren.

"A scratch; a mere scratch! But your lordship will see that your aim was truer than you have supposed.

It came pretty near putting me out of action, and probably would have done so if your aim had not been slightly diverted by the jar of my shot felt through your shoulder. I congratulate you upon your skill with the musket!"

It was plain that though courtesy maintained the appearance of sympathy and regret, the fact just revealed went far to soothe the wounded self-esteem of the English lord at his failure and defeat, and added to the good feeling that had so quickly arisen; a bit of human nature which, doubtless, we all can appreciate.

A sponging off, a little ointment, and a bandage, was all the treatment Ben-Thee's slight wound required. This given, the quondam adversaries returned to camp in high good-humor, and parted in mutual friendliness.

CHAPTER XVIII

A DUEL WITH DEATH

An enemy far more dangerous than the Spanish beset the British forces before Cartagena. Lurking in the bogs and swamps were the germs that under the hot suns and chilly nights swiftly bred divers diseases that made fearful inroads upon their ranks. The yellow fever broke out, and in the ignorance of its causes and the inefficient sanitary methods of the day, was soon propagated throughout the camp by the hordes of mosquitoes whose breeding-grounds were pools that spotted the low sandy lands. With these wrought, in malign co-partnership, exposure in an unfriendly climate, and insufficient rest and food.

It was pitiful to note the ravages of sickness, the helplessness and despair alike of the victims and their comrades. Heroisms of friendship and comradeship, and devotion to duty worthy of the highest applause, went side by side with examples of poltroonery and selfishness that showed the depths of depravity to which human nature can descend.

Not long after the duel between Ben-Thee and Lord Pettybren, Robin More was taken down with the fever. He was on duty with a company of sailors who had been detailed for shore service during the siege; and as soon as the dreaded symptoms appeared was taken to the brigade hospital, a rude structure of logs, boards and canvas. The disease made such rapid progress that within twenty-four hours a message was sent to his company headquarters that he was dying. Captain More was at his post on the "Heather," which was on scouting duty off the harbor. Lieutenant Ruel Braun at once went

over to the hospital, accompanied by a sailor whose reckless and profane character, together with the unsavory record that was charged against him, had procured him among his messmates the name of "the Pirate." When they arrived at the hospital, and were shown to Robin's bed, they found him lying upon a rude couch with a sheet over his face.

"He has just died, sir!" said the orderly, who showed them to the place.

Lieutenant Braun walked to the cot, threw off the sheet from the face, and gazed upon the pallid features.

"Good riddance of bad rubbish!" he cried, as he flung the sheet back across the poor wan face. "He was always a snob and hypocrite, too good for his business, and ever trying to bring a parson's morals into a seaman's work. In the interest of the service, such fellows as he are better dead than alive!"

As he turned to walk away, he was faced by the Pirate, who at first astounded by such an outbreak of heartlessness and malice, had made a quick transition to indignant wrath. His fists were clenched. He was breathing hard as though struggling to restrain his hot feelings against his officer's brutal words.

"Sir!" he fairly hissed, "you're a coward and a liar! You're worse than a ghoul. You rob the dead of his well-earned name and honor. You ought to be drummed out—"

"Ho! What's this I hear?" the lieutenant interrupted. "Has Pirate Pete turned pious, too? What sort of language is this to an officer? I'll have you seized to the gratings for forty lashes and swung from the yard arm!" And he broke forth into a volley of oaths.

"I dare you to try it!" cried Pete defiantly. "You call me pirate! I'm a better man than you. Ay, I know your ways, and I'll see that others know them, too!—highway robber and thief as you are! Officer or no officer—were you Admiral Vernon himself—I

would damn you all the same for such an act of inhumanity. You're a disgrace to human nature, and to the colonies, and to the fair name of the British navy! When our men hear of this, you'll be the party, sir, not I, to go to the gratings or swing from the yard arm. And every man Jack of the crew will bear a hand right heartily in plying the cat or swinging you off. The men loved and respected Mr. More, which they never did you, sir! He was a gentleman; fair and kind and honorable always — which you are not! And a better sailor never plowed the seas. I'll not deny you that merit; but when that's said, all's said. I'll not serve another day under a man like you. The Admiral's willing enough to get good sailors for his own ships without pressing them, and there's many a fine vessel short of a crew."

While Pirate Pete was hurling forth this torrent of maledictions, seasoned with the hottest oaths, Lieutenant Braun had drawn his sword and advanced upon him. The Pirate whipped out a huge knife and was about to spring upon his officer when Sergeant Alfred Oster entered the ward, having been hastily summoned by one of the orderlies.

"What is this, my masters?" he said, stepping between them. "Isn't there enough death here, that you must needs be carving one another? Put up your weapons, I bid you! — Excuse me, Mr. Braun, but I am in authority here. Do not compel me to call the guard, for it would surely go hard with you both for making such disturbance among our sick people."

The remonstrance was heeded. The two men left the hospital. Sergeant Oster went to Robin's cot, and composed his limbs, smoothed out the disordered sheet, and reverently and decently covered the face. Then he had the cot with its silent burden moved to a little side-room, reserved for higher officers, and which chanced to be vacant. After that he sent a message to the tent of Captain Owen, informing him of the sickness and death of his friend.

The message was not received until early the next morning, when Ben-Thee returned from picket duty. He at once hastened to the hospital, and was shown into the little room where Robin had been put. As the door was opened, the orderly uttered an exclamation of horror. Ben-Thee pushed into the room. The cot was empty! The sheet was dragged off, and lay partly upon the bed and partly on the floor. In one corner with his head against a rude stand used to hold a wash-bowl and pitcher of water, lay Robin More face downward and forehead pillowed upon an arm. Beside him lay the pitcher — empty.

“Haste for the surgeon!” cried Ben-Thee and the orderly sped away. Then he kneeled and put his hand upon his friend’s face. It was warm and was wet with sweat. He seemed to be sleeping soundly. Ben-Thee lifted him up, and laid him back upon the cot. He did not move, but slept on. And when the surgeon came, he still was sleeping. After examination, that official declared that he would undoubtedly recover. The fever was broken, and with careful nursing the patient would soon be well.

But what was the mystery — or the miracle — of his deliverance from apparent death? It soon appeared. During the night Robin awoke. He was burning up with fever, and consumed with thirst. By the moonlight shining in through the uncurtained window, he saw the water pitcher. He dragged himself from the cot to the stand, seized the pitcher, which was full, and drained its contents. Then strength failed, and he sank to the floor. He remembered no more until he awoke to find Ben-Thee at his side, his fever gone, and although very weak, with hope of life before him.

Let the medical men explain this cure — for it is an actual case the author here relates — with what technicalities they may, the simple fact seems to be that the great draught of water, a whole pitcher full, cast the patient into a profuse perspiration which broke the fever,

permitting a healthful natural sleep. And so, with the blessing of Providence, Robin More was saved from death.

Several weeks of faithful nursing followed, during which Sergeant Oster, the Head Steward of the ward, was unremitting in his care. Ben-Thee gave all the time he could spare from duty. Captain More, who had now been informed of his son's sickness, also came in to cheer up the patient and help on his recovery.

He heard from the orderly the tale of his first officer's outrage upon the supposed corpse of his son, and burning with indignation took his way toward the camp, where a squad of his own men were stationed with other seamen. He found that Pirate Pete had been true to his threat to let the men know of Braun's brutal conduct. The story had so wrought up their passions, that they rose against their officer, and breaking through all discipline and fear, hooted and hissed and greeted him with muttered curses and threats wherever he went throughout their quarters.

Powerless to control the storm, Braun left the camp for brigade headquarters, as he declared, to have the whole company put under arrest for riot. Captain More found the boatswain in command. The anger of the men had been somewhat abated by the good news from Robin, and they greeted the Captain with hearty cheers. Yet as they crowded around him, they roundly averred that they would receive no more orders from a man of Lieutenant Braun's kidney.

"Softly, my men!" the Captain said. "Let us go about this matter in the right way. We can't afford to have any of you put to distress for your actions in this affair. Of course, I sympathize with your feelings. But discipline is discipline; and the articles of war are your law and mine. I too will go to the brigade headquarters, and let the General know the facts in the case, and we will see what can be done about it. I ask you to wait in the quiet discharge of all duties until you

hear from me. Will you promise me to do this?"

"Ay, ay, sir!" was the chorused response.

When Captain More reached headquarters, the adjutant assured him that Lieutenant Braun had not been there. They knew nothing of him, or of the incident. To make short of the story, he disappeared from the army as though the earth had swallowed him. Some believed that he had deserted to the enemy, capping his villainies with treason. Some declared that he had been suddenly seized with yellow fever, had died, and been hurried to an unknown grave in the great stress and panic of those pestilence blighted days. At all events, he was gone—"a good riddance of bad rubbish" and ere long Robin More, now fairly convalescing, was put on board a transport bound for Philadelphia on special service, and sailed away for the Capes of the Delaware.

Meanwhile, Sergeant Oster was winning golden opinions from surgeons, chaplains and officers and men generally, for his courage, fidelity and efficiency in the care of the sick. He never lost heart. He never flinched from any service. He faced fearlessly the most unpromising cases. He not only directed work in the wards of which he had been made head steward, with intelligent diligence and skill, but by his willing part in menial and dangerous duties, led the nurses, as well as assigned them to their work. He was often warned by the surgeons and others to spare himself, lest he be cut down suddenly; but he simply smiled and bowed his thanks, and went on as before.

One of his constant companions in these humane labors with the living and for the dead was Chaplain Addison Henry from one of the New York colonial regiments. His breezy voice and cheery presence sent a flood of sunshine through the wards when he visited them, as he often did. His prayers and holy ministries for the sick and the dying, consoled many heart-heavy and despairing souls. His bright spirit and hearty ways were better

than medicine to cure nostalgia — homesickness — which baffled surgeons' skill and sent many a fine fellow to his grave, literally pining to death. Everywhere the two men, Chaplain and Hospital Steward, went on their beneficent way, true angels of mercy, and their hearts grew together in this holy comradeship.

At last there came a day when Alfred Oster lay down to die. By his strenuous and often sleepless toil he had drained his energies to their last feeble remnants. The most skilled surgeons labored to save him. The ablest nurses waited upon him. Oster was grateful for every kind word and act. His buoyant spirit rallied against the powers of disease, and brightened the gloom of nearing dissolution. But at last he said to his new friend, the Chaplain, that the end had come.

Then in the sacred privacy of a death-bed confession, he told him the story of his great sin against his Heavenly Father and his penitent return to Him. "During these long months of absence from home, I have sought to atone — no, I do not mean that! — but to make some amends for my sin, and give proof of my penitence and sincerity by faithfulness to duty in my new sphere. I would like a longer trial, and a further opportunity to serve. But I hope my efforts have not been in vain. I am trusting my Saviour's Passion for all who have sinned. What can I do more? Is not that enough?"

"It is, it is, my friend!" the Chaplain said, and his voice trembled with emotion. "That is my own trust, my sole ground for hope; and as I rest my own soul thereon, wholly, wholly! — I can commend it with confidence to you."

"I have told you already — of my mother — and sister," the dying man resumed, but with feebler and more broken voice. "May I ask you to let them know how I died? They do not know — I hope they may never know! — the story of my guilt! But — it will comfort — them to hear that I did my duty to the last. Send to them my dearest love — and tell them I hope to see them

in a better life. Fare — well! Now read to me the story — of the — Prodigal Son.”

The Chaplain opened his pocket Bible at the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, and read the touching story. . . . “For this my son was dead, and is alive again, he was lost, and is found!” . . . As he ended the parable with these words, he noted that the Sergeant's lips moved as if he were trying to repeat them after him.

He shut the Book, and kneeled in prayer.

When he was done, and as he spread his hands above the dying man for the beautiful apostolic benediction, he saw that the seal of death was already falling upon his comrade's face. . . . “Grace, Mercy and Peace from God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, be with you and abide, now and forever more! Amen.” . . . He knelt on, in silent prayer, and watched until the great change had come. Then he arose and called the orderly, and together they composed the corpse for the burial.

In the mighty harvest of death that was being reaped everywhere upon land and sea, before the walls of Cartagena, there was neither time nor inclination for much formality or wonted pomp in the burial of the dead. But so deep had been the impression made by Hospital Steward Oster's rare fidelity and beautiful devotion to his trying duty, that he was buried with honors of war denied to many of high rank. It was a spontaneous and voluntary tribute, that men rarely withhold from genuine acts of self-denying heroism. Most of all, he was mourned by the convalescents who had known his loving care and skill.

Among those who followed the Sergeant to the grave, and whose company furnished the firing squad, was Ben-Thee, the sole repository, save Chaplain Henry now, of the dark chapter in Oster's life. Ben-Thee marked the grave, which had been made beneath a tall royal palm, with a board on which was carved a rude cross, and the words, “Hospital Steward Alfred Oster. In Peace.” It was not much; but it was a tribute of sincere respect

for one of whom it could be truly said, "He was dead, but is alive again; he was lost, but is found."

The carnival of military inconsequence and disaster on the plains of Cartagena, ended in the assault upon a castle and redoubt that bore the name of St. Lazarus. It lay back from the harbor's entrance on an eminence forty or fifty feet high, but was overlooked by the brow of a hill that entirely commanded it. The redoubt was in itself insignificant, though advantageously situated for defense. It was a square of fifty feet in dimensions with three demibastions having two guns in each face, one in each flank, and three in the curtain. The entire British force available for the service was marshaled for an attempt upon this redoubt. It was resolutely and successfully defended by the Spaniards, and the British failure to take it practically ended the campaign against Cartagena.

In this, however, the most effective Spanish auxiliary, the yellow fever, had a conspicuous part. A current record of the period says that "after St. Lazarus the troops sickened fast. Between Thursday morning and Friday afternoon they had dwindled from 6645 to 3200; and of these 1200 were Americans." One is reminded by such figures of the daily sick and mortality reports that came to General Shafter's headquarters during the American siege of Santiago in the Cuban campaign of 1898.

The British fleet withdrew from Cartagena on May 12, 1741. But not willing to return home with such small show of glory, it sailed for Panama intent upon conquest there. After a period of dawdling, General Wentworth concluded that he had not land force enough to warrant assault; and so the combined sea and land forces sailed away to try their fortunes in Cuba.

They passed Santiago in the track of Admiral Sampson's fleet of 1898, but as they looked up at the frowning walls of the Moro that guarded then and still guards the narrow gate to the harbor and the town, they concluded

it was too strongly fortified to justify an attack. The fleet therefore pushed on to the fine large harbor of Guantanamo. Here again the Americans of 1898 were in their wake. The writer recalls an official visit here to the well-ordered encampment of our marines, and of a battalion of Cuban volunteers, and later the imposing display of the united American fleets rendezvoused in the spacious bay.

Here again Wentworth blocked action by declaring that he could not get his artillery over land to attack Santiago. Perhaps he was wise in declining the venture. It will be remembered by Cuban campaigners of 1898 that the troops of General Wheeler, led by the Rough Riders of Wood and Roosevelt, made the difficult landing at Diquiri, and pushed on through the coast range, after the skirmish at Las Guasimas, to the plain of San Juan, just back of Santiago. Something of the same plan seems to have been in the minds of the leaders of the British expedition of 1741. But Guantanamo was too far distant to warrant such rapid movements, and with the scant facilities of that day a landing at Diquiri would have been impossible.

In all these operations the American colonial troops took part; and it is interesting to trace such parallel as exists between their course and that of their countrymen one hundred and fifty-eight years afterward. In the meantime the antagonism between the dashing sailor Vernon and the dawdling soldier Wentworth had developed into open hostility. Admiral Vernon, whose courteous self-control had long been strained, finally broke forth in indignant remonstrance. In the end both commanders were recalled to England.

The American colonial troops appear to have been disbanded in 1742. But it was a scant and broken remnant that returned. Of the Massachusetts quota of five hundred, only fifty lived to get home. Little better fortune attended the Pennsylvania contingent as at last they passed the Capes of the Delaware and landed, a

grateful company, in Philadelphia. Among the few who returned were Ben-Thee and Arthur Burbeck. On the hostile shores of the Spanish Main, and in the waters of many a sea between, lay the bones of several hundred of the strong men who left with them in the young autumn of 1740, full of high valor and bright hopes. And more than twenty thousand stalwart young Britons shared with these unfortunates the mournful issue of that fatal Expedition.

Scarce a trace of it now remains upon the face of American history. But among the few is one that will never perish. Among the Virginia contingent was Captain Lawrence Washington, who subsequently named his beautiful seat upon the Potomac, after the English Admiral—"Mount Vernon." In due course, this passed into the possession of George Washington, and will remain a sacred spot to all lovers of civil liberty, as the place where rest the ashes of the "Father of their country."

CHAPTER XIX

DOROTHY GOES UPON HER MISSION

The special meeting of Friends to consider the mission of Dorothy and Kersey Owen, was not unanimous in opinion as to its propriety. Some opposed it as unwise in the present irritated condition of the Delawares to whom first of all Dorothy proposed to go. If ill should befall the messengers, the consequences would be unfortunate; for it would anger the frontier people, and would be made a cause or an excuse for retaliation, and so bring on hostilities.

On the other hand, were warmly urged the example and teachings of Christ and His Apostles; the custom of Friends to send out messengers on missions of inquiry and evangelization; and their especial duty to those who had so long dwelt among them, and who had been grievously wronged. Was not "beginning at Jerusalem" the method of primitive Christians? Then there was that sense of a Divine call, the voice of the Spirit which the Owen Friends had felt so deeply and surely. Friends must consider *that!*

As to danger, was there not the promise of the Divine presence, as good now as ever: "Lo, I am with you always?" This appeal to conscience, to the higher nature, to the spiritual elements, to the demand of duty and the Divine will, prevailed. The sending forth of the messengers was approved, and a letter was duly drawn up and signed in behalf of the true brethren of Onas (William Penn) commending the messengers to their brothers of the Indian tribes, and in particular to the Delawares.

Two days thereafter, while busy with preparations for his journey, Father Owen had a call from Louper

Jan. "I have come," said he, "to apply for the place of guide and interpreter in your expedition to the Indians. I know the country to which you are going. I am well versed in all the methods of camping and traveling in forest and on stream, and getting from them food and shelter and all needed comforts. I have had long experience with Indians, and know the dialects of several tribes. I propose to undertake for you all those arrangements necessary to make you and your daughter comfortable; to protect your health from inclement weather and other threatening conditions; and also to shield you from parties, both white and red, who may try to plunder or molest you. You will need such a man, I am sure, and I believe I can give you satisfaction."

"Sit down, friend! What is thy name?" Father Owen was so far impressed, as to be willing to consider this plausible proposition.

"It is John Cole, sir; but I am better known as Jan Cole, or on the border simply as Louper Jan."

"Has thee brought any recommendations? — for thee is a stranger to me."

"No written papers, if that is what you mean. I never had call for such, in my line. But I came here in the employ of Mr. Benjamin Owen, as one of the guides for his pack-train. He is off in the Spanish war, or I would refer you to him. He knows all about me and my merits as a forest guide and ranger, or he would not have employed me and brought me here. You probably do not remember, but he presented me to you with the other men at Clarke's Inn, on the day of our first arrival five years ago. Your daughters and sons also saw me at the Fair and foot races with Mr. Ben-Thee and with Arthur and Andy Burbeck and Cato."

After a brief deliberation, Father Owen remarked: "Well, friend, I believe we will need thee, or someone like thee; and if my daughter is favorable, and we can agree on the terms, I feel inclined to include thee in our

party. Call here to-morrow, about this time, and I will let thee know our decision."

Dorothy at once approved. "If Ben-Thee, who probably knew him and his merits, esteemed him so highly as to give him a trusted place in his train, surely he will serve well enough in our train!" Her argument overleaped the vast difference in conditions and functions in the two positions, but it sufficed. She was at her father's office the next day when Jan called, and the man's appearance was so far favorable that he was engaged; and in all their preparations proved a valuable helper.

The parting with Mother Lydia was touching and tearful. But the good woman having once been convinced that the mission was a religious duty, and that her loved ones were following the Divine call, bowed submissively, and controlled all violent outbreaks of grief. Phœbe and the Owen boys (Grace remaining with the mother) mounted horses and accompanied Dorothy and the father beyond the Fords of Schuylkill. They were joined in this by a number of others, personal friends and well-wishers, and a few of the heads of Meeting, thus forming a goodly escort.

The white canvas-covered wagon drawn by a pair of horses and driven by a trusty man who had long been in the Owen employ, led the van. Close by came a couple of pack-horses loaded with sundry camping conveniences, with Louper Jan as general superintendent. Dorothy and Kersey Owen followed on horseback, and around them and behind them rode the family and near friends. Then came the friendly escort, riding loosely four abreast, and forming quite a cavalcade.

When at last the escort paused, and final farewells were said, and from a summit of one of the beautiful hills beyond the Schuylkill, Dorothy looked back upon the retiring cavalcade until all had disappeared among the woods through which the road wound, there dawned upon her a vision of the magnitude of her undertaking.

As she turned away with a sigh, and galloped to overtake the wagon train, she felt that now indeed she had cut loose from home and friends and civilization, and had committed herself without reserve into the care of Him upon Whom henceforth she must wholly depend. For although her father and the helpers he had provided, prevented her from a feeling of absolute loneliness, she was sensible that once they should have come to the Indian settlements, these would be but weakling barriers between her and the overwhelming floods of ignorance, passion, prejudice, and superstition to which she would be exposed, unless the Divine Hand should withhold them and uphold her. Upbraiding herself for her momentary faltering of faith, she lifted her heart Heavenward, and calmly set her face to the west.

There was much in the character of the country through which they slowly passed for several days, to win the attention of the wayfarers. Dorothy was not unfamiliar with forest scenery, yet her interest rarely flagged. For, with all her deeper concern for things spiritual, she had a large and true sympathy with nature, that made her alive, in all her faculties, to the animated life covertly and openly manifest everywhere around her.

Occasional gaps in the forestage, covered with jagged stumps and heaps of blackened brands, showed where a pioneer was hewing out a homestead from the continuous woods that shaded the rich soil. A few straggling villages, with here and there at favorable points a more ambitious settlement, appeared along the route. Rude inns at rare intervals dotted the trail, the centers at times of groups of packmen, teamsters and immigrants. But still the native wilderness held its own so long undisturbed sway, and seemed to smile in the face of such petty scars as man had made upon its vastness.

Dense masses of trees, both deciduous and evergreen, rolled over hills, climbed mountains, crept across valleys, and edged their undulating course along rivers and creeks, often seeming to stand as thick as grain-stalks

in a wheat-field or grass-blades on a mead. At times the monotonous forest's face was broken by an open space which the natives had utilized for corn-fields, in which squaws only lately might have been seen at work hoeing the young stalks. Now, a group of deer were quietly grazing therein,—an antlered stag with does and their fawns, lifting their heads to gaze at the passers-by, or timidly ambling into the edge of the woods till the coast should be clear again.

"Alas!" said Dorothy, "that this peaceful scene should be scarred by the cruel hands of human hate, and its beautiful solitudes echo with discords of war!"

"It is indeed pitiful, my daughter!" was Father Owen's reply. "And it seems a sad reflection that all this boundless wealth of nature, with its measureless possibilities for the growth of civilization, should serve no better end than the battle-ground and hunting-field of a few savage tribes. Could the great Creator have meant so much of earth's most fertile spaces to be thus lost to humanity's highest good?"

"Did not the Creator," Dorothy rejoined, "who has made of one blood all the nations of the earth, and who has determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitations, determine for these red tribes this great wilderness for their bounds and habitation?"

"It may be so, indeed. And it may even be that we Englishmen are the transgressors, and have overleaped our appointed bounds, and obtruded upon the Heaven appointed habitations of others. If so, may the Good Father forgive us, and order all things for the best! Yet, surely, were the red men to submit their lives even partly to the law and yoke of Christ, there would be here enough for them and enough for us, and enough for millions yet to come after us! Can the All-Father approve that such immense acreages should lie waste and unimproved while multitudes of His human children are landless, homeless, foodless? But these are deep problems, my child. Let us forward in faith to the duty of

the hour, as it lies in our conscience and judgment, and leave the results to God."

At John Harris's ferry (now Harrisburg) they made a few days' stay, finding there Mrs. Arthur Burbeck and her boy Andy. They also met Mrs. Esther Harris, who was Kate Burbeck's aunt, and who not only gave them good advice as to supplies needed for their journey, but was able to sell them most of these from her husband's country store.

Dorothy, who had taken a great fancy to Andy Burbeck when he visited Philadelphia in Ben-Thee's train in 1737, was anxious to have him go with them, for a little while at least, as her special attendant. He was now a stout lad of fourteen or fifteen, well versed in border ways, keen-witted and skillful, full of healthful life and spirits, good-tempered, and with all his rollicking ways, a cautious, observant and close-mouthed youth, wise and prudent beyond his years. The rough school in which he had been reared, had been a rare discipline for him, and he had rarely profited by it.

His mother, a woman of strong natural abilities, had taught him to read from the Bible and the Westminster Shorter Catechism. Many portions of the former, and all the answers to the latter he knew by heart. Besides these two books, his scant library held Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" and his "Holy War." These, the latter especially, were his favorite volumes; and though he could not enter into the inner spiritual sense of these masterly productions, he found them an unfailing source of interest. His vivid imagination supplied the background and infilling for the author's pictures, and gave interpretations and added accessories that would have caused the writer's ears to tingle, could he have shared the boy's confidence and grasped his views. These books created a new world for the lad, exciting, full of incident, and peopled with creatures of a strange sort, with whom he had familiar converse, when the practical duties of frontier life gave him a little pause.

As Andy had been left by the absent father, especially commissioned to be his mother's helper and protector, Dorothy's scheme was not favored at first. But the substantial offer of the rich merchant was so tempting, and the advantages otherwise so promising, that Aunt Esther advised acceptance, agreeing to look after her niece in Andy's room, should occasion require. Thus Andy, not unwillingly, but with all a boy's eagerness for new adventures, took up his rôle of personal attendant and body-guard of the fair missionary, of whom he was thenceforth a devoted servant, champion and friend. He transferred to her and with augmented fervor, the chivalrous attachment which he had cherished for her sister Grace ever since that day of the Academy foot races when he won the soubriquet of "Grace's Kiss."

The coming of the bright and ready-handed boy into the little camp was welcomed by all save one. Louper Jan had established himself over and around Dorothy's tent as her special protector. It was a gradual process, but progressive by ceaseless increments, until it became at last an embarrassment and annoyance. At all hours of the day he hovered around her, taking or making occasions for obtruding himself with proffered offices. Such attentions were as unwelcome as they were unnecessary; and at last Dorothy felt compelled quietly to rebuke them. This checked but did not end the annoyance; and a large factor in the engagement of Andy Burbeck was the wish to place a more effective barrier to these disagreeable intrusions. Thus Louper Jan was the one exception to those who cordially welcomed the lad, for he shrewdly suspected the real cause of Andy's coming.

At Harris's store the Indians were frequent callers, trading their furs for sundry supplies and for rum. Thence they found their way to the Owen camp, and with these straggling visitors Dorothy's mission began. Harris was a fur trader, and long, rude structures served as storehouses in which the skins were kept until oppor-

tunity came for shipment to Philadelphia by pack-trains.

Regard for his own safety led Harris to limit his sales of rum to the savages; and this at one time led to his being tied to a tree with threats of burning by one indignant party. However, he was released by another party, and so escaped with a temporary scare and brief inconvenience. But with Mrs. Esther the Indians, whether tipsy or sober, took no such liberties. She had the reputation of being even a better trader than her husband. She was strong, active, exceedingly vigorous and most courageous. When the Indians, chiefs or braves, became unruly through drink, she had been known to box their ears, not with dainty coquetting taps as of milady's fan, but with the forceful stroke of a muscular woman.

She was an expert in paddling the canoe. She could swim the wide Susquehanna in the spring floods. Few men could rival her for skill or endurance in horseback riding. She was a borderside Amazon; her muscles of steel were directed by an unbending will, an intrepid heart and at times a woman's tender spirit.

As the day drew towards the gloaming, Dorothy came down to the Harris store to make some simple purchases. Mrs. Esther Harris who waited upon her, bade the maid who acted as occasional assistant, go to an upper room for a required article. As the place was dark, she lit a tallow candle, which she held in her hand without a candlestick and mounted the stair. Presently she came back to make some inquiry, but without the light.

"Where is your candle?" asked Mrs. Esther.

"I set it in the flax-seed barrel, till I should return."

"But there's no flax-seed there!"

"O yes, ma'am! — back in the corner just beyant the dure —"

"Great God, woman! That's the new powder barrel! Flee for your lives! Out of the store, all of ye!" she cried to the customers and loungers.

Most of them fled at once into the street and afar. A

few stood for a moment transfixed with terror, and then followed. Mrs. Esther dashed up the stairway — into the room. There, facing her as she entered, stood the blazing candle, with its long burnt wick glowing in the center, thrust into the massed grains of powder in the open barrel! She tiptoed to it with step soft and swift as a panther's lest the jar of her tread upon the floor might dislodge the snuff, and cause the explosion which she came to prevent. With one hollowed hand she shielded the long snuff, and with the other took out daintily, quickly, deftly, the candle from its perilous receptacle, and descended the stair — safe, safe! And seemingly without a sign of nerve-shock!

There stood Dorothy — alone! Her face was colorless. Her eyes were fixed upon the door through which Mrs. Esther had disappeared and through which she now emerged holding aloft her still burning candle.

“God be praised! Thee is safe!” exclaimed Dorothy.

“God be praised that *you* are safe!” was the response. “Why didn't you run, Miss, as I told you?” queried Esther as she quenched her light.

“I do not know. I couldn't. I felt that I must wait for thee!”

“And where is that careless hussy of a maid, I wonder?”

Now Dorothy could smile — though it seemed too awful a situation, even when the danger was past, for the lighter emotions — as she recalled what had occurred. It was like the flash of a passing sunbeam, but was indelibly fixed upon her mind. Stalwart Indian warriors, and white hunters and farmers, rushing madly to the door, struggling in the jam; shouting and swearing and praying; pushing their way out, tumbling over one another in their haste, and then scudding across the street toward the river. They were thus following in the wake of the agile maid who, with fluttering hair and swinging arms and piercing cries, never stopped until

she had jumped into the edge of the stream. Here she crouched with face buried in her hands, awaiting the dreadful explosion that would wreck the life and property of her mistress, and sobbing hysterically as she rocked to and fro. Thence at last she was recalled by Mrs. Esther's loud summons to come home.

"Madam," said Dorothy, "thee is a heroine! A braver deed than this, history does not chronicle."

"Tush! It was nought! But how I would have liked to see the Indians run! Yet I cannot understand, Miss, why you didn't run yourself!"

"No more can I!" quoth Dorothy. And there the matter rested. For now the scattered fugitives, red and white, began to return, and discuss the incident in strident tones.

"White squaw much brave! Queen Esther great Chieftain!" was the Indians' comment. But the whites varied their unanimous verdict as to the courageousness of the act, by suggestions of the hardihood amounting to folly at the terrible risk the women took.

From that day on a friendship, as strong as it seemed strange between two persons of such opposite characters and conditions, sprang up between Dorothy and Esther Harris, lasting long and destined to have an important influence upon the life of at least one of the two.

CHAPTER XX

ROBIN MORE COMES HOME FROM THE WAR

Still feeble from the effects of his sickness, Robin More was put on board the "Boston," a transport bound from Jamaica for Philadelphia. Many sick and convalescent and wounded soldiers were being sent home; most of them recruits enlisted from Pennsylvania, Virginia and the Carolinas. It was not a cheerful company to sail with under any circumstances. But those who have made a like voyage from the West Indies on nineteenth century transports, furnished with modern comforts and aids for the sick, sad as their experience may have been, can have but a dim conception of the miseries of such a trip in the middle of the eighteenth century. There was, however, one inspiring thought, which for a while, at least, animated all — the ship was homeward bound!

The smell of the sea was a tonic to Robin More. He felt stronger with every league off shore; and ere the island was lost in the horizon, his interest in affairs, of late so nearly atrophied, began to return. He even had strength to do some kindly offices to those of his fellow voyagers whose condition was far worse than his own; a service as gratefully received as it was greatly needed. Such gracious acts by an officer were unexpected; for the sense of brotherhood was not so keen then as now, and the habit of helpfulness, particularly among army and navy people, was not so prevalent nor so well organized as in our day. In this at least, our age has made great progress toward better social ideals.

Several incidents occurred during the voyage, which, while depressing to most of the passengers, and threat-

ening serious results, acted like a stimulus upon Robin; quickening his vitality and adding to his strength. His experience as a mariner, his familiarity with danger, and his valor as a man, caused his spirits to rise in the face of difficulties, and gave him a wholesome and at last a commanding influence among all on board. Off San Domingo the vessel was chased by a privateer carrying the enemy's colors. It was a hot chase and a long one. The transport was heavily laden, and a poorer sailer under the close reefs that the strong wind and high seas compelled.

Late in the afternoon the pursuer was so near, that capture seemed certain. The "Boston" carried but one gun. This was given to Robin's charge. Choosing from the heartiest of the soldiers a gun crew whom he thought he could depend upon, he rallied the despondent invalids, and prepared for a stout resistance.

"Better take our chances in a fight for escape," he cried, "than the certainty of disease and death in the enemy's odious prisons; or of being forced to serve on Spanish ships against our country! Take heart! They will hardly venture to launch their boats in such a sea as this. You have been cursing the storm and the waves, which are surely unfriends to landsmen; but they will prove our salvation now."

Everything in the shape of a weapon was seized and distributed among the convalescents. The very fact that they were armed, and that there was something to do, with a chance of a successful defense, aroused their spirits and quickened their energies. Now the ships were within hailing distance, and a call was made in bad English to lay-to and surrender.

"What shall I answer the cursed Spanish privateer?" the "Boston's" master asked of Robin.

"Tell him to come and get us!" was the prompt reply.

And "Come and get us!" was the response bellowed through the trumpet across the rough sea. This was followed by an outburst of hearty British cheers.

"That's right, lads!" said Robin: "Give 'em another like that! And stand by to resist boarders! Meanwhile I'll send them your compliments."

A rare skill in gunnery was one of Robin's sea-craft accomplishments, and the gun, which he had been carefully training upon the Spaniard, was fired, while renewed shouts followed the cannon's crack like an echo. The shot was so well delivered that it created a great disturbance on the enemy's crowded deck, and led her to draw off to a more respectful distance.

She answered Robin's "compliments" with several shots; but between the heavy rolling seas and the poor Spanish gunnery, they passed harmlessly by. A second shot from the Boston's piece played among the privateer's rigging; while a third, aimed at the boats which the crew was preparing to launch, splashed in the water close by the ship's hull. The first boat launched was immediately swamped, and that ended the attempt to attack in that way.

Meanwhile, the "Boston's" master had concluded to venture more sail. The seamen mounted the swaying masts. Reefs were shaken out. The ship drove on before the wind at a high speed until in the nightfall the foe was lost to sight. Then speed was slackened; and when morning dawned, no enemy was in view. Robin in his courtly manner congratulated the master in behalf of his passengers on his gallant spirit and good seamanship. To which the master replied, like the bluff, honest sailor, that he was:

"All right enough, sir, thankee kindly! It was a close shave, an' I did my best. But I reckon that the 'best' lay in callin' on you to help. It's thanks to you, sir, that we're not all on our way to an infernal Spanish prison pen, or in Davy Jones's locker. So stand by, lads, and three cheers for Mr. More!" The cheers were given with a will, the soldiers heartily joining with the crew.

This was only the beginning of their misadventures.

A few days thereafter, the ship took fire. A panic seized the soldiers, and thereby threatened a graver peril than even the conditions justified. Matters looked hopeless. But here again Robin came to the rescue. He had so won the confidence of the unfortunate passengers, that they at once grew calm under his orders, took their places in the fire brigade that he had hastily organized, and saved the "Boston" from the most terrible of ocean calamities.

Yet another peril the unlucky transport was called to face. One of those thick fogs with which navigators of the New Jersey coasts are unhappily familiar, brought the ship into a critical position. Then for a brief space the fog lifted. It was enough. Robin's experienced eye recognized the shore upon which the master who had completely lost his bearings, was driving the vessel. He raised a warning cry. He stood by the Captain's side; and was able to pilot the "Boston" into the wide mouth of the Delaware at the Capes. Thenceforth the way was clear, and at last their troubled voyage was over.

Robin More was landed at Chester, and with many expressions of respect and gratitude, his comrades parted from him and were carried to Philadelphia where the governor and authorities took charge of them, until they could be regularly discharged. The greeting of "Mother Bell," as Robin fondly called her, was a hearty one, and in the loving welcome and comforts of the only home he ever knew, he soon regained much of his wonted vigor.

He longed intensely to look once more into Grace Owen's face, to hear again her voice, to feel the thrill of her hand-clasp. He had never forgotten her. By day, at night, in perils of sickness, in dangers of the sea, in the face of death under the enemy's fire, in dense tropical forests, on the burning sandy beach, in the deadly assault — everywhere and always her sweet face had been before him.

Yet his sense of honor and duty was stronger even than his love. He felt that Grace was not for him. The obstacles to their union seemed insurmountable. Fate had barred him from what he held to be the chief prize of life. During his absence he had not heard of her. Whether living or dead he knew not. And he would not openly ask. He had deliberately determined to eliminate her from his life, as something beyond all possibility of attainment. He had made his fight alone, within himself, apart from all sympathies. A sore, hard fight it had been, and would be; but — he could and he would overcome a passion which his reason showed him was vain and unmanly. Indeed, he had supposed that he had come good speed in that direction until his arrival at Chester, within so short a space of his beloved's person, revealed to him that the battle must be begun again.

After a few days spent in strict seclusion in the rest and comfort of the Bell cottage, he planned a visit to West Chester, to the home of a young couple whose friendship he had formed during his school-days, and had ever since kept up. The wife was a devoted friend. The husband, Henry Coates, though still a member of the Meeting, had somewhat lost standing with the leaders by favoring armed resistance of public and aggressive enemies. Yet he was not alone therein. Others, and so eminent a person as James Logan, the great Founder's secretary, felt "free" to profess that principle. Robin's part in the Vernon expedition therefore had not broken or even marred the friendship between the two men. So, strapping a roll of personal wear across the saddle, he mounted his horse and rode away over the beautiful intervening hills to his friend's farm.

He was a welcome guest; and the quiet and hearty greetings over, Henry and Hannah Coates were deeply interested listeners to Robin's story of the adventures and misadventures, the struggles, and sufferings of

soldiers and sailors alike in the Cartagena expedition.

“What a proof is all this,” Hannah Coates exclaimed, “of the rightfulness of Friends in their testimony against the wickedness of war! Thy tale of terrible experiences is a more convincing sermon than any I have heard.”

“It is indeed cruel work!” Robin admitted. “My own experience of actual war has been small; but taken with the stories I have heard seasoned warriors tell, it brings me to think that Friends are more than half right. I am not sure but I could turn Quaker myself on that point,” he added smiling. “Men talk of a perdition!” he continued with earnestness. “If there be such a place outside of earth, or of men’s imaginations, I am sure it could not be worse than the English and Colonial camps before the walls of Cartagena!”

“One would think, friend More,” Mrs. Hannah quietly remarked, “that thy experience of the possibilities of persistent human wickedness, and the penalties it inevitably brings, would have prepared thee to admit the probability that such passions and their penalties may also persist in a future state of being. But let that pass! What I would like to ask thee is: What good ground was there, in thy mind, for this war, to warrant such expenditure and waste of human life and energies?”

Robin paused a moment before answering. It was a question that needed due pondering. “Are not the Spaniards our national enemies?” at last he replied. “Have they not long been the foes of our countrymen and of our religion? Have they not time and again tried to injure and destroy us? Did not our King demand our services, and should not loyal citizens—”

“Yes, yes! I know all that! Let us grant it such force as thee claims. But what was there or is there in this particular quarrel, to demand, in righteousness, the coöperation of the English Colonies in America? Our King is trying to wrest from the King and people of Spain certain provinces which they, as the discoverers

and first occupants, have surely as good a right to as ourselves. Now, I can understand on Henry's principles, which permit defensive war, how the Spaniards of Cartagena and other West Indian ports are justified in resisting thee and thy English and colonial comrades. But on what grounds can we justify our people for trying to seize the Spaniards' lands and possessions; for hurting and slaying them, and turning their country into what thee has called a perdition?

"Thee spoke of loyalty to our government. Well, truly, loyalty to one's country and home is a natural virtue. That I do not deny. I might learn that much from the ants whose great conical mounds are raised in the wood-lots on our hills, and who fling their lives away most freely in defense of their communes. But we are not now under natural law simply. We are under Him who came to set up a Spiritual Kingdom. He is our great and supreme Law-giver now. And He has said, 'Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God!' Christ's law takes precedence—yes, henceforth and wholly—of the law of natural selfishness and human strife."

"But that is an ideal rule for an ideal condition," said Robin. "It is impracticable, in such a world as this, to live up to it."

"Did not William Penn make a practical success of government under such principles?" Mrs. Hannah retorted.

"Yes, I admit that," Robin replied. "But had it been his hap to fall upon the seats of one of the fierce and warlike tribes, instead of those of the Delawares, disarmed and cowed and disqualified from war by their conquerors, the Five Nations, Penn might not have fared so well with his holy experiment!"

"It may be. But I put an accomplished fact against your conjectural failure."

"Please understand me, friend Hannah," said Robin. "I thoroughly agree in the general unwisdom and wrong

of war. I believe that mankind will not always submit to such folly and loss as it needlessly imposes. But I fear that day is far, far distant!"

"Yes! May God forgive us!" said Mrs. Coates. "I know well, as thee does also, that the quarrel between the Kings of England and Spain is none of our making or choosing. We are as little concerned as considered therein. What interest had those poor colonists of ours who were starved, maimed, slaughtered, and whose lives were burned out by fevers and exposure in torrid climates, in such quarrels? Oh! if the men who foment these quarrels could be made to fight them out themselves! I would it might be so! There would be few wars then, I ween! But see! It is the poor peasants, and handicraftsmen and farmers who must bear the burden of toil and taxes, of sufferings and death forced on them by others, and in which they have only disadvantage and loss. My conscience and my heart rise up against the cruelty, wickedness and folly of it all!"

"There, there, Hannah!" the husband interposed. "Thee must not wax too warm over this matter. Thee knows that excitement is not good for thee; nor for thy little nursling. Let us drop the subject now. Doubtless our friend Robin has had enough of war and war-tales for the present. We can find pleasanter things with which to entertain him, perhaps."

And certainly, more interesting things, and many of them, there were to tell and talk of. The affairs of the city and colony for the last year and more were all news to Robin. One after another, and one suggesting another, they were told and talked over. Among these the most interesting was Dorothy Owen's call to minister to the Indians, and her father's joining therein. That had greatly stirred all the Friends' Meetings in the colony. Thus came in naturally the news of the Owen family. All were well as usual.

And Grace? He dare not ask particularly for her;

though he might have done so, for his friends knew nothing of his feelings for her. Yet somehow tidings came of her, also.

“She is not married, then?”

“Oh, no! there are no rumors of that, or of any entanglements leading thereto. The Owen maids all seem to be heart-whole. Indeed, Grace is now helping her brother Paul in the Academy; for since his father has arranged to go, Paul must give much time to business, and will doubtless give up teaching, ere long.”

“And how fares it with the young lady in her new duties?”

“She gets on bravely. It is said that the boys are all in love with her. Her bright mind and charming ways and gentle tactfulness have quite won their boisterous natures, so that even the rudest of them have become her chivalrous knights and helpers. They are ready to do anything for her—even master their lessons! It is a new thing to have a woman teacher for such boys; but with Grace Owen it seems to be a success. The gossip goes that since her sister’s dedication to the spiritual welfare of the native Indians, Grace has determined to give her life to the work of instructing youth. It is truly a noble mission; but no doubt so fair and talented a maiden will not escape the common lot of women, and will some day pass from spinsterhood, and join the great and worthy army of matrons.”

CHAPTER XXI

A GREAT TRANSFORMATION

That night when Robin retired, he found on the little table by his bed a copy of William Penn's "No Cross, No Crown." His admiration of the author as a statesman and philanthropist, the founder of a new and distinct type of government, led him to open the volume and glance at its contents. The conversation of the afternoon and evening had greatly agitated him. Feelings he had sought to subdue had been revived. He was wakeful; and adjusting the candle, began to read.

The book did not interest him at first, but soon a passage fixed his attention. He reread it. He read on with quickened interest. The candle had burned low ere he ceased reading, and went to bed. The book had strangely affected him. He began to speculate upon how a man of Penn's practical wisdom in statecraft and worldly affairs, could be so taken up with a system so mystical, so sentimental, so unworldly or other-worldly? Then he remembered that in his youth, ere he had achieved his mental freedom by philosophy, as he had foolishly put it, he had believed some such doctrines as Penn professed.

Thus came back to him recollections of his motherless childhood. His mother! She had died when he was little more than an infant. That was all he knew of her. Could she have been such a woman as Hannah Coates? So he pictured her. Then he thought of Dorothy Owen, and the strong and beautiful even though deluded faith that led to such a sacrifice as she had made for a lot of worthless savages. He had talked about her in the Cartagena camps with Ben-Thee, who said he had tried to discourage her plan to devote her life

to the reclamation of the Indians, as perilous and impracticable, and especially rash and certain of disastrous failure in one of her sex. "Poor woman!" Robin inwardly exclaimed, "What a cross! And—but is it a delusion? Would there, perhaps, come to her sometime—somehow—somewhere, a crown?"

—"Aye, there's the rub! for in that sleep of death, what dreams may come when we have shuffled off this mortal coil, should give us pause!" Robin was a lover of Shakespeare. That much, at least, his old Chester schoolmaster had taught him.

From Dorothy Owen and the reflections associated with her, it was an easy transition to her sister Grace. There the old conflict began anew. And ever, Reason lay prostrate before Love in the wrestlings of the night. "You ought not to think of her! It is vain; it is folly!"—urged Reason. "But I must! I cannot help it!"—cried Love. And the sweet passion prevailed in his thoughts over the sober judgment. He was compelled to grant that Reason is not supreme lord in the human mind.

The moon shone in brightly at his window. He sat up in bed. He looked out upon the garden and beyond it to a field that sloped away across a winding brook to a wood-crowned ridge. As he gazed, he seemed to see a figure—a colossal figure of Grace Owen hanging above the woods in the full moonlight, waving a branch of royal palm, such as grows at Cartagena. The figure grew gradually dim—and dimmer. It receded into the horizon. The palm branch was slowly transformed into a bunch of forget-me-nots that he had plucked from the brookside before night-fall. See! it beckoned him with the flowers held in an upright hand, and disappeared out of sight—up—up—upward, blending with the moon-illuminated sky. Robin fell back upon his bed; turned over on his side, and soon was asleep.

He arose, dreaming that he heard a cannon boom

from the walls of Cartagena. It was Henry Coates rapping at his door, and bidding him prepare for breakfast. How cool and fresh was the morning air! How pure and fragrant the breath of the garden and lawn! How clean and dainty the breakfast table looked with its snowy cloth, and the scent of the fields floating in through the open door! And when Mrs. Hannah came in with her rosy-cheeked infant cooing in her arms and waving its chubby fists, it seemed a picture of heaven on earth to the lonely-hearted and love-lorn man. Would such a home ever be his? Alas, such hopes must be quenched! They were empty as the visions of the night. His love had for him only a "cross," never a "crown!"

Yet when he sat down to breakfast, which a country lass in a trim Quaker dress was serving, and the host and hostess bowed in the "silent pause" that in a Friend's household takes the place of an audible "blessing," Robin found himself unconsciously bowing also, not simply out of politeness, but with a new emotion, something like the old-time reverence, lifting his heart upward.

Now domestic duties and farm labors called for his host's care, and Robin walked out in the fields to meditate. He turned his steps toward the wooded ridge beyond which the figure of Grace had vanished in the vision of last night. He crossed the brook where he had plucked forget-me-nots, and stooped and gathered another handful. And then—something occurred; something strange beyond all marvels he had ever personally known or dreamed of; something that turned the course of his entire life. Whence could it have come? By what power of association? Could it have been the news of Dorothy Owen's divine call and her devotion thereto? Or, his casual reference to the perdition of the Cartagena camp, and Hannah Coates's gentle allusion to it? Could it have sprung from suggestions raised by reading William Penn's "No Cross, No Crown?"

The author will not try to explain the event which he now relates. It is a mystery of our psychical being, the like of which one has found along all the paths of human history, and still finds, not infrequently, in life around us. It is an inseparable part of us—of our complex character and life. Perhaps one may as well accept the theory that Robin More held to during all his after-life unwaveringly, and fall back upon the fact of a presence among men of a Spirit of Divine Power and Love. This is what Robin long afterward wrote of what occurred on that morning:

“As I was walking in the fields alone, my mind being under no kind of religious concern, or in the least excited by anything I had heard or had thought of, I was suddenly arrested by what seemed to be an awful voice proclaiming the words ‘Eternity! Eternity! Eternity!’ It reached my very soul,—my whole inner man shook. It brought me, like Saul, to the ground. The great depravity and sinfulness of my heart were set before me, and the grief of everlasting destruction to which I was verging. I was made bitterly to cry out, ‘If there is no God, doubtless there is a hell!’ I found myself in the midst of it. For a long time it seemed as if the thundering proclamation was yet heard.”

When he returned to the house, his friends noticed his distraught manner. Had he been taken ill? Was it a return of the West Indies fever?

No! Something had happened; something strange and dreadful.

Would he tell them what?

No—not now! He did not know himself. He could not explain. God had met him in the fields; *God*—the God whom he had rejected! He hurried to his chamber. He knelt down and remained long upon his knees. He arose and walked the floor in a tumult of spirit.

Meanwhile Henry and Hannah Coates were speaking with subdued voices of their guest's case!

"Is there nothing we can do for him?" asked Henry.

"Let him alone!" said Hannah, wiser in spiritual things. "The Spirit of God is wrestling within him. Let us fear lest we do the sin of Uzzah, and reach out our hands to stay the ark that God is bringing home. Let us be quiet, and be much in prayer, and bless our God for this manifestation of His power in our midst."

They were not surprised when Robin came out of his room, and announced, very quietly, his purpose to return home at once. There was no remonstrance; no comment; no questioning. Henry went with him to the barn and helped to prepare the horse for the journey. Then as Robin was about to mount, Henry laid his hand upon his arm and in a kindly, gentle voice said:

"Robin, my friend, is it not time for thee to give thyself to God?"

That was all. Robin clasped his hand in silence. Then he said: "Farewell! And say farewell for me to your good wife. Surely, you have a treasure in her!" He mounted and was gone.

At Chester, Mother Bell remarked the change in appearance and bearing — his reticence, his solemnity, the absence of that buoyant, light-hearted manner which made him a center of joyous life wherever he was. He went at once to his room. He took from its corner on his little library-shelves his unused Bible. It was not dust-covered, for Mrs. Bell's careful hand prevented that. But it was an unknown volume to him; for though its reading and study had been part of his childhood's lessons, in his young manhood he had neglected it utterly.

Now he opened it, seeking for light and leading. Perhaps his act was prompted by motives in which superstition had some part. He turned to the Book as some might turn to a fetish, an incantation, a charm. Would it not somehow, by reason of a superhuman sanctity

within it, soothe this great disturbance that had befallen him? He read on and on—many chapters. He was disappointed. His tumult of spirit remained. Light he indeed had received, and instruction. The high and holy thoughts, in their strong, pure phrasing, fresh from the “fount of English undefiled,” fell like music upon his soul.

Mrs. Bell called him to his supper. He ate sparingly, almost in silence, and hurried back to his chamber. He took from his shelves another book, that long had stood beside his Bible, equally unused. It was an old English imprint of the Confession of Faith of the Westminster Divines, a gift from his father whose inherited orthodoxy was the chief element in his religion.

“This was the work of pious ‘men,’” Robin thought; “perhaps it may have some help for me.”

He opened at the very first chapter, and at the page whereon the character of the Holy Scripture is defined in language of remarkable beauty, force and clarity. “We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to a high and reverend esteem for the Holy Scripture; and the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is to give all glory to God); the full discovery it makes of the only way of man’s salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof—are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the word of God. Yet, notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof *is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the word, in our hearts.*”

“‘The inward work of the Holy Spirit?’” Robin repeated. “Surely this is what I need! Oh, for that witness in my heart!”

He fell upon his knees. He poured out his soul to his Maker for the gift of the witnessing Spirit upon the

written word. Then he opened the Bible and read. He walked his room, alternately reading and praying and walking the floor, until midnight was near. Yet, he had not given himself to God. The parting words of Henry Coates had come to him many times. They would not leave him. "Is it not time to give thyself to God?" He had not done that. He could not do it. Nay, he would not! That was the truth that he faced at last; he *would not* come to Christ that he might have life! He had other plans for his future, and a profession of Christianity would destroy them. He could not; he would not!

What! he, Robin More, become a Presbyterian like Mother Bell, or a parson like George Whitefield the Evangelist, or a Quaker like Father Owen or Henry Coates? No! He could not, he would not yield! Then came a voice so distinct and loud that it seemed to come from without not from within him, and he turned involuntarily to see if someone had not spoken.

"*Give thyself to God!*" it said.

He sank upon his knees and cried: "Lord, I surrender! I give myself to Thee! Have Thy will with me! I will do aught for Thee, be aught for Thee, that Thou dost require! I will break stones upon the highway like the convict gang, if thereto Thou dost bid me! Lord, I am Thine! Accept me, for my Redeemer's sake!"

The struggle was over. In that self-abnegation and surrender he found peace. He sat down at his writing-table, and deliberately wrote out a series of resolutions to bind his contract of surrender. He spread them before him, and on his knees sought grace of Heaven to keep him steadfast and true. The clock on his mantel-piece struck twelve. A new day had begun. A new life had been born. The great transformation of the Divine Spirit had been wrought within him! Then he lay down and slept; and when he awoke the day had fully broken.

When he came down to breakfast Mrs. Bell saw by

his radiant countenance that the change had come. She knew,— for she, too, had been spiritually born — the conflict he had passed through.

“O my child; my own dear boy!” she cried; and took him to her arms as often she had done when he was a lad. “Thank God; thank God! At last you have come home to your Heavenly Father?” Robin laid her head, now gray with growing years, upon his breast, and she wept silently there for joy and gratitude, while his own eyes were filled with tears.

CHAPTER XXII

ROBIN MORE COMES TO A DECISION

The great question in the spiritual career of Robin More had been decided. But there immediately faced him another which mightily perplexed him. He saw it to be his duty to embrace the Christian religion publicly, and to enter upon a life of active obedience to the laws of Jesus Christ. But in which one of the several denominations of the Church should he unite his worship and his work? The question at last narrowed itself to two. The hereditary prejudices of his father, should he incline to express preference for any, he felt sure would strongly favor some branch of the Church of Scotland. That Mother Naomi Bell was a devout Presbyterian also had great weight with him. Another person whose judgment he highly valued was attached to the same Communion—his old Scotch-Irish school-master, Hugh Andrews.

Feeling the need of wise counsel, he resolved upon a visit to Mr. Andrews. He found the aged pedagogue in his little school-room at the noon hour. He was seated at a rude table just before the high desk which served as a sort of public throne from which the general exercises and lessons were conducted. Around three sides of the room were ranged against the wall a continuous bench, which was fronted by a continuous sloping desk, whose continuous hollow interior was used as a repository for the books, lunch bags and other paraphernalia of the students. Immediately in front of this continuous wall-desk were arranged high backed benches on which sat the little folk who were learning the rudiments of education. Here in this primitive academy

had Robin got such schooling as he had acquired, passing up gradually from the front seats, as an A-B-C scholar, to the higher forms. And here Master Andrews was engaged in his usual noon-work of ruling copy books and setting copies.

He sat at his table with a round ruler in one hand, and a pencil in the other, and a goose-quill pen thrust behind one ear. His scanty gray hairs were combed up from each side of his cheeks into a point above his forehead. His thin smooth face in repose had a rather stern expression; but in the crow's-feet drawn around the corners of his large blue-gray eyes, there lurked a twinkle that was often stirred up, and easily widened out into a broad smile. At such times his face was a remarkably fine one, and must once have been handsome.

Robin stood quietly at the open door for a few moments, and watched the old gentleman as he rolled his round ruler down the white page before him, scoring with his pencil, as it rolled, the lines upon which the tyro in writing was to repeat the copy which the master was to "set" upon the top line. He had acquired such skill in this exercise that although the ruler traversed the page as rapidly as the penciling hand could move, it was impossible to detect a variation from the straightness of the alignment. This feat had always had a strange fascination to Robin, even when he was head-boy, and was one of the marvels of his school-days. It was interesting now, and aroused old and pleasant associations.

The Master laid his rule and pencil aside, dislodged his quill from its rack back of his ear, and dipping it into his ink-pot, began to write a copy. Then Robin entered the door, near which Mr. Andrews sat, and spoke. At once the master was upon his feet. The stern face relaxed into a bright smile, and a welcome grasp was given and received with a heartiness such as often passes between old teachers and former pupils. Robin was not long in entering upon his errand, for the school-hour was near at hand; and although the Master was not a

demonstrative man, there was a warm expression of sympathy with his former pupil in the change that had come to him.

“Well, my lad,” when Robin’s case had been stated, “I was just writing one of my old copies — one in D, which you will doubtless remember. I can think of no advice to give you better than this:

Dare to do your duty and —

The copy you see is unfinished” — Mr. Andrews pointed to the sentence that partly filled the line, written in a large fair text. “But I dare say you will recall it.”

“Yes indeed,” was the answer. “I remember most of your copy texts. They have many a time probed my conscience, and strengthened a righteous purpose, or shunted me from an evil one. And none has been a better friend to me than this one: ‘Dare to do your duty, and leave results to God.’ I think I am quite willing to do my duty now. But the difficulty is to know just what my duty may be. And I have come to you to get some light upon it, if I can.”

“Well, Robin, I might send you off to the parson, perhaps,” said Mr. Andrews, “and no doubt he might help you. But our clergymen are naturally apt to be a little prejudiced in favor of their own Communion; as indeed I confess that I am myself. Your experience has thus far been wholly without ministerial influence, and perhaps it might be as well to let it so continue, for the present. There is a deal of religious excitement in our colony, wrought up by the preachings of the Rev. George Whitefield, and Mr. Gilbert Tennent and others. I would counsel you to steer clear of them just now. They have done and are doing a good work for many. But I think for the present you will be the better for listening to the ‘still small voice.’ Sober reflection, quiet meditation, reading and study of the Bible, and prayer for the Spirit’s guidance, will be pretty sure to bring you to the right decision. I like the spiritual liberty, the

intelligence, the steadfast devotion to principle, and the order of my own Church. It is the Church of your father, the Church of your baptism; and perhaps you could do no better than to make it the Church of your active profession. But if you have leadings elsewhere, do not decide until you are thoroughly satisfied, and then abide by your decision. The field for Christian duty and service is so wide and pressing in every denomination of the Church in these Colonies, that you will find enough to do in whatever one you may choose. But there, I hear the scholars' voices approaching, and we must separate now. May God the Spirit guide you, my dear boy! Farewell."

The youthful faces that trooped brightly into the schoolroom as Robin passed out, and who greeted the Master with the wonted obeisance, noted upon his countenance an expression of unusual placidity. The quiet smile that beamed thereon as his visitor left, did not fade away, but lingered throughout the short remainder of the afternoon. There was a gentleness and patience in his manner toward even the most perverse pupils that all the scholars marked. Matters must have gone on pleasantly at the Master's home? Or had that handsome officer brought him good news of his son from the war?

Neither of these, young hearts! The good man simply was happy in the prospect that another of his "boys" had chosen the better part, and gave promise of success in life. And had not Robin More been one of his most trying scholars in his day?

Even the Chester school-boys knew something of the domestic trials of Master Andrews' life. He had but one son, and he, contrary to his parents' wishes, had gone off to the Spanish West Indies with the Pennsylvania recruits. His mother's grief thereat had been so great — for her life was wrapped up in him — that it acted unfavorably upon a temper already sufficiently irritable, and had quite unbalanced her mind.

“ Pure ill-temper and nothing else ! ” said old-fashioned Doctor Laird. “ She has never tried to control herself ; and in the face of an unusual provocation and disappointment has shipped the rudder altogether . ”

“ ’ Deed an’ she hadna far to gae , ” was the comment of her next-door neighbor. “ A vixen she has lived, an’ a vixen will she die, barrin’ the special marcies o’ the Lord. She was daft on the matter o’ haein’ her own wull ; an’ could never bide bein’ crossed in the laste bit. An’ that’s a specie’ o’ insanity, I ventur ? ”

Most folk agreed with Mistress Rankin and the old-fashioned doctor. But not Master Andrews. “ She has been a good and economical housekeeper, a loyal wife, and a faithful and fond mother. If betimes her tongue has been a little sharp — she has doubtless had sore provocation, poor soul ! ”

The Master’s friend, the Presbyterian parson, shook his head gravely, when the matter was mentioned in his presence. “ Poor Andrews ! ” he said with a sigh : “ I fear me he knows too well the Psalmist’s bitter experience. ‘ What shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue ? Sharp arrows of the mighty with coals of juniper. Woe is me that I sojourn in Meshech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar ! ’ ” It was a genuine sympathy, doubtless, for it was shrewdly suspected that the parson himself was not without experience, though of a milder sort, of what it means to “ dwell in the tents of Kedar ! ”

After the tempest of anger and grief that followed the departure of young Andrews for Cartagena, matters came to a crisis at the Master’s house. Mrs. Andrews came back from the transport to her home overwhelmed with rage, disappointment and sorrow. All her vials of wrath she poured out upon her husband, whose sorrow was as keen as and even deeper than her own. In the pitch of her excitement she resolved to leave the Master, with whom her heated imagination had somehow associated her son’s departure, though indeed it was quite the reverse of that.

She announced her purpose, and straightway began making what she termed an equal division of the household goods. Mr. Andrews well knew by long experience that remonstrance would be vain and opposition worse. He therefore went off to school, whose sanctity for some occult reason his wife never obtruded upon, and left her to the devices of her own heart. When he returned at noon the work was done. The goods were divided into two parts in every room, and with an equity that was striking, though in some features amusing. The dame had already been out and rented a couple of vacant rooms, and a carter was at the door to transport her share of the goods. She was an energetic body, and usually lost no time in carrying out her plans.

"There!" she exclaimed as the Master entered. "I've divided everything fairly, share and share alike. You can't say that I have taken a thing more than my honest half. There's nothing left but this big Bible. I think I ought to have that. How can one start housekeeping without a Bible? A Bible and salt must always go in first. Besides, you've got your Greek an' Latin Bibles that you're aye palaverin' about, and will need this the less."

Now it so happened that this particular book was one especially prized by Mr. Andrews. It had been a present from a number of his favorite pupils, among whom was Robin More. He therefore urged a gentle remonstrance; and appealing to the sense of justice which she had so rigidly adhered to, ventured to suggest that this book was in an especial sense his property.

That set the match to Madam's passions. "You arrant heathen!" she cried. "Would you send your wife out of the house without the Word of God to bring her a blessing? An' you an elder in the Church? Fie upon you!"

She snatched the Bible from the little stand where it was wont to rest, seized a large bread-knife from a table, and ere the Master could grasp her purpose, or even raise

a cry of remonstrance, she had severed the book in twain along the back.

"There!" she shouted, flinging down one of the halves before him. "There is your half of the Bible, and much good may it do you! I've dealt generously wi' ye, too; for I've gi'en ye what they say is the better half — the New Testament. An' I've keepit the Auld Testament for myself, for I aye liked best the bonnie Psalms!"

The Master was horrified at this act. Never before had his forbearance been so strained. But he recovered his patience, and without a word of anger or remonstrance watched the dame go forth of the house in most stately wise, with an air of injured innocence mingled with triumph, hugging under one arm her own half-Bible and carrying in the other hand a vessel of salt. The carter came in for her belongings, and the flitting was duly finished. Thenceforth for a while there were two Andrews' households in Chester, the Master's and the Dame's. And the good man saw to it secretly that whatever might be lacking in his own home, his wife's quarters lacked for nothing.

As Robin More walked up the street from the school-house, he stopped suddenly. He smote himself smartly. "There!" he muttered. "What a selfish, thoughtless man I have been! I meant to tell my old Master the news that I have from his son John. But in my self-absorption in my own case, I forgot it until this moment. I am ashamed of myself!" He wheeled sharply around, and walked back to the school. It was almost unheard of to interrupt a lesson-hour, but Robin ventured to do so.

"My dear Master," he began, "I crave your pardon! I had intended to give you some news of your son. But I was so selfishly absorbed in my own affairs that I let it pass until too late."

The old man's face flushed with anticipation. "No news is good news, it is said. I confess when I first saw you, I feared you might have bad tidings. But when

you said nothing of the lad, I knew that you had nothing of that sort, at least, to tell."

"Thank God, no! On the contrary when I left, John was in good health; as good at least as anyone can be in the camp before Cartagena. I had not seen him for some weeks before leaving, but I heard from him through Captain Owen. The camp was ringing with a gallant exploit he had performed in an assault upon the walls. He rushed through a storm of bullets and grape-shot, and brought back in his arms — you know how strong he is — the wounded major of his regiment, a kinsman of Lord James Cavendish, our General. The men cheered him wildly as he came safely in, and the Colonel promoted him to be Color-Sergeant on the spot. Oh, it was a gallant act and a great honor for our Chester boys, and we were proud indeed of the son of our old Master."

All the lads in the school had dropped their books and sat with rapt faces, eager eyes and open mouths, taking in Robin's story, which he purposely had told loudly enough for them to hear. The Master stood, with pride and love playing across his countenance and the tears streaming down his withered cheeks.

"Three cheers for Color-Sergeant John Knox Andrews!" called the head-boy, rising upon his bench. Every lad was on his feet in a trice, and never in the history of the Chester Academy did the old building ring and ring again as on that day.

"I think — dear boys!" the Master began with unsteady voice and broken speech — "There, there! thank you, thank you all! That is — quite enough! I think — with your consent, of course! — I might venture to — to give you a half-holiday."

"Hurrah, hurrah! Three cheers for the Master!" called the head-boy. They were given with rare goodwill. "And now three for Lieutenant More!" In which, really, the school-master departed from his usual dignity and also joined.

Then off trooped the lads with a rush — though not

forgetting their "manners to the Master" as they left — and out of the room with a whoop, whence they dispersed through the town, to scatter the news.

Robin remained to tell Mr. Andrews such details of his son's deeds and welfare as he could recall, and the afternoon had well advanced ere the father's heart was satisfied.

"May I ask of you a favor — a great favor?" he said, as at last Robin turned away. "Would — you mind — going up to where my wife lives, and telling her this news? It will be better than food and medicine to the poor mother's hungry heart."

Off went Robin upon his errand of friendship and kindness. The Master stayed behind to shut the windows and put the room to rights, and then closing the door, he kneeled down by his writing-table, to pour out his heart in gratitude to God, and to pray, as he had never ceased to do, for his beloved son amid the perils of camp and siege. And ere he rose, he commended to a Heavenly Father's care — as he had done every day for many years — the boys of his school. Then he locked the door, and walked with a lighter step and surely with a lighter heart, to his lonely home. The good news had already sped, and many times he was stopped on the way and greeted with warm congratulations by neighbors and townsmen.

So on he moved to his house-gate. "Ah! who is this flying down the street, with streaming hair, and dress fluttering with the swiftness of the gait? Can it be? Yes! it is — his wife!" She flew through the gate — into the yard — and flung herself, with the old impulsive mode, upon his bosom as he stood by the door-step.

"O Hugh, my husband! I have heard the news you sent me by Robin More. I have come back to you! Will you receive me? For our boy's sake — will you forgive? I beg you on my knees!" And she sank upon the paving-stones and clasped his feet.

"Aye, Jenny, my lass! Heartily and fully!" He

stooped and lifted her up, put back her gray, disordered locks, and kissed her wrinkled brow, on which his hot tears of joy were falling. Then he opened the door and led her in. And that night ere he laid down to sleep, he read again — as often he had read — out of his mutilated Bible the story of that one in the Lord's parable who had been lost, but was found.

The next morning Robin, with his great question still unsolved, mounted his horse and rode over to his friends the Coates's at West Chester. There the light had first broken in upon him on that morning when his spiritual life had been born. Here it might be, he would find the open door to his spiritual activities. Henry and Hannah Coates received him with a joy which was not the less sincere and deep because of its quietness. He could tell them now the whole strange story of his conversion. And no tale could have been heard by them with keener interest, though thrilling with deeds of chivalry by knights of renown, and alive with the loves of fair ladies of high rank.

Nor did it seem so very marvelous to these devout Friends. Had not their Society been established upon such experiences? Had not the Founder of their colony and his "Holy Experiment" therein, come to them through personal experience not unlike? Nay, had not the Church of Jesus and the Apostles of Christianity been cradled amid such scenes? Why then should visitations of the Holy Spirit for the personal call of souls be thought a wonderful thing? The wonder was that their unbelief should cause it to be so rare. God forgive them! They would rejoice in this glimpse of the "dayspring from on high" that had come to their friend in their own home, and would trust the gracious Spirit for yet more.

In so devout, peaceful and sympathetic an atmosphere, Robin could not but feel at rest. The fact that these friends were of his own age brought them more closely together. The day following his arrival, the Coates's had

been invited to dine at a neighboring farm, and Robin went with them. The host was a retired English army officer, and the special guests were two English women Friends who were on a religious visit to Pennsylvania. The family was one of culture and refined manners; the conversation was elevated and spiritual. After dinner there was what Friends called "a religious opportunity," and several communications were made, chiefly by the visiting women ministers. One of these particularly impressed Robin More; and as the incidents of this and the succeeding day had a great and permanent influence upon the character whose development we are here seeking to present, it may be well to quote from his own narrative:

"As Friend Deborah addressed me, it seemed as if the Lord opened my outward ear and my heart. Her words partook of the efficacy of that 'Word' which is 'quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword.' She seemed like one reading the pages of my heart, with clearness describing how it had been, and how it was with me. I was like Lydia; my heart was opened. I felt the power of Him who hath the key of David. No strength to withstand the Divine visitation was left in me. Oh, what sweetness did I there feel! It was indeed a memorable day. I was like unto one introduced into a new world. The Creation and all things around me bore a different aspect. My heart glowed with love to all. The awfulness of that day of God's visitation can never cease to be remembered with peculiar interest and gratitude, as long as I have the use of my mental faculties."

The next day Divine worship was appointed to be held at the Friend's Meeting-House, and the two English women Friends were invited, it being hoped that they might be moved to speak. Robin attended, and it was a pleasant sight to see the well-kept horses drawing snug wagons filled with comely and thrifty Quakers, threading the country roads toward the plain but trig looking sanctuary. The sheds built at one side of the

Meeting-House grounds, were soon filled with the teams, and after the little flutter of dismounting from the chairs on which the women had ridden, and of the friendly greetings interchanged, the worshipers entered the house. The deep Sabbath stillness that pervaded the outer world, seemed intensified by the silence within. There is always something profoundly impressive in the silences of assembled human beings. On the upper gallery sat the two English Friends.

“The sight of them”—continuing Robin’s narrative—“brought solemn feelings over me. But I soon forgot all things around me. For in an inward silent frame of mind, seeking for the Divine Presence, I was favored to find in me what I had so long sought for without me. I felt the Lord’s power in such a manner that my inner man was prostrated before my blessed Redeemer. A secret joy filled me in that I had found Him after whom my soul had longed. I was as one nailed to my seat. I was so gathered in the temple of my heart before God, that I was wholly absorbed with what was passing there. Thus had the Lord opened my heart to seek Him where He may be found.”

It was a strange experience. It is a remarkable record. It is hard for one of practical habits and organization, controlled by the ordinary views of men, and the impulses common to the average human being, to understand such a state of mind; and especially to see how it can subsist side by side with the most intense practical activity in affairs, without in the least disturbing the balance or diminishing the degree thereof. But as a study in psychology and the spiritual life of our kind, it commands earnest consideration.

In this estate of quiet religious ecstasy Robin More passed out of the meeting, sat in the Coates’ farm-wagon, and drove through the beautiful rural scenes to his friends’ home. The deep Sabbath stillness, the soft sun-illumined air, the whole repose of the landscape and the glory and beauty that lay over and upon it, were in de-

lightful harmony with his spirit. The question that had troubled him was settled — settled, as he firmly believed, by inward guidance of the Spirit of God. He would — he must be a Friend! The consequences to himself of this decision; the revolution to be wrought thereby in his life, he clearly foresaw. But by the help of God, he would face all, and meet all with a firm will and an unflinching faith.

CHAPTER XXIII

DOROTHY'S MISSION CAMP UPON THE SUSQUEHANNA

The time came when Dorothy felt that she must leave Harris's, and push into the heart of the Indian settlements. She had not been unmindful of her mission, nor idle therein, no, not for a day! Small groups of braves with their peltry for sale, and sometimes accompanied by their squaws and children, would drop into Harris's for barter. That trader's storehouses were filling with the furry products of the chase. These the Indians had exchanged for knives, hatchets, blankets, powder and lead, kettles, hoes, paint, cloths and guns, articles which had become necessities to them since the white men had taught them their uses. These hunters and shoppers, and stragglers adrift after their roving fashion, were sure to find their way to the "white wigwam" of Dorothy, within or before which, or under a massy oak beside the tent, she had many conferences. But such audiences Dorothy and her father felt to be too transient for any permanent good effect. They must away therefore to the real Indian settlements!

Higher up the Susquehanna were the new villages of the Delawares, into which they had been forced by their remorseless conquerors and masters, the Five Nations, under the unprincipled policy of Thomas Penn. Thither Dorothy turned her face, having for a guide and interpreter a Mohican named Two-tongues, whom Mrs. Harris had recommended as sober, friendly, trustworthy and an ally of the Delawares.

"But do not forget, my young lady," she added, "that you cannot cease your vigilance for a moment with even the best of these people. I heard you, the other

day, teaching them the Holy Scripture that bids us 'watch and pray.' They will watch — be sure of that — though I will not guarantee the other. However, see to it that your father and his helpers do not forget to watch, also! As you value your life, and what is more, your honor, insist on all your party watching, whether they pray or no. I have heard many good and holy words from you, my dear lady, for which I am thankful, for they are scarce enough on the frontier; and I will not forget to put up a bit prayer for you betimes. For I was brought up in the Church of England, and know my religious duty even if I do not do it. But my parting advice is, 'Watch and pray' — especially watch!"

"I thank thee heartily," was Dorothy's reply, "for thy loving thought and prayer for me. But I assure thee, Aunt Esther, I have no anxiety for my life. I am trusting Him of whom it is said: 'He will not suffer thy foot to be moved. He that keepeth thee will not slumber.' Farewell!"

The journey through the dense forest along the Susquehanna was one of great natural beauty, though not easy to bring a two-horse wagon through. But at last the stopping-place was reached, a large village of the Delawares. Clusters of smaller villages were seated at various distances, and from points high up the river where Nanticokes, Conoys and Mohicans were settled, detached groups of those tribes were intermingled with the Delawares. Thus the Indian town, Shamokin, as it was called, and which gave title to the modern city of that name, was a good center from which to propagate the religious views that Dorothy and Father Owen had come to teach.

The town was new. The inhabitants were poor, having so lately been forced from their former seats. There was some little show of regularity in the arrangement of streets, though many conical bark wigwams and rude imitations of white men's log cabins were planted at random in spots convenient to the stream. Lank, half-

bred horses grazed at will upon the lush meadows hardby. Children and girls sported and bathed in the river, splashing and swimming and diving amid shouts of laughter.

Packs of dogs yelped and gamboled among the children and youth; or slept and dreamed of hunting adventures by the wigwam fires. Boys and youth were at their mimic games of archery, wrestling, running and ball. Their seniors, the braves, looked on lazily, or sauntered or lounged idly in the sun, or smoked their pipes in haughty silence. The squaws wrought in the fields of corn, or toted water from the river, and wood from the forest, or bent over steaming kettles of venison and hominy, fish and succotash. Wrinkled grandams gossiped at the doors of the lodges, or watched the paposes swinging to the boughs of low shrubbery.

Toward the center of the town was a big building which showed conspicuous among the smaller huts of bark or skins or wood. It was the Council House or public hall. Here were held public conferences and town-meetings, festivals and dances, and here also visitors to the tribe were received and entertained. And here Dorothy and Father Owen were brought, word of their coming having been carried by Two-tongues, their interpreter, in advance of their arrival.

A deputation of chiefs and elders conducted them to the Council House where bear skins were spread near the center of the building, and they were invited to be seated. Dorothy asked through the interpreter, to be excused from the usual formalities, as far as might be permitted; and begged leave at once to state her errand. Before this request had been answered, and while the Head Chief seemed to be pondering it, Father Owen arose, and removed his broad-brimmed Quaker hat. His tall and erect form, his flowing hair spotlessly white, his dress and hat so different from those usually worn by white men, attracted general attention. After a silent pause he thus spoke:

“Brothers and Brother Chief: We come from the great city of Brotherly Love, and as Messengers from the Society of Friends, sometimes called Quakers, of which thine honored friend, William Penn, was a member and elder. This is our commission from them, which I beg thee to have read. It will tell thee for what purpose and by what authority we are here.” Thereupon he took a roll of parchment from his bosom and handed it to the Head Man, who received it with that show of veneration which the earlier Indians were apt to give to written documents.

“Brothers,” he continued, “the Great Spirit has seen fit to move upon the mind and heart of my beloved child, Dorothy Owen, bidding her give her life to the spiritual teaching and uplifting of His red children who so long lived near us and among us, and with whose wrongs we deeply sympathize, though unable to set right. The same Great Spirit, the Master of Life, the Good Father of us all, has spoken to my inner man, bidding me go with his young Messenger, my daughter, to share with her the labor and the responsibility. Therefore I am come. We wish to dwell with thee for a little while, to make known our message to all the people. We will bide wholly at our own charges. We have nought to sell, for we do not come as traders, and shall wish only to buy of thy people such food as we may need. I have brought as a small token of our friendly feeling, and in accordance with thine own custom, a bale of useful goods, which I beg thee to receive and to distribute according to thy judgment of what is fitting.”

Thereat Joel and Andy came forward bearing a large package which they laid down at the Chieftain's feet and took their stand behind Father Owen. A general guttural murmur of approbation welcomed this act, but the keen curiosity to know its contents, was quite concealed.

The Head Chief replied: “Brothers: we have heard the words of Snowy-hair with open ears. We receive them as coming from a sage who has the wisdom of

many years. This message which he brings us from the true Brothers of Onas we will consider with the care that is due to such great friends of the Indians, and answer as is fitting. For this gift, which promises to be worthy of those who bring the greetings of the friends of Onas, we give the acknowledgment and thanks of all our tribe. It is not our custom for women to speak in the Council of our nation. But the Great Spirit has appointed different laws for different people, and we know that the people of Onas have a different law from the Lenni Lenape; and as the daughter of Snowy-hair shares with him equally the message, it is now permitted her to speak."

Dorothy rose, and laying aside the Quaker bonnet which had concealed her face, stood uncovered before the Chiefs and tribesmen that filled the Council House to the doors. A flush of embarrassment mounted to her cheeks. She clasped her hands in front of her body, and bowed forward for a moment in silent prayer, during which not a sound was heard throughout the crowded hall. Every eye was intently fixed upon her; all ears were strained to hear the pending speech. Then in a voice low and sweet, but so full and penetrating that it was heard by all present, she began her address:

"Fathers and brethren: The Great Spirit, who is the Master of Life to all men, has spoken to me words that I dare not disobey. He bade me go to His Indian children with His message of salvation, which has been brought to all men by His Son, Jesus the Christ. I am come to you in His Name and for His sake with this message. The Great Spirit loves all His children with equal love. He would have them all come unto Him that they may have Life Eternal. He will not turn from any who come to Him with believing spirits, leaving their evil ways.

"People have fallen into the habit of thinking and speaking of Christianity as the 'white man's religion.' No! It is all men's religion. It was appointed and is

fitted for the whole human race. When it was brought from Heaven to earth, its Divine Founder spake God's will when he said to His disciples: 'Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature!' This is His command, and it rests as a bounden duty on every son of man whether red or white or black. This is why we are here. The Great Spirit has put into our hearts love for the Indians as God's children.

"The Master of Life taught His disciples much more than the wisdom which brings men a good, happy and peaceful life here on earth. He taught them that this life is only the first stage of another and endless life. This life is the seed, the next life is the full, ripe ear of corn. This life is the root; the next life is the great tree. This life is the bud, the next life is the flower. This life is as the infant, the next is as the full grown man or woman.

"Death seems to end all; but it does not; it begins all rather! Said the Master: 'In my Father's House are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you.' That Father's House is the beautiful world into which the holy and good shall go. We call it Heaven. Thy sages, honored friend, knew something of the life beyond earth, and spoke of it as 'the happy hunting grounds.' It is indeed a Happy Land, beautiful and blessed beyond the brightest dream.

"The lot of some men and of most women is — tribulation, trouble, sorrow, loss, poverty, want. Some seem to have more than others; far more, they sometimes think, than their share. But these differences in our lives are all made equal, and all forgotten in the life hereafter. We must remember this, lest we think evil thoughts against the Good Spirit who has permitted to us so much pain and hardship here. Let us bear our lots with patience and good cheer, knowing that rest will come soon and will never again be broken. Then shall we find out the full measure of truth in the holy apostle's words: 'These light afflictions, which are but for a moment,

shall work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.'

"And even here and now we may all find that a true Christian piety shall make smoother and sweeter for us the roughest earthly way. It is written: 'Cast thy burden on the Lord and He will sustain thee!' Hear these words of our Lord Jesus: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.' Oh, my brethren, my sisters, believe it, for it is indeed true, our peace and comfort in this life depend more upon the inward state of our hearts, than upon outward conditions of our lives. He who carries a quiet conscience and a pious, trustful spirit has the secret of a happy life. And this our Saviour gives. Hear what he says: 'Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest!'"

Having finished her address, Dorothy knelt upon the bear-skin on which she had stood, and with clasped hands, and face uplifted heavenward, offered silent prayer.

Her prayer ended, Dorothy rose, and stood modestly with bowed face, awaiting the words of the Head Chief and his councilors. A great stillness had fallen upon the Council House, especially during the close of her address. Her voice, naturally sweet and attractive, took on a plaintiveness that gave her speech a mournful cadence. As her tones rose and fell in the utterance of the gracious invitations and consolations of Jesus to the burdened and sad-hearted, it was plain that many were deeply moved. Among the women, who crowded the back parts of the hall behind the warriors, there was little effort to conceal their feelings. Their lives were indeed weary and heavy-laden. They were scarcely better than beasts of burden for their proud and indolent braves, and Dorothy's gracious words fell like sweet music upon their ears. It was a long address, and its force much broken by the mediation of an interpreter, but they had listened

intently to the close; and many of them had lived so long among the colonists that they understood most of what Dorothy said, even as it fell from her lips.

The presiding Chief now spoke: "Brothers and Friends: We have listened to the Snowy-hair, whose years and wisdom we bow before with reverence. We have heard the voice of the Mourning Dove, as a sweet and plaintive song that has touched our hearts unto sadness. For she has told us of our sorrows, and she has set before us a balm for weary and heavy-hearted ones. We thank her for her sympathy which we know is sincere. For the ring of truth is in her words and tones, and the face which she turned upon us covers no trace of deceit. All who come to our tribe and town as peaceful visitors are welcome. I know no reason why we should turn away from us the messengers and brethren of Onas, our great and good Friend. But our Council will consider the matter with the deliberation that is due; and until we shall announce a different judgment [turning to Father Owen] you may bide with us and speak, as your opportunity serves, all that the Great Spirit has put in your hearts.

"Surely such words as we have heard can do us good alone. We may not receive them as you do, nor accept them as a religion for our tribe. You have taught us some things hard to receive, and which would turn back the whole current of our lives hitherto. But that they are weighty with the wisdom of one of the world's greatest Sages, renowned alike for wisdom and goodness, and unselfish love for our race, we well know, for we dwelt long near the white men and have heard of their divine Prophet. And it gives us pleasure to learn, as we have done this day, that His grace is intended no less for the red man than for the pale face. It is permitted you now to retire."

The Owen party left the Council House. Father Owen and Dorothy retired to their tent to await further results, though they were well satisfied that there would

be no interruption of their plans, at least for the present.

Joel, Louper Jan and Andy as they went to the tent which served as their quarters, commented upon the conference each after his own peculiar fashion. Andy was enthusiastic over Dorothy's address. His eyes were near the dew-point when she had finished, his warm emotions having been keenly affected by the closing appeal.

"There never was annything aqual to it!" he averred. "My heart was in my mouth half the time she was spakin'. If ever there was a saint on arth, it's Miss Dorothy! If sich pr'achin' dis'nt convert the Indians, nothin' will. 'Dade, an I had the power, I'd soundly whup ivery mother's son and daughter of 'em 'at wouldn't be converted right away! Sure, they ought to be 'shamed o' thimselves, the haythens, to give the good lady so much trouble about their souls! Troth, if I didn't know her mission was to the Indians and not to white folk, I'd be converted myself, an' not have her wastin' her precious stren'th and time for nought. It was all I could do to kape from it the day, annyhow!"

Thereat Joel was moved to say: "Young man, thee doesn't understand the first principles of true Christian conversion. Thee talks about forcing men thereto. Thee can't force others, and thee can't force thyself. Were the Angel Gabriel himself to summon these Indians by voice and trumpet to 'repent and be converted,' it would effect nothing unless the Holy Spirit should accompany the word, and make it effectual. The addresses of our Friends were indeed all that we could wish or expect. They were full of scriptural truth, and spiritual tone and zest. But if the Spirit does not water the word, there will be no spiritual fruit. If thee would see thy mistress's labors honored by conversions, thee must look and pray for the Power from on High."

"Humph!" ejaculated Louper Jan. "I was too much taken up with the rare beauty of the speaker, to mind her speech. It's a pity that one so fair should throw herself away upon a lot of squaws and braves, when she

might be making some honest white man happy as his wife. The idea of converting such cattle! They're good enough Indians just as they are. It's clear flyin' in the face of the divine decrees to try to change 'em from what Providence has app'inted 'em. However, as it pleases Miss Dorothy, it's all right. And," (turning to Andy) "see that you help in the work, boy, till she tires of it — or it'll be the worse for you!"

The covert threat at the end of this remark, like ~~the~~ ~~snapper~~ on a whip's lash, irritated Andy, who, though from being over-sensitive, resented anything like jossism in one who had no lawful claim to authority.

"H'ighty t'ighty!" he exclaimed. "Who be you, Mr. Louper Jan, to threaten and give orders? Sure, you're the last one to do that! You were empl'yed as guide and interpreter from Philadelpy to Harris's; but Two-tongues had to be taken on from Harris's here. And as to personal sarvice to Miss Dorothy, that's just what I'm here for, an' no thanks til you! An' I'm to take no orders from sich as you, I'd let you know. So plase mind your own business, and lave the Mistress to mind hern!"

This reply with its insinuations, and the tone thereof, so angered the Louper that he started toward Andy with fists doubled up, exclaiming:

"You little red-headed, freckled-face, bog-trottin' Irishman! I'll give you the lambastin' you've been working for this while back!"

There certainly would have been a collision, if Joel had not interposed and commanded the peace. "Let there be no quarreling here!" he said. "Or I'll have to report to Father Owen! If there's one thing he cannot and will not abide, it's quarreling and fighting and picking at one another among his hands. That's a sure passport to a swift discharge." This appeal at once converted the belligerents into sons of peace; and the not unusual consequence of a religious discussion was averted.

Next day the noon repast of venison and hominy,

corn-bread and tea was being served before the Owen tent, when the Head Chief and two others called to inform Snowy-hair and the Mourning Dove that the Council had agreed to welcome them to their town, and to listen to their message, for which purpose the Council House would be open to them unless otherwise occupied.

Having delivered their official report with the dignity of Roman senators, they seated themselves upon the ground before the table, and followed Andy's movements in serving the viands, with hungry eyes. Dorothy could do no less than offer them a share of the food, which they eagerly accepted. Andy, knowing their sweet tooth, added a triple measure of sugar to their tea, much to their satisfaction.

This was no unusual occurrence as the days passed. A fringe of Indian warriors squatting around the table, waiting silently for such scraps as might be given them, became a common feature of the Owen meals. This strange mingling of "inordinate pride and a generous love of glory, with the mendacity of a beggar or a child," has been remarked as often appearing in the Indian character.

CHAPTER XXIV

PLOT AND COUNTER-PLOT

The missionary duties of Father Owen and Dorothy were wrought with great fidelity, and for a time with apparently great interest and promise of success. Then, without any manifest reason, the audiences in the Council House began to grow smaller. The cordiality with which the messengers had been received at first, began to wane in warmth.

In response to inquiries among their little staff, Dorothy learned from Louper Jan that the change was due to the hostile attitude of a certain native prophet of wide popularity who was using his influence to counter-work against the missionaries, and stir up the populace to expel them. The real cause was at last uncovered by an incident which traced it to a traitorous plotter in their own camp.

Andy had slipped away from camp as was his wont at times, and stretching himself in the high grass by a thick clump of bushes, re-read his Bunyan's "Holy War." Of that he never tired; and although he was most sociable in his nature, he would lie thus solitary for an hour at a time, while his imagination ran riot with the various captains and characters and combats in and around the "city of Mansoul."

While thus reading and dreaming, he heard a murmur of approaching voices, and looking through the trees saw Louper Jan in conversation with a disreputable Indian known as Cross-eye. He drew himself still further into the shelter of the bushes until the men had passed him. Then seating themselves upon a log not far away, they continued the conversation that had so deeply engaged them.

They spoke in the Delaware tongue, which Andy understood well enough to follow ordinary speech. A few words that he caught roused his suspicions, and laying aside his book, he strained every nerve to overhear what was being said. He had no scruples about eavesdropping in such a case. He was a "Mr. Prywell" now, hearkening to the secret plots of conspiring "Diabolonians" in Mansoul! At the same time he loosened the pistol in his belt; for he knew that if the two plotters should detect him, and have the faintest suspicion that they had been overheard, he would have to fight for his life.

. . . "Yes, the plunder shall be all yours. I do not care for that . . . only the white wigwam and the young woman. . . . All the rest." . . . Thus, Louper Jan.

"And the horses?" queried Cross-eye.

"The horses, too! . . . for yourself and friends."

"But Two-horse [Joel] and Snowy-hair and Standing-hair? [Andy]. They will fight! How we get rid of them?"

"No fear of that. Two-horse and Snowy-hair are Quakers. They will not fight. They would let you scalp them first."

"Ugh! That good! Scalps good for Indian!"

"But Standing-hair is a different sort. He will fight to the death. And he is wise beyond his years. You must watch him, and strike him first or there will be trouble."

Andy could pick up little more than this, for the two men soon rose and walked away. When they were fairly out of sight, he returned to camp greatly troubled in mind. The terrible plot that thus had become known to him had shocked and alarmed him. The treachery of Louper Jan; the iniquitous designs against the fair and holy maid whom he himself served with such loving reverence and fidelity; the murderous purpose of Cross-eye, in which doubtless others were concerned, against all the Owen

party, filled him with anxiety and alarm. The details of the infamous plot — the time for attack, the manner, and other particulars — he had not heard. But one sentence was burned into his memory:

“Remember this, Cross-eye, the white squaw is mine! Everything else is yours, to do with as you please. I will deliver them into your hand. But the woman is mine alone!”

The fiendish earnestness of the Louper's utterance was so intense that his voice rose, and the words were plainly heard. What now should he do? What could he do? He, a mere lad, alone — for Father Owen and Joel would not fight — in the midst of a horde of savages! Some of them were no doubt more or less friendly. But at the first sight of blood, or the first chance for scalps, the latent demon in them would be aroused, and many of them would join in the fray!

Here, indeed, was a “Holy War,” with “Diabolus” and old “Incredulity” and all the host of “Diabolonians!” And he, a mere youth, the only one to watch and ward his beleaguered “city of Mansoul!” Then he bethought him of the good “Prince Immanuel”; and he discerned enough of the meaning of Bunyan's allegory, to bow there in the forest and ask His aid in the present distress. Then he arose and walked back to the tent pondering deeply the situation.

Should he reveal the plot to Miss Dorothy? Would she believe it? Would she not betray all by her agitation, and force matters to an issue? Should he be content to put her on her guard by some hint, and trust to his own resources to circumvent the plotters? Ought he to tell Father Owen, and urge him to leave the village at once, while he could do so? That seemed a right and wise thing to do.

Yet, on the other hand, he knew the persistent character of the aged Friend when once set in his purpose, and his unwillingness, as well as his daughter's, to credit a charge of so foul a design against their Indian friends,

and their general infatuation for the red men, with which he had little sympathy. Yet, something must be done! He would watch night and day. He would not spare himself. He would risk all, sacrifice all, but — there must be help!

Could he get a message to his mother; or, better still, to Aunt Esther Harris? Aye, that is it! He would try it. Could he trust his friend Fox-foot? He must try it, at least! Fox-hunt was an Indian youth about Andy's age. He had been down several times on various errands to Harris's Ferry, where he had met Andy. A strong friendship had sprung up between the two lads, a blood brotherhood, in fact. In the romantic spirit of youth they had bound themselves to life-long friendship and mutual service by an oath and exchange of tokens. Surely he could trust him with a letter to his mother and aunt, and they would find some way to rescue them from their dangerous situation!

When he came to the tent he got paper, pen and ink, and wrote the following letter:

“DEER ANT ESTER: I have jist found out a plot agin all our party by that ole Diabolus Louper Jan an' Cross-eye, to kill an' sculp us all an' carry off Mis Dorthy. I dunno when it is to cum off; but sune, I am sure. Plez send up at wans one haf dozen good fighting men (no Quakers) to bring us back to Harrissis fery. I hev tole nobody here yit, but think uv teling farther Own soze he kin coax his dotter to leve. Tel mother. I trust yur wel known pluck and prudens to save us. this by the hand uv my friend Fox-foot. Giv him somethin to show he got this to you, and send me a pond av powder by same.

“Yours respectful nevy,

“ANDY.”

“PS My trubl is Im frade Miss Dorthy wont leve till we're all kilt. Ile do my best, but fur God's ake dont fale me!”

This letter was composed most painfully and with several interruptions, and with Dorothy's warm encouragement and commendations for thus remembering his mother and aunt, though she little suspected the contents. The writing being at last achieved, he folded and sealed his letter, and set forth to find his friend. Fox-foot had gone to Harris's once before for Dorothy for some supplies which Mrs. Esther had sent back promptly. Andy was therefore hopeful that his plan would succeed. Fox-foot readily undertook the errand, promised profound secrecy, and set off promptly, stimulated by the promise of a new and beautiful hatchet which Andy was to give him on his return. But, to do the lad justice, he was quite willing to undertake the journey simply from friendship for his brother, Standing-hair.

With this clue in his hands, it was easy for Andy to trace the diffusion of the unfriendly feeling against the missionaries. On the surface it seemed to be due wholly to the prophet, Red-love. But back of him, by the aid of Two-tongues, he found everywhere the cunningly concealed manipulation of the Louper. He was intimate with the prophet; was seen to have frequent meetings with him. And from those meetings the Indian seer came forth always with his visions of the pernicious character of the Owen "emissaries" much clearer, and his bitterness against them more intense. Yet the Louper managed to convey his insinuations with such shrewd dissimulation, that Red-love was convinced that it was only his own acuteness and delicate diplomacy that had dragged out the condemning facts from an unwilling witness.

At last the agitation became so general and intense that the Head Chief could no longer withhold the call for a meeting of the Great Council which the prophet demanded. The Council House was crowded as on the day that the Owens came. Red-love was not lacking in that rude eloquence which has always been most effective in swaying the Indians, and he had a subject

which admitted of appeal to the strongest passions of the Delawares.

There was first and chief the infamous policy of Thomas Penn. "It is vain to appeal to them," he urged, "by the kindly relations that once existed between our tribe and the great and good Onas. Onas has long since passed away. His sons have risen in his stead and with them and their councilors we have to deal. Will the rich harvest of one full year keep us in corn through many years of famine? Not with dead men — no! — with men alive and in power, the descendants of William Penn, we have to do. And what have these men done for the Delawares? Ah! buzzards have been hatched in the eagle's nest!

"See! With all the professed love of the Penns and the Quakers for the Lenni Lenape, they are exiles from their homes! They have been robbed of their lands by lying and fraud. The perfidious Walking Purchase is but one, though the chief, of many outrages that have been put upon them.

"Thomas Penn has gone further. He has added unforgivable insult to open deceit and treachery and robbery. He has brought upon us our implacable enemies and conquerors — aye, for I must still say it — our masters, the Iroquois! Can we ever forget the insulting terms with which we have been loaded by them? We were whipped as with serpent's teeth and tongues from our beautiful seats on the Delaware to this new land. Can we forget? Never! Can we forgive? Never! Never, while grass grows and rivers run! And even now the white men, claiming to have bought their titles from the Penns and other Philadelphians, are planning to take up these lands also, and drive us on and on toward the sunset and the evening star! Call you that an act of Children of a City of Brotherly Love? Nay; it is the act of land pirates, greedy and mad with the insatiable lust for land and money and ever for more and more!"

Under the spell of this terrible declamation the meeting was stirred up to a fury that was almost uncontrollable. Then the orator introduced the matter of the Owens.

"They came to us with commissions from the true Friends of William Penn and of the Indians. That is well. But tell me, what did the Philadelphia Friends do, with all their friendly words and professions, to save us from the spoliation of Thomas Penn? Nothing! If they were willing, they were powerless. If they were able, they willed it not.

"But their messengers are fair-spoken. They have an open hand. The words of Snowy-hair are weighty with wisdom. Those of the Mourning Dove drop with sweetness like honey from the bee-tree. It is true. But what does it all amount to — for the Indians. Is their no deep plot behind it? May not these wise and honey-tongued messengers be themselves the unwitting tools of a deep conspiracy of the sons of Penn and of the white men now in power? It is not the gun alone that kills, but the gun and the man behind the gun. The weapon is an innocent instrument; but it slays just the same!

"Listen to me, while I expose the white man's plot. Let the Indians become men of peace like the Quakers. Let them throw away their arms, forget their cunning in war, and lose their valor. Let them cease to be a terror to those who oppress and despoil them. What then? The robbery will go on unhindered! Who will oppose the advance of the pale-face westward, even to the Ohio, across our lands, like the mighty flood of the Susquehanna when spring rains fall and spring freshets rise?

"There will be none! Indian warriors will be as harmless as the Snowy-hair. The Five Nations have called the braves of the Delawares 'Women.' If the mission of the Mourning Dove succeeds, they will be called 'Quakers,' which is far worse. Then woe to our wives! Woe to our children! Woe to ourselves! A Quakerized Indian in the white man's hands, would be

but a sparrow in the claws of a hawk! Do the Delawares wish that?

"There is but one remedy. The messengers of the Friends must go! We have given them the hand of welcome. We have strained our hospitality already to give them place and hearing as though they were our own people and prophets. We have done enough. Let us now bid them depart in peace, even as they came!"

This was the substance of Red-Love's oration, and it carried the audience. A few voices were raised in defense of the missionaries, the one so venerable, the other so sweet, and both so free with their gifts. Here and there a feeble plea was ventured for the Gospel which they had proclaimed, and which had brought to some hearts comfort and easement in their earthly cares and burdens, and to some had opened up a vision of a better life beyond.

But the vast majority voted with enthusiasm for the decree of banishment. The Council dissolved, and the head chiefs, accompanied by the prophet, waited upon Father Owen and Dorothy, and informed them with delicacy but firmness that their mission must end, and that on the morrow they must leave Shamokin.

The Owens were disappointed and grieved. But they had been somewhat prepared for this result by the events of the last few days, which had revealed to them the great change in the attitude of the Indians toward themselves and their work. With sad hearts, but with submission to what seemed the Divine Will, they gave the orders to leave in the morning.

The work of packing went on briskly, and by nightfall everything was ready to strike tents after breakfast the next day. Andy's rôle during these preparations was a difficult one. The darkening clouds of tribal anger that overhung and threatened an outbreak; the plot of the treacherous Louper with the murderous Cross-eye; the open antagonism of the fanatical zealot, Red-love,—sorely taxed all the resources of one so young as he.

He eagerly longed and watched for the return of Fox-foot, though he knew that hardly enough time for that had elapsed. The plot had burst into blossom over-
soon! Yet, these great burdens that he carried seemed less irritating than the hypocritical expressions of sympathy and regret to which the Louper gave vent as he went back and forth preparing to break camp, and hovering around Dorothy like a gross blue bottle-fly about sugar.

It was a glum and unfriendly crowd that watched the departure of the messengers. But a few faithful hearts, mostly squaws and young braves, set at defiance the now prevailing public sentiment, and followed the party a little way beyond the town, to give them a last greeting and good-by.

"Alas," sighed Dorothy to her father, as farewells were said to them by this small band of faithful disciples, "this seems a most barren ending of our mission! It never entered my mind that we would be thus driven forth, and be forbidden to speak further for Christ!"

"And yet, my daughter, our Divine Master prepared His disciples for just such a fate," the father responded, "when they went forth to evangelize the nations. We entered the door which Providence opened before us. We have faithfully wrought, as God is our judge! And now the door has been closed upon us by no fault of our own, and we have been driven forth. What can we do but go, leaving with God in His own good time and way to water and fructify the good seed of the word which we have sown in faith and love? We are still God's messengers, though fleeing before his foes; and we must trust our work as well as ourselves in His Hands."

Thus the wisdom and experience of the venerable saint comforted his child; yet though Dorothy lifted her heart trustfully to Heaven, nature found relief in a flood of tears.

PART THREE

CHAPTER XXV

A FISHING PICNIC AT THE SCHUYLKILL

A century and a half ago, when Philadelphia lay along the Delaware River, and reached westward only to the State House, the whole region of the Schuylkill and its affluent, the Wissahickon, was a scene of wild natural rural beauty.

At Stenton, the colonial manor of James Logan, the venerable friend and adjutant of William Penn, and recently the acting Governor, a party of young folk were assembled for a day's outing. Chaperoned by Madam Logan, they set forth in the early June morning of A. D. 1741, for the Schuylkill, bent on a holiday at fishing. How much allurements lay in the gentle art itself, how much in opportunity for quiet and meditation uninterrupted by the common round of daily life; how much in the enjoyment of nature in her virgin loveliness at the fairest season of the year; and how much in other plans — such as love-making — openly or secretly indulged, who shall say?

It was a gay horseback group that set out from Stenton that morning, and after a charming ride over the Germantown hills and down the shaded glen of the Wissahickon, halted below the Falls, and was soon dispersed at sundry points, seeking with rods and lines for fish then waiting in thronging schools to reward the angler's art.

Time was, in the memory of living men and women, that the Schuylkill, especially on the bank of its Wissahickon branch, had a special fame for "catfish and waffles!" Indeed, the Indian name Wissahickon is said

to mean "catfish." These tidbits were apt to be the *point d'appui's* of many a ride or drive or saunter along the creek's romantic shore. On those occasions the catfish were not caught by the pleasers; but there was much angling of another sort. Many a grandsire and great-grandmother of this generation could tell the story to children and children's children, of how, while waiting for the catfish and waffles to be prepared, and while wandering through the shaded solitudes surrounding the inns, they had met their fate, and set their first seal to vows of love. Perhaps something of that sort was in the air at the period of our tale!

John Smith of Burlington, but some time settled in Philadelphia as a merchant and shipper, rode up from cityward and joined the fishing picnic. He was a sturdy, active young fellow, with a frank and pleasing personality that won him a large circle of friends among the best people. Quite a gallant of the day, he delighted much in waiting on the Quaker dames and maidens to various religious and social meetings. He was deeply in love with Hannah Logan, and had long bent his best endeavors to win her as his wife. He found his "Charmer" (as he generally speaks of her in his diary), fishing at some distance from the rest of the company. As he came up and offered his apology for the intrusion, he was graciously received; as indeed he might well have been, for a fortnight before he had been accepted by his "Charmer." Concerning the present event he wrote: "I had the pleasantest day in fishing that I ever employed that way before." Apparently the weight and number of the catch had nothing to do with the conclusion! Wherein was shown, of course, a lack of the true fisherman spirit.

When the noon-hour arrived, the fishers rallied for luncheon under the shadow of a large chestnut-tree. James Pemberton (a great chum of John Smith) Phœbe and Grace Owen, their brothers Gaius and Marcus, were of the party; and as luncheon is usually the most de-

lightful part of such a picnic, there was a merry time spreading the white cloths on the green sward, emptying baskets of their alluring contents, and disposing in due order the divers relishes, of which there was enough for two such occasions. It was a light-hearted group, though by no means a light-headed one; and the conversation, though not shunning serious topics, was punctuated by frequent peals of laughter, startling the birds which had begun to assemble in the nearby trees, drawn by the tempting portions that fair hands were casting to them.

“By the way,” said John Smith, “I have just heard a rare bit of news from Friend Henry Coates, who was in at the store this morning. Thou knows him well, Jemmy!”—turning to James Pemberton—“and thou, his wife,”—nodding to Hannah Logan—“who bears thy name. It is of a wonderful conversion of a young naval officer who came back from the Cartagena Expedition, not long ago, on a sick transport. He is unknown to all of us, I think, but we will be highly interested in his case. He is a Scotch youth named Robin More, the son of the master of a privateer named ‘The Heather.’”

There was a flutter among the Owens at this. “Why, yes!” Phœbe exclaimed. “Some of us do know him! That is, we have met him occasionally. He went off to the war with our brother Benjamin, who was quite friendly with him. We had not heard of his return, and shall be glad to hear anything good of him.”

“Then,” said John Smith, “my story will be of especial interest to some of us.” And he proceeded to relate the spiritual transformation of Robin More as Henry Coates had told it, closing with the young man’s purpose, after great mental struggles, to unite with the Society of Friends. It was listened to with deep attention, at times in profound silence, again with exclamations of lively interest. Than such a company as that, the tale could have had no heartier hearers. Like

Henry and Hannah Coates, they all perceived in it the mighty working of the quickening Spirit, in whose divine presence and power they believed as firmly as did the primitive disciples after Pentecost.

"How will this affect the young man's future?" Mrs. Logan asked. "He has acted in the matter wholly on his own responsibility, it appears. Will his father consent to his change of faith and life?"

"Lieutenant More does not know. He hopes he may; but he fears the worst. By a vessel bound for Jamaica, he has written a letter which he trusts may be received in due time, in which he states his case fully and asks approval."

"But if the father should refuse?" asked Hannah Logan.

"My daughter, thee knows that William Penn's father followed the sea, indeed was of high rank, and when his son joined the Friends, the Admiral cast him off. He afterward revoked his decision; but it was a great trial at the time. Nothing worse can befall young More. If the worst comes to the worst, Friends must make it a point to do the friendly part by him."

"If I am any judge of character," suggested Gaius Owen, "he is not the sort of man likely to ask help from anyone. He struck me as a proud and independent fellow, well able to shift for himself."

"Did thee not say, Friend John," said Grace Owen, speaking quietly and softly, "that the young man is an expert seaman? That is in thy line of business. Surely he need not lack for employment, as long as honest trading ships need experienced masters!"

"The very thing!" cried Hannah, with enthusiasm. "John, thee must take this matter up, if need be! Grace is quite right, as she generally is. What sort of a person is this Robin More?"

The question was addressed to Grace, but that maiden paid no attention to it. She sat with cheeks and chin resting on her two palms, gazing across the river as if

in profound meditation. Phœbe, seeing her sister's self-absorbed condition, took it upon her to reply.

"We know but little of him. Yet that little is highly favorable. He is a young man of pleasing appearance. Indeed, one might speak of him as handsome. He is affable and courteous in his manners. I have never seen a better bred gentleman. He has the old-fashioned dignity of bearing, yet without arrogance, and with a simplicity and modesty that we have been taught to associate with high rank."

"Stenton manners!" interjected James Pemberton *sotto voce*.

"Yes, something that way!" quoth Phœbe, nodding and smiling. "He was an officer on his father's ship, and that did not invite to intimacy with a family of our principles. But as far as we knew him, we highly esteemed him, and wished him well. He left for the war without saying good-by, except by a message through our brother Benjamin; and your news just told is the first we have heard about him since he left. I suppose he does not feel at liberty to intrude upon so slight an acquaintance."

"Humph!" quoth brother Marcus, speaking *sotto voce*, or what was doubtless intended to be such. "Our eldest brother Paul quietly intimated that father would be pleased to learn fully about his family and principles, continuing the honor of his visits."

"Very proper indeed!" Mrs. Logan remarked. "Young ladies cannot be too careful in forming and encouraging acquaintances, especially when their family antecedents are not well-known. But here is a case in which without undue boldness, thy chance acquaintance might be made to serve a most worthy end."

Perhaps Grace's self-absorption was not as deep as supposed; or something may have aroused her from it. At least, as Phœbe pronounced her encomium upon Robin More, the blood rose into her cheeks. Her eyes lost their far-away look, and lighted up as under a play of

pleasant fancies. Then, when Mark's mumbled comment was uttered, she turned toward him a glance of sharp surprise and vexation. Her mouth parted as though to speak; but she bit her lips and was silent, until Madam Logan's remarks seemed to call for some response:

"It is just like thee, dear Mother Logan, to take a kindly interest in this young man who seems to need friendly counsel. But the gracious offices you suggest are not for maidens to do. If any of our family are to act, it must be the men. But what is to hinder thee, or any other woman Friend of mature years, or any man Friend, from such kindly acts as thee may be moved to?"

The luncheon being now over, the young women undertook to clear away, and to pack up the baskets, while the men, leaving them awhile to themselves, walked up the glen along the beautiful creek-side to the house of the Hermit of the Wissahickon, Conradus Matthew. He was the last of the Pietists or Mystic Hermits, of whom Kelpius was the head. On the death of Kelpius in 1708, the community began to decline, and continued to decrease until Matthew alone remained. He was then nearly eighty years old, and continued his hermit life for ten years longer.

Our visiting picnickers found him in fairly good health. He greeted them kindly, conversing in intelligible English, though a Switzer. He talked freely on religious subjects, having a good deal of sympathy with the peculiar views of Friends, and was especially vigorous in condemning war, warmly endorsing the Quaker testimony on that point.

As they walked back to rejoin their party, Mr. Smith remarked: "There seemed a lack of depth in that experience of spiritual things and communion with the Divine Spirit, which might be expected in one who has professed for so long a time, now more than thirty years, to have withdrawn his mind from all other objects, and to have fixed it on heavenly things alone."

"Perhaps," Gaius Owen answered, "thee has not sufficiently counted on the effect of those innumerable petty affairs that nature and necessity force upon the attention of one who is compelled to self-ministry. These things tend to absorb attention, belittle the mind, and narrow one's spiritual vision. The spirit may be willing, 'but the flesh is weak,' as the apostle says. By which, of course, he means that it is weak spiritually; or in other words, is terribly strong to assert and enforce its own demands. At least, I confess to that sort of an experience."

"May it not be," suggested James Pemberton, "that we fall into an error just there? Are not the claims of the 'flesh,' that is, of the animal or physical nature (not the corrupt disposition and habits, as the apostle uses the word), in their legitimate sphere and degree, worthy of recognition as entirely within the law of righteousness? Man is a complex being. He is composed of body, mind and spirit. Every element of his being is God-given, and its exercise is God-approved. Do not men err, and do violence to their own natures, when they force into abnormal development any one element at the expense of others? Men may over-develop the mental nature, at the expense of both the spiritual and physical. Equally they may tax the physical and the mental, with all their social and other natural functions, in a forced development of the spiritual side of their being. Is it not the well balanced exercise of all the human faculties and functions, with the three-fold aim to glorify God, bless humanity, and enlarge and ennoble one's whole life, that brings about the highest type of manhood? It seems to me that the error of these Hermits lies somewhat in this direction. They lack the just human balance. The physical proves too strong for them without the legitimate checks and balances of other elements of a social creature, and being refused its due and natural demands, it rebels, and reacts and asserts itself in spite of all curbs and denials. I believe that

Friends and others, who temperately use the body, and cherish the family and the home, and the social and civil estate and duties, are thereby in a fairer way to cherish and develop the highest spiritual character and life, than such recluses as Father Matthew and the Hermits of the Wissahickon. But there! I fear I have been preaching, though this is a fishing picnic."

"Thee need make no apology, Friend Jemmy," said John Smith. "As I read the Gospels, there was a great deal of sound givings-forth, on certain fishing occasions in the old Galilean days. But yonder are the ladies, and we may join them now."

Meanwhile, Phœbe and Grace Owen were sauntering along the bank of the stream with arms intercrossed around each other's waists, talking over the strange incident which John Smith had repeated.

"What does thee think of it, Grace?" queried Phœbe.

"What should I think of it, but that He who arrested Saul and converted him from a persecutor into a preacher of the Gospel, still lives and reigns, and in achieving spiritual conquests is as mighty as ever? Does thee think it a greater task for God's Spirit to win Robin More of the 'Heather' than Saul of Tarsus?"

"Indeed, no!" replied Phœbe. "And I feel my own faith more firmly planted because of such good tidings. But I was thinking, Grace dear, that Robin always seemed to take a special interest in thee, and wondered, sometimes, if thee didn't care just a little for him. In truth, our family were a bit anxious about it. I do not mean our parents, of course. I doubt if a faintest thought of that sort ever came to them. Thee knows how they feel about Paul and Rhoda Reagan, one of our dearest friends, unexceptionable in every way, except that she is of the Church. But that thee would care for a nameless and unknown rover, they would deem simply impossible; and I must say, none of us thought seriously of it."

Grace was not prompt to reply. They walked in silence along the babbling stream, in whose overhanging

trees the birds were caroling their mating songs, or twittering and chirping their nest-building notes as they busily flitted to and fro. At last she spoke:

“Phœbe, dear, thee and I have always been as one heart and mind in all matters. Let me say then, once for all, that thee is quite right; our parents are quite right. There was never the remotest probability that I would encourage the advances — supposing them to have been made — of a man of the occupation and association of Lieutenant Robin More; though I confess that a more gentlemanly and agreeable person I never met. Nor was there ever word or token of any sort from him that he cared for me other than as a passing acquaintance. If he had such feelings, he was assuredly most successful in hiding them. It is more than a year since I have seen him or heard of him, and I am not likely to see him again. But there! Our folk are hoo-hoing for us and it is time for us to be back at our fishing tackle.”

CHAPTER XXVI

CUPID WALKS A HOSPITAL WARD

The year 1741 was marked in Philadelphia by an outbreak of a fever, popularly known as the "Palatine Distemper," because it was first and for a while chiefly observed among German immigrants from the Palatinate. But Dr. Thomas Bond, a prominent physician of the period declared it to be yellow fever. Whether introduced by German immigrants or by vessels plying between Philadelphia and Cartagena, may be a question. But it is certain that it caused many deaths and a large exodus of citizens to the suburbs. It is not improbable that the exit of Thomas Penn, who left for England in August of that year, may have been due to his desire to place the ocean between himself and the prevailing pestilence.

As commonly it has been in like conditions, there were then some spirits in whom the presence of danger, and the distress of their fellows awakened sentiments of compassion and self-sacrificing purpose to aid the sufferers. Among these was Robin More. His natural benevolence was quickened by his recent religious experience. He had recruited so rapidly from the effects of his Cartagena attack, that he felt able for duty of any sort, and hearing that there was great need for volunteer nurses to care for the sick in Philadelphia, he offered himself, and was gratefully accepted.

His first ministrations took him to the Friends' Alms House that occupied a spacious lot on Walnut Street near Third. Here a temporary ward had been prepared for the reception of fever sufferers. As he entered and

reported for duty to the physician in charge, he was warmly greeted.

"We are pretty strong-handed to-day," said the doctor, "as two of our best young lady helpers are with us. But it is hard to overtake the increasing demands upon us. Ah, here comes a new case now!"

An elderly woman was brought in by two bearers, who laid her upon a vacant cot near the door, and then fled, as though terrified by even a moment's presence in a room occupied by victims of the dreaded fever. Robin joined the doctor in arranging a pallet and giving such first aid as was suggested. He was bending over the cot when the doctor addressed him.

"Mr. More, I have called one of the women nurses, who will take charge. If you can help her she will let you know."

Robin lifted his eyes. There stood Grace Owen! A little Quaker cap crowned her brown hair. A neat white over-apron covered her plain frock. Her eyes had a startled look as she gazed upon Robin kneeling at the cot-side. There was a moment of confusion. Her face flushed and then paled, and then flushed again. It was but for a moment. With admirable self-command Grace recovered herself, and to the doctor's brief introduction replied:

"Mr. More and I are old acquaintances. We knew one another before he went off to the Spanish war. How fares it with thee? I heard that thee had been very ill."

Robin arose, and took the hand that Grace extended to him as she stepped to the side of the cot. His heart was beating violently. A great weakness seized him, so intense were his emotions and so sudden their onset. His impulse was to kiss the hand that rested in his, and whose touch thrilled him. But summoning all his powers of self-control, he merely bowed and returned the gentle pressure, though with an emphasis and a warmth which sent their unconscious signal tingling through Grace's nerves.

"I thank thee, Friend Grace!" he replied. "I am quite recovered, and am strong enough to venture to render to sufferers the aid so freely given me by thy brother Benjamin and others. Can I help thee in aught here?"

"Thee may help me lift this woman, and get her into a more comfortable position. Then, as we will have to change her dress, thee may call my friend Agnes Oster to help me in that." In planning and serving, Grace had recovered wholly her self-command.

"Agnes Oster, did thee say?" queried Robin, "the sister of our Hospital Steward, Alfred Oster? If so, I owe her a great debt for the devoted service of her brother in my time of need."

"It is indeed she," answered Grace. "But haste thee! This patient is in need of help, and other matters may wait."

Robin hurried to the opposite end of the ward where Agnes and the doctor were engaged, and gave the message. The physician sent Agnes to Grace's aid, and bade Robin take her place.

"She can be of no further use in this case," the doctor added in a low voice. "Nor indeed can anyone — unless perhaps you know how to pray! Kindly watch here till the end comes, and I will go where I can be of use."

Did he "know how to pray?" Robin was not sure. For never as yet had he prayed with another soul. And now, must he begin with this dying woman? — a maiden, not far from his own age, and showing signs of former comeliness even in the ghastly article of death. Yes, he would take up the duty and do the best he could! He kneeled by the cot, and placing his lips near the woman's ear, repeated words of Isaiah which he had read that morning, and whose rare beauty had fixed them in memory.

"Fear not, for I have redeemed thee! I have called thee by thy name, thou art Mine. When thou passest

through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour."

Then he uttered in a low voice a broken prayer. There was a slight quivering of the maiden's eyelids, a faint passing light as of consciousness upon the face, which made Robin hope that the prophet's words, at least, had been understood. But when the doctor came around again, life was quite extinct.

The orderly was called, and Robin helped him carry the corpse to the little outer room where the dead were laid, and where already another silent form awaited its hasty burial in the nearby Mall, now known as Washington Square.

Shortly after the noon-hour a fresh group of volunteers came, and Robin and the two young women were relieved. They walked home together, and ere Agnes was left at her mother's door, Robin had much to tell her of her brother's noble service. Of his death he had not heard, though word of it had reached the Osters.

At the Owen mansion Robin was cordially welcomed, and once more found himself seated at that hospitable board, in the midst of the large and happy family; though there, as everywhere, the shadow of the pestilence had fallen, and subdued the usual buoyancy of the table-talk.

Not a word had been spoken of his conversion. But there was a mute interchange of sympathy in the warm pressure of hands, the subdued tones of voices and the softening glances of eyes, that plainly signaled the inner feelings of spiritual fellowship and greeting. The ice was at last broken by Mother Lydia.

"We have heard of the great change in thy religious life," she said, "and we thank God and congratulate thee thereon. It will not be easy for thee under the circumstances. There are trials before thee which those who have been brought up in Friendly homes cannot well

appreciate. There is but one course for thee to pursue: take thy stand at once wholly and decidedly, though modestly and unobtrusively, on the side of the truth as thee has seen and accepted it. Some may look on thee at first with distrust. There will be, as in all human beginnings, a period of probation. But when they see that thou art in earnest, the way will open up before thee."

It was good advice. It expressed the sense of the family gathering. And it ran with Robin's own convictions of manly and Christian duty and expediency. He did not wait long with the Owens, but returned to his inn alert and elate. He seemed walking on air. The depressing scenes of the morning were lightened before the recollection of his meeting with Grace Owen, and his reception by her. Hope, which had died down within him, began to revive, and drew upon the brightening background of his fancy a picture of some future wherein he might tell his love, and beg, with a measure of assurance, for its return.

But not now! No; even could he be sure of a favorable reception — not now! As he pondered the matter, there had arisen the fear — and once come, it haunted him like a specter that would not be laid — that men might think and say that his religious transformation had its roots in his love for Grace Owen and his wish to win her; that even Grace or her family might suspect that! It was a disturbing thought. ✎

But there! Why should he anticipate such base suspicions? And if they should come, he must bear them patiently as a part of what Mother Lydia had called his "probation." At least, and that was the conclusion of it all, there should be no hint of love to Grace until his probation had been well passed, and his sincerity made known to all men.

The next day he was again at the Alms House, and with Grace and Agnes wrought in the care of the stricken patients, who were now rapidly filling up the wards.

There is something in such joint service for others that opens the heart to one's fellow laborers. The highest qualities of human character are apt then to be disclosed. The tender elements are quickened. Spirits are united in mutual respect and admiration, and enduring friendships are formed.

Perhaps it was due to this that Grace felt drawn more closely to Robin during the days that they walked the hospital wards together. Little was said beyond the needful exchanges for tending the sick. But acts, modes, expressions, often trivial in themselves, were continually appearing, which disclosed characteristics that won for Robin an esteem that every day grew stronger.

So two weeks passed, and then there came a day when Robin was assigned to duty elsewhere. Grace, who had looked for his coming with an interest which she had not suspected, found her eyes wandering unconsciously toward the door by which he was wont to enter. When he did not come, she was conscious of a feeling of — was it disappointment? And was it simply because she missed from her work the helping hands to which she so soon had grown accustomed? Or? — but the pressing duties of the hour forbade much questioning or indulgence in loneliness. Yet, when on the next day no Robin appeared, and no explanation of his absence, Grace was compelled to confess to herself there was a void in her mind that startled her.

The doctor broke in upon her thoughts. "I have brought you a new helper this morning. She wishes to avoid publicity and to be known as 'Madam Mary' simply. Please indulge her fancy for the time being. You will find her an agreeable and, I think, a useful helper."

He returned presently bringing with him the new volunteer nurse. "Madam Mary," he said, "this is Miss Grace Owen, who will direct you in your duties until you can get in touch with them."

The newcomer was a handsome woman apparently not yet forty. Her clear blue eyes, rosy cheeks, glossy

brown hair, bright smile, and springing movements gave the impression of vigorous health. But withal, especially when the features were in repose, there were traces of sadness, as if some great sorrow had befallen, or some secret grief were hidden within her breast.

"Miss Owen, I am happy to meet you and serve with you!" Her voice was low, and perfectly modulated, the voice of a person of culture, as all her bearing showed her to be. There was a slight Scotch — or was it Irish? — accent in her speech which added to its richness and piquancy. "Your name is not unfamiliar. I have met a Captain Owen who perhaps is one of your family?"

"My foster brother, Madam Mary. But pardon me if I at once ask thee to help me to put fresh sheets upon this cot, and change the linen on the patient. The woman, we think, is convalescent."

The gracious manner of Madam Mary's assent, and the readiness of her aid, proved her to be as efficient in service as ladylike in deportment. The quickness with which she took up the duties of the ward; the keen sympathy, variant with varying cases, yet never made inefficient by vocal expression or nervousness; the gentle, yet strong and steady, touch so grateful to an invalid; that insight of needs which seemed to know without being told the thing to do, and the unfailing and sunny patience that came to one's relief — gave promise in Madam Mary of a model nurse.

A week passed, and yet another, and Robin had not appeared at the Friends' Alms House. But Dr. Caldwell reported that he had been occupied every day among the Palatines, it having been learned that he spoke German. "In truth," he added, "the young man must spare himself a little, or he will go the way of some of the rest! He has been doing good and hard service, and has won many high encomiums from citizens, and the warm gratitude of the humble people whom he serves."

Grace listened intently. "But what is this young man to her (she thought) that she should feel a special in-

terest in him?" She was vexed at herself that her heart responded first with anxiety, and then with pride to the physician's words. She tried to push Robin from her thoughts by quickening her wonted activities for her patients; and when the hour for relief came, the day's duties had tired her more than usual, and she walked home with lagging gait.

She heard the patter of rapid footsteps upon the path behind her, and a voice which she at once recognized as Robin More's, calling, "Friend Grace!" Her heart leaped up gladly, and seemed now to be pouring the very elixir of vitality through nerves and muscles. Yet,—strange perversity of dawning love!—she feigned not to hear, and quickened her pace.

"Friend Grace!" the voice called again.

Then came a flash of indignation at herself for an affectation so foreign to her nature. She stopped, and turned upon the young man a countenance that expressed her real emotion of honest pleasure. He looked pale and worn, but his handsome face brightened up with responsive pleasure at the meeting.

"May I walk with you to your home?" he asked. "I cannot tarry now; but I would like permission to call on you this evening. I feel that I need cheering up a bit, and an hour or two in your charming household will act like a tonic. I take every precaution against infection, and I know your folk do not fear the presence of voluntary nurses; for your brother Paul has been helping me, and we all know of your service."

"It will give me great pleasure!" quoth Grace; and that was surely an honest word.

The walk to the Owen house was a short one, but it took an unusually long time to cover it that day. As Robin bade Grace good-by and turned away, the maiden entered the door in unwontedly good spirits. That tired feeling of the morning had quite vanished. What a marvelous influence our mental moods have upon our physical state! And how little we understand and use

this strange power in our daily lives and our relations to others!

Fresher and brighter for the evening bath and change of dress, Robin was early at the Owens; and Grace, too, rested by an afternoon nap and sweetened by a fresh toilet, received him with a cordial greeting. Underneath it, dimly defined, so dimly that she was barely conscious of it, lay a wonder as to what might be in the young man's mind, and what it might bring forth for her.

The evening was warm; the full moon was just rising; and the family sat on the side-porch that faced the orchard and garden. It was embowered with clematis and honeysuckle; and by and by, when tea and cake were served, and the moon had mounted higher, the scene was so fair and soothing, and the evening passed so quickly and pleasantly, that they almost forgot the dreadful pestilence that walked among them.

Then Robin told the special reason for his visit. He had received from a well-known merchant and shipper an offer to go as master and supercargo of a fine large brig that had just been finished and fitted out. He had accepted the offer. The worst of the fever, it was believed, was over. He would withdraw from the service of relief and devote himself to mustering a crew, laying in the cargo, and putting the vessel in shape for sailing. The destination of the ship had not yet been announced; perhaps it would be Jamaica. But it would be a voyage of several months. He would call again, if he might, to say farewell; but they had all been so kind to him that he wished them, before all others, to know his plans.

Ere Grace retired that night, she leaned out of her bedroom window, and watched the shadows of the trees so vividly outlined upon the lawn that they seemed like real things. Strange fancies, and sweet they were, as well, flitted through her brain — (were they, too, only shadows?) — and somehow the form of Robin More was interwoven with them all.

From his inn-window Robin also looked out, but not

upon orchard and lawn; on the moon-lit street and brick houses, the broad river and the shipping. He, too, had his visions; but they were of success upon the great sea which he knew so well; of a home somewhere, with Grace Owen the light and joy and presiding spirit thereof. Great God of the ocean and moon-lit land, could such happiness be for him? Could he ever be worthy of it? Then he, too, lay down to untroubled sleep.

With October came clear days and cooler nights, and wholesome conditions. Dawning hope heralded the coming of rising confidence. The pulse of business quickened. The stir of new life was felt along the Delaware front and its vicinage. Fugitives were talking of returning home. The sick felt the healing tonic of the brightened environment; and the prevailing hope and good cheer checked the progress or stayed the coming of attacks. The Alms House patients were far fewer and the cases less violent and fatal.

And Madam Mary announced that her task was over, and that she was about to leave. The attendant physicians and her associate nurses saw her go with warm expressions of good-will. The convalescents were grateful and tearful. Of Grace she asked the favor before the final farewell, of going with her to her home, as she wished to have a private talk with Mrs. Owen.

Grace mounted to her own room at the head of the stair and left Mother Lydia and Madam Mary together in the little parlor. An hour and more thereafter, Grace heard the front door open and her mother's voice upon the porch. Looking out, she saw Mother Lydia, in bidding Madam Mary farewell, draw her to herself and kiss her upon the cheek. Madam Mary as she passed down the path between the borders of fall flowers, seemed to have been weeping. What transpired during that long interview was never fully revealed. But this much her mother told Grace when her visitor had gone:

"Thine unknown helper, of whose brave and self-denying labors thee has so often spoken, has given me

her name and bidden me tell thee. She is Lady Jenks, the late companion of Thomas Penn. She has told me the story of her life; and a pitiful tale it is. She was well born and well reared, but the love of pleasure and a misguided affection led her astray. She fondly cherished the hope that Thomas Penn would acknowledge her as his lawful wife. But when he abandoned her and went to England in August last, she was well-nigh heart-broken. The call for volunteer helpers to care for the fever-stricken, awoke in her a wish to do some good to her fellow creatures, and mayhap find easement for her own sorrow by bringing aid to the suffering. She concealed the name by which she is known, lest her offered help might not be welcomed. Her experience amid the awful incidents of the last few weeks has wrought a great change in her views and feelings. She is naturally proud and high-spirited; but she is now a heart-sore and, I hope, a penitent woman, who, I trust, has experienced the Saviour's beatitude: 'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted!' I have pointed her to the only sure Source of comfort, of forgiveness and spiritual cleansing. May that Holy Spirit guide her into righteousness and peace! She asked me to tell thee as much of her story as seemed right, and to bid thee farewell for her, and say that thee would see her no more. Let this matter bide between thee and me. It would be ill to set the tongue of gossip agoing. Heaven help us all; for truly we all need to pray, 'Forgive us our trespasses!'"

Another incident marked this dark period, which it benefits us to record. One day a gentleman called at the Oster house and asked for Mrs. and Miss Oster. The maid told him that both ladies were out, and that he could find Miss Agnes at the Friends' Alms House. He left word that he would call in the evening, as he had important business in hand. But plainly the stranger changed his mind; for passing into Walnut Street, he walked down to Third and entered the Alms House. He

gave his name to the Irish attendant at the door, and asked to see Miss Oster, if she could leave her duties for a little while.

“He is a fine-looking, blackavised man,” was the message brought to Agnes, “and by his dress a soldier or a minister, I could not tell which. He did not give his name in full, but just said to tell you he was a ‘son of Henry, and came from Cartagena.’”

“It must be the Chaplain who wrote us about Alfred’s death!” said Agnes; and, as duty was not pressing, she hastened to the little office to meet him. It was indeed Chaplain Addison Henry. As he had come to Philadelphia especially to see her mother and herself, the physician readily excused her, and the two walked home together. When they arrived, Mrs. Oster had come in, and the good Chaplain had the melancholy privilege of giving mother and sister the full details of the hospital steward’s noble service and triumphant death.

Some souvenirs of their dear one he had brought from Cartagena, which he would bring to them that evening. Not a word was spoken of the shadowed chapter in Alfred’s life, which the Chaplain believed had been fully atoned for by Him whose blood “cleanseth us from all sin,” and which was fully testified to by the Sergeant’s faithful Christian life as a soldier, and his heroic death. In the evening Chaplain Henry called to leave the promised souvenirs, and the more substantial token of Alfred’s whole back pay, which had been sent by him. He tarried longer than he had intended, and left with the decided impression that Agnes Oster was not only a beautiful but a sensible and pious young lady.

The next morning he called at the Alms House, and offered his services during his brief stay in Philadelphia, as a volunteer nurse, “especially as an aid to Miss Oster, in view of his close relations to her brother during the war. As he had seen much similar service on the Spanish Main, he might count himself, if not an expert nurse, at least a somewhat experienced one.” Hap-

pily the great pressure of need had now passed, but as there would still be much to do for a week or two, his offer was accepted.

Chaplain Henry, an ordained minister of the Reformed Church of Holland, was a man of comely presence, of good family, of substantial means; and withal of fine abilities as was shown by a sermon preached in the First Presbyterian Church on the following Sunday. It was not often that Agnes Oster forsook her seat in Gloria Dei Church wherein her family had worshiped since its founding before the coming of Penn. But on that occasion courtesy to her brother's friend appeared to justify her in going to hear him. And she took with her not only her mother, but her friend Grace Owen, who sometimes indulged in an "occasional hearing" of "hireling ministers," despite the admonition of the Meeting's Overseers. That he was well worth listening to, all were agreed. Agnes declared that he was both instructive and interesting; while Grace considered his sermon eloquent and his manner graceful.

The attractions of Philadelphia seemed to strengthen daily in Chaplain Henry's mind, and they centered largely around the Friends' Alms House and the Oster home. The vessel sailing for New York, in which he had engaged passage, left port without him, and he was obliged to wait for another opportunity; to which misfortune he was sweetly resigned, as became a gentleman of his cloth.

In short, he had resolved, if the way should be clear, to take back to his thrifty New Amsterdam parish a pastor's wife; since he had found in Philadelphia one whom he judged to be eminently endowed by personal and mental and spiritual graces (the only dower that he sought), for that responsible position.

This was a matter which it took two parties to determine; but as Cupid had once more been walking that hospital ward, his advances were favorably met. But the Chaplain's plans miscarried in part; for Agnes was

not quite ready for such vigorous wooing and hasty marriage, so soon after her brother's death. Mr. Henry therefore had to sail away without her; but with the promise that when he should return in due time, his manse might be prepared to welcome a bride, and with her the mother from whom Agnes could not be parted.

CHAPTER XXVII

DOROTHY FALLS INTO THE HANDS OF DIABOLONIANS

The first day's march of the Owen party covered about sixteen miles. The trail followed the Susquehanna through deep woods broken here and there by bits of natural meadow-lands that gave lush pasturage for the horses. It was not easy to make headway with a wagon, but it finally won through to the first night's camp.

Soon the tent was pitched, and a great camp-fire was crackling, and piercing the light river mist with its cheerful blaze. The pleasant bustle of making the evening meal, caring for the horses, and preparing for the night's rest, sped on the evening until dusk. The sun set behind a mass of red, orange, golden and lavender clouds, that had a strange seeming, against the background of distant mountains, as of mighty forces stirring and marshaling behind them. So weird was the effect that Two-tongues, the Mohican, shook his head and declared that "Manitou was brewing a big storm in the Sun!"

As the nightfall deepened, the travelers settled down for rest. The curtain that divided the tent into two parts was stretched, giving Dorothy some privacy by screening her from her father's premises. Bear-skins were laid upon pine-tree twigs making a comfortable couch. When the silent pause for family worship was over, good nights were said, and a deep stillness fell upon the camp.

The Louper had left, saying he would go to the river to catch a mess of fish for the morning breakfast. Andy, worn out by long waking and anxiety, asked Joel

Knowles, the owner of the Owen camp wagon, to take the first watch, from dusk to midnight; then lay down in his place by Father Owen, and was in a sound sleep a moment thereafter. Two-tongues slept in the men's tent. Joel sat by the smouldering fire till it had died down to a mass of glowing coals. Then he walked the tour of the camp, keeking here and there to see if all were well.

Throwing an armful of wood upon the coals, he watched the fire eat into the sticks and creep along their lower surfaces, and shoot upward into tongues of flame. They pierced the shadows of the forest in a circle of diminishing brightness until swallowed up by the gloom of the thick woods. Long and silently he sat in worshipful mood, as is the manner of Friends. He heard a distant howl of wolves. Once he fancied that he caught the gleam of their eyes, as if some leaders of the pack had pushed daringly near the dreaded fire. He even thought he had a glimpse of their dark forms as they shrunk back into the impenetrable darkness. Then there arose calls of night-birds, answered by the trilling of tree-toads and the shrilling of insects. These died away into silence and began again; and again silence fell, a silence that could be felt!

Joel's mind was filled with religious awe. From these mysteries of the woods, the natural creatures of the Good Father whom he worshiped, his thoughts arose into prayer. And then — for he was no longer a young man — the spell of slumber which he had been resisting, seized with full force upon his drowsy senses, and nodding by the camp-fire on his log-seat, he drooped his gray head and slept. There, by the fading firelight, in the dim moonlight that fell upon the open camp grounds and the shimmering stream, the old, weary sentinel slept!

There was a rush out of the forest of many feet. He felt it, rather than heard it. He sprang up half-waking. "Were the wolves upon him? Ay, Joel, human

wolves!" Three Indian warriors held him in their grasp.

He struggled to free himself. He had no purpose of fighting, but the natural instinct to repel restraint asserted itself. He was a stalwart man with muscles seasoned by toil, and his half-unconscious action flung from him one of his assailants who chanced to fall into the fire. The other braves instantly pinioned Joel's arms, and just as he lifted up his voice to cry an alarm, a hand was thrust across his mouth.

Then from the fire's edge leaped Cross-eye, for it was he who had been thrown down, and irritated by the smarting burns, and yet more by the mocking laugh of his comrades, he thrust his scalping knife into Joel's heart with a vicious white man's curse: "You be still now! Hey?"

Joel sank upon the ground, and while life was still quivering in the murdered man's frame, his scalp was torn from his head and hung reeking at his assassin's belt. The two warriors dragged him from the fire's edge, and as they laid him down, heard his last word — "Rest!" His meditations, his visions, his dreams were over. Perhaps we had better say in the spirit of his own strong faith, they had simply been lost in sight. At least, he had "entered into rest."

Two-tongues' alert senses had caught the first sounds of the attack, and creeping under the rear of his tent, he crawled snake-like into the darkness, and disappeared. Andy heard Joel's smothered cry, and seizing his rifle, rushed out of Father Owen's quarters, to be felled by a blow of a war-club from one of a band of Indians who surrounded the tent. His arms and ankles were pinioned with deerskin thongs, and he was carried, still unconscious, to a young oak tree and lashed thereto.

When he came to his senses, he tried to take in the situation. His limbs were numb from suppressed circulation, and pained him sorely. The tightness of the cords cut into the flesh. His head, too, ached from the

blow upon his forehead, and the blood that trickled from the wound had congealed on his face. But the brave lad cared little for his own hurts. His anxiety was for his mistress.

That was for the present relieved as he turned his eyes toward Dorothy's "White Wigwam." The front flap was open, and a warrior watched before it. Within, he had a view of Dorothy kneeling in silent prayer upon the bear-skin rug which had been her couch. Her back was turned toward the open door. She wore the plain Quaker dress in which she had lain down, and a gray shawl was spread across her shoulders. In his own apartment, just visible, Father Owen was seated upon a camp-stool. His head was covered with his broad-brim hat, and his pocket Bible was open in one hand.

Relieved thus from immediate anxiety for those in whose fate he was most deeply concerned, Andy turned to consider his own case. The tree to which he was tied was well to one side of the camp and barely within the faintest circle of the fire's light. Just beside him lay a dead form. It was covered by a blanket, out of respect, no doubt, for Dorothy's sensibilities, or out of dread of her indignant rebuke. Who could it be? Not Two-tongues — he wore moccasins; and the feet (barely exposed), were shod with stout shoes. Not Louper Jan. He had not been seen since he went off fishing, (as he said); and Andy could well account for him. It must be Joel!

The shock which he felt at the sudden death of this good and harmless man, was great; and although he was not particularly superstitious on such matters, yet this gruesome figure lying so near to him, there in the lonely woods, made him feel uncomfortable. Moreover, from the fact that the Indians had not spared Joel, he argued ill for Father Owen and Dorothy, and that his own fate would not be a gentle one. Had he been kept for the slow torture of the stake? Well, the wretched Diabolonians should not have the satisfaction of

winning a groan from him, let them do their worst!

Several Indians were stretched out asleep around the fire, feet to the coals, wrapped in their blankets. At a little distance therefrom a smaller fire had been kindled, and before it two warriors were seated conversing in low tones. One was Cross-eye. The other he did not recognize, but as his dress and port indicated a chieftain, he inferred that one and perhaps more of the head men of the village had joined in the attack.

Ere long this Indian came to the tree, and began examining the thongs by which the prisoner was secured. Andy was suffering so much that he appealed for some relief.

"Can't you loosen up the cords a bit?" he asked, speaking in the Delaware language. "The men who tied me have quite overdone the job. The thongs are cutting the flesh, and stopping the blood. A looser tie will bind as fast; and surely you've nought to gain by causing me useless pain."

The Indian's response was most unexpected. He smote Andy a smart blow on the cheek with the palm of his hand, and spat in his face!

"You red-headed devil!" he fairly hissed in English, and in tones that he once recognized as Louper Jan's. "I give you back one of your own proverbs, 'fast bind, fast find!' If I could tighten the cords, I surely would do so rather than loosen them. Do you begin to squeal a'ready? We've just begun with you! You'll have some reason to howl before we're done with you."

"Oh! it's you, is it?" Andy replied. "I might 'a knowed no Indian 'ud be mane enough for sich doin's! You traitor, you murderer, you betrayer of your own people, you treecherous plotter with savages to debauch and ruin your sainted mistress! No wonder you cover your shame beneath Indian dress and paint. You miserable, degraded Diabolonian! You're far warse nor a savage at heart; an' no white man'll iver again own ye!

Just loose me for five minutes, and put a weapon in my hand, an' boy as I am, I'll fight ye, and send your cowardly saul back to your true father, the Devil!"

For a moment, beneath this torrent of denunciation, the Louper stood grinding his teeth in rage. He drew his scalping-knife; then thrust it back, and turning sharply from Andy walked to where Cross-eye sat.

"He's fast enough!" he said. "He'll keep till tomorrow, and then — But I'm off now, I've kept my promise; have I not? Well, now I trust you to keep yours." He plunged into the dark forest and was soon lost to sight.

Cross-eye kept his lone watch for half an hour, and then made the round of the camp. He exchanged a few words with the sentinel before Dorothy's tent, and satisfied that all was right returned to his place, lay down by the fire and slept.

The keen excitement of his anger, had for a moment caused Andy to forget his pain. But as his wrath cooled, his sufferings returned. The night had worn on to two hours past midnight. A cricket chirped on the ground so close to him that he was startled. Was it mere fancy? Or did he hear a well-known signal? He waited, eagerly intent to note if the sound were repeated.

"Crr-rr-eek! Ker-eek!"

There it was again! So like the cricket's chirp that any ear might be deceived; yet with that slight artificial inflection which marked it as a chosen signal. It must be Fox-foot! Andy answered the call, repeating it in a key so low as to be heard only a few yards beyond him. He waited until he could count fifteen, and the note was again sounded, very softly, and just beside him. Yes; his friend had come!

Hark! A voice is whispering in his ear:

"Hist! I here, just behind tree. Make no move. I cut thongs. Stand still till you get over be numb. Then

creep to woods after me. I leave knife at foot of tree. Rifle and tomahawk in woods."

Now an arm was reached from behind the tree, and swiftly and silently the cords on his wrists and ankles were cut. The arm disappeared, and presently Andy saw Fox-foot's form gliding like a shadow and as quietly over the ground. Kind Heaven, what relief! He stood motionless while the blood came tingling along its veins, causing a pain of its own—sharp enough, but how different!

Cross-eye moved restlessly in his sleep, but did not waken. The sentinel before Dorothy's tent seemed to be dozing. The warriors around the camp-fire lay like logs.

Then Andy slowly shrank to the earth, thrust the knife into his belt, and began to worm his way noiselessly into the background. A dry twig crackled beneath him.

To his sharp-edged senses it seemed like a rifle's crack. He stopped, and hugged the ground closely. No one stirred in the camp. He pushed on, and reached the deeply shaded space, where Fox-foot met him and put a rifle into his hand.

"Come," he said. "I got safe den pretty well hardby. We go there first. Let your feet fall softly as the moonlight."

A short walk brought them to the foot of a ridge that rose sharply from the strip of clear bottom-land on the farther end of which was the camp. On the river-side the water washed the rocky base of the ridge.

"Off with shoes!" said Fox-foot. "We wade here; get to cave pretty well so; and throw pursuers off trail, if they follow. They think mebbe we ford stream here. They get pretty well big fool! Hah?" He had somewhere picked up the phrase "pretty well," which so pleased him that he made it do duty often as his adjective and adverb of special emphasis.

Shoes and moccasins were doffed, and with scarcely a sound of splashing the two youths marched along the ridge's base in the shallow water until Fox-foot gave

the signal to land. A few minutes' climbing brought them to the summit, which was crowned with a great jutting rock.

From where this protruded from the earth a narrow shelf or rim had been left, or formed by the rain and frost. Along this shelf, Fox-foot slowly shuffled, holding the while to shrubs that were rooted in the crevices of the rock above, and with chest pressed closely against the surface. It was delicate work, especially in the scant moonlight, and required steady nerves and cool head. Andy with his wounded brow and aching limbs was in ill shape for such a trial; but having first pushed over his knife and rifle to his comrade, he made the passage successfully.

He found himself in a small cave which had been fitted up with sundry rude conveniences for a secret bivouac. A real paradise that for an Indian boy, or for any normal boy, in sooth!

"This my fort!" said Fox-foot, looking around with pride and pleasure in his friend's surprise and admiration. "We safe here. I found 'im two years ago, when my people sent me out, all myself by, to find my 'Wy-ya-kin.' I found 'im, too! The Fox-spirit sooke me; so I was named 'Fox-foot.' No one knows cave yet, I pretty well sure. Here two men defend selves days against a tribe. And here now powder an' bullets Queen Esther sent you. She rode Paxton to raise band riflemen for you rescue. If white men have pretty well go as Queen Esther, they now on way. But this bad business"—pointing toward the camp—"for Delawares! Tribe not in this, you be sure. Band bad men with Louper Jan chief, have done! But we all be blamed, and may have to suffer pretty well. I not forsake my tribe; but I cleave to my white brother till he pretty well safe, and help Mourning Dove and Snowy-hair all I can. But you must tell Queen Esther and her braves how it is. The blame pretty well with one their own color — not poor Delawares!"

"That I will, truly!" Andy replied with great cordiality. Then he told what he knew about the attack, and the Louper's part in it. Fox-foot in turn related how, having done his errand, he hastened back, and coming upon the encampment, reconnoitered, and was amazed to find how things stood.

"And see!" he said, pointing to the knife in Andy's belt, "beautiful present your good Aunt gave me! And with it I cut your bonds! See?"

Now Fox-foot took Andy to one side of the projecting shelf, where an opening through the embowering trees and shrubs gave a view of both river and camp. Across the stretch of level mead dimly lighted by the half-moon, the two lads could see the camp-fires and tents. Even while they gazed, Andy's escape seemed to be discovered. Cross-eye's manner, as he stood in angry colloquy with the sentinel before the tent; the stir among the warriors as they were aroused; the conference around Cross-eye who took the lead of the band, all could be seen as the figures came into the strong light of the camp-fire.

Then the group broke up, and scattered in various directions, seeking traces of the fugitive's trail. But so many footsteps, trodden to and fro without attempt at concealment or thought of hostile surroundings, criss-crossed the little plain, that such efforts were of small worth.

The searchers, therefore, were recalled, and returned one by one. Again they surrounded Cross-eye and appeared to report their failure. Presently they once more scattered abroad, several into the forest, the rest by two canoes, of which one went up, the other down the stream.

But now Andy began to feel the effects of the heavy blow, the torment of his lashings to the tree, the long strain of anxiety and loss of sleep and many exposures, and was compelled to lie down. He had washed his wound and face in the river as he came through it to the cave, and Fox-foot had attempted some rough dressings with softened slippery elm bark. But he was parched

with fever, and suddenly felt as if his strength had left him.

Fox-foot slipped along the shelf and returned with a canteen of water from a spring that issued from the ridge below the summit. This was refreshing to Andy who soon fell into a troubled sleep. He tossed his limbs restlessly. He wandered in his speech. He broke into fierce denunciations of Louper Jan, and started up half awake.

Fox-foot soothed him into quiet again. But now he was shivering. His friend covered him with a bear-skin, and still he was cold. Plainly, it was a case of "fever and ague," "chills," "river fever," the "malarial fever," however called, so well known as a scourge of the frontiers. Fox-foot marked the symptoms with a heavy heart, wondering how he should care for his white brother there in that secluded spot, and how he could get him out should this illness continue?

When at last Andy's chills were abated, he fell into a quiet sleep, and Fox-foot went to his "peep-hole" in the front of the cave to look out upon the camp. He could hardly stay the cry of amazement that rose to his lips. The camp was forsaken! Snowy-hair and the Mourning Dove were gone from the tent! The front flap was wide open, and by the firelight he could see the form of the Indian sentinel who had been left as the sole guardian of the two peaceful prisoners, lying on the ground before it, bound hand and foot. He had thought him dead, at first, but perceived the truth when he saw the man squirm and roll upon the ground in efforts to unloose himself.

What could it mean? Had there been a rescue? Had Queen Esther and her riflemen come and safely taken away the Mourning Dove and Snowy-hair? Or had there been some new plot of the Louper? Had he come in the absence of Cross-eye and his party, and carried off the prisoners? He hoped for the best, but feared the worst. At all events he would not tell Andy until he should be better.

CHAPTER XXVIII

HOW NATURE AIDED PROVIDENCE

The Indian sentinel before Dorothy's tent started up as he heard the heavy tread of rushing feet from the wood hardby. He raised his rifle. It was too late. A blow from a battle-ax felled him. A powerful man in a British officer's undress uniform swiftly drew strong cords around his arms and tied them.

The canvas door of Dorothy's apartment was closed, for she had lain down to rest. But she heard the blow and the brief scuffle, and then the voice of Father Owen crying out in tones broken by surprise and joy:

"Benjamin, my son, my son! Is it thee?"

"It is I, indeed, Father Owen! And thank God, I have come in time. But we have not a moment to spare for explanation. Haste to your horse. Saddle and bridle him. I will join you in a moment to prepare Dorothy's. Mine is in the woods. Where is Dorothy?"

His question was answered instantly, and in a most unexpected way. The flap of the tent was pushed aside, and with a glad cry Dorothy ran out and flung herself upon Ben-Thee's bosom. During the excitements of the past days, she had borne herself heroically, almost stoically. For the sake of the cause, for her father's sake, even for her own sake (for she knew how to win the respect of the red men), she had kept up. All tears, all signs of weakness were suppressed. But in the shock of this great surprise she lost the grip upon her nerves. Her womanly nature swept all else aside in the sudden onrush of sentiment, and she sobbed aloud as she leaned on that broad breast:

“O my love — O my brother!” she cried. “Thee has come!” In that moment of uncontrollable emotion the hidden secret of her life had broken forth!

Ben-Thee pressed her to his heart, and bent his head and kissed her brow. Emotions long and quietly gathering, like the waters of a mountain lake, were let loose and surged through his heart.

“This is the sweetest moment life ever brought me!” he said. “But dearest Dorothy, we must not wait. Prepare at once to fly. We cannot expect to be long free from your captors, as we are now. I must finish binding this man. Our own safety requires that. I spare his life for thy sake. Then I will join Father Owen and thee at the horses, and we will fly together.”

He held her from him, and gazed fondly upon her face. He kissed her forehead, her cheeks, her lips — passionately, rapturously. Then he released her.

Dorothy’s cheeks were burning with blushes. What had she done? Oh, that unmaidenly revelation! Yet, there was a look of intense happiness, of ecstatic joy upon her face that for years had not been there. She was loved — loved as a maid — no sisterly subterfuge! — loved by the man she had loved from childhood! O sweet life! It is worth living now!

She ran into the tent and donned a riding hood and a gray shawl, and in a moment was out again.

“I am ready — at once — now!” she cried. “I will run to father, and help him. We will not lose a minute!” And away she sped, joyous as the first sunburst from a summer sunrise cloud.

The Indian watchman was not dead. The force of Ben-Thee’s blow had been broken by the rifle which he had thrown up to ward it off. But he was stunned, and lay still while his legs were bound together, and the cords upon his arms were secured. This done, Ben-Thee joined Dorothy and learned in response to his inquiry, of Andy’s mysterious escape and the excitement it had caused.

"Then we can go with lighter hearts!" quoth he. He lifted Dorothy to her seat. Father Owen was already mounted. Both had the choice horses they had ridden from Philadelphia. They followed to the place where Ben-Thee's "Nelly" was picketed, and then away the trio rode in the early dawning, pushing their horses as fast as the trail would allow, making a straight course for Harris's Ferry. For three hours they kept up their pace, during which time they exchanged the stories of their lives since their last meeting.

"Father Owen," said Ben-Thee, in one of their intervals of silence, "I ask thee, should we be spared from this adventure, that I may have Dorothy for my wife?"

The old man, startled by this sudden proposal, turned his face backward, for he rode a little in front of the young couple, and checked his horse's pace. "Did I understand thee aright? Thee asks Dorothy to wife?"

"Yea and verily! With all my heart I mean it. Thee will not deny me?"

"And thou, my daughter, what sayest thou?"

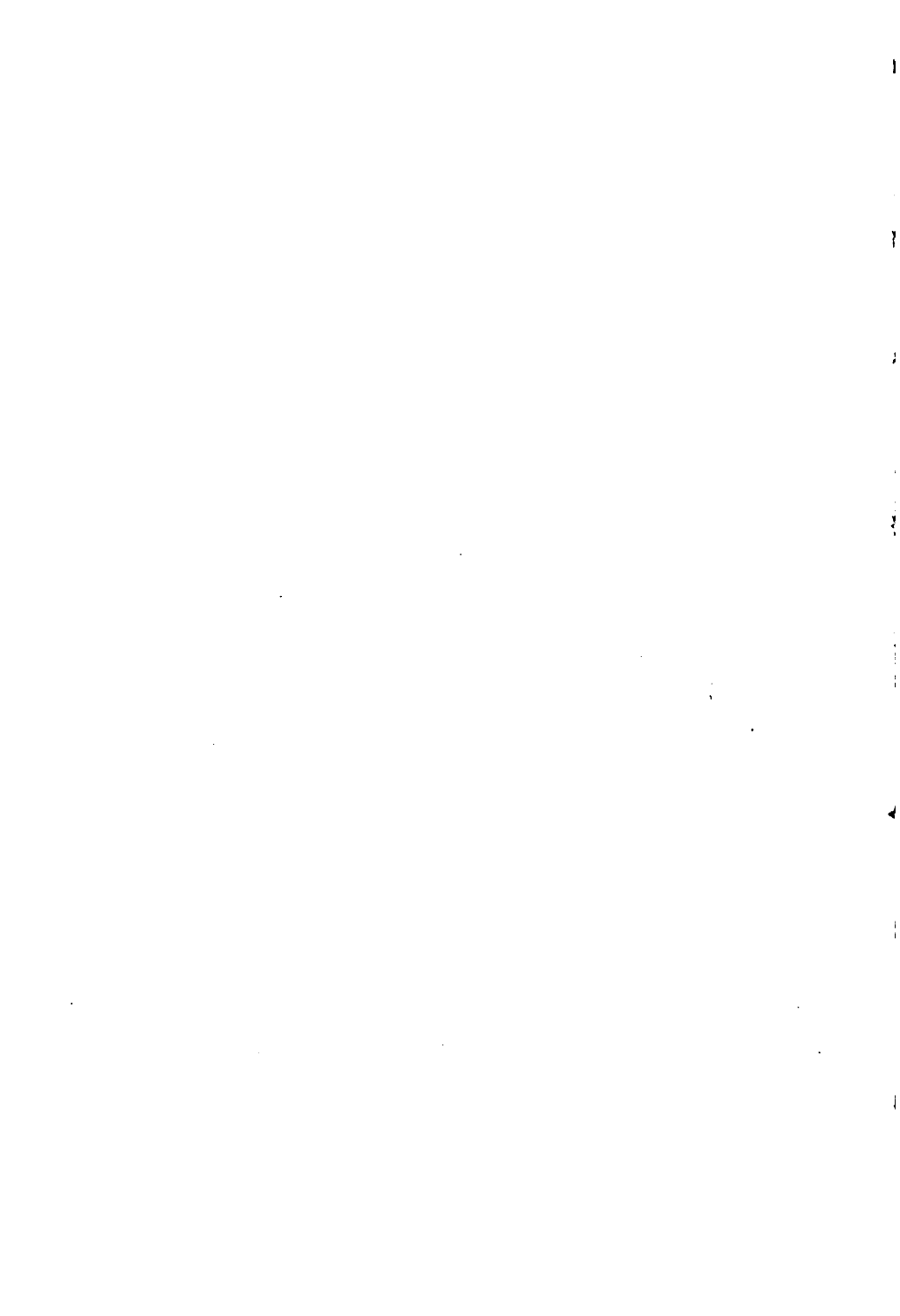
The maid replied in a voice so low that it scarcely reached beyond her father's ears, and trembled with emotion. "It is my wish, father, if it please thee."

"It pleases me, indeed; though I could wish that Benjamin were of our faith and way. I have long suspected that thine affections were fixed upon him. But his fancy for Rhoda Reagan was so decided, that —"

"Oh, that is long past!" Ben-Thee interrupted. "Buried beyond even a thought of resurrection. Do not let that trouble thee a moment. I did not know my own heart then. Two years' absence amid the terrible scenes of the Spanish campaign, have disclosed the deep, true love that lay beneath the fancy of a few month's growth — a fancy as impossible to realize as it was immature. I know myself now. I love Dorothy — not as a foster-brother — but as a man may love a maid! And I will never be content until she is my wife!" He pressed his horse to her side and took her hand.



"MAY HEAVEN BLESS THEE, MY CHILDREN!" WAS FATHER OWEN'S REPLY.



“May Heaven bless thee both, my children!” was Father Owen’s reply. His voice trembled. His eyes were moist with tears. He removed his broad-brimmed hat, and bowed his head in prayer, as though by this simple act to give solemn sanction to this strange betrothal, there in the deep wilderness, while fleeing for their lives. And truly their lives hung in the balance, as presently was made clear to them.

* * * * *

An hour after the White Wigwam had been vacated by the Owens, Fox-foot was again at his “peep-hole,” looking out upon the camp. Andy was better. His chill had been followed by a free perspiration, and that by a sound sleep. He lay breathing quietly so that his friend could leave him safely. What is it that he sees as he looks out upon the camp?

A white man in a frontiersman’s dress advances from the river bank where he has left his canoe. He looks around him, seemingly in great surprise. He sinks to the earth, and crawls forward cautiously. He appears to suspect some trick — an ambush perhaps. Now he sees the sentinel, and creeps to his side. There is a brief conversation, and he springs to his feet. The full light of the camp-fire falls upon him. It is Louper Jan!

He cuts the Indian’s cords and the man rises. Soon the pair are joined by Cross-eye and four other warriors who had gone down the river in a canoe to scout for Andy. There is a hurried colloquy. Then a rush to where the horses are picketed. The Louper, Cross-eye and three of the braves mount and ride away hot haste on the broad trail left by the Owen Party. Ah, Ben-Thee, that was indeed a serious error, to leave those horses bunched and picketed there, instead of turning them loose and whipping them into the woods! The two men left to watch the property, sit down by the fire and smoke their pipes, while the day slowly breaks, and Fox-foot

goes back to lie down by Andy's side and catch a few moments' sleep.

* * * * *

Esther Harris, who was a famous horse-woman, mounted and rode away, spreading as she went the news of an Indian attack upon white men, including her nephew Andy. At Paxton, she saw the minister, Mr. Elder — afterward commissioned a colonel, and known as "the fighting parson," — who promised to assemble a company and march to the relief.

Back she galloped to her own house and store, and the first person she met was her niece's husband, Ensign Burbeck! He stood at the upping-block to take her horse as she rode up.

"Arthur Burbeck, as I live!" she exclaimed, and grasping his hand. "Welcome home! I never expected to see you again. But are you well? You look peaked enough for a sick man!"

"It's myself, sure enough, Aunt Esther!" Arthur replied. "Or at laste, as much of me as the wretched Spanish Main an' the tormentin' an' tossin' say have left of me; for I'm nighamost frazled out, I allow. But I'll soon pick up on home fare and home air."

"When did you reach the colonies?"

"We landed in Philadelphia a week ago; and as soon as we could get certain matters relating to the company and the men's pay and discharges put right, the Captain and I got horses and left for the backwoods. I was longin' to see my family; and the Captain, when he h'ard of Father Owen and Miss Dorothy 'a-bein' out among the Indians, was bent on visitin' 'em afore he went home to the Cumberland Valley."

"Well, I do hope you're done now wi' your daunderin' over creation, and are ready to settle down and stay settled. It's full time for that; for it's fair true that a rollin' stone'll gather no moss."

"Ay, auntie, I'm well inclined to settle, and daunder no more! But as to that old rollin' stone you throw up

at me, I never could see what good the moss 'ud 'a done it, anyhow! I've no ambition to be a sluggish old moss-back! But there's no settlin' jist now, 'tanny rate; for the first thing I h'ard after I'd greeted Kate, was the bad news from Andy. And I'm come to l'arn what luck you've had at Paxton, and then I'm off to look after my boy. The Captain's gone a'ready — gone his lone, too! He stopped barely long enough to change his horse for his big mare Nelly that Kate and Andy had kept over for him. There was no holdin' him back when he l'arned that Dorothy Owen was in trouble with the Indians. An' I'm jist waitin' to hear from you, and get a few good men to join me, when I aim to follow Captain Ben-Thee."

Further talk was stopped by the coming of an Indian runner, who glided up to them, and announced his presence to Mrs. Esther. It was the Mohican, Two-tongues.

"You bring news?" Mrs. Harris asked.

"I bring news!" was the reply.

"It is bad news, I dare say. But speak out, and let us know the worst!"

"It is bad news!" the interpreter answered. And he told briefly the story of the attack on the Owen camp, the death of Joel, the captivity of Snowy-hair and Mourning Dove, and the wounding and binding of Andy. After that incident he had hastened to bring word to Queen Esther.

"Who are in the raid?" asked Mrs. Harris. "Has the whole tribe risen?"

"No. Delawares are quiet. Only Louper Jan and a few bad Indians."

"What will be done with the boy Andy!"

Two-tongues shook his head. "No tell that! The Louper hate Standing-hair. It look bad for him."

"Well, come into the store. I have something for you." She took him inside; gave him an ample present; learned all the particulars of which he was possessed, and bade him return at once and scout around the camp, and

await her coming with such news as he could pick up. Thence she passed into the house, took down her rifle, which she could shoot as well as most borderers, and came out to Arthur.

"I am ready," she said. "Go, get your horse and come on."

"Won't you wait for the Paxton men?"

"No. They'll follow. My son John and two good frontiersmen are here at the store and will join us. That's enough. We'll all be mounted. Tell Kate to fill your haversack. They're putting up a snack for the rest of us in the store. It will be ready by the time you get back."

* * * * *

We return to Ben-Thee and the Owens. The exhilaration that had come with the sudden climax of two hidden loves; the stimulus of their interchange of thought and news after such long separation, and their increased confidence in the growing hope of escape from probable pursuers, were at once beclouded by an accident to Dorothy's horse. While passing through a rough piece of woods, a forefoot was thrust into a small but deep sink hole, and he stumbled forward. Dorothy was thrown, but fortunately had released her foot from the stirrup, and came to the ground with only slight injury. Ben-Thee was at her side in a moment.

"I am all right!" she said. "Look out for poor Salem! I fear he is badly hurt."

And that unfortunately was true; his leg was broken. There was nothing to do but go on without him. Ben-Thee's pistol gave the "mercy stroke" while his mistress hid her face and wept, and Salem's carcass was left in the wilderness. Dorothy's saddle was transferred to Nelly's broad back; and the party pushed on, Ben-Thee afoot.

"Should the need arise," he laughingly remarked, as he lifted her to her place, "I will mount behind thee, and ride on, for Nelly can well carry double." But

much time was thus lost. Their progress was greatly retarded; especially as in Ben-Thee's two years abroad and at sea, he had lost much of his spring and endurance as a footman gained in frontier life.

As the morning wore on, the signs of a coming storm rapidly multiplied. Masses of dark clouds rose up from behind the western mountains, and scudded across the sky. The air grew thick and heavy. Occasional blasts of wind, as though they were the scouts and vanguards of the mighty coming tempest, swept before them dry leaves and light surface litter, or carried them forward whirling in little eddies.

"It is well to shun the woods in a storm," said Ben-Thee. "There is a bit of high ground yonder that is quite clear of timber. Let us make for that."

As they rode out of the forest and ascended the open hill beyond, Ben-Thee turned to look at the thickening clouds behind them. His eyes fell upon a more appalling sight. A group of horsemen galloped across a level mead by the river, toward the belt of woods out of which they had just come! They were Indians — no! One was a white man; and they were in pursuit of themselves!

Could it be Louper Jan and his Indians? It must be so. And hark! They have seen and recognized their party; for a yell of triumph is borne to them on the driving wind. Father Owen and Dorothy heard it, and gazed with blanched faces toward the coming band. Too well they knew what fate awaited them should they be overtaken!

"Father Owen," said Ben-Thee, "there is one chance for us. I remember that about two miles ahead, straight along this river ridge is a white settler's log cabin. Ride forward with Dorothy — ride at your utmost speed! Warn the people of the coming Indians. Claim their protection. Bid them from me to call in all stragglers, to secure the cabin and prepare to defend themselves, though they will do that without bid-

ding, you may be sure. I will take my chances on foot and in the forest, and can delay the pursuit long enough to make your escape sure."

"And leave thee alone, and at their mercy?" Exclaimed Father Owen. "Nay, Benjamin; we will bide with thee and share thy fate!"

"That is folly! Thee will not fight. Dorothy cannot. Does thee not see that thee will avail nothing by staying, and only make it worse for me? Alone and on foot I can do something. With thee and Dorothy to hamper me, we are all sure to perish."

"Father," said Dorothy, "thee must do as Benjamin bids. In his hands under Heaven, our lives now rest. Ride forward. Haste thee! Warn the unprotected settlers, and save their lives. Thee may do that, at least! I will stay with Benjamin to persuade him to mount Nelly, even as he said, and we two will escape together after thee. O my father, do not delay!"

Thus importuned. Father Owen galloped away.

"Come, Benjamin!" Dorothy entreated, "the mare is strong. She carries double well, thee said. She will bear us both to safety. Mount at once, I beseech thee!"

"My own love!" he said, "it is hard to refuse thee aught. But listen! I must kill some of these men or they will kill us. Look! Yonder is Louper Jan, the infamous wretch who follows thee — thou knowest for what! He rides at their head. He will soon be within rifle shot. I must stop him!"

"O my Benjamin! It is hard. But it is written, 'Thou shalt not kill.' 'Vengeance is mine,' saith the Lord. Leave him in the hands of God!" As she spoke a spent bullet dropped almost at Ben-Thee's feet.

"So I will. But at least I must stop this ride and this shooting. It is getting perilously close." He raised his rifle and fired. The Louper's horse fell and rolled with its rider on the ground.

"O Benjamin! I cannot bear to see thee take life like this!"

"It is their life, or thine and mine. I do not scruple to choose the former. But if thee would not see, ride forward. I will overtake thee soon."

His reloaded rifle was already poised when a shot from the horsemen on the mead struck Dorothy, and with a cry of pain her bridle arm dropped to her side. Almost as an echo the crack of Ben-Thee's rifle rang out and the foremost Indian, who had fired the shot, fell from his seat. The others halted. The Louper who was already on his feet, but little hurt, seized the horse's bridle as the rider rolled to the ground, and leaped into the empty seat.

"Forward, my braves!" he cried, "we will come back for our comrade! See! the white warrior flees. We are sure of him now! Forward!" And forward again they dashed with wild whoops of vengeance.

Meanwhile, Ben-Thee had run to Dorothy.

"You are hit!" he cried.

"Yes. It is my arm. It pains me, and it bleeds. But it cannot be serious."

Ben-Thee drew a large silk handkerchief from his shirt collar, and wrapping it tightly around the wound, fastened the ends. "Can thee bear it for a while?" he asked. "Thee must try. For we must get out of this at once." He mounted upon the mare's broad back, took the reins with one hand, and with the other clasped around Dorothy's waist to hold her to her seat, if need be, urged Nelly to her utmost speed.

The large and powerful creature responded to her owner's call as though she knew what depended upon her service. Beyond the hill upon which they had stood there rose another and much higher one. Up this height the good horse bore them; but she was well blowed and her pace lagged as Ben-Thee halted at the summit. She had been overfed and underworked by her keepers!

The trail over which they had come was in view from this point; and Ben-Thee's heart sank within him

as looking back he saw that his pursuers had gained upon them. And Nelly could do no better! He must appeal to the rifle again; for that he had kept slung across his back.

He dismounted. He lifted Dorothy from her saddle and led her to a seat upon a large fallen log on the side of the trail. Then he looked to the priming of his rifle. But now the progress of the storm, which in their absorbed attention to their personal safety had hardly been noted, alarmed him. A mass of clouds had gathered in the northwest, growing thicker and blacker and wider until it filled the heavens almost to the zenith. The occasional trees around the open on which they stood, were swaying and whipping their tops. Flights of leaves and loose twigs and dry brush were driving before the blast, sailing high up in the air, skurrying along the ground, and at times bombarding their persons unpleasantly.

Suddenly there seemed to issue from the very bosom of the black belt a segment of clouds torn and tossed and whirled about with inconceivable violence. It was as if all the forces of the air were in deadly conflict there in that riven segment of clouds. Soon it had taken the shape of an immense inverted cone whose apex touched the ground, whirling around and around and sweeping forward with incredible velocity. Its frayed edges gleamed with light.

On it came, directly toward them. No! Some mighty force has bent it from its course. It strikes the edge of the belt of the woods into which Louper Jan and his Indians have just entered. The roar of its awful voice drowns the war-whoops they had raised in confidence that their victims are surely within their grasp. So fierce and eager were their passions that they had given scant heed to this terrible Creature of the Clouds and the Wind. But it is on their track!

With a sound like the cry of ten thousand warring wild beasts, it struck the woods. Great trees were

snapped from their trunks as if they were straws, and heaped upon one another in vast win'rows. Huge limbs were wrested from trunks and caught up into the awful vortex, and whirled around, battering down whatever they smote, or were hurled afar off and dropped, as the tornado sped upon its rolling course. On, on, over the ridge it rushed on its path of desolation.

Ben-Thee and Dorothy gazed spell-bound upon the terrific scene. Its very awfulness fascinated them. Only the far tumultuous verge of the whirlwind had touched them, but even that was dreadful to experience. The air was full of drifting forest débris. The roaring and moaning, and howling and shrieking stunned them. The mare trembled with fright, and coming up to her master, pushed her head against him. Dorothy flew to Ben-Thee, and clung to him with her unhurt right arm.

“O Benjamin, my love!” she cried. “We shall at least have the joy of dying together, and by the hands of God and not of wicked men!”

“No, dearest, look — look! We shall live together. See what the Lord and the tempest have wrought for us!”

He pointed to the strip of forest along the base of the river hill out of which they had so lately come, and into which Louper and his band had just entered. A broad open lane lay through it, wherein, piled upon one another, like wheat stalks in the swath of a grain field, the fallen trees marked the tornado's path. Not a tree was left standing in its course. Their pursuers were nowhere to be seen. Horses and men lay crushed beneath the fallen trees, or beaten lifeless by the wind!

CHAPTER XXIX

A QUAKER CAPTAIN MEETS A SEA-ROVER

"I have a letter for a Lieutenant Robin More," said Chaplain Henry to Agnes Oster on the day after his arrival from Cartagena. "Do you happen to know of such a person, and could you give me his address?"

Agnes nodded toward Grace Owen, and with a mischievous glance and smile remarked: "This lady could probably inform you; and indeed might be willing to deliver the letter in person."

Whereat the Chaplain took the letter from his wallet, and would have handed it to Grace. But that lady, deeply blushing, refused to act as his post-carrier; and recommended him to apply at the office of the inn where he had put up, as the gentleman he sought was lodged there.

Thus it happened that Robin received from his father sooner than expected, the answer to his letter informing him of the great change which had been wrought in his views and character. It was short and sharp, and in substance disowned him as a son.

"Had you gone into the Church of Scotland," it declared, "in which you were baptized and reared, or into one of its American branches, I would not have had a word to say. That sort of religion could not do a sailor much harm. But for you to unite with the thee-and-thouing, non-combatant Quakers with no more vigorous blood in them than in earth-worms, and no more fighting grit than a sheep, is too much to endure! I have no further use for such a man on shipboard or elsewhere. You have blighted all my high hopes for the future by joining a sect despised by all sensible people

outside of Philadelphia; a sect that for all its boasted humility, is the most self-opinionated and stiff-necked under the sun; whose pride it is to differ from everybody else.

“Well, you have made your bed, and now you must lie in it! You have left your father for the Quakers; now look to Quakers for countenance and support! As an officer of the ‘Heather,’ you are entitled to a certain amount of money from the government. I therefore enclose an order for one hundred pounds, which Mr. Angus Reagan will honor on presentation. Should there be more due you—which is not likely—in the way of prize money or otherwise, I will see that it is forwarded to you. I do not wish you ill; though you have treated your father so ill in acting in a matter of such importance without consulting him, and doing what you must have known would put an impassable barrier between us. But it is done, and there is an end of it, as this letter requires no answer, and I wish none.”

This communication bitterly grieved Robin, although not wholly unexpected. Yet he would not admit to himself that this was “the end of it”; for he still hoped, as he daily prayed, that one whom he so loved, and to whom he was so greatly indebted, would yet see his son’s conduct in its true light, and that a reconciliation would follow.

He informed the Owens briefly of his father’s action, sparing them the reading of the letter, however, and putting his act in the mildest light, by dwelling upon the liberal remittance, which he felt sure his father had advanced from private funds. Before he sailed, he went down to Chester to see Mother Bell. More than ever now, he felt alone in the world, and turned to the house of this good woman as his home. Leaving her a generous sum in advance payment for his rooms, he bade her good-by.

It was a fair October day when the new brig the

"Quaker Lady," left Dock Creek, and with favoring tide and wind dropped down the Delaware. As the vessel was bound for Jamaica, the course was southward after leaving the Capes.

Once out upon the broad sea, the men were mustered aft. There were twenty-five of them besides the officers, a large crew for a simple merchant vessel. While descending the Delaware, many had been the conjectures and comments upon the character and capacity of their Captain, and how, in such stirring times, they were likely to fare under a Quaker skipper, even though, as it was well understood, he and the vessel owners were not principled against fighting in defensive warfare. When the mate had mustered the men aft, Captain More appeared in a trim suit of plain dark gray, with naval officer's coat, trousers and cap! That was surprise number one.

"Men," he said, "you have wondered, perhaps, that a merchant vessel should sail, as we do, with more men than really needed to work the ship. It was so decided by owners in view of the pending war. They are Friends, as I am. They reprobate war, as I do, though I long served on a ship of war. Yet we all differ so far from other Friends as to believe it our right and duty to defend life and property from those who would wrest them from us by violence. Under such conditions, and under no other, we feel free to fight. Therefore, this vessel is fitted out with guns for defense. As these would be worthless without training in their use, I have divided the men into gun crews, which shall be arranged finally as experience shall suggest; and we will at once begin regular practice. In case of emergency small arms will also be served to you." That was surprise number two.

"Moreover," the Captain continued, "jackets, trousers and caps of a uniform color and cut, will be issued at once to all hands. These will be served without cost to the crew, but you will be held responsible for reasonable care of them. You all know that the vessel's

safety and our own lives depend upon the efficiency of the crew, officers and seamen alike. As I expect you all to do your full duty, I promise to the best of my ability to direct and lead you in the same; and I ask and shall look for your cordial obedience and support."

The men answered by a cheer for the "Quaker Lady" and her Captain. The new uniforms were at once issued, and as they were neat and becoming, and were a gift to the men, they were donned with satisfaction and even pride.

It is a true saying that dress does not make the man. But it certainly does nourish manly self-respect; and in the case of organized men, a uniform dress gives a feeling of oneness that contributes to the sodality of the organization, and so to the efficiency of its movements. Thus it happened, at least, to the crew of the "Quaker Lady."

Now came the first gun drill, and the zest with which the men took to it was quickened by rewards which the Captain offered for those who should prove most apt in handling the guns, and for the most skillful marksmen. The gun drill was conducted at first by Robin himself; and the men soon found that their Quaker skipper was (to quote their own phrase) "no slouch at the brass long nines." Or, as one of them put it: "Our Captain and owners may be Quakers, but the Spanish dons who may chance to meet the 'Quaker Lady' in action will find that these big barkers are anything but 'Quaker guns.'"

When the gun crews had had sufficient drilling in the management of their pieces, and temporary gun captains and gunners had been selected, Robin gave them a lesson in shooting. Several hogsheads and boxes were lashed together, and cast adrift as a target. There was a deal of bad shooting, as might be expected of beginners, and the target was not once struck.

"Cheer up, lads!" said Robin. "You'll improve with practice; and if you imagine yon target to be a vessel

of our own size, you will find that your shots have not all gone wild."

"That's just it, your honor!" said one of the gunners, touching his cap. "I doubt if there's a man afloat, much less greenies like us, that could hit a mark like that!"

"Well, my hearties," Robin replied, "it may not be fair to ask you to do what I'm not willing to do myself. So let me try a shot!"

By this time the target had drifted well to leeward and showed but dimly as it bobbed up and down upon the waves. But Robin carefully sighted the piece, and its discharge was followed by a cheer from the ship's crew, who had gathered on deck and were eagerly watching the exercise. The target had been blown to pieces!

After that, their esteem for their Captain, and their confidence in their ability to take care of themselves while sailing Spanish waters, were greatly increased. However, Robin lost no opportunity to impress upon them the fact that it was only for the actual defense of life and property that he would ask them to risk their lives in action, or would use their services to destroy the lives and property of others.

The voyage proceeded without anything more exciting than the big-gun practice. Both officers and crew noted the daily improvement in the discipline of the men in managing the ship, in ordinary seamanship, and in special drills for engagement with an enemy, handling the guns, repelling boarders, manning the boats for assault, etc. The weather was delightfully serene, and the sea smooth. The season for tropical storms or tornadoes was about over, according to the old sailors' rhymed calendar for their prevalence in those parts:

July — stand by!

August — look out you must!

September — remember!

October — all over.

The course through the Bahamas and around the eastern coast of Cuba was a rare continuous pleasure. Passing the island of San Salvador, all hands were at the taffrail to see the first bit of land that Columbus saw when he "discovered America," and gave to Spain the passport and the key to the Western hemisphere. In these halcyon days the forecastle and deck, especially in the early evening, resounded with the songs and merry-making of the light-hearted sailors. And this, Robin not only permitted but enjoyed, because he liked to see his men happy, and believed that their happiness contributed to their general efficiency in duty.

One fine morning after the "Quaker Lady" had rounded Cape Maysi, and was making the Windward Passage between Cuba and St. Domingo with the course set straight for Jamaica, the lookout man on the main mast announced a sail in sight, off the Cuban coast and bearing down upon them. Soon all was animation aboard, for this was the region where they were liable to meet Spanish cruisers at any time. As the vessels neared one another, the British flag displayed by the "Quaker Lady" was answered by the stranger with the Spanish colors.

"She's a fighting ship, Captain," said First-officer Munro, a Scotchman and an experienced sailor, who had been master's mate on the "Heather" during a cruise with Robin. "She is heavily armed and manned," he continued, keeping his glasses fixed upon the approaching enemy, "and out-classes us somewhat in every way, I judge. But — I think — we may venture to tackle her, sir, if you are willing to help us with your gunnery."

"If the worst comes to the worst," was Robin's reply, "we must try it. But not until we have done our best to escape. Crowd on all sail that she will bear, Mr. Munro, and keep out of the Spaniard's way if you can."

The men had already run to quarters without waiting to be piped thereto, and showed scant alacrity in mounting to the rigging to put on more sail. They were

eager for "a brush with the Dons," and being confident of their ability to beat a vessel so near their own caliber as the stranger seemed to be, did not relish running away from her. It was soon seen, however, that the "Quaker Lady" was no match for the Spaniard in speed, and would be overtaken. And now, as she came within good fighting distance, she fired upon the "Quaker Lady," and hauling down the Spanish colors sent up a black flag blazoned with a skull and cross-bones.

"A pirate!" cried Robin, startled by the sight. "Call the men to quarters, Mr. Munro!"

The sailors hurried from aloft. The men flocked to their stations. The guns were uncovered and cast loose. Robin sent to his cabin for his sword and buckled it on. Coming forward, he briefly addressed the crew.

"Men," he said, "though I would fain have avoided a conflict, it is now inevitable. We cannot escape it, if we would; and since that black flag has been flung out, I am not sure that I would escape it, if I could. Yonder pirate is an enemy of mankind. His hand is against every man. The only law he recognizes is that of superior force; and to that we must appeal. We will fight to-day to rid the seas of a scourge, assured that we shall have the approbation of the whole world for a just and necessary act. Besides, we must fight for our lives. We can hope for no mercy from men who dare sail and fight under such a flag as that. Let us look up to God for His blessing upon our work!"

Robin removed his cap and stood for a moment bowed in silent prayer. The crew uncovered and stood at their stations in sympathetic silence. It was a striking scene! The quiet was broken by the boom of the pirate's gun and the crash of a ball against the hull; but not a man moved until the Captain put on his cap and cried: "Now, lads, let us to our duty with a will!"

He advanced to the crews of the long nines, pointed each piece separately, and gave the word to fire! The first shot struck the enemy's mainmast fairly; the second

shattered it badly, and the third and fourth, which quickly followed, sent it down and to the vessel's side, giving the pirate's axmen a busy job to clear away the wreck.

"Now for the foremast, lads!" said Robin. And sure enough, the next two rounds brought the foremast down. Whereat the crew, surprised and delighted by such remarkable gunnery, gave vent to their feelings in wild cheers.

"Well, my hearties," Robin remarked, surveying the result of his skill with much satisfaction, "we've spoiled her chances for catching us when we run away from her. But to show that we have no special spite against their standing gear, let us heave them a shot or two amidships."

Then he sighted his guns for the hull. The first shot blew two of the midship ports into one; and the next entered the opening and went boring through the hull, shattering all before it.

"By the ghost of Billy Penn!" said the boatswain, "he'll sink the pirate before he gets a shot at us."

But the prophecy was premature, for the pirate's gunners now began to get their distance. One of the long nines was dismounted, and several of its crew were carried wounded to the cockpit, and one man was killed by a flying splinter. The Captain also received a severe flesh wound on the leg from a splinter. But refusing to retire, he had the surgeon hastily bind up his wound on deck, and sent him back to care for the hurt seamen.

When Robin fell, a wail of sorrow ran through the ship at the news that he was killed! But when he was seen limping to the remaining big gun and directing its discharge, the depressing report thus contradicted gave occasion for another rousing cheer. The next shot from the "Quaker Lady" made a big hole below the pirate's water line; and thereupon Robin left the piece for the gunners to manage themselves, and had a hammock

spread on deck, in which he reclined, while directing the movements of the crew.

"There're getting out their boats!" said Lieutenant Munro. "I believe they mean to try to carry our ship by assault."

"The greater fools they!" was Robin's comment. "Man the carronades and give them grape and cannister as they approach. Our men will never allow them to board us. See that the muskets and cutlasses are distributed." As these had already been brought up from below, the seamen were soon armed and ready to support the carronade gun crews should they come to close quarters.

Two boats were soon sunk. As the survivors struggled in the water, even though they were Spaniards and pirates, the kind-hearted sailors pitied them, and when the Captain gave order to lower the ship's boats and save all they could, they sprang to the merciful task with alacrity. Soon the boats were darting here and there over the sunny waves, picking up the living with as much zest as they had shown but a little while before in destroying them.

Their efforts were misunderstood. The men of the pirate's crew could not take in the fact that these Anglo-Americans were on an errand of mercy, but expected to be slaughtered in the water! They alternately sputtered out shrieks for mercy, and attempted to placate their victors by broken cries of "viva los Americanos!"

"Poor souls!" sighed Boatswain Bolls, who commanded the cutter; "I could have seen the whole bloody gang gibbeted without a qualm. But this is too much for me — to see human beings perishing like drowning rats!" Thereat he turned the tiller over to a seaman, and fished out of the sea with a boat-hook a Spaniard wounded in the head.

Only one boat succeeded in reaching the side of the "Quaker Lady." That had pulled up under the stern, and its crew, reduced to six or eight men, began to call

lustily for "quarter," not in the Spanish tongue, but in English, with a twang of New England colonial thereto!

"Don't shoot, lads! We surrender!" the coxswain called, as some of the "Quaker Lady's" crew showed themselves with pointed muskets. "Here's our First Luff in the boat with a bad wound an' bleedin' to death, I reckon. Can't you haul him up?"

"Yes, yes!" answered Robin himself. "Pull around to the steps and climb up yourselves, and we'll help your officer aboard." The prisoners climbed the ladder and were disarmed. Then the wounded officer was lifted up carefully and laid on deck.

"Send for the surgeon or his assistant!" Robin directed, as the man was laid down. At the sound of his voice, the pirate lifted his head and looked around. Then in the blood-stained, pallid and pain-stricken face of this broken piece of humanity, Robin recognized the features of Lieutenant Ruel Braun, the former First Officer of the "Heather!"

The recognition was mutual. "Oh, it is you, is it, curse you! I might have known there was no man afloat but you who could have made such gun work as has done for us. May the devil take you for it!"

By this time the surgeon had come, and after a brief examination said that the case was hopeless. "My good fellow," he remarked quietly, "if you have any prayers to offer, you had better send them in quite the opposite quarter from the person you have just called upon. I advise you to save your breath and spare your energy, for you'll need it all if you're to have any chance for recovery."

"None of your cursèd preaching, Doctor! I know it's all up with me! I shall be in h—l — if there is such a place, and my old grandfather believed there is — before sunset. And my only regret is that I can't take with me yon canting, puritanical Captain of yours! I hate him! I have long hated him! And I will hate him forever! That's one satisfaction in going whither I'm

bound — I can hate him all I want, and hate him through all eternity!”

“Let him be carried below,” was Robin’s only comment, “and be cared for as if he were one of our own crew!”

These kind words called forth a fresh outbreak of angry objurgation. Braun was taken below, and all was done for him that could be done. But before sunset he died in great agony, uttering curses with his last breath. Even the most hardened of the sailors were horrified at the fact of such malicious blasphemy upon the lips of a dying man.

Robin was greatly stirred by this incident, but the duties of his position left him little time for vain regrets over a perverted and demonized life. The decks were cleared from the disagreeable and destructive effects of battle. The boat crews returned with all whom they could pick up from the sea. Two boats had made off from the shattered vessel, carrying the Captain and such of the crew as had stayed on board, to the coast of Cuba, a couple of miles or more distant.

Then Robin, accompanied by the boatswain and the ship’s carpenter, went aboard the abandoned pirate to examine its condition, and to see if it were worth an effort to save, and take with them to Jamaica. It was decided to make the trial, as outside the rather serious gun-shot damages, the brig was in excellent condition, and her injuries could be repaired and the craft made over as good as new. The carpenter and a prize crew were therefore put on board under Mr. Munro’s command and the work of repair was begun at once.

Jury masts were rigged, and the two brigs sailed in company to Port Royal, Jamaica, without further incident. There the captive ship was sold to the government on good terms, and turned into the service for the fag end of the Expedition against the Spanish Main. Thus captain and crew had a taste of prize money — though Robin turned over his share to the men — and

there was enough besides to repay the owners of the "Quaker Lady" for the cost of repairing the damages wrought in the fight.

The new vessel began its career as an English war ship under the name of the "Sure Shot," in honor of Robin's gunnery by which she had been won from the enemy. The command of her was offered to Robin by Admiral Vernon, who was highly gratified by the accounts of his conduct during the engagement, as related by the officers and men of the "Quaker Lady." Indeed, the whole fleet was soon advised of the facts, and as such picturesque acts of gallantry and skill had not been lately as frequent as usual in the navy, Robin More became quite a popular hero.

He disposed of his cargo on advantageous terms, and laid in a return cargo there and at the Barbados, which in the end proved highly satisfactory to the owners, and made his first voyage a marked financial success.

Eight or ten of Robin's prisoners were Americans and Englishmen who had been subjected to cruel treatment in prison to compel them to purchase release by enlisting in the Spanish navy. These had been forced against their wills to serve in the ship when it had been turned into a freebooter by the machinations of Ruel Braun, a deserter from the English fleet, whose naval skill had at once advanced him to an officer's place. These prisoners were readily taken into an English frigate. As the yellow fever had greatly weakened the fleet and able-bodied seamen were much needed, the Spanish sailors were also finally enlisted at their request.

CHAPTER XXX

MR. REAGAN HAS A VISITOR

One morning in the autumn of 1742, a gentleman stopped at the door of Mr. Angus Reagan's law offices. When the porter appeared in response to the vigorous thumping of the big brass knocker, he was handed a playing card, the ace of diamonds, on the back of which was written the name, "Captain Alexander More." There was no discourtesy in this act, for in the great dearth in the colonies of proper paper for visiting cards, such substitutes were occasionally resorted to from sheer necessity.

The visitor had tarried but a moment in the little waiting room adjoining the private office, when the lawyer entered alertly, with his card in hand. In truth, Mr. Reagan had something more than a current professional curiosity in the quality of this client and the nature of his business. For several years Captain More had been a client, though the lawyer never had seen him. He had transacted business involving considerable sums of money, always by correspondence or an intermediary. Thus far his mysterious client had withheld himself, as though by set purpose, from all situations that would be likely to involve a personal meeting.

This had stimulated Mr. Reagan's curiosity as to Captain More, and when his striking though not wholly unusual visiting card was placed in his hand, he felt peculiar satisfaction; and with accelerated pace advanced from his office desk to the waiting room. As the door opened, and his visitor rose to greet him, the whole aspect of the lawyer's countenance and person changed. It was transformed to one of intense surprise, which as

suddenly yielded to an expression of delight. He rushed forward with outstretched hand.

"Sandy Cameron, man! can this be you?" he cried.

"None else, Wallace Guthrie, my old schoolmate and chum!" was the reply.

The two men stood with clasped hands, gazing into each other's eyes.

Then, "Come into the office, man, come in!" Mr. Reagan exclaimed, and fairly drew his visitor into the private room.

"Let me look at you again," he said, "that I may be sure it is you! Yes, it is indeed Sandy Cameron, my old college-mate and partner in mischief, my fellow in exile and bondage!"

Again the two men wrung each other's hands with fervor. Then they sat down and looked at each other. Mr. Reagan — for we will not take up the abandoned name of Wallace Guthrie — broke the silence.

"And to think that you, Aleck Cameron, are my mysterious client, Captain Alexander More! And all this time you have succeeded in concealing your identity, and in fooling me to the top of your bent! But what possessed you to do that?"

"In truth, Wallie," was the answer, "I had no very special reason; unless it was to respect your own incognito, and maybe keep you out of trouble. It was at first rather an accident than intentional. And then I kept up the play from one of those unaccountable fancies that sometimes move men to do odd things. I was hard put to it at times to dodge you on the streets and in the inns and public places of Philadelphia. And now, I am come to let the cat out of the bag, to have a long talk, a full settlement, and to say farewell. For I'm off to Scotland in a day or two for good and all."

Mr. Reagan rose and lifting from a large iron-bound chest a tin box labeled "Captain More's papers," took therefrom a bundle of documents. "Here are your accounts and the various writings sent to me," he said.

"Kept like a lawyer!" exclaimed Captain More.

"Ay; or like a sailor!" Mr. Reagan replied, nodding toward the big chest.

"If you'd been as curious as you're careful," continued the Captain, "you might have found out my secret from those papers; for it's all written out fully there."

"True, but these were sent to me as private papers, with instructions that they were not to be opened or made public except in case of your death. I hope I have a little more conscience now, even if less curiosity, than in the days of our youth at the University of Auld Reekie. But come! before we take up these business affairs, let me hear your story. I have never heard a word from or of you since you left the Cumberland Valley under the fear that our old Maryland master was on your track. We all supposed that you and your family had been killed by the Indians, or fallen victims to fevers or accidents of some sort on the far frontier."

"So be it!" said Captain More. "A short horse is soon curried, you know. My yarn will soon be spun, for it's a scant skein. We pushed from the Cumberland into the extreme western parts of Pennsylvania, and I settled with my wife and the adopted Hannan boy in Washington County. With my usual facility in getting into trouble with the government, I fell in with a man who was turning western grain into Monongahela whisky, and was skipping the revenue officer's charges.

"I found I could make a living in this, and something more. The business suited me, for I was not skilled in farming and had no handicraft, and was a stranger in a strange country with a dependent family. Besides, I confess that I had a sort of pleasure in beating out of its revenue a government against which I had a grudge."

"A wrong and dangerous sentiment, of course," interjected Mr. Reagan, "but a lot of human nature in it!"

"Well, that was my case, anyhow; and I've kept at it a good part of my life, I'm sorry to say. But my

Washington County business was interrupted in a little over a year by the death of my wife. She was as affectionate and loyal a mate as ever man had, though without much polish or education except that of the American branch of our old Scotch Kirk, of which she was a devout adherent. And that mightily uplifted her character and softened her manners."

"Aye, aye!" muttered the lawyer. "Our Churches, of one sort and another — and all have done good work! — have saved civilization as well as religion and education in these colonies. I remember your wife as a bonnie young bride."

"Indeed, yes," the Captain continued, "and as good as bonnie! I had no idea how I loved her, and how much she was to me, until I lost her! Of course, I was left with the lad to rear, and with as little ability and taste for such a task, I reckon, as any man ever had. Just then, an old sea captain turned up with a scheme to come East, and buy or build a sailing craft of some kind, and go into trade, meaning smuggling spirits as well as freighting cargoes.

"This suited the party with whom I was engaged, and he agreed to go into the enterprise, and put up the bulk of the money for it, provided I would join in and take charge. I joined in, and back I swung to the East. We stopped at Chester, where my sea captain was well known; and there, first of all, I found an excellent widow woman, Mrs. Naomi Bell, who agreed to take charge of my boy Robin. We soon had possession of a tidy craft, and as business was lively in the colony, we had a good trade at once, legal trade I mean. But the smuggling came in gradually and easily; and you would be surprised — probably — were I to tell you how many and what sort of people shared in it, one way or another! Oh, I'm not the only scapegoat, by a long way!

"Our far west partner kept up his end of the business vigorously, and his Monongahela whisky came in pack-trains across the mountains to be run into all the

ports of the colonies and the West Indies. Indeed, we put one cargo into dear old Scotland herself, under the very noses of some of the officers who sent us off to America. But it's poor business, Wallie, poor business at the best! It's not comfortable to live at war with organized society, in conflict with the officers of the law, and an outcast from the respectable elements of a community. I never cared much for the personal danger to myself, for I'm not a coward by nature; and there was a sort of pleasure in the excitement of adventure and antagonism. But it went sore against me to have to defend myself and goods often at the peril to life and limb of poor honest fellows who were simply doing their duty. Well, that's about all the story, except that in the course of time the business all fell into my hand. I bought the 'Heather,' and the rest you know.

"My boy, Robin, who was a bright and affectionate lad, grew up to be a fine fellow, with a great turn for the sea, and a natural genius for navigation. But he never took to the smuggling business, and I reckon he's a better man than his dad. It's about him that I've called to-day.

"I am going back to Scotland. I have come into my own there. The old affair has been settled up and condoned, and I am free to return. I am going back to be a good citizen, an exemplary landlord, a supporter of Church and State, a bulwark of society, and all that! And I reckon I'll wind up as a portly and red-faced magistrate, 'venerated and mourned by a wide circle of respectable friends.' There are some things that I want you to arrange for me before I go. But first, about your own history? I have picked up part of it, and guessed at the rest. But I wish to hear the true story from you." So Mr. Reagan related it, as already known to the reader.

"And the little girl whom you adopted — Robin's sister? How about her?" the Captain asked.

"Rhoda? Ah! She is no longer a little girl. She

has grown up as handsome a quean as one would care to see. She knows nothing of her real name and kin. And I do not care to have her know, as yet. I love her as my own child; and she will inherit all I have"—

"A tidy sum, I dare say!" quoth the Captain.

"Fair!" replied the lawyer. "It might be more; but she'll not be on the parish, at any rate. And she deserves it all. She's a comely lass; and (as you said of your wife), as good as she's bonny, and as canny as she's good; and as loving and devoted to me as she's canny. Oh, she's a rare lass, Sandy! and Old Scotia, God bless her! never reared a bonnier or a better. I took pains to look up the pedigree of her parents through one of my Irish correspondents. They come of good, substantial Scotch and Scotch-Irish stock. In fact they are far-away cousins of my own family, the Guthries, and collegued with them in some of their wild Covenanter enterprises. And, oddly enough, the mother was a Cameron, and her blood may be crossed with your own."

"Queer, that; sure!" ejaculated Captain More. "It's strange how things do turn out in this life, at times!"

"It does seem strange about this Hannan family, at all events. One is inclined to suspect that a Higher Power than human has shaped their destinies. There were three of them left helpless and friendless orphans; waifs in this wild new world. Yet somehow, though widely scattered and roughly tossed about, they've all turned out well. The oldest boy was taken by a fine old Quaker named Owen, and has grown up to be a strong and noble character. He commanded one of our Pennsylvania companies during the Spanish war, and has lately returned—one of the few fortunate ones—and has gone back to his farm in the Cumberland Valley, not far from where you and I started in."

"Captain Owen, did you say?" said Captain More. "I met him at Cartagena. A splendid fellow, and a great favorite; though a queer kind of a Quaker! He

appears to be a fighting character, and was in at least one duel that I heard of. For he and Robin were great friends, and Robin acted as second for him. And to think that, all unbeknownst, they were brothers! That is truly a queer fling of fate! And they are all ignorant of their relationship?"

"All; as yet!"

"Well, I came to talk with you about Robin. Have you heard of his absurd fancy in turning Quaker?"

"Yes; it made quite a sensation here; particularly in Friends' families; and that means our best ones."

"Then maybe you heard about my part in the affair?"

"Not a word. Except that Rhoda told me — having heard it through the Owens — that you strongly disapproved of his act, but had been very liberal with Robin, and had sent him £100."

"'Strongly disapproved' is good. I should say so! Why, I wrote a scorching letter disowning him as a son! In short, I fear I made a fool of myself, for I was fell wrothy with the lad for going into a sect that I have always despised. Though, I dare say, I may be wrong there, too! I thought it would be the ruination of the fellow and of all my plans for him. I was blazing angry, and I wrote hotly.

"But I did Robin injustice, I doubt! He came down to Jamaica with a merchantman, and on the way behaved so handsomely that the whole Expedition was ringing with his praise. He tackled a Spanish pirate ship, captured it and brought it into Jamaica, where he sold it to the government. His officers and men told great stories of his coolness, courage, and marvelous gunnery. The Admiral offered him the command of the new ship, which he declined, saying that he would not block the promotion of worthier men. But I reckon his new religion had something to do with it. However, it made him mighty popular with the fleet officers, all the same. Since we reached Philadelphia, I have heard from many of my old acquaintances of his noble behavior during

the yellow fever epidemic, and that I count a braver deed than fighting pirates. All this has set me a-thinking; and I have concluded that I made a mistake. The lad has not been spoiled by his Quakerism; and I have concluded to undo the damage I have done. That is what I'm here for! What do you think of it?"

"There's only one thing to think and to say. You have come to yourself, and I'm glad of it. Your prejudice against Quakers is perhaps not to be wondered at, considering your life and education. But my intimate knowledge of them, for many years, has led me to esteem them highly for their work's sake. I say nothing about their peculiar tenets; but of their pure, benevolent and upright lives I have been a witness. And if your boy turns out, as I am sure he will, for he has the ground work in him, as good a man as some of the Friends I know, you will have no cause to regret his change of profession. Indeed, I suspect that a bit of the same kind of religion might be as good for the father as for the son — for my wayward old chum Sandy, as for my gallant young friend Robin!"

This aroused Captain More. "What, I a Quaker?" he exclaimed. "No, sir! Confound Quakers and all Sectaries, including Anglican Bishops and the Pope! say I. I'm a true blue Presbyterian, I would have you know — Westminster Confession, Shorter Catechism and all the rest. True-blue — genuine color, deep-dyed in the wool and fixed; warranted not to wash out or fade. No, no; thank you! No Quaker for me, personally. It's quite enough for me to be reconciled to Robin's trying it. Maybe he'll tire of it, by and by, and come back into the true fold!"

"I fancy he's a fixture now. There'll be no coming back as long as Grace Owen lives, at least."

"Oho!" exclaimed the Captain. "I thought there was a woman behind it all! And I must know what sort of a woman she is."

"Excuse me, Sandy!" the lawyer rejoined. "There's

something more than a woman behind it, if I haven't lost my ability to weigh testimony."

"Hey? Something more? What can it be? Not money, I'm sure. Robin's not of that sort, I'd pledge my life."

"No, not money!" said Mr. Reagan. "You're right there. But come, Sandy! You're no infidel, even though you are a Scotch Presbyterian, and can swear like a King Charles's trooper. Have you forgotten your Bible story about Saul of Tarsus, and who met him, and what happened to him on the way to Damascus?"

"Oh, ay; I mind it bravely!" the Captain replied. "Most of my Bible larnin' has slipped through the meshes of memory, I allow. But that story somehow has stuck."

"Well, then," Mr. Reagan continued, "that is the Power behind Robin's conversion to Christ and Quakerism, I surely believe. Anyhow, Robin believes it, and is in dead earnest about it all. A word about Grace Owen. I was wrong in mentioning the lady's name, as I did, for it is a mere conjecture. But since you have asked, I will say that next to my own Rhoda, she is the comeliest and best young lady I know; and if Robin should succeed in winning her favor, he will be the most fortunate youth in the colony. But out, now, with what you mean to do for the lad, and let us get it into legal shape before I tease you into changing your mind!"

"All right, then. Here it is. I want to turn over to him at once, all right and title in the 'Heather' on the sole condition that he is not to use her or allow her to be used for smuggling or any other unlawful purpose. Now cast up our accounts and let us see how much cash I have in your hands."

"Here it is; already summed up and balanced. It amounts to £3,964 s. 8 and d. 9."

"And what is your fee?"

"Fee? Hoogh!" grunted the lawyer. "Juist a kind cast backward for auld lang syne! There'll ne'er

be other fee in this office for either thee or thine!"

"Well, then," said the Captain, and his voice grew soft and tremulous, while a suspicion of a tear moistened his eyelids, "there's to write £250 for Rhoda Reagan for a wee bit giftie on her wedding-day. And while you're at it, just add £500 for that Grace Owen you spoke of, on her wedding-day, if she marries my Robin."

"Good for you, Sandy! Like many another Scotchman, your bark is worse nor your bite. You curse the Quakers, and bless them with your bountith in the same breath!"

"Now how stands the account?"

"That leaves a matter of £3,000 and over to dispose of, all here under my fist, or ready to draw upon at sight. Shall I turn it over to you now? Or how shall I dispose of it?"

"How shall you dispose of it? Didn't I say already?"

"Not yet, my worthy Captain."

"Then, of course it all goes to Robin More along with the 'Heather.'"

"And what is the value of the 'Heather?'"

"As she lies at the dock to-day, she is worth £3,000."

"Then there's £6,000 and over, a snug fortune (for our colony, at least), to turn over to Robin. That's no so bad, for a disowned son!"

"Well, draw up the papers right and tight, and I'll sign them and be done with it. I wish for the lad's sake that there were more of it; for I'll have enough and to spare without it. And just add a word that I don't feel quite equal to saying good-by, and all that. But I leave him my love and farewell. And say, please, that my home will always be his home in case of need; that I'll expect to hear from him betimes; and if he ever wanders Scotland way, he'll be as welcome as the laverock at Craig Cameron Hall. If all that doesn't meet the situation as seems to you fit, fix it up to suit yoursel', and it'll suit me."

"It's all right, my dear old chum! You never did a wiser, juster or better deed; and you've done it handsomely, as becomes a Cameron! Come back to luncheon at mid-day, and I'll present you to Rhoda."

This eventful morning was not to close without another visitor to Mr. Reagan. The burly form of the Captain had scarcely disappeared, rolling, in his sailor-fashion, down the street, ere the tall and graceful form of Paul Owen appeared at the office gate. With a bow and smile and wave of the hand to Rhoda, who was walking in her flower garden, he passed into the office.

"Good morning, Paul! I'm up to my ears in business just now. Yet I'm glad to see you. But I must ask you to be brief. To what do I owe the favor of this visit?"

"I've come on another begging visit, sir."

"Let me see! What was the last call for? The Friends' Alms House, was it not? Well, how much do you want now, and what is it for?"

"Oh, sir!" was Paul's reply, his voice trembling and his fine face flushing deeply, "I have come to ask for thy greatest treasure."

"What! Rhoda?"

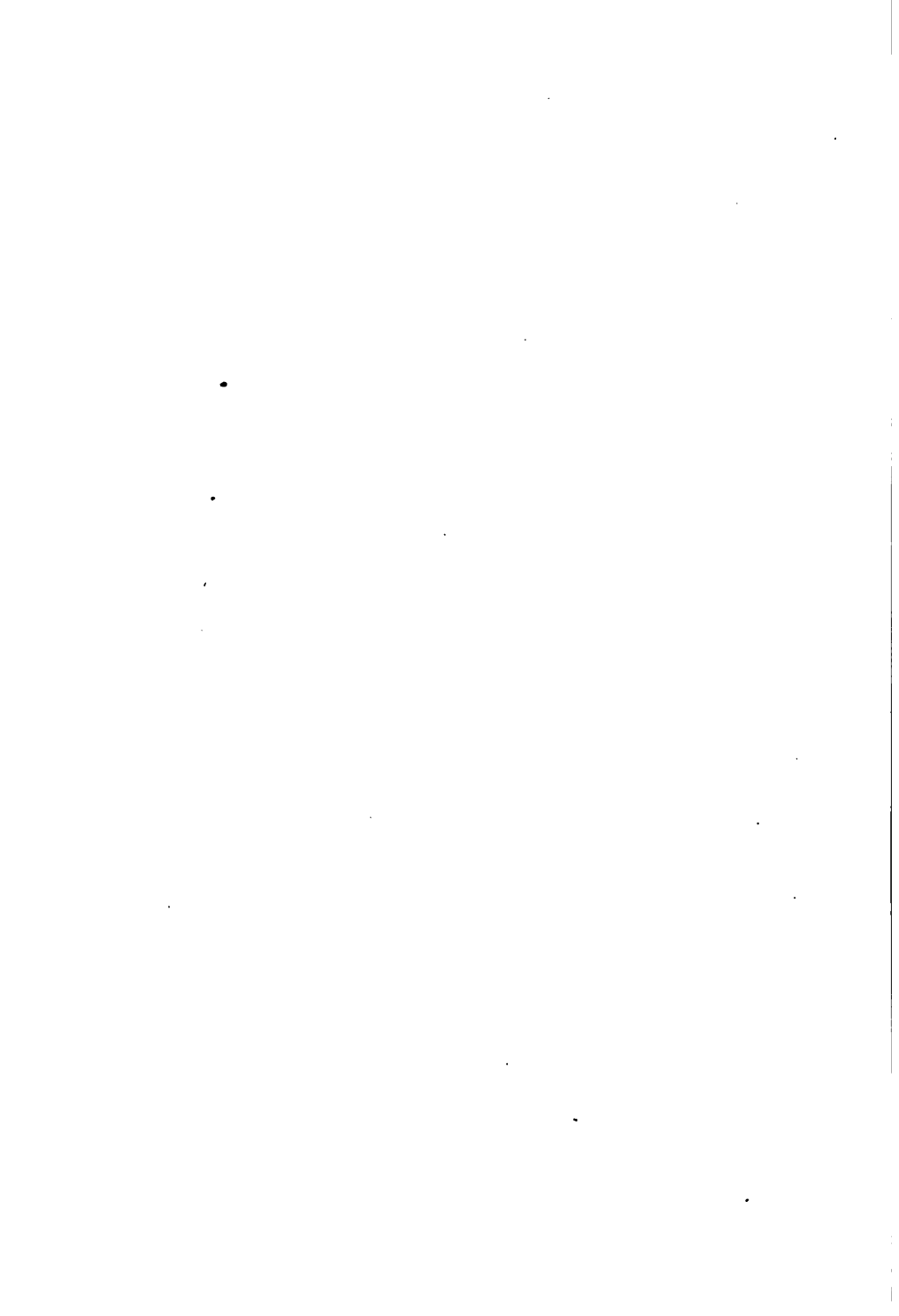
"Even so, sir! I have long loved her; and lately not without some hope of a returning affection. But I have not presumed to make a formal proposal without her father's approval."

"Well, Paul, I will not pretend that this takes me by surprise. I have expected something of this sort, for I have noticed your fondness for Rhoda, and have suspected that the maid likes you, at least. But the matter rests with her. I would not force her choice, and I certainly will not oppose it, should it favor you. Yonder she is!" He rose and threw up the office-window and looked out upon the garden where Rhoda stood bending over a bed of bright chrysanthemums.

"There she is! As sweet and lovely a maiden as ever brightened a father's home! Go to her, there among



"FLOWERS AND ALL!" SHE SOFTLY SAID



her flowers. If it will ease your way, you may tell her that I sent you. Ask for her hand, and if your wooing is successful, the matter is ended, and as you would wish it to be."

"Sir, for this great consideration, I thank thee! And even should it go no further, still I thank thee!"

Away he went with heart pounding violently and every nerve aquiver with hope. He pushed through the garden gate to where Rhoda stood by her bed of chrysanthemums, and with the eloquence of love in its utmost fervor, told his tale and made his plea for her hand.

For answer, Rhoda plucked a cluster of the bright autumn flowers, and offered it to him. As he reached for them, she allowed her hand to rest a moment in his.

"Flowers — and all!" she softly said, with downcast eyes, and neck and cheeks rosy with blushes.

Paul was no dullard in matters of sentiment, though a plain Friend. He caught the maiden's meaning at once. He caught the hand, though the flowers fell to the ground, and kissed it again and again passionately, reverently.

Then he picked up the fallen bouquet and kissed the flowers, too. "Henceforth," he said, "the chrysanthemum shall be my favorite flower; the beautiful reminder of this favored hour, and the emblem of that which is fondest and best in my life."

The two walked together from the garden to the office. They did not enter the door, but stood outside at the low window that overlooked the lawn, and tapped upon the glass.

When Mr. Reagan threw up the sash, there stood Paul and Rhoda, arm in arm, looking up to him with the joyous lovelight shining in their eyes, and irradiating their faces.

"Is it settled, my daughter?" he asked.

For meet reply, Rhoda raised her face and offered her lips, which Paul fervently kissed.

CHAPTER XXXI

HOW ANDY GETS OUT OF HIS CAVE

The tornado that brought such timely deliverance to Dorothy Owen, was followed by a great downpour of rain. Ben-Thee sheltered Dorothy as best he could under the lee of the huge fallen oak beneath a thick clump of bushes; and taking the blanket which he carried behind his saddle, wrapped her in it. Then he placed his own bulky body beside her as a sort of bulwark. But in a few moments she was drenched and uncomfortable. So that when the sun came out, its searching heat was pleasant.

They were just preparing to mount and ride away, when the clatter and splash of horses trampling over the wet trail was heard below the summit of the hill.

"It is our friends!" exclaimed Ben-Thee, and uttered a loud "halloo!" to signal their whereabouts, which was answered by a cheer. Then appeared a cavalcade headed by Esther Harris whose warm embrace soon encircled Dorothy's wet form, while Arthur Burbeck's hearty voice and hand clasp greeted Ben-Thee! Father Owen, too, had come; for he could not rest at the pioneer's cabin, so great was his anxiety.

Stories were soon exchanged. Aunt Esther's party, reinforced by Mr. Elder and his Paxton parishioners, had reached the cabin just as the rain struck it, and there heard from Father Owen the account of the Indian raid, the rescue by Ben-Thee and the pursuit. The tornado passed by them well to one side, bringing them only the downpour. They hastened forward as soon as the rain storm abated.

"And here we are in good time, thank God!" ex-

claimed Arthur, which pious ejaculation was echoed by a chorus of "Amens!"

"Where are your pursuers? Have you killed them all off, Captain Ben?" asked Mrs. Harris.

"No indeed!" Ben-Thee replied. "A mightier Warrior than I came to our rescue. Our foes lie yonder"—pointing to the narrow strip of woods beyond them—"slain by and buried beneath the irresistible weapons hurled by the tornado."

"That reminds me," said Dorothy, "that some of them may still be living. It would be a violation of Christian charity not to relieve them, in that case. Let us go down to the woods and see!"

When the wood was reached, the terrific force of the wind was seen in the manner in which the great trunks of the forest trees had been wrenched off from their stumps, and were piled up atop of one another. The track of the whirlwind could be traced by an open lane in the woods paved with these overthrown giant plants.

On one edge of this lane stood a huge trunk several feet thick, through which a large limb or a young oak twisted from its stock, had been fairly driven, as one would drive a spike through a board. In its course this limb had struck Louper Jan upon the head and passed on leaving him dead upon the ground.

Not far away from this remarkable exhibition of force was another equally puzzling. A tall tree still stood erect, but its rigid trunk was twisted from base to top into a cork-screw shape as one would curl a green wither around his finger, or coil a thin wire into a spiral around a lead pencil. It was such a sight as the most experienced woodmen had never seen. There were other freaks of the wind, strange indeed, as though the tempest were sporting in mere wantonness of its titanic strength.

As for relief of the fallen Indians, no such humane office as Dorothy had supposed, was needed. They were all dead. Two of the horses were alive, one so injured that the "mercy stroke" was required. The other

was comparatively unhurt. A mighty trunk had been snapped off so far from the ground as to form a bulwark against which the tottering trees around had fallen, and thus made a sort of stall within which the poor animal lay, terrified and trembling, but safe. It whinnied gladly at the sound of human voices, and recognized its owner, Father Owen. A bit of ax work soon released it from its prison. Its rider had been swept from its back, and lay dead nearby. The rescued horse was a powerful but gentle creature, one of Joel's wagon horses, whom Dorothy had often petted and fed sweet tidbits. And it was touching to see the big fellow make up to her, as though inviting her caresses, and as if he felt safer under the eye of his petite mistress. It was one of the bright incidents that helped to lighten the gloom of this awful day to the kind-hearted maiden.

"And now," said Arthur Burbeck, "let us set forth to find my boy! He's in hiding somewhere not far from the Owen camp, I suspect. And I hope he is safe; unless these rascals whom Heaven has cut off, to save us the task o' doin' it, have fallen in wi' him by the way, which God forbid!"

"Amen!" said Parson Elder. "And our party will go with you, and follow this adventure to the end."

But it was deemed well that Dorothy in her wet and exhausted and wounded condition should not undertake the journey. Father Owen also was much weakened by the nervous strain and physical fatigue of the last day or two. It was therefore arranged that the two should go back with the pioneer settler to his cabin and there remain until the party should return from their search after Andy.

Ben-Thee's heart went with Dorothy, whom he fain would have accompanied; but it seemed his duty to guide the party to the abandoned camp. Therefore he set off with them, after many suggestions to the maid and urgent instructions to the pioneer — most of them superfluous! — as to her care during his absence.

The trail left by Louper Jan and his mounted Indians was broad and plain, and there was little difficulty in following back upon it. The camp was surprised, and the Indians left in charge captured without a blow. The most skillful and persistent questioning failed to get from them any information about Andy.

Up in his cave, Fox-foot kept watch for his sick friend. From his peep-hole he looked out from time to time and reported to Andy such facts as he thought he might know without exciting him too much. The disappearance and probable escape of the Owens had been told as a bit of cheerful news. But the outset of the Louper and his band had not been told.

When Ben-Thee and the rescuers appeared upon the scene, Fox-foot at once took in the situation. Mrs. Harris he knew, and some other members of the party. His descriptions of the others were so vivid and accurate that Andy easily recognized and named them. Thus he learned of his father's return home. Indeed, ere long he heard his voice shouting his son's name in his rich Doric near the base of the ridge. He little suspected how near was the beloved object of his search, but fancied that the lad might have fled into the thick woods on the ridge, when he escaped, and might be still lurking there in fear of his captors.

"Answer back!" cried Andy, rising upon his elbow, and himself making an attempt at a halloo. But his voice died away within the cave.

"No — not yet!" was Fox-foot's reply. "Better I go to 'ims camp and tell um fader an' all white man's 'bout you pretty well sick. I go now, if you well 'nough, an' promise true, 'pon honor, you not try get up till I back."

Andy promised; for, in truth, he lacked both strength and energy to undertake anything; a wholly new experience, which the boy, to whom sickness was unknown, could not understand, and knew not how to deal with.

Fox-foot was soon crossing the little plain toward the camp. Already Ben-Thee had brought his company un-

der something like military discipline, and sentinels had been stationed on each flank, since they were now in the heart of the Indian country. One of these saw Fox-foot coming and halted him with sundry rude phrases and threatening movements of his rifle. Fortunately Parson Elder was nearby, and hearing the needlessly loud and angry challenge, came up to the guard, who was one of his own parish, and quietly checked his violence.

"Easy, McPhee; easy, man! Don't you see it's but a boy; and unarmed at that? Vigilance is right; but violence is usually out of place, and is more apt to hinder than help one's purpose." Thereupon he handed his own rifle to the man, and advanced toward Fox-foot with a friendly gesture.

Thus encouraged the boy drew near. "Ugh! I no bad Indian!" he said, speaking in a manly and dignified way. "That man pretty well big fool. He kill me, he mebbe kill Andy, too. That pretty well bad!"

"What do you mean?" Mr. Elder asked. "Do you know where Andy is? Can you tell us anything about him?"

"Yes; Fox-foot know all! You pretty well good white man, I 'speck. But Fox-foot tell no one but Andy's fader or the Big Chief."

"All right! Come with me to headquarters."

Ben-Thee and Arthur were found near Dorothy's tent, which had been turned over to Mrs. Harris, and Fox-foot's tale was soon told. It spread rapidly through the camp that Andy was found, and was nearby, and this greatly raised the spirits of the little company.

"The lad needs nursing first of all; and that's my task!" exclaimed Mrs. Harris, who was deeply moved by the tale; for Andy was a great favorite with her. "Come, boy! What's your name?—Ah; Fox-foot! What sort of food have you been giving Andy?"

Fox-foot was silent, and hung his head.

"Speak up, boy! What have you to live on in your cave?"

"Spring water," was the answer.

"What! Is that all you youngsters have had to eat for the last two or three days?"

"Oh, no! I gather wild berries, too. That pretty well for Indian. But—" Fox-foot was again silent, and stood with downcast face, as though the poverty of diet were his fault.

"My brother Andy too pretty well hurt to leave 'im. He pretty well sick in his head, too. Like—bird flying? Hey? That wrong word, I know!"

"He means 'flighty' I reckon," Mr. Elder suggested.

"Yes, that it! His head all whirr-rr! buzz-z! Fox-foot stay with 'im to keep 'im from jump out cave. That down, down—dead! Pretty well bad, that! So Fox-foot no get out to get more better for eat by steal from Louper's camp. That pretty well bad, too, mebbe. But Indian boy could do no better."

"God bless you, my brave, good lad!" cried Arthur, whose cheeks were wet with tears. "You did very well, indade. A'll niver forgit your faithfulness and affection to my son."

"Oh, that pretty well all right!" Fox-foot interrupted. "He my brother, you know. I bound do all that."

"Well; and A'm bound to be your good friend through all your life. But you must be hungry yourself. Wait a wee!" He bustled off, and soon returned with his haversack, and fishing out a large sandwich, fairly forced it into the boy's hands.

Fox-foot eyed the food ravenously, but declined to eat, Hungry as he most certainly was, his idea of high honor and chivalry forbade indulgence at that time and in that presence.

"By an' by, when Andy get some eat, I too! Now, I plenty full berries an' roots. Indian boys used to that pretty well. Much-a-tankee, Andy's fader!"

Meanwhile, Mrs. Harris had completed preparations for her nursing plans—some tea, which she always carried with her, with a small pot to make it in; a few herbs

which frontier experience had shown to be useful in common diseases, and some crackers, bread and cold meat from the lunches prepared for her own use.

"Lead on, now; I'm ready!" she said. "Arthur Burbeck and my son John will go with me. Come!"

Fox-foot hesitated.

"What's the matter, now?" asked Mrs. Harris impatiently.

"Ugh! there's water to wade in," responded Fox-foot, "to get to cave. Queen Esther, mebbe —" He hesitated, and cast a quizzical glance at the woman's skirts. They were made quite short, for convenience in forest excursions, and her feet were covered with men's top-boots. But the boy evidently had high notions of what might be becoming in so exalted a personage as he held the "white queen" to be. For to him, and to many other Indians, she was indeed the ruling spirit of the Ferry Store.

"Oh! It's the petticoats, is it?" queried Mrs. Esther, with a smile, at once catching Fox-foot's meaning. "Umph! I'll make shift to manage them, I warrant! As for the boots, they can come off, and I will go it bare-foot, as I've done many and many's the time. Don't mind me. I'll rough it with the best of ye. So come on! We're losing precious time. I'd go into the river without petticoats as well as boots, rather than have my gallant Andy suffer."

That matter of female etiquette being settled, the party sped away. The ridge was soon reached. Its base was skirted through the lipping stream without mishap to Madam Harris's garments, and when it came to crossing the narrow ledge that led into the cave, she made the passage as easily as any of them. She soon had a fire of small sticks crackling in the cave's mouth, and a pot of spring water bubbling for the tea, which she knew that Andy liked almost as well as herself.

The meeting between Andy and his father was touching; and although the lad was much excited by the event,

it seemed to act as a stimulus and tonic rather than the reverse. The delicious odor of tea that soon filled the cave awoke appetite, and he ate heartily of the food which his aunt gave him, while he sipped the tasty beverage. Highly content, happy and with heart and mind satisfied and peaceful, he fell into a sound sleep, from which he awoke greatly refreshed.

Now came up the problem of how to get the sick lad out of the cave. He was too weak to cross the ledge by himself, and it was too narrow to allow two persons to pass over at once. The solution was suggested by Fox-foot. Young Harris was sent to the camp for a long rope, which, it was planned, would be tied around Andy's waist, leaving the long end coiled in the cave to be paid out by the one who held it, as the lad edged himself, with face to the cliff, along the ledge. Enough free rope was to be left at the other end to cover the length of the ledge. Both ends were to be held taut and firmly, one by Arthur in the cave, the other by John Harris outside. Thus supported it was calculated that Andy could grope and be drawn across; and in case he should slip off, he could be held from falling far, and could be drawn back.

Aunt Esther thought the lad would be strong enough to make the attempt by the next morning; and in the meantime the experiment was tried with Fox-foot, and proved successful. He even proposed to slip off, in order to test that feature of the plan. But his white friends would not permit such a venture.

Aunt Esther and Arthur kept watch with Andy through the night, while John Harris and Fox-foot bivouacked beneath the pine-trees outside. In the morning, Andy awoke, feeling much stronger; and being refreshed with a cup of tea and a wholesome breakfast, felt ready for the crossing. It was made as planned. Andy was supported down the ridge to the river, resting betimes, and his father and John Harris picked him up bodily and carried him through the stream. And so to the camp.

The tent was converted into a hospital for the sick lad, and ere long he was snugly resting upon a couch of pine-twigs and bear-skins, which had served Father Owen and Dorothy for beds. Aunt Esther was established as chief nurse, and every one of the rescuers as willing assistants, while Fox-foot hung around, happy and relieved at his friend's deliverance, and boy-like and in Indian fashion, making up for his long fast by frequent meals. The white folk made quite a hero of him for the manner in which he had rescued Andy from his captors. And that the boy seemed to enjoy, though he took it all with stolid dignity.

The next morning Andy was thought not well enough to venture upon the journey, so it was concluded not to break camp until the following day. But before the morning had passed the company was alarmed by the report of their sentinel scout that a band of Indians was approaching from the north.

Fox-foot was sent out to meet them, and returned with the report that the coming band numbered thirty men, all Delawares and wholly friendly. Nevertheless, Ben-Thee thought best to direct all hands to be fully armed, and to remain so while the Indians were around.

The Delawares advanced, led by the Prophet Red-love, making signs of peace and friendship. As Two-tongues had been despatched to ride post-haste to Harris's Ferry to advise Andy's mother of his safety, Fox-foot acted as interpreter.

"We have come," the Prophet began, "to assure you that the Delawares have no part or lot, as a tribe, in the violence done to Snowy Hair and the Mourning Dove. Indeed, we know for sure that it was one of the Owens' own party, a white man, who planned and carried through all the mischief, in conspiring with certain lawless red men. We are ready to punish those of our own nation who have been guilty. Or we will deliver them up to your authorities for punishment. We have suffered wrongs, but we do not care to visit them upon

innocent women and friendly old men. Nor do we wish to break the peace by attacks upon white men and their property, or by acts of violence of any sort."

"Red-love's talk sounds fair," Ben-Thee responded. "And we join you in wishing for peace — though we are not unprepared for war. We thank you for the offer to take and punish the guilty persons who attacked the Owens, and slew one of their party and maltreated another. But they are beyond your power or ours. For Almighty God, the Great Spirit, has already visited upon them the just penalty of their crimes. They perished in the tornado yesterday, all but two men, who are our prisoners, and whom we will deal with after a fair trial.

"But Red-love will permit me to say candidly that the accounts given us by Snowy Hair and the Mourning Dove agree in placing the real responsibility for the outrage put upon them, on one higher in place than any of his base tribesmen, even upon the Prophet who has just addressed us. It was he who wrought up the tribe to cast out those good missionaries, who came to you in the spirit of love and goodness, to tell you something of the Gospel of Jesus, that Saviour whom they worship and serve.

"We wish you to know that we are not to be deceived. Yet we will not ask, what in justice might be done, that the real instigator of the first outrage upon our friends, which led up to all the others, should be delivered up to punishment. But we hope that the Delawares themselves will take the matter up; and that Red-love's own conscience will condemn him for the hot words which were the seeds of such a sad harvest. They who have power to move the people should always weigh their words carefully.

"If there is any other chief or head man here present who wishes to speak for his tribe, we will hearken. But we decline to hear further from one who has treated our friends with such enmity, and thus brought upon them so much suffering and loss, and the death of one

of their number, the maltreatment of another, and the wounding by a gunshot of the Mourning Dove herself."

This plain-spoken address overwhelmed the Prophet with confusion,—which was shared manifestly, in spite of the well-known Indian powers of self-control and concealment of emotions—by others of the party. But no effort was made to resent it, and no one ventured to speak. A glance at the stalwart forms and stern faces of the white warriors, all armed to the teeth, and in number almost equal to themselves, checked any disposition to angry retort. Moreover, they well knew that Ben-Thee had spoken the truth, and their sense of justice, crude as it may have been, added force to the Big White Chief's words, which put the blame upon the right person, and not upon all the tribe.

A painful silence ensued, during which the two parties glared at one another with questioning looks, the white men gripping hard their rifles, and the Indians feeling for the handles of the hunting-knives or hatchets in their belts.

The pluck and diplomacy of the only woman present relieved the situation. Esther Harris stalked to the side of Ben-Thee, carrying her trailed rifle. "Brother Delawares," she said, "listen to her whom you call Queen Esther. You have heard the truth from a brave warrior, who yet is not a man of blood. Meditate upon these words and act thereon at your leisure. Now you have come as friends, and as such we wish to receive you, though you have been unfortunate in the choice of your spokesman. Yet for that we will not judge you harshly. Your prophet should have given you wiser counsel. But he, too, is liable to err; and no doubt you will discipline him as he deserves.

"We seek no quarrel with you, and accept your tender of peace. And we will not let you go without such hospitality as we can show. But remember that we are here on a hurried expedition; having, in truth, come upon the war-path to rescue our friends, believing that

the Delawares had risen in arms. We rejoice that it is not so; for your sakes, as well as our own. We bid you tarry while we prepare such food as we can, that we may eat together, and part as friends,—at least not in enmity.”

“Queen Esther has spoken well!” said Ben-Thee. “Let it be as she has said!”

Thereupon he stepped forward and offered his hand to a venerable Indian who stood near the Prophet. The old brave took it amid a chorus of approving “Ughs!” from the Delawares, and an answering cheer from the white men led by Arthur.

Now Mrs. Esther took charge of affairs, and soon pots of tea and coffee were cooking at the big camp-fire in camp kettles from the Owen supply. A tin vessel of maple sugar appeared from some hamper, and sundry bundles and scraps of sandwiches, sweet cakes and crackers, bread and cheese, were laid out on a tablecloth, spread upon the grass. Some of these came from the foresters' haversacks, and some from the abandoned stores which Father Owen had turned over to Ben-Thee, bidding him use freely whatever might be needed.

Then the forest feast began, primitive enough in its serving, to be sure! But nothing could be more civilized, even at a modern club banquet, than the appetite which it evoked, and the vigorous gusto with which it disappeared. And coffee and tea, a rare treat to the Indians, sweetened with maple sugar, were as nectar to the mythical gods of classic days, to these savage red men and hardy frontiersmen.

The relish of it all was mightily quickened when from sundry secret recesses several well-filled flasks of whisky appeared, and were tendered to the mistress of the feast. Queen Esther dumped the same into buckets out of the Owen store, filled with clear spring water well sweetened. Arthur assisted in mixing this decoction, which he dubbed “Cartagena Grog,” and carried it around, serving it out with gourds.

How the Indians smacked their lips, and absorbed the contents of the gourds! The white men abstained, reluctantly indeed; but Ben-Thee and Queen Esther quietly passed the word to wait until the Indians were served. For though the amount of liquor in any one draught was too small unduly to excite the nerves, yet the leaders preferred that all their party should keep perfectly clear heads under the circumstances.

After such a "royal finish to a royal feast," the Indians departed in high good spirits, even seeming to have put away for the time the depressing effects of Ben-Thee's personal remarks anent the Prophet. He, by the way, had quietly disappeared, and taken the back trail for the Indian town at Shamokin. But his affair was dealt with later; and after a fashion that highly satisfied Captain Ben when he heard of it.

Now one chief motive for hastening their departure had disappeared, the danger of attack by nearby Indians. So they made camp for the night, and thanks to the abundant material provided and abandoned by the Owens, most of which was left untouched by their captors, they all managed to rest comfortably. But despite the signs of peace and good-will, Ben-Thee took no risks, and saw that steady and careful sentinels were put on guard.

One of the first duties that the rescuers had considered after their arrival, was to pay fitting respect to the dead body of Joel. The first suggestion was to bury him where he had fallen. But Ben-Thee finally decided that Father Owen and Dorothy would be better satisfied if their old and faithful servant and friend were given sepulture nearer the bounds of civilization. He therefore arranged to carry the corpse in the wagon to Harris's Ferry. The offer of Pastor Elder to give a grave in his churchyard at Paxton was accepted. The body was carefully wrapped in blankets, with a bear-skin closely lashed over all.

On the morning following the interview with the Indian delegation, a brief funeral service was held by

Pastor Elder. It was a picturesque scene. On one side towering above them, were the great trees of the primitive forest. On the other ran the creek, skirting the little plain, and lost at each end in the deep woods, from which it issued, and into whose depths again it flowed. The plain was bounded by the high rocky ridge, crowned with tall evergreens. In the center of the scene were the two tents, before the larger of which the minister stood, with the men grouped around and Mrs. Harris and Andy inside. Nearby were the smouldering camp-fire; the saddle horses picketed, the canvas-covered wagon which was to serve as a hearse, with its two horses, "Big Gray" whose romantic escape from death in the tornado had made him a sort of equine hero; and a bay gelding of almost equal proportions. These two Joel had driven into the woods; alas, they were now to draw his silent form out of the forest! These were the details of a simple, natural, picturesque and impressive scene.

The short service over, the tents were struck, the camp baggage packed, and the cavalcade moved, Andy riding on the wagon-seat beside the driver. At the pioneer's cabin on the river hill, Father Owen and Dorothy were picked up, and Harris's Ferry was reached without further incident. Ben-Thee, instead of proceeding to his farm in the Cumberland Valley, concluded to escort the Owens to Philadelphia.

For the present, their mission to the Indians was deemed as closed by the act of Providence. Driven forth as they had been; Dorothy wounded and suffering with nerve-shock; Father Owen's aged frame sorely strained; their domestic arrangements broken up by Joel's murder; Louper Jan's treachery and Andy's sickness — all these were sufficient reasons for returning home, at least for a season of rest and consideration. To these were added the importunities of all their white friends on the frontier.

CHAPTER XXXII

ENGAGEMENT DAYS

The arrival of the Owen party in Philadelphia wrought a genuine sensation, especially in Friendly circles. And this was greatly increased by the announcement, that quickly followed, of the engagement of Dorothy Owen and Captain Benjamin Owen Hannan. To many good members of the Meeting it was a mooted question, whether it would be permitted for Dorothy, a member and even a messenger of the Society, to marry "out of meeting"; and whether Friend Owen, an Elder who sat upon the ministers' benches, could pass unrebuked for sanctioning such a union were points that needed consideration. The opinion was almost unanimous against such irregularities.

Ben-Thee was exercised about the matter only as it affected the comfort of Dorothy and the peace of mind of her family; for he had the assurance of his affianced, that let the Meeting do what it would, she would cleave to him as the spouse of her heart's selection, and of the clear appointment of God also, as she verily believed. With Cupid and Conscience both on his side, therefore, he walked the streets of Philadelphia in a state of exaltation, which was visibly uplifted by the congratulations of many friends.

In this state he awaited philosophically the reply of the Monthly Meeting to the announcement sent thereto, declaring Dorothy's intentions of the proposed marriage, and her request for the Meeting's "approbation." Ben-Thee joined in the request in a modest note, which, while it said that he was not a convinced Friend, but a member of a Presbyterian Communion, yet he cordially re-

spected the Society, and was in sympathy with many of its principles, and wished his intended bride to retain her membership in and her devotion to the Meeting.

Before this matter was settled, another announcement stirred the gossips of the Quaker Societies — the announcement of the engagement of Grace Owen and Robin More. As Robin had already declared his assent to Friends' principles and had been received into membership, the approbation of the Monthly Meeting was readily given. The young people "passed Meeting" with enthusiastic assent; and the prayers and addresses on the occasion were fervent and exalted. For Grace was a universal favorite; and the conversion of Robin had drawn toward him an unusual degree of sympathy and interest. However, the "passing" was not without a discordant note; for Robin's record as a fighting sailor excited the conscientious scruples of some of the strictest Friends, who held that even defensive war was unlawful, and that one who had been guilty of such an offense ought not to be passed without rebuke. But this minority did not affect the result; and Overseers were appointed, two men Friends and two women Friends, to attend the wedding to see that it be conducted in accordance with the good order of the Society and with becoming moderation.

The result was not so favorable in the case of Dorothy and Ben-Thee. The Meeting decided reluctantly that Friends could not approve such a marriage in faithfulness to their testimony and established order. A few voices were raised in remonstrance.

One speaker declared: "This marriage, as proposed, implies no violation of the true spirit of the Rules of Discipline and Advices, whose object is simply to guard young people from ill-assorted and ill-considered marriages. This union is not such. It is in every respect fitting, promising usefulness and happiness. The parties are of mature age; the parents and family in hearty unity."

Another said: "Although the man is not in Friends' membership, yet he has, in one particular of Friends' testimony (that in favor of plain language), borne a witness more constant and faithful, and under greater difficulties and discouragements, than many professed Friends. This is well known. Even his common names among world's people, "Quaker Ben" and "Ben-Thee" are proof of it. Such a testimony confirms his frank declaration of unity with many of the leading principles of Friends."

Still further, it was urged: "A chief purpose of the Society in its marriage advices is to prevent violation of Friends' *'testimony in support of a free ministry of the Gospel'* by avoiding *'the assistance of a priest or minister in accomplishing this solemn engagement.'* Now note," the speaker argued, "it is particularly desired by the petitioners that the marriage shall be by Friends' ceremony. No 'hiring minister' will be asked to officiate, nor will such be recognized in any way different from any other guest. Surely this is enough to warrant a liberal interpretation of the Society's formal advices—for 'advices' alone they are! Friends are left free to act as they may be moved in every case. There is no compulsion. That indeed would be violation of principles."

The last speaker also pointed out that "the three fixed rules for marriage are first, 'the consent of parents in order to preserve harmony, peace and unity among families, and to guard against hasty and improper connections.' Second, that the proposal should be laid before the Monthly Meeting, thus recognizing the Society's 'watchful care over its members.' Third, the maintenance of testimony for a free ministry. All these points have been fully met in the spirit, at least, and in good part in the letter. It ill becomes Friends whose fundamental principle is the dominance of the spirit, and protest against subjection to the letter, to reverse their testimony by refusing their approbation to the

proposed marriage. Here clearly is a case for a wise clemency and liberality in interpreting rules in accordance with a wise discretion and liberty."

This was a strong plea, and came near carrying the sense of the Meeting. But the deeply-rooted conservatism and feeling of loyalty to fixed customs, finally prevailed, and Dorothy and Ben-Thee failed to "pass Meeting." This decision was influenced by the rumor afloat of the engagement of Paul Owen and Rhoda Reagan. One of the Elders referred to this in animated language. "Here is another case of letting down the bars!" he exclaimed. "Paul is one of the most promising of our young members. His voice has often been heard in Meeting with solid edification and lively approbation. His name has already been brought forward by the 'Preparative Meeting of Ministers and Elders' as having a gift in the ministry worthy of recognition. And now he is about to take to wife a maiden who is a member of the Presbyterian Church, the daughter of a prominent elder therein. If this spirit and trend be not arrested, what will become of our young folk? How can Friends expect to keep up their testimony, if leading members are encouraged to violate the fixed customs? Would they not feel at liberty to make entangling alliances with world's people, as though such conduct were not blameworthy? If we ourselves remove the ancient landmarks which our fathers set up, how can we keep back the rising flood of worldly conformity that is threatening to sweep away old and sacred traditions?"

In this spirit one of the Overseers "felt a concern" to call upon Paul Owen in the way of his duty "to exercise a vigilant and tender concern over their fellow members," to advise and labor with him on the proposed disregard of Friends' rules and principles.

Paul received him courteously; listened respectfully to his message, and after a silent pause for devotional reflection, gave a decided reply.

"I thank thee, Friend, for thy kindly interest in me.

Thou hast done thy duty as it appeared to thee. But permit me to say that, as I view it, thou hast listened to a deluding spirit. Is it not a fundamental truth of Friends' testimony that the Divine Spirit leads believers in all their ways? In this matter of a marriage union I have long and earnestly waited upon that Spirit, and I have followed His movings upon my heart. The lady, I believe, has done the same. Would it not be resisting the Spirit to refuse to follow such clear indications of His will? I cannot be in unity with thee in this concern. I must hold to my own conviction and experience of the Divine guidance, and to my right as a Friend to decide thereon in a matter which concerns me alone.

“Moreover, in all things our Society stands for reasonable Christian liberty. If there is anything in which a Friend may justly claim liberty, surely it is in the choice of a wife. Yet thou wouldst restrain this liberty, and put a padlock upon my will, and take away my freedom to follow my conscience and affections, which in this matter are perfectly clear. That is not a real Friendly act, and I feel bound to resist this assault upon my Christian liberty.

“We claim to be, and I believe that in many things we are in advance of the Churches in a wise and tolerant regard for freedom of conscience in all religious matters. Yet here is a case in which our intolerance shows to disadvantage as compared with all Protestant Communion. There is not a Protestant pastor in Philadelphia who would not at once consent to unite Rhoda Reagan and myself in marriage without raising any question of religious connection, simply on such grounds as we would present to the Monthly Meeting. The Church of Rome and the Society of Friends, the very antipodes seemingly in discipline and testimony, stand together and alone in asserting the ecclesiastical right to interfere with the personal freedom of conscience and choice in the matter of marriage! That is not a pleas-

ant fact for liberal-minded Friends to meditate upon."

"Well, Friend Paul," said the Elder, rising and extending his hand in farewell, "I see thee is not moved to give up thy will in this matter. Perhaps, if I were a young fellow and in thy situation, I might feel as thee does. Yet, I would it were otherwise! Many of us have looked with satisfaction and fond hopes upon thy promise of usefulness in the Society, and it would sorely grieve us to disown thee for marrying out of Meeting; which I greatly fear may come. Farewell. Thee has at least my warm wishes for thy happiness!"

So saying, the good man went sadly away, leaving Paul still in the bonds of his sweet "error."

Meanwhile, Father Owen and Mother Lydia moved on serenely in their peaceful paths, too grateful for the late providential deliverance "from the paw of the lion and the bear," and the happy settlement of three of their children, to grieve sorely over a matter which, they sensibly considered, could work no serious ill to their loved ones. To be sure, they regretted the Meeting's decision. Father Owen had hoped for, though he hardly expected, a different result. He therefore proceeded quietly to arrange for the wedding of Grace and Robin at his own home with full approbation and in due form of the Meeting. At the same time he determined, as the young folk all so strongly wished it, to have the marriage of Dorothy and Ben-Thee performed by Friends' ceremony, but without the Meeting's formal approval. This he conceived to be within his liberty, and other leading Friends conceded the point. Mother Lydia quite agreed to this, and at last the eventful day of the weddings was fixed.

The case of Robin More was greatly forwarded by a visit which Angus Reagan had made to Father Owen. After Captain More had sailed to Scotland, the lawyer had an interview with Robin, to whom he divulged the story of his true parentage, and the good fortune that had befallen him through his foster-father's generous

provision for him. If the young man experienced a sharp shock at the discovery that the ties which had bound him to Captain More were not of nature but of adoption, yet there was compensation in the recovery of his father's esteem and affection. There was also much, very much in the gaining of a real brother of the blood in Ben-Thee, to whom he had become warmly attached. Nor was it a small consideration, that unexpected worldly prosperity permitted his early union with Grace Owen under circumstances so grateful to his pride and sense of propriety.

Not that Grace or any of her family would have raised objections on the score of lack of worldly goods, so long as his sea-faring skill promised an adequate means of support. They were all willing to take him just as he was and with open arms into the family. But his own ideas of what was seemly forbade him to ask a maiden to leave a home in which she had been used to such secured abundance and care, to share his present career with its almost certain self-denials. He had therefore made up his mind to defer marriage until he had won a suitable home and maintenance for his bride.

Now the way was made clear for him! And it was with a heart not only highly content but jubilant, that he consented to Mr. Reagan's suggestion that he at once lay Robin's change in financial prospects before Father Owen, and propose that he unite his fortunes with the merchant's firm, and join his sons in business. The "Heather," with Robin as commander, would permit a profitable enlargement of their commercial undertakings, and £2,000 which he would put into the partnership, would be capital enough to justify the venture. This proposal was gladly accepted, and Robin as a member of the firm of "Kersey Owen, Sons & Co." felt himself placed upon a more honorable footing with the family.

Ben-Thee was vastly pleased at the good Providence

which had brought him his long lost brother, and under conditions and prospects so highly gratifying. He felt the stir of a new emotion; the upspringing of an affection that had lain dormant, being little more indeed than a feeble germ of sentiment. But brotherly love shot out into full bloom in a day, like wild flowers in early spring. And it added to the happiness of the new possession and relation that the two brothers were to have the added bond of a union with two sisters. In fact, this incident much increased the interest of friends and acquaintances in the coming "double wedding." The event seemed almost like the invention of a romance!

Ben-Thee had proposed to defer his own wedding until he could go to his valley farm and have a suitable house put up for his bride. He was loathe to ask her to come to his two-roomed cabin. But the sentiment of a double wedding, and the good sense of Dorothy, and her simple ideas of home-making and plain living blocked that plan.

"I can readily adjust myself to the conditions of a log cabin home," Dorothy declared. "Other women have done it, why not I? There will be no experiences to face as rough and primitive as those I passed through on my Indian Mission, which I was quite able to endure and even to enjoy. With such faithful helpers as Cato and Cleo about the house, to begin with, I shall soon have our cabin snug and home-like. And we will be all the happier in it because of the demand upon toil and taste and ingenuity in fitting it up! Besides, I think I would like to share with my husband both the responsibility and the pleasure of planning out, overseeing, and watching the growth of the new house. That is fascinating employment. Let us share it together!"

This settled the matter; for Dorothy's decision harmonized with Ben-Thee's inclination. A Philadelphia architect was at once set to work upon plans for the new farmhouse, with its big bank barn. The pleasures of wedded union and of housekeeping were enjoyed by an-

ticipation in the discussion of the various parts of the house, the number, size and location of the rooms, and the placing (in imagination) of such household conveniences as the period permitted.

When the plans were finished, Ben-Thee brought them to Dorothy, whose eye fell at once upon the title, engrossed beneath the sketch in fair, round script: "Owencroft, the country home of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Owen Hannan, in the Cumberland Valley."

"Owencroft! How dear in you!" exclaimed Dorothy. And Ben-Thee felt well rewarded when she threw her arms around him, and paid him for this compliment to her family name by a warm kiss.

So the days ran on—how swiftly and delightfully!—consulting with each other and with the family; planning, replanning and amending their plans; every day happier than its predecessors, and bringing them nearer to the wedding-day. What a busy, blissful time it was!—in itself most sweet, and a seeding-time for reminiscences that brightened many radiant hours yet to come! For the beauty of such days never fades away, but lingers even down to hoar hairs.

Even the shopping was not so very trying to Ben-Thee, although it was new and strange work to him. He felt quite proud at first as he escorted Dorothy and Mother Lydia and sisters Phoebe and Grace from shop to shop. But his complacency abated as he followed them through all those intricacies of pricing, choosing, bargaining and buying which the ladies, dear hearts! went through so easily and enjoyably, but which to him were mysteries unfathomable by his crude male intellect.

Time and again did he swing his bulky proportions—which had never before seemed to him so unwontedly ungainly and out of place,—to some counter or corner, table or shelf, responsive to Dorothy's beck or call.

"What does thee think of that?" queried the maiden.

"Excellent, admirable, beautiful, fine!" the swain replied. He soon exhausted his store of commendatory

adjectives, and invariably added, "Never mind what I think! Please thyself, and I will be pleased."

"Thee great awkward boy!" quoth Dorothy, tapping him gently with her fan. "It is idle asking thee what thee thinks. I verily think thee doesn't think at all!"

Therein she was mistaken. Ben-Thee was thinking; and his thoughts ran thus: "How pretty she is, my Dorothy! flitting hither and there among the shop-keeper's goods, seeming to carry, wherever she goes, a circle of sunlight and sweetness! What a wonderful little fairy she is! Was there ever as lucky a fellow as I! But—how does she with her wee body stand this wearisome shopping? while I, with my hulking frame—well!—"

The wedding-day dawned at last, a bright, soft November day of Indian summer. Ben-Thee was up at an early hour; and sallying forth to walk off his restlessness, came upon Robin bound upon the same errand.

"I cannot imagine what makes me so uneasy to-day!" said Robin. "I wonder if all folk feel that way on their wedding-day!"

"Well, brother Robin," Ben-Thee replied—the title of "brother" was very sweet in his mouth—"I can speak for myself, at least, and confess that I haven't slept since the first cock-crowing, for thinking and wondering and worrying how I'll get through the ceremony. It seems absurd too; for I was never so happy in my life. Heigh-ho! I wish the affair were well over, and we were settled down quietly on our valley farm!"

"And that's just the thing," responded Robin, "that most troubles me—the settling down! It will all be so new, so strange in my experience, that I am perplexed beyond measure in thinking how I shall face the new life, and adapt myself to it!"

A brisk walk along the river bank brought them to the point opposite to which the "Heather" was anchored. Even at that early hour the sailors were astir, for the ship was to be "dressed" in honor of the Captain's

marriage, especially as it had been arranged that Grace and Robin would take a voyage to the Barbados as their wedding-trip. Robin hailed the brig and a boat put to shore, which brought the two brothers on board.

Robin proposed that they should have breakfast on the ship, which pleased Ben-Thee, as the day was likely to be long, since they had been forbidden to call upon their sweethearts until just before the ceremony.

As they sat together in the Captain's cabin all spick and span for its anticipated fair inmate, Ben-Thee recalled his first sight of the "Heather" as it tacked down the Schuylkill on that eventful day, over five years ago, when he had come with Alfred Oster to Philadelphia in charge of Windall and Bete's pack-train. Thus they were led to speak of the changes that had befallen in that time. How many and how great they had been!

Oster slept in a soldier's grave near Cartagena on the Spanish Main. Unconsciously to him, through the inscrutable ordering of Providence, his interest in his mother and sister, uttered in his dying moments, had led to an alliance with Chaplain Henry that provided for his loved ones with a fullness of comfort far beyond his most sanguine hopes. What the ill-gotten gains of his wayward years had failed to secure, the noble and consecrated acts of the closing year of life had indirectly accomplished.

Windall and Bete, detected in their many rogueries, had been forced to give up their business for lack of patronage, and now, broken in reputation and fortune, awaited a trial that would probably condemn them to prison. Lieutenant Ruel Braun had ended his career as a pirate, and lay in the Ocean Cemetery off the Cuban coast.

Ensign Arthur Burbeck — dear old Arthur! — full of honors and happiness, had come safely through the horrors of Cartagena, and had settled down as a thrifty farmer, with the promise to his devoted and beloved Kate that he would "daunder" no more. Bubbling

over with joyous spirits, he had come to the marriage in charge of the pack-train that was to carry to the Valley the goods and chattels for the new house, and escort the bride and groom. Mrs. Esther Harris had come with him, on Dorothy's warm personal invitation. And Andy, too, had come, quite well and strong again, for all the horses in the train could not have held him back from the wedding of Dorothy, and of his first love, whom he still remembered by his boyish soubriquet of "Grace's kiss." At Andy's urgent request, his faithful friend Fox-foot was also in the train as a driver-boy, and was destined to have the richest experience of his life.

Mrs. Naomi Bell, hearty and happy and proud of "her boy," had come up from Chester, not only to see the marriage, but to go upon the trip to the Barbados, to "mother" Grace, and to look after her as she had done with Robin. Along with her came Master Hugh Andrews and his now thoroughly reconstructed wife; for her son John Knox Andrews had returned with broken health, but with a Lieutenant's commission, the reward of especial gallantry. There was not now a prouder, and hardly a happier pair in Chester than the aged schoolmaster and his spouse. The bisected Bible had been rebound, and regularly had its place in the daily family worship, where once a day, at least, the "bonnie Psalms" were sung in "Rous's varsion."

CHAPTER XXXIII

WE GO TO A QUAKER WEDDING

The evening was propitious. A fair day closed with a brilliant sunset, in the soft after-glow of which, reflected from the red brick fronts of Philadelphia houses, the elite of Philadelphia's Friendly Society moved in groups and couples toward the Spruce Street house of the Owens.

The company gathered in the spacious parlor, was in general type and tone not far different from a modern assembly of Friends on a like occasion, except in the matter of apparel. Quaker plain clothes were the rule in both sexes, not the exception, as a twentieth-century Friend's wedding is likely to be. To "the world's people," and to all who have an eye to picturesque effect in human assemblages, this is a distinct loss. But the course of fashion, like the tide of Time, is not to be stayed or turned by a mere sentiment, and doubtless the old-fashioned comely Quaker apparel is destined to extinction. However, it was in full evidence on that Indian Summer eve, at the Owen double wedding, where there was none to dispute the Friends' Contention that beauty and simplicity in attire are not irreconcilable, and that the extravagance and folly of slavish devotion to arbitrary, changing fashions should be reprobated and shunned.

A hush fell over the company as Paul Owen, who acted as the bridegrooms' man came down the stairs that led from the upper rooms into the parlor. Then came a little girl, five years old, the daughter of a near kinswoman, carrying a basket of flowers; and following the child were Robin and Grace, Ben-Thee and Dorothy.

They made their way to a sofa placed at one end of the room, and there sat down. Another sofa, facing them at right angles, was occupied by the four Overseers. The family and near friends were grouped irregularly around.

There followed a profound silence in which all the Friends present were, or were supposed to be, in devout meditation and prayer. This silence was twice broken, once by a woman Friend who offered a prayer, and again by a man Friend and Minister who gave some wholesome advice. Both these exercises were brief. And now, at last, there was a movement on the bridegroom's seat, upon which all eyes were fixed. Robin and Grace arose, and facing each other joined right hands. Then Robin repeated in a clear ringing voice, the marriage formula as prescribed by Friends' Discipline.

"In the presence of the Lord, and before this assembly, I, Robin More Hannan, take thee, Grace Owen, to be my wife, promising with Divine assistance to be unto thee a loving and faithful husband until death shall separate us."

Then Grace repeated the same formula, substituting her own name for that of Robin's and the word "wife" for "husband." This done, Robin bent over and kissed her, and both resumed their seats. These two were perfectly self-possessed, and passed through the ceremony without a flaw, except a little hesitation as Robin pronounced his new name, which still sounded strange to his ears.

Now uprose Ben-Thee, his tall form towering above Dorothy, who, as she took his hand and looked fondly up to him, seemed daintier than ever. The big fellow, who had never felt his nerves shaken in the face of danger, was now fairly abashed as he cast a side glance at the company before him. He blushed and stammered as he went through his formula and had well-nigh promised to be a loving and faithful "wife" to the dear little woman, when a quick warning squeeze of her hand ad-

monished him of his blunder, and he thundered out the word "husband" like a military command.

Then came Dorothy's turn, and there was a glad tremulousness in her voice as she repeated her part without hesitation or a word misplaced. It is to be observed that these experiences of Ben-Thee and Dorothy are not peculiar. In wedding ceremonies the brides are almost sure to go through their part without faltering and in perfect form; while, if there is any blundering, it is by the groom.

However, Ben-Thee cared nothing now for how he had got through with the form. The sweet fact contented him that Dorothy was his own — his beloved wife! The mutual vows being spoken, he stooped to the dear face that was turned up to him, and kissed her lips. Then they sat down and waited in silence.

A slight ripple of emotion, like the first breath of a breeze in a leafy grove, ran through the company as Arthur Burbeck lifted his sturdy form in the midst of a group near the bridegroom's seat, and announced his purpose to speak by a loud "Hem!" Amazement, amusement, disapprobation, expectation, were expressed in the involuntary movements and on the faces of the good Friends around him. He seemed conscious enough of the fact, but it did not shake his purpose or appear to embarrass him. He looked straight forward to where Ben-Thee and Dorothy sat, and they in turn gazed at him with a sort of amused expectation which indicated that they were as much surprised as others at Arthur's apparent purpose to speak.

"Ahem!" Arthur began, "I am not eggsackly what thee-uns would call a member of the Society of Friends, as I darsay thee-all know. But I've been so long in close comradship wi' our Captain Ben-Thee yander, and have got so us't til his theein-and-thouin' way of talkin' that I sometimes think I've absorbed nigh enough o' the lingo to make me half a Quaker at laste.

"An' so I ventur' to rise an' say a word for Ben-

Thee and Miss Dorothy, seein' as no wan else is moved tharto. But thee-folks mustn't axpict much; for I'm not in practice; and you know the sayin'—comb seldom, comb sore! But Cap'n Robin and Miss Grace have had several good talks an' prayin's in thar behalf—an' well they desarve 'em!—wile Cap'n Ben an' Miss Dorothy have had nary wan; which isn't accordin' to Quaker rules of fair play. So here goes; though I'd a heap rather have some of thee-folks do the han'some thing by 'em; for I'm no preacher, an' was not cut out to be; an' thee-uns know the old sayin'—Ye can't make a silver whistle out of a pig's tail.

“What I like about Friends' marriage ceremony is that both bridegroom and bride make the same promise an' covenant—to be 'loving an' faithful.' That covers it all, an' is fair to both. Our folks make the wife promise to be obeydient, also; which is all right when it is right. But what's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, I reckon, and vicy varsy; an' I can't see why the bridegroom shouldn't promise to obey, too! He's mighty liable to have to do it annyhow, accordin' to my observation—an' axperience.

“Oh, you nadent smile, Mr. Ben-Thee! For big as ye are, and little as is your bride, ye'll find that a pound o' feathers is as heavy as a pound o' lead; an' she'll put ye under her thumb as aisy as kissin'! So you'd beeta make up your mind at wanst to share an' share alike in the matter of bossin'. That's nayther a question of sex, or size or weddin' wows, but of natteral faculty an' practical fact. But if you don't—well, I've known one lively little hornet, bent on business, to set a whole roomful of big men and women into a fearful commotion! That's not intimatin' that Miss Dorothy is in the laste like a hornet save in proportion. It's jist a figur' o' spache!”

By this time more than Ben-Thee were smiling. Most of the company were in a state of amused excitement, except a few of the more sedate Friends, who were taking the innovation seriously. One of the Overseers was

particularly exercised, and made motions to rise as if to stop Arthur as one not speaking to edification. But the good Quakers who sat beside him, pulled his sleeve and whispered:

"Peace, Friend, thee's not an Overseer for Dorothy's wedding!"

Arthur was not to be suppressed. He advanced a step nearer to the bridegroom's seat, and with a wave of his hand and a determined glance at the Overseer, who thereupon subsided, went straight on with his address.

"All married folk have a honeymoon, av coorse. For the time it seems as if it would niver and. But it *will* and; an' life will settle down to its humdrum duties an' sarvice. A new broom sweeps cl'ane; an' a new wife or husband sames faultless. But by an' by, whan the first fine aidge of the new life gits worn down a bit, the rough points may begin to show. An' that's a ticklish time wi' young folks! Whan my old parson married Kate an' me, 'my children,' sayd he, 'I've jist one brafe bit of advice to give ye.'— He was what thee-uns call a 'hireling minister' of coorse; but there'll be no charge for repatin' his advice here. An' annyhow he was about the worst paid worker in the country-side, so that oughtn't to count agin him, I reckon. Well, the dominie says, says he, '*If ye niver spake the first unkind word to one anither, ye'll never spake the second!* Can ye mind that?' says he.

"So I nods my head, approvin' like; an' Kate up an' says, says she, 'That's as true as praychin', your Riverence!'

"'Ay,' says he, 'an' far truer nor some pra'chin I wot of. An' here's another bit of wholesome counsel. You're both of ye rayther high-strung an' peppery-tempered. See to it that only wan of ye gits mad at a time, an' then always count fifty till yourself afore ye spake out. If ye do that,' says he, 'I'll guarantee ye'll kape the p'ace lovingly all your lives.'

“An’ now, I’ll give ye another advice which maybe thee’ll like better since an old Quaker gintlemen give it til his son. ‘My son,’ says he, ‘whan thee went a-courtin’ I bade thee kape both eyes wide open. But now thee’s married, I advise thee to kape them half shut.’ That’s wise advice. I’ve niver yet knowd a perfect man — or woman aither, though they’re apt to come a leetle nearer the mark. So it’s jist as well for wedded folks not to spy out too closely for faults. They’ll be mortal sure to find ’em; an’ some that don’t exist, too! Ye’ve taken ither for better or warse; an’ what’s been done can’t be ondone. Lasteways, it oughtn’t to be ondone — niver! So, if ye should iver find yourselves a bit disapp’inted wi’ wan anither, jist jook an’ let the wave go by, as the sea bathers do! You can pick a pimple intil a runnin’ sore, that, lat alone, would heal itself in a day or two. Naggin’ an’ pickin’ at ither’s faults, is sure to make ’em warse an’ to make faults where there were none afore.

“Now, Cap’n Ben-Thee, I reckon thee belaves thee’s got the fairest an’ best maid in Philadelpy — present company axcepted, of coorse, as is always polite — an’ I agree wi’ you! She’s the pick o’ the Quaker flock, an’ they’re the pick an’ ch’ice o’ all the rist of us. But ye both belong to races somewhat famous for their strong, not to say stubborn wills — the Scotch Irish an’ the English Quakers. So I ask ye both to remember the Scotch Irish lady’s prayer for her man: ‘Lord kape him right, for I’m fell sure he’ll be steadfast!’”

The smiles that met this sally were quite audible; and three of the Overseers looked scandalized and serious. The fourth one, who was a round-faced, fair-cheeked matron, with a merry twinkle in her eyes, indulged in inward laughter that evoked a rebuking glance from one of her associates; which, however, only enlarged the curves on her jolly face. Arthur looked around him in well feigned surprise at such apparent levity in a Friends’ Meeting.

"An' now fathers an' brethren, an' fellow Friends," he continued, "I've often h'ard that the two hardest things about a spache are to git started, an' to stop. An' I belave it! For I've tried several times a'ready to find a good jumpin' off place, an' I'm still a runnin' on. So havin' said my say, and gien thee-all more good advice nor thee'll be apt to remamber, I jist wush thee-all, married an' single, a happy life in the holy estate of matrimony, an' I'll mak' my congee an' tak' my sate."

The rustle of many moving bodies that followed the relaxing of the keen interest in Arthur's address, was succeeded by a deep silence. This was broken by the trembling voice of Father Owen, who led in a fervent prayer for his beloved children, and for invited guests, and especially for those "honored and faithful friends who are with us in the fellowship of the spirit, though not of the form, by whose self-sacrificing aid, at the risk of their own lives, the late messengers of the Society were delivered from bodily bondage and peril." His voice was broken with emotion; and there were tears in many eyes as he closed his tender petition.

Thereupon Paul Owen rose at Robin's side and unrolling a large parchment, read the certificate of marriage, in form as follows:

"Whereas Robin More Hannan of Philadelphia in the County of Philadelphia, in Pennsylvania, son of Thomas Hannan of County Antrim, Ireland and his wife Mary, both deceased, and Grace Owen, daughter of Kersey Owen and Lydia his wife, having declared their intentions of marriage with each other before a Monthly Meeting of the religious Society of Friends, held at Philadelphia, according to the good order used among them, and having consent of parents, their said proposal of marriage was allowed by the said Meeting.

"Now, these are to certify to whom it may concern, that for the full accomplishment of their said intentions, this tenth day of the eleventh month in the year of our Lord 1742, the said Robin More Hannan and Grace

Owen appeared at a meeting at the house of Kersey Owen in the city of Philadelphia, and the said Robin More Hannan, taking the said Grace Owen by the hand, did, on this solemn occasion, openly declare that he took her, the said Grace Owen, to be his wife, promising with Divine assistance, to be unto her a loving and faithful husband until death should separate them; and then in the same assembly, the said Grace Owen did in like manner declare that she took him, the said Robin More Hannan to be her husband, promising with Divine assistance to be unto him a loving and faithful wife until death should separate them. And moreover, they, the said Robin More Hannan and Grace Owen (she according to the custom of marriage, assuming the name of her husband) did, as a further confirmation thereof, then and there to these presents set their hands.

“And we, whose names are also hereunto subscribed, being present at the solemnization of the said marriage and subscription, have as witnesses thereto, set our hands the day and year before written.”

Having thus read in full, Paul unrolled a second parchment and said: “I have here another certificate of like import and form except that therein the names of Benjamin Owen Hannan and Dorothea Owen appear, and the approval of the Monthly Meeting is not certified. I will read this only in part. And at the close of this Meeting, I invite the Friends present to join in the subscription of both the certificates as witnesses of these marriages.”

A brief interval followed of unbroken devotional silence. Then one of the Overseers offered his right hand to his next neighbor, who clasped it in his own. This was the sign of breaking the Meeting. Immediately, the two brides and grooms arose and joining right hands greeted one another with a kiss. Thereupon, friends came forward and offered their congratulations. At the same time in the opposite part of the room, the certificates of marriage were spread upon a

table, with pens and ink, and a stream of guests, who came to sign their names, flowed thereto and therefrom.

The collation then served was doubtless in accordance with that "moderation" which Friends' rules enjoin, "that no reproach arise or occasion of offense be given." But certainly, the tables, heaped with the best of the substantials and dainties of the New World Colonies, amply testified that with Philadelphia Friends, at least, the idea of "moderation" carried no hint of penury or asceticism.



