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Xmas 1897 -



"I knew it by the MacKinloy Tartan." (Page 562.)



THE LATIMERS

A Tale of the Western Insurrection
of 1794



BY

HENRY CHRISTOPHER McCOOK

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"OLD FARM FAIRIES," ETC.

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PREFACE.

In the following romance the author has attempted to picture the life of the Scotch-Irish pioneers of the American frontier during the close of the eighteenth century. The Colonial immigrants and their scions of this vigorous stock were the chief pathfinders of our then Western border. They opened the wilderness to civilization. They formed a barrier between the hostile Indians and the growing settlements of the seaboard. They laid the foundations of the New West, the Greater America. Whatever throws light upon their history in this formative era should interest not only their descendants but all who have profited by their labors and sufferings.

In prosecuting his purpose the author has diligently studied this people, their habits, characteristics and environment. Local histories have been read. Papers, manuscripts, pamphlets, church and county records have been examined. The scenery described has been personally visited, photographed and sketched, and topographical plots and maps copied and drawn. The flora and fauna and weather conditions have been noted. The biographies of leading and typical men and women of the various sections have been read. The dialect has been especially studied. For several years the author has been engaged in preparing a vocabulary of Scotch-Irishisms which contains many hundreds of words, phrases and sayings. The results of this research are shown in the language of some of the characters who figure in the story.

The period in which the narrative is located was one of the most important in the history of our national and social development. The Old West, as known to our Colonial ancestors, was about to disappear, or to recede further towards the great prairies. The last decisive conflict between the white men led by General Anthony Wayne, and the aborigines, was impending in the Northwestern territory. The battle of Fallen Timbers, described in one chap-

ter, and the pivot of several chapters, decided the destiny of the middle West, and opened its territories to permanent settlement. The riots and risings in Western Pennsylvania and the adjacent sections, stirred up by Revenue troubles, were then fomenting, and subsequently issued in what is known in history as "The Western Insurrection," or more popularly, "The Whiskey Insurrection." Most of those engaged in this disturbance were descendants of Scotch-Irishmen, many of them veterans of the Revolutionary War. The incident has been little studied and less understood, although in point of fact it had a most important influence upon the growth of our country.

To suppress this "insurrection" President Washington led towards the frontier an army which in point of equipment was perhaps superior to any which he commanded during the War for Independence. He paused at Carlisle to return to Philadelphia, then the capital of the Republic, leaving General Lee, accompanied by Secretary Hamilton, to march the militia across the mountains to the scene of the disturbances in Washington and Allegheny Counties. The course of the story leads the reader into the midst of these stirring events.

Within this period the author has laid the scenes of his story. Indeed, it has been a chief purpose to present the true character of this famous, or as it is more commonly conceived, this infamous insurrection. A degree of obloquy has fallen upon the race most closely concerned therein, which, in the author's judgment, is not deserved. He does not seek to exempt the Scotch-Irishmen and others, associated directly or indirectly with the Western riots, from deserved censure; but he believes that the character of the men concerned, as well as their motives and the actual degree of criminality in the various risings, have been exaggerated and misrepresented in history, and are not understood by the people at large. In the various incidents described, the author uncovers his own view of the origin, progress and disappearance of this insurrectionary movement. While he does not suppose that his personal bias is wholly concealed, yet he ventures to indulge the hope that in this regard he has shown the impartiality and truthfulness which should characterize history, even though it be written in the form of a romance.

JULY 3D, A. D. 1897.

THE LATIMERS

A TALE OF THE WESTERN INSURRECTION
OF 1794

CHAPTER I.

"THIS MAN WAS BORN THERE."

On a summer eve of 1792 three men pushed a boat into the Ohio River from the mouth of Yellow Creek. One boatman was a man of twenty, who sat on the middle thwart carelessly dandling a rifle on his knees, and viewing the river scenery with pleased eye.

Though the day was waning apace, the sun of an August afternoon still blazed upon the water which ran scant and sluggish through the narrowed channel. The heat was great, but the air was not humid, and it lay upon the landscape so clear that every sunbeam twinkled into the deepest heart of the forest foliage, lighting up the leaves with many hues of green and yellow, and showing the patches of greenish lichens upon the gray trunks. The blades of grass along the river banks stood out sharply in the transparent atmosphere, and the sunlight cut down to their very roots. The rugged hills on the northern shore rose up to the sky line, with every feathered tree-top marked in clear outline against the deep blue which swept zenithward without a cloud.

The youth's senses were as tense to the melodious sounds as to the sweet sights of Nature, and he noted gladly how the waters plashed and babbled merrily against the bow as it parted them asunder. Song birds twittered in the hazelnut, sumac and elder bushes. Mocking-birds whistled in the woods. Catbirds called from the low trees. The swing of an eagle's wing shadowed the stream as the bird started up from its nest in a high tree that a thunderbolt had smitten. A hen crow cawed from a stump where her rude nest showed atop, with her broodlings' black heads perked above its rim. Great buzzards circled aloft, such ideals of graceful motion that the young man, who knew their ungainly fashion and had an eye for goodly seeming, wished that they might never come to roost again.

Here and there he had a vision of a doe with her young fawn, that had come quite down from the bank and into the channel for a drink, and were tardy to leave off at the strange plash and sight, not yet having well learned the fear of men. But presently they lifted their heads and sniffed, and plashed away, and rustled through the bosky banks into the forest.

These incidents the young man noted, with sundry comments to his father, who sat at the bow paddle. The latter was a man of forty-five or thereabout, although the hardships of twenty-five years of frontier life and warfare had grizzled his hair and written lines of a greater age upon his beardless face. A good strong face it was, of the type which we know as Scotch-Irish, and would have been fair but for the swart of long exposure. Blue gray eyes looked keenly but with a kindly light from beneath a broad and somewhat beetling brow. The nose was prominent, and full, shapely lips were set firmly above a square chin. The third man in the boat was an Indian, well advanced in life, as far as one might judge; for to tell the age of a red man from his looks is a problem that Anglo-Saxon wit is slow to solve.

The boat moved steadily up stream under the muscular arms of the foresters, and by the bluffs on which the town of Wellesville now nestles, crowding back to the foot of its great overshadowing hill. It passed the wooded site of the present thriving pottery town of East Liverpool; and soon thereafter the boundary line between Pennsylvania and Ohio, and thence on to where the Little Beaver Creek makes outlet through the shaded gorge of Smith's Ferry.

"A lettle furdur, lad," said Luke Latimer, the elder white man. "We'll find the spot within a half mile of the creek. Thar; we're most fornenst it now; what say you, Mingo?"

The Indian gave a guttural assent, and pointed to a black walnut tree rooted upon the northern bank. Its vast spread of branches cast a wide circle of shadow upon the mellow green, and one goodly part stretched over the channel. There is nothing nobler in nature than a full-grown tree, and in the American forests of that date there were many such. The white men's eyes followed the Indian's finger and rested, the one with recognition, the other with admiration, upon the giant plant. One would mark and re-

member it anywhere; but the peculiar curve of one of its vast roots around the river bank, and the bearing of a big bough that overhung the channel, set it apart from all its comrades to the forester went to note as landmarks every oddish feature of the landscape.

"Ay, ay," said the elder, "theh's no mistakin' that lan'-mark. Thar on the lee of that gnarled root I us't fer to moor my boat,—whin th're was anny river to spake of!" He cast a depreciating glance upon the scant proportions of the stream. "But we'll nade no moorin's the daay. We'll jist stop here an' pull her up on the rocks." He turned the bow toward the edge of the stream, and leaped from the boat, followed by his companion.

The river bed where they landed was a solid mass of flat rock stretching up stream and down for many rods, dipping at one edge into the water and at the other underlying the bank, which was twelve to twenty yards distant. In ordinary stages of the river all this was under water; but it sometimes happened in midsummer that the stream was so low that it shrunk from either shore into mid channel, leaving the dry bed in view.

The party dragged the skiff upon the rocky platform, and climbing the bank by the great walnut tree, began preparations for evening camp. It was a time of peace; at least no enemies were near, and although precautions habitual to the forester were not wholly forborne, yet the men proceeded with that cheerful abandon that comes with freedom from peril.

But first of all Luke Latimer led his son to a low mound on which lay the ruins of a cabin, and bade him look and be content, for there was the spot where he was born. The young man, leaning on the muzzle of his long rifle, gazed at the bit of ruin before him. It was not much, indeed; a few yards square of space, covered with the weedy vegetation which creeps up from some unknown retreat when the first growth is burned over. Around it on three sides, like a frame to a canvas, were thickened clumps of varied rankness; daisies in full bloom, goldenrods just beginning to show the yellow in their plumes, field lilies lifting their whorled stalks and spotted orange-red corals above all the other wild flowers, weeds and grasses. On the fourth side stood the remains of a wide-mouthed chimney. Its rough stones were put in rubblewise with mortar and it was

flanked and propped at each end by pieces of mouldering logs that showed still, beneath the moss and wild foliage, the char of fire and the hollows which flames had bitten out. A Virginia creeper embraced the rude pile within its graceful tendrils. Behind it, stretching almost to the forest, was a thicket of blackberry bushes laden with luscious fruitage, over which, as the young man looked, a humming-bird was hanging and flitting.

The youth gazed silently upon the ruin, his fine face ruffling with the play of such thoughts as one must have who looks for the first time after many years upon the scene of his birth. "And now, father," he said, breaking the silence, "you'll tell me all about it; there could be no better place or time."

"Not jist yit, son! We'll first have our bite an' sup, an' make camp, an' then I'll e'en be as good as my word. Come away, then, an' lend a hand, or the Mingo'll have all things ready."

But the Indian, so far from getting things ready, leaned against the trunk of the great walnut, motionless as though he were a carved figure. Only his bright eyes, which followed the movements of his companions, showed that he had due sympathy with feelings which might be indulged at such a time. Let one be white or red, civilized or savage, he must have felt somewhat of the emotion which stirred young Latimer as he stood there amidst the scenes of his birth and infancy. Only a log cabin in the wilderness!—a rude forest site such as birds and deer and squirrels possess; but, once it was "home." In that sentiment red men and white discover the unity of humanity.

"We'll make camp, Mingo," said Luke Latimer, "if you'll git some'at fer supper."

The Indian nodded his approval of this division of labor, and, resting his rifle against the tree, took bow and quiver, for he would not waste good powder and shot on such game as he sought. Then he stole away into the forest, whence he returned ere long with a string of fat gray squirrels and a brace of woodcock. Meanwhile, father and son had built a booth of green boughs and saplings, which were at hand in plenty. Two stout poles, shred of foliage and forked at the top, were fastened into the ground eight feet apart and six feet high. Into the forks a third pole was laid, against which were leaned, as close as might

be, long boughs with their pliant branches and twigs compressed against their sides. Into these again were interlaced wattles of greenery until all was well thatched. The sides of this booth were staked and wrought in like manner, and the front left open toward the river, and facing the camp-fire which was kindled a little way off. Feathered ends of hemlock twigs from the hillside were spread upon the ground beneath the rude thatch, and over these a bearskin from the boat was thrown. Each forester had his blanket, and thus a bivouac was made, and all in trim by the time the Mingo had dressed his game ready to be roasted upon the embers.

The shadow of the high and abrupt hill had darkened the river bank and bed ere the foresters had finished their simple meal of toasted game and parched maize. Now the soft cooing of a wood-dove beat its mournful note across the river. A whippoorwill whistled from the chaparral. Night-owls hooted in the woods; and, to remind them that forest life had still some perils, the harsh cry of a catamount came down from the far-away hilltop. The moon, just past its first quarter, twinkled and shone on the running water, and threw broad patens of light upon the mellow sward through open places in the treetops.

"Now, my son!" said Latimer. "Come, Mingo!"

He led the way to the ruined cabin. A large oak log lay at one side, the trunk of a tree that the woodman's axe had felled twenty years before. The good remainder had gone into the cabin walls and the hearthstone fire, but this bit stayed where it fell, a sort of rampart screening the path to the spring. Time, weather, mould and insect teeth had gnawed somewhat upon it, but it was yet a tough butt, though covered with moss, and the bark was dropping away. Here sat down the three men, and Luke began his story.

CHAPTER II.

"PERILS BY FLOOD."

"It's quite nayter'l, lad, 'at ye should think long to see the spot whar ye were born, an' l'arn the story of those 'arly days. But it's a melancholy place for me now, I assure ye. Not but some pleasant thoughts bubble up above the black an' heavy ones; the best of which is of yourself, my b'y, an' of my good fri'nd Panther." He cast a glance toward the Indian, who made no sign except in the softness and unction of his guttural "hugh!"

"In the 'arly spring of 1772, I left Fort Pitt with y'r mother, grandfather an' sister Meg, a lass o' three years. We had h'ard much of the fertyle banks of the Ohio an' the abundance o' game thereon, an' though the Indians were to be feared, we agreed to take the resks. Y'r mother would'nt bide behint, though we wanted her to do so. Scotch granite itself isn't grittier nor she; so she l'arnt to usc the rifle an' ax, an' said, 'we'll live or die thegither!' We put our few belongin's intil a flat boat, an' with a good canoe a-draggin' ahint, poled an' drifted away from the p'int, foll'ed by the good-byes of the few folk in the little hamlet outside the Fort. Th're weren't more'n twenty cabins then in Pittsburg, an' a hundred or two people.

"We got on well enough, though we were new to that kind o' navigatin', ontill jist anigh the p'int of the island above here we snagged our flat boat. We paddled mother and Meg ashore in the canoe 'asy enough, but had no ind of trouble a-savin' our goods. Howiver, we got most of 'em, though some were damaged an' all were wet.

"That accident detarmined us to settle whar we landed; an' it was fair enough a site for our purpose. The fine bottom lands fornent us on the Virginnny shore were taken up a'ready, an' we dassent to settle thar, tho' we cast longin' eyes upon it, I confess. But rocky an' rough an' onpromisin' as this shore looks, if ye'll climb the hill ye'll find a table of as fair farmin' land as one nade wush, an' that especially pl'ased mother's fancy. We 'lowed to hunt an' trap, for the most part, a sight better business nor farmin', them days; an' the crick below us swarmed with

beaver, whose dams blocked it from the mouth clane up til the head waters along its forks. Bear were plenty among the rough hills below an' inland, and as for deer an' small game th're was no end on't. So we landed by the great walnut tree an' built our log cabin here on the bank, astead of up on the uplands whar we claired our plantation.

"It was a good big cabin with a high loft juttin' over the door, with loop-holes for our rifles on all sides. Father an' Meg slep' in the loft, an' wife an' I slep' in bunks below, for your mother was dilicate then, an' we were lookin' for you soon.

"Logan, the Mingo chief, had his village at the mouth of Yallow Crick; an' as he was fri'ndly to white men, father an' I wint down the river to a council. We reported our setlemint, told our intintions an' wushes to live at p'ace with 'em; an', although we had tomahawked our claims an' so had full right to settle (or so we thought), as't their consint fer til hunt an' trap within their grounds. The Mingoes welcomed us as brothers; the pipe of p'ace was smoked; we made presents of powder, tobacco an' whuskey to the chiefs, an' started back home accompanied by a young brave who from that day to this has been my brother. Yander he sets,"—pointing his pipe at the Indian,—“my old fri'nd and brother, Panther. He was as fine a-lookin' warrior as iver walked the forest; an' as to courage, ther's small nade to spake o' that, for you yoursilf have seed it tried. The cussed hands of bloody Dan Greathouse an' Cap'n Cresap wrought foul treachery an' murder on his kith an' kin, two years thereafter; but betwixt him an' me no cloud has iver come an' niver wull. Whin he had visited the cabin an' foun' how it was with mother, he paddled down the river an' brung up his wife, Featherfoot, then the handsomest squaw in the Ohio country, an' as good as fair. She tarried with us ontill you were born,—'arly on a bright May mornin' it was,—an' you may think what a comfort she was, with no women folks in the house but wee Meg.

"What a time that was! I mind as well as though but yisterday the heavy rains that fell a few weeks after your birth. Little Beaver Crick was a roarin' torrent. The Ohio was in good stage, but it soon riz up, up, till I thought it would niver stay. It filled both banks plumb full; an'

though that walnut tree stands high on the bluff, the water swirled around it. Ye mark that the cabin site is on a lettle swell of the foothill; an' we had built it two good feet above ground, blockin' it up to let the air play aneath it. That was your mother's fancy, an' it stood us in good stead, for the flood covered the forty yards atween cabin an' river bank, l'avin' us for a day at laste with the water a-lippin' an' a-plashin' at our door. But thar it was stayed, thank God! an' in a day or two it had shrunk back beyant the knoll, an' so kep' on fallin'.

"Ahbut, it was a sight to see that angry strame an' to hear its bellerin'! Driftwood, tall trees cut out from shore by the wrenchin', burrowin' current, went careerin' in mid-channel, wildly bobbin' up an' down; swirlin' off now into an eddy clost til our shore; lockin' limbs an' roots an' formin' great piles; aidgin' an' a-crowdgin' up toward the top with the squazin' flood inunder, like scramblin' swine in a sty; crashin', grindin', creakin', groanin', swayin' to an' fro; then one after another frayin' off from the aidge of the heap until the whole mass was dissolved, an' plunged away once more intil mid strame.

"The day when the water began to fall was a throng day for us. 'Arly in the mornin' we saw a birch canoe a-driftin' at fearful speed down strame, guided by an Indian squaw. She had lost her paddle, an' was tryin' to kape her boat in the current an' aidge it shore'ard. But the strongest brave might well have failed in such a flood, an' it was plain she must soon drown. She saw us, an' looked pitiful enough, but niver made cry or sign. Indade we naded none, for our boat was a'ready off shore, an' we was paddlin' towards her. Providence favored us, an' we caught the canoe jist as it swep' past the fut of the island, though it was sore wark for a while breastin' that current. By sheer might an' skill we all three helt the canoe to our gunwale till the squaw l'aped lightly as an arrow until our boat, an' then lettin' her own drift, dropped upon the thwart, and throwed back her black hair with a 'hugh' of satisfaction.

"'Why, Featherfoot!' I cried, 'is it you? Thank God truly for this!'

"'Humph!' she said, noddin' assent; for Featherfoot indade it was, the good squaw who had presided over your birth. She had been off on a huntin' trip with Panther, an' while he was in the woods she ventur'd to cross the river,

havin' confidence in her skill; an' she would 'a done it too, if her paddle hadn't 'a broke."

"Good!" exclaimed the Mingo, who thus far had listened to the story seemingly as unmoved as the log on which he was sitting.

"Ay, comrade," resumed Latimer, "that she sartainly would. But the han'le of a paddle is a pore tool fer til guide a boat through a flood. How the woman managed to kape alive that frail bit o' bark in sich a ragin' strame, passes my ken. I would hardly 'a belaved it, though I know the rivercraft an' woodcraft of the red man surpasses all praise.

"Well, we were glad enough to do this turn to one who had so befriended us, you may be sure. Wife urged Featherfoot to bide a while; but, without bite or sup, an' tarryin' only to kiss the babby an' cuddle it a bit, she tuk the river trail an' hurried up strame to meet her husban', knowin' well that he would worry over her absence. I belave she made her own camp afore the Mingo thar got back, an' his first knowledge was from her own lips."

"It is so!" the Indian interrupted, "Featherfoot told all. My brother says true, but not enough. It was much brave. White men t'rowed their lives on angry river to save an Indian woman. It was Featherfoot. We have not forgotten!"

"Tut, tut, Mingo, it was nought! Anny man with half a heart would 'a done as much; an' aven if we were all as you say, you've repaid it manny fold sin' syne. Well, that was a good beginnin' of the day. But another adventur' foll'ed. In the afternoon, along with the wild drift of the river began to come flotsam of another sort, showin' that somewhar the waters had invaded the settlemint of a white man an' overturned his cabin an' carried off his plunder. We tried to save some of this, for the island up yander throwed the current well toward our shore. We got in a few chairs, a table, an' oddly enough an ole door with a cock an' two hens an' aven one chicken a-ridin' safe upon it. Meg took these in hand, an' what a fuss she did make over them, to be sure!

"Now, a lettle later, what should we spy but a cradle a-ridin' in mid current, an' a-bobbin' up an' down on the crests of the waves. It was jist what I wanted for the new baby, an' athout lettin' on to wife, whom I wushed to sur-

prise, I called father, an' we pushed out intil the river. We caught the cradle with some trouble, an' as father drew it to the boat to make fast a tow rope, he exclaimed:

"My God, Luke, there's a baby inside!"

"I started, half risin' to see, but the boat gave a lurch, an' as it was ticklish work a-rowin' in sich waters, I got but a brief look.

"Is it alive, father?" I asked.

"I do belave it is!" he said. 'Ay, surely!' For jist then the wee thing moved an' began to moan.

"Save the baby!" I said, 'an' let the cradle drift!"

"Na, na," said he, 'we'll save 'em both, pl'ase God! an' liddle John shall have both bed an' bedfellow.'

"Well, to cut matters short, we got babe an' cradle safe to shore, an' whin we intered the cabin, father first a-car-ryin' the cradle, an' I a bit behint him bearin' the baby gingerly on its liddle bed, th'e was a scane, ye may belave. What betwixt mother an' Meg, there was cryin' an' cacklin', an' kissin' an' huggin' enough to satisfy anny heart, an' in sooth, father an' I j'ined in.

"Poor mitherless bairn!" said wife; an' thereat she clapped the rascued child to her breast, an' it was a bonnie sight to see the puir thing gurgle an' suck. It was a fine boy, about your age, John, mebbe a bit older nor you, an' of coorse then an' thar we adopted it as our own. They was room in her heart for the two, mother said, an' milk enow in her breast; an' what could we do besides?

"That avenin' at warship, an old fashion an' a good one, too, that father al'ays kep' up, for said he, 'whariver God gives me home, thar wull I give him homage', he read the story of how the Hebrew child Moses was saved from the Egyptian river. An' thinkin' of how we had drawn this babe from the flooded Ohio, we called him Moses.

"We thought the laddie would make a fine playfellow for you when you should grow up. You were wonderfully alike, at laste to me, for I niver could well dis'arn betwixt rale young infants, they lookin' all alike to me. So she kep' aroun' Moses's throat a coral necklace which he wore when rascued, an' thus we men folks knowed one from t'other.

"Whin you were two months old, an' mother could go about the house comfo'table agin, for she was a halb woman an' niver staid long in bed aven with her babies, we thought best fer to lave her an' the childer an' look after

our traps. It had been a good month sence we saw 'em, one thing an' another, but especially your comin' havin' detained us; an' the flood, too, we consated must 'a wrought mischief to 'em. As our livin' depinded on our furs, father an' I set forth, though loth to leave mother with only Meg to tend her. But they were us't to bidin' th'r lone, as all pioneer women must be.

"Moses was rather porely when we left, bein' the warse, we fancied, for the hard usage of the flood. But wife belaved it was but a light turn, an' we set out with a good heart.

"We were gone tin days, an' as we drew nigh the cabin with a cheery haloo of warnin', Meg met us with a tearful face an' the news that wee Moses had died the night afore. We found the lettle fellow a-lyin' in the cradle with his coral necklace around his white throat, an' his purty dud-dies in which we saved him spread smoothly on him.

"Th're was a sweet smile on his face, an' his blue eyes were half open, an' his pink fingers, not yet stiff, folded over his bosom. Th're's no more touchin' sight, an' for that matter no sweeter one nor a wee dead child. It was amazin' how mother did greet for that stranger lad; he seemed in his short stay to have laid aholt of her heart a'most as tho' he'd been her own; an' indade we all truly loved him, the poor orphan waif!

"Nex' day, lackin' materials for a coffin, we buried him in his little cradle, for so mother would have it, coverin' up the top snugly, an' father readin' the Book an' makin' a prayer. But the necklace an' locket an' some of the infant duds wife kep'; for some time, she said, some one may be a-seekin' him, an' it would be a comfort for a mother to know that her bairn had been well cared for, an' given Christian intarmint. But we've niver ha'rd a word of quest or 'quiry durin' all the long years sence; an' the mystery of the laddie's comin' has niver been solved, nor is it like to be.

"It was long afore we forgot the wee stranger. Your mother would often prattle to you, as she helt you to her breast, of the dead baby, an' to this day she can hardly spake of him athout a tremblin' in her voice. I all'ys admired that in her. Th're few women with a tinderer heart, John, nor your mother; though she can swing an axe with the best woodman, an' shoot a rifle with true aim."

CHAPTER III.

LUKE LATIMER GETS HIS WAR-NAME, "RED AXE."

"An, now, lad, the warst is to come. It's droughty wark a-tellin' sich a tale, so fetch a drink from the spring, that I may slock my thirst, for my throat is as dry as a corncob." John brought the water in a drinking horn that hung at his side. The father took a hearty draught, and resumed his story:

"Our life for the nex' year differed lettles from that of an ord'nary pioneer. We hunted, trapped, preserved our skins, an' marketed 'em with the traders at Fort Pitt, an' tilled our upland plantation for bread an' vegetables enough to kape the pot b'ilin'. We didn't al'ays stay here, but wair on the wing here and thar where game was most plentiful, and often in company with the Mingoes, who wair our sworn fri'nds an' allies. It was a half savage life, but pleasant enough in the main, an' we al'ays came back to 'Indian Rocks,' as our settlement was called, as home.

"But now matters began to grow sayrious for us. The Shawnees tuk the warpath, and the frontier became the scane of a bloody conflic'. The fri'ndship of the Mingoes saved us, but we knowed that we couldn't long hold our position. So, aided and advised by Panther, we made ready to go intil the old settlemint of Washin'ton county, which were large enough to be secure agin ord'nary assault. Pittsburg was less secure nor our own cabin; for the settlers couldn't live inside the fort walls, and the place contin'ally invited attack by its military importance. We had made all our preparations, had our goods and gear packed in an extra boat, and lay down ready for an 'arly start nex' day. You wair res'less that night from some brash or other, an' your mother havin' been up to care for you slep' lightly.

"She was roused by the whistle of a whippoorwill. Now theh's nothin' strange in that, for you know our woods is full of thim birds, which, like most of the owl kind, are abroad at night after prey. But it so happened that Panther had arranged a private signal with us of which the whippoorwill's call was the first note; an' we wair apt to give some extra heed to it. So wife listened

keenly, bein' narvous about the Indians, as we all wair; and prisently h'ard the trill of a tree toad; then, followin' clostely, a softer whippoorwill's note rep'ated. That was our full signal!

"She quietly woke me, an' I had jist time fer to git my rifle an' rouse father, whin th're came a low tap at the door like the crackle of a beetle; then another, foll'ed by the shrill of a cricket. Panther, sartin! For that, too, was a private signal. I knowed at wanct sich caution meant a great an' prisent danger; so warnin' all to utmost silence, unbarred the door an' opened it quietly. Panther lay at the lintel on the log stoop, an' glidin' in like a serpent, while I closed the door softly, stood up an' uttered sich a 'hugh!' of satisfaction that my blood tingled with axcitement, for I knowed what danger he must 'ave escaped. He glanced round the cabin an' seein' wife awake, laid his finger on his lips. But th're was small nade o' that caution, for your mother knowed border ways fine, as well as anny ranger of us all.

"The Bended Knee, is he here?" That was the name father went by among the Mingoes, who had obsarved his habit of kneelin' to pray at warship; an' th'e wasn't many foresters 'at they could honestly have called the same. Though we did warship too, after a silent sort, an' few wair onbelavers.

"'Ay,' I whuspered, 'he is in the loft at the loop-hole.'

"'Good! An' Sunny Hair?' So they called our little Meg, on account of her flaxen locks.

"'Asleep in the loft, all right. We're all in, an' ready for flittin' the morrow. But whatever diviltry is up, Panther? Somethin' sayrious, I'm sure. Out with the warst, at wanct!"

"'Shawnees!' he answered. 'Here; now; on the hill; in the river; there in the great walnut!' Then in his brief, jerky way he let us know how he had struck their trail, an' sendin' Featherfoot to alarm the village at Yallow Crick, had foll'ed to Indian Rocks; an' changin' his war paint to that of a Shawnee brave, he had mingled with 'em freely, an' found out their plans.

"They had moved our boats up strame fornenst the island, an' had sent a party 'round to attack in the rare from the hillside while the others should charge in front an' break in the door. I'm not more car'ful for my life nor

most men, but I shuddered to think what danger my fambly had escaped; though, for that matter, I hardly saw how we could win a safe place. Our only chanct, I soon found, was to hold out till the Mingoës came to our aid, which we knowed they would, with haste an' saycrecy. We agreed that the Shawnees must have no hint that we knowed their prisence, but let 'em attack thinkin' us wholly onready. We should gain two things by that; freer exposure of our inemies' parsons, whereby we could do 'em more harem; an' the greater likelihood 'at they would retire an' delay their next onset through greater caution, an' thus gain us time, which was what we craved.

"Ther' were four rifles of us, for your mother is a fair shot; an' as she could shoot under kiver, an' had a firm mind to do so, we consinted. She took one of the loop-holes in the loft a-guardin' the front with father, an' Panther an' I below watched toward the hillside. The moon was nigh full, and the night onclouded, which was better for us. All 'round the cabin we had claired away trees an' underbrush, an' acrost this open space we consated the Shawnees would make a rush.

"Affairs wrought as we had reckoned. We hadn't been on guard long whin the signal came. The hoot of an owl from the hill was answered by the shriek of a night-hawk in the big walnut. Th're was a moment's pause, an' then the open space seemed alive with warriors. Four big chaps led the front, a-carryin' betwixt 'em a log with which they rushed straight at the cabin door. They were so sure of their game that ere they were half way over the clairin' they gave cry with their war-whoop. Then I made signal, an' four rifle shots rung among their yells, foll'ed closely by two shots from a pair of horse pistols that father an' I managed. Not a shot was wasted. Five warriors fell, an' a sixth was whirled around like a top, an' his tomahawk spun from his hand as his arms fell by his side.

"The silence which foll'ed was awful in contrast with the pravius whoopin'. But it was only for a moment, an' then came a yell of mingled grief an' rage that I have niver h'ard ekaled on this border. Saizin' their dead, the Shawnees scurried back intil the woods. But they weren't wholly under cover afore we had reloaded and sint another volley after 'em. Their batterin' ram was left whar it fell, for two of the braves who bore it had fallen, one of 'em by wife's shot. So the matter inded for the time.

“But we didn’t flatter oursel’s that the danger was over. The hostyles would count that we had six men in the cabin an’ would be wary; but that they’d give up athout an attempt at revenge we niver thought. In good time we had notice of their plans, for arrows with burnin’ brands tied to ’em began a-rainin’ on the cabin roof from the hill above us. We tried to dislodge the archers with our rifles; but as we had to fire at random, or by the direction from which the arrows flew, we couldn’t stop ’em. The roof caught fire, but we cut an openin’ through the cla’-boards and quenched the flames, though it was resky wark. But more fire-bran’s flew, the roof was agin in flames, an’ only water could save us.

“Now you mind that the cabin stood on blocks, quite above the ground; and th’re was a trap door in the floor through which I wint with two buckets, an’ creepin’ out, sheltered by this big log on which we now set, managed fer to win the spring an’ git back onharmmed. But the rascals soon found out that trick an’ made it too hot fer me.

“At last, it came to a ch’ice betwixt roastin’ by fire in the cabin, or dyin’ by Shawnees in the open; an’ well the red fiends knowed it, fer the woods resounded with their ta’ntin’ yells. Jist then, in the last nick of time, hope came. The sharp ears of Panther detected signals that his frien’s were near. They were comin’ along the river trail from below, an’ over the hillside in the rear of the Shawnees. It passes me how he knowed; but the red man has a sixth sense, I think, when it comes to wood sounds an’ sights. So we agreed to lave the cabin an’ take refuge ahint this log, drawin’ the inemy’s fire; for they were all now on the hill. The big walnut an’ the river bank, bein’ within our rifle range, had been abandoned. Then father and Panther wair to crouch behind the lcg with their rifles an’ the two pistols, an’ holt the inemy at bay, while I with wife an’ the childer made a rush toward the shelter of the bank, an’ in the direction of the comin’ Mingoos.

“We got through the trap, an’ won the log. Then Panther l’aped atop the trunk, shuck his rifle at the hill, an’ raised the Mingo war-whoop. At the same time father showed himself with a lusty halloo of defiance. Down they dropped, foll’ed by a volley from the Shawnees, an’ then we made our break. I had you in one arm, John, an’ an axe in the other. Mother carried a rifle an’ led Meg

by the hand. On we sped for dear life, while from the hill an' forest there rose a shout that, well us't to it as I was, made me heartsick. I hardly knowed how it came about, so quickly things passed, but I knowed the Shawnees was a-chargin'. I h'ard three rifle shots ahint me, an' the Panther's war-cry far above the din, mingled with father's hearty hurrah; an' then, I was fightin' han' to han' with a gang of warriors, while you lay at my feet ahint me. My axe wrought havoc with each swing. I h'ard the ring of your mother's rifle, an' the shriek of Meg as a painted divil saized her. I saw, or felt, ruther nor saw, my wife swing her clubbed gun among the dusky warriors, then stagger an' fall. I was hit more nor wanct, but in the fierce forgetfulness of sich high fevered excitement wounds seemed no more to me nor the stings o' hornets.

"Then I was conscious of a well-known an' welcome cry, that sounded amid the clamor like angels' songs,—the war-whoop of the Mingoos. A rush of dusky forms swep' over the moonlit space an' closed around us. Mingoos an' Shawnees mingled for a while in the awful swirl of han' to han' conflic', in the midst of which I knowed that I was a-ladin' on, side by side with Chief Logan, while the foe gave way, slowly at first, an' then breakin' into flight, plunged intil the forest. I felt the thrill of victory an' started in pursuit, but—thar all consciousness ceased.

"My next reminbrance was of my wife a-bendin' over me on one side an' good Panther, here, on t'other, a-rubbin' my wounds with Indian oil an' a-bindin' 'em with rude sargery. It was mornin'; the battle was over; the Mingoos were preparin' their dead to bear home to the village. An' alas! my dead, too, for closte aside me lay dear father. Panther 'll tell you how fightin' side by side with him, the Bended Knee fell an' died, an' gave us our only hope of escape. I looked for a little form beside hissen, ay for two of 'em, but saw them not and feared to ask. Featherfoot read my thought in my eyes and brought you, my b'y, that you might kiss me.

"'And Meg?' I cried, 'where is she?' They shuck their heads. My pretty lass, my darlin' Sunny Hair was gone! An' from that day to this, though we have s'arched the border through, we have h'ard no word of her. Dead or alive, God only knows."

"God," said Panther, speaking up quickly, "God—and the Shawnees."

"Ay, my brother, God an' the Shawnees. An' Heaven send she be dead ruther nor a captive wife in a Shawnee warrior's lodge.

"They's lettle more to tell, John. We buried your grandfather thar at the fut of the hill aside little Moses, an' the good Mingoos heaped stones from the river above their graves. They nursed me intil health, an' as our boats had been rascued, when I was able to travel we wint away to Washin'ton County and settled nearby our fri'nds at Canonsburg. That is the story of how your grandfather was killed, an' your sister Meg lost, an' I got my warrior name. Afore that the Mingoos al'ys called me Big Walnut, from the old tree by our cabin camp. But ther'after they named me Red Axe; an' I suppose I must 'a desarved it, for their Chief, Captain John Logan, has told me, an' Panther too, that I swung my axe through the Shawnees like a sickle in the rye-field. But I hardly knowed what I did. My blood was in a faver, an' my brain in a daze, an' I seemed to be borne on by some power other nor myself. But come! it is late, an' I'm a-weary with my tale. It's long years sence I telled it, lad, an' I'll niver tell 't agin. Now, let's to sleep."

Before the young man lay down, he went away and looked at the two graves. They were still marked by the cairns that the friendly red men had heaped; but the moss had covered them, and a growth of wild roses overbore them. He trimmed with his hatchet the tangled vegetation into some shapeliness, until the graves stood forth in fairer outlines, as the moonbeams nestled upon them. Then, filled with strangely conflicting thoughts, he lay down beside his father and the Mingo underneath the green canopy.

The fire grew dim, and its last flames seemed to be licked up by the moonlight. The night voices of the forest sounded more clearly than ever in the windless air. When, as sometimes happens even in a dead calm, a tree on the hill fell with a thundering sound, awakening echoes along the river, he grasped his rifle and started to his feet, as though the Shawnees had come back to attack. Then he arose and wandered off along the river bank till the keenness of his nerves was dulled, and so back to camp, where he lay down again and slept a dreamless sleep until morning.

CHAPTER IV.

A REVENUE PARLEY AT INDIAN ROCKS.

No matter how ill one may sleep in camp he is likely to be astir betimes in the morning. The early sunlight beats freely upon his unshielded face, and the hour seems so much later than it really is, that one is beguiled to rise up. Then, all living things in nature are aroused by daylight, and, athrob with life, renewed by sleep, and exultant at a new-come day, fill the forest with their various clamor. Thus John Latimer, despite his disturbed slumbers, was up with the sun. A thin mist overhung the river and hills, which the sunbeams rapidly teased away, but the day promised to be fair and warm.

The youth walked over the rocky bed which the drought had uncovered, to the spot where the Indian carvings are found. For a long distance up and down stream the channel, at full stage of water, overruns a flat and nearly unbroken surface of rock which juts out from beneath the bank. Where it breaks off in midriver, or dips downward, there the summer channel runs. For many yards, between the island, now known as Georgetown Island, and at the point where our party were encamped, the rocky surface is covered with signs and figures of various sorts, done by Indians no one knows when, but doubtless long before the date of this story. Hence the place is known far and near as "Indian Rocks."

There are images of braves with their scalp locks, and with totems hanging around their necks; trees and branches, fishes and birds, turtles, alligators and horses, beavers and squirrels, and pelts and tracks of animals, all done in that sketchy outline which characterizes the drawings of children and the hieroglyphs of rude civilization. There are carved human footprints of a bigness that might bespeak them modeled from the famous Wyandot chief Bigfoot himself; but all apparently of natural size and shape, as though the outline had been made by scribing round a real foot. These figures are cut in the hard limestone rock with some rude tool, leaving gutters from a quarter to a half inch deep and wide. The fret of the run-

ning waters and grinding of ice have somewhat smoothed down the outlines; but there they are to this day, as plainly to be seen at low water as when John Latimer viewed them a hundred years ago.

Having made sketches of a number of these figures in his note-book, for being in training for a land surveyor he had some skill in drawing, John joined his companions who were enjoying a pipe after breakfast. His questions concerning the rock pictures brought small satisfaction. His father knew little, and Panther would say little about them. However, he learned that they were held in reverence by the Mingoës as medicine marks, and the spot was looked upon as somehow sacred to the Great Spirit. They were chary of the place themselves, and liked not to see it intruded upon by others.

"Come," said Panther, plainly anxious to avoid further question. "Let us find the medicine oil. The growing sun will drink it up, and the Red Axe says his brothers will need it much when they go upon the warpath against their Great Father and Chief, Washington. Panther does not understand; but the Red Axe is wiser than he in white men's ways, and that is enough for Panther! Let us go."

This remark, seemingly dropped carelessly by the Indian, stirred the white men powerfully. An eager glance passed between father and son; from the one of questioning, as though to read the youth's mind from the play of his features; from the other of surprise, followed by a passing flush of indignation, that instantly yielded before an expression of pain. But whatever thoughts were seething in the white men's minds, they bosomed up their counsel and taking horn canteens and earthen bottles, the party walked down stream to the mouth of Little Beaver. They entered the channel of the creek and picked their way through the ravine by which it debouches into the Ohio, without wetting their moccasins. Here and there, in pockets and holes and shallow pans in the rocky channel, where the water had been left by the retiring stream the youth noted an unctuous floatage, which at times, in the ruffling wind and sunlight, flashed out all the colors of the rainbow.

"What have we here, Panther?" John asked. "I have seen it afore, I trow, but never thought to give close heed to it."

Panther stopped, and laughing softly made answer. "This is what we seek. Young Oak has found the Mingo's secret. This is the Indian oil. We will gather it."

So saying, he took from his belt three mussel shells which he had plucked from the river sand, gave one to each of his companions, and opening a cruse proceeded to skim the oily scum and place it therein. The others joined him in the work which was wearisome and needed dainty handling. It was well towards noon before their vessels were filled, and they turned homeward.

"Now, Panther," said John, "tell me what you know of this Indian oil. Whence comes it?"

"It is the gift of Manitou. Does oil drop from the clouds? Does it gush from the earth or rock? Our wise men have not so found it. We have sought springs of oil along many streams, but have not found them. The red man and the wild deer know the salt licks. We have heard of the endless lake, the great sea whose waters are filled with salt; and Red Axe says that white men get it by boiling the water away. Salt in water is the gift of the Great Spirit. Why should he not also put oil in the water for the Indian?"

"But when did the Indians discover it? And to what use do you put it?" asked John.

"The Mingo's have always known the water oil. Their medicine men showed our fathers how to use it for wounds and hurts and sore bones and aches which come with damp and frost and with old age."

"Do you drink it? Is it good for fevers?"

"Neither; we pour it upon wounds; we rub it over the joints. It loves the air, and will glide quickly into its bosom if the bottle is not shut. It hates the fire, and rushes from it with angry cry and flash like powder."

"When do you usually find it on the water?"

"When the Manitou walks along the streams he leaves the healing oil behind him. He comes when he will, but we find the oil in the summer when the waters are low. Our fathers tell us of a time when the Little Beaver was covered with it, and it flowed into the Ohio and spread far down the stream. Then the Manitou fought with the Evil Spirit. The heavens grew black with thunder clouds. The lightnings fell upon the creek and it kindled into flame and ran burning to the river, and the river was afire

and rolled burning to Yellow Creek. The bravest warriors trembled, for they thought the waters were burning up and the Ohio would burn, too. The medicine men said the Great Spirit was angry with the Mingo. But the fire went out; the storm passed; the sun shone again, and our wise men said it was the water oil! Panther knows no more. It is enough! The Mingo has his secrets; the Red Axe has his; the Young Oak, maybe, has his. Very good! The Manitou has secrets too. He opens not all his counsel to the red man or the white. Some time He may tell; let us wait!"

Their vessels were at last painfully filled, and the trio returned to camp. After the noon meal, Luke and John Latimer were left alone in camp, while Panther went into the woods for game. The father sat in the shade of the great walnut tree meditatively smoking his pipe. The son seated near by was scraping a cow's horn with a scale of broken flint, making a new powder horn. The Indian's quotation of Luke's allusion to the revenue troubles then disturbing the frontier, rankled in John's mind. He knew that his father had taken up the popular view with warm favor, and had cast himself into the agitation with an intensity and prejudice characteristic of his strong nature. His business as a freighter, chiefly up and across the Monongahela, brought him closely in contact with many of those most interested in illicit distilling, and this had its weight in giving bitterness to his opinions. But John had never imagined that affairs had gone or could go to the length of active, much less armed, opposition to the Government.

His own views were not matured; but as a pupil of Doctor John McMillan, the principal of the famous Log Academy which afterwards grew into Jefferson College, he had heard the Government side of the question. The doctor and the clergy generally (who were chiefly Presbyterians) were opposed to insurrectionary movements and to all violation of law. They knew that their flocks would be helpless against the attacks of the Republic's troops led by their President, the renowned General Washington. Thus, both the popular sympathies and conservative instincts of their order led them to oppose rebellion. A son who has the true filial feeling must always regret to find himself opposed to the views and wishes of his parent. It was

therefore with great concern that John ventured to broach the matter that filled his thoughts. But the way was made somewhat easier by the fact that Luke Latimer was very fond of his boy, and from the time he was a little chit delighted to have him potter about his heels, and peer and mouse into his work, and quiz him with all manner of questions. So John had grown up feeling the reins of authority wound about and eased with the spirit of comradeship.

"Father," John began, "I've been thinking a good deal of what Panther said this morning just before we started for the Indian oil." He held up to the sunlight the powder horn on which he wrought, and peering through it to see if it were yet worn thin enough, glanced sidewise upon his father's face. Luke smoked on thoughtfully and only said:

"Well, John?"

"I'm not sure that I understand his meaning," and John resumed his work of scraping dainty curls of shaving from the cow's horn. "But if I did, I hope he has misunderstood you. I can't think matters have gone so far that you are ready to join a conspiracy against your old commander, our noble President. You served under him as a pioneer during most of the Revolution. You were one of the warmest advocates of the Constitution, and voted heartily for the first President. I am loath to think you could be led into armed opposition to the laws."

"Well, son," said Luke, tapping the ashes from his pipe, "I'd as lief settle this matter betwixt us now as later. You're quite right to think that I honor an' love the great commander; an' it's sore agin the grit, I'll allow, to oppose aught he favors. But he's badly advised about our affairs here in the West; an' what betwixt Secretary Hamilton an' the Congress, we're a'most worse off nor under Great Britain. Now, I'm not for layin' down an' lettin' Philadelphy Quakers an' Gover'ment tax gatherers eat us up soul an' substance without opposition."

"But, father, doesn't our Constitution give the Government the right to levy revenue taxes? You voted for that, didn't you?"

"Ay; but to take your last quistion first; I al'ays opposed the State system of axcise laws, as you well know, an' so did all this western country. We niver counted on Congress takin' up the old an' hateful policy of the Colonial Legislatur' an' carryin' it furdur nor the Colony iver

did, or you may be sure we wouldn't 'a voted for the Constitution. Besides, it's not us that's a-violatin' the Constitution, but the Revenue officers. Jist look at it! The Constitution says the taxes shall be uniform throughout the States. But here in West Pennsylvania our stillers have to pay as much tax for two shillin's worth of the best Monongahela whuskey, as the stillers down in Philadelphia or Jarsey pay for four shillin's worth. Thar! they've doubled the rate on us who are far less able for til stand it."

"I admit that seems unjust, father. But what other plan could be taken? It wouldn't do to have a different scale of prices for every town and county, and slide it up and down to meet every trader's or distiller's ideas of valucs. That would indeed be anything but uniform. Of course, it's unfortunate for us; but that's one of the penalties of our western isolation which pinches us in a good many ways."

"Then let 'em git the gover'ment tax by some system that'll not bear so onek'ally on us. Besides, we're informed that they can't an' don't collec' these revenues elsewhere. Other States dodge aven the duty on imported spirits an' wines. Now, I wouldn't mind taxes on fureign liquors. It's true, the axcise laws in the auld country were niver pop'lar among our folk, an' smugglin' was not thought much of a sin. But aven thar they laid most stress on fureign liquors, an' no man thought it harm to make a lettle for himself an' neighbors.

"For my part, I spurn the whole policy as onjust an' oppressive. Look 'e here, Jack, if rye can't be made intil whuskey 'ithout a license, no more can hide be made intil boots, or buckskin intil breeches, or wool intil a hat, 'ithout speecial permission from the Gover'ment. If taxed for one why not for t'other? If we yield the right in one, why not in t'other? Why, lad, that 'ud be warse tyranny nor England iver helt over us. The right to tax a penny gives the right for til tax a pound. The right to license spirits gives the right for til license ivery kind of home produce; an' by an' by we'll be bound to have license for farmin' an' flat boatin', an' cattle breedin', and shootin' and trappin'. Would you favor that state of things, now? Nay! We'd better take the bull by the horns at wanct, ere he toss an' gore us altogether."

"But, father," remonstrated John, "the Government can't be supported without some kind of tax. Every civil-

ized nation has and always has had some form of taxes. No doubt the taxes have often been unwise, oppressive and unequal; but must we not after all leave this to the Government to determine? And what article can be taxed to better advantage than liquor? Have we a right to make armed opposition because the tax falls hard on us? You know what our Saviour said: 'Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.' That's good civil policy as well as true religion."

"Ay, ay, lad! Thar ye go with the same auld song the Tories sung afore the Revolution. We'd niver 'a gotten independence if we'd 'a-listened til it then; an' we'll lose the fruits of liberty if we listen til 't now. Not but ther's justice an' right in't if looked at in the right way. Now, I'm for payin' fair an' reasonable tax. Let 'em kape to the axcise of fureign spirits, an' I'll no turn a hand agin 'em. But give us a free fut in home 'stillin'!

"Why, John, it's a quistion of bread an' butter, an' that you know right well. Thar's rye, our best crop, whar's the market for it, aither at home or abroad? None; none at all! What's the good of our rich soil an' heavy crops when an extra barrow load 'ill glut the market? Ef we're to git aught for it we mus' put it intil spirits. Ther's posityvely nothin' for the frontier folk to live by but farmin' and huntin', unless you give us lave to do our own 'stillin'. It's got so bad that I've h'ard a Pittsburg trader say he'd as lief see a load of manure a-comin' to him for barter as a load of wheat. Our crops lie in our bins, or clog the trader's stores. You know how hard it is for to git our grain ground, an' then to run flour to New Orleans or down the river for a market. Packin' grain or flour East is out of the quistion. Our pack horses can carry the amount of twenty-four bushels in high wines for ivery four of grain, an' in that shape alone can we git a market an' livin' profits. It's a matter of life or death with us, boy, I tell ye!

"Here's the western countries full of Revolutionary vet'rans. After all the perils an' sufferin's of the long war agin the mother country, they found themselves 'ithout a fardin' axcep' Continental currency that's only good for to light one's pipe with. They came out here for a home. It was a forlorn hope, but they came. They claired up the forests, fought snakes, an' wild bastes an' wilder savages. An' now whin the'r farms are claired up an' th're's some

chanct for to make a livin', along comes the Gov'ment that we've created, an' wants to squaze from us an' our famblies the lettle that we have. Tush, lad! It makes one's blood boil to think of the cruelty an' injustice on't."

"But, father," said John, after a moment's pause, "you forget, don't you, that the Government doesn't forbid us to distill? It only says that we're to enter our stills for license and pay tax on the product. Where's the great hardship of that?"

"Well, many of 'em has done it, hard as the conditions air. Some of 'em kin afford to do it. Thar's whar the shoe pinches; the poor man can't afford to pay so heavy a per cent on his produc'. It's not only the accessive axcise tax but the sort of payment demanded. The Inspector, for sooth, 'll take nothin' but specie! Specie? Whar'll you find it in these settlemint's? We've got to barter for our trader's goods. Nobody pays coin for our stuff, or axpec's it. Peltries an' grain, ginseng and snake root, an' what not, are the coin of this country. The very best, most portable, salable an' profitable of our products is spirits distilled from our own grain. Lord help you, lad, when the farmer has paid his stiller's charges, an' the big discount for specie, an' the axcise tax, th're's nothin' left for wife an' weans. No, John, it's an intolerable condition, an' th're's nothin' for it but to stand up like men, an' let the Gover'ment know that our lawful rights must be respected, or we'll know the rayson why."

"But, father, admit that our people labor under great wrongs, is it wise or right to resort to force? Two wrongs never made a right; and to attack the Government that you men won by your valor and sacrifice, and built up yourselves, seems to be a great wrong. To be sure, one may oppose bad policies; but there's a right and a wrong sort of opposition. Our laws put the power in the people's hands, and if our own representatives make oppressive laws, we must submit, for all I can see, until we send men who will undo the evil by legal and constitutional methods.

"We've just embarked on the experiment of a Republic. The oppressed of all nations are watching us with anxious interest. It would be a blow at the heart of human rights if we struck down our Government, or weakened the world's confidence in our stability. Father, you've suffered much, so have all the old veterans, for the rights of man;

can't you suffer a little longer? Be sure all will be righted at last. It must be so. President Washington will not see us oppressed, if we can get the facts before him. Let us pause before we mar the noble work of so many years of bloodshed and toil."

The youth had risen in the flow of his earnest talk, and stood facing his father as the rays of the setting sun slanted through the treetops, and glowed with ruddy glory on the smooth river. The father looked up with an expression of mingled admiration and dissent, then answered:

"Well said, John; well said, I must allow that. But here ag'in theh's two sides to the quistion. Gover'ment's a matter of give an' take. If we have duties, so have our rulers. Now, look ye! The administration has left us to fight our own battles with the Indians an' the cussed British, to boot. The Western posts 've been left in possession of the English contrary to treaty, an' they're still behind most of the diviltry a-goin' on along the border. Why don't the Gover'ment put a stop to that?"

"The best answer," John replied, "is the military camp now forming at Pittsburg under Gen. Wayne. Then, there were the expeditions of Harmer and St. Clair. Sure, it's not quite right to say that the administration has done nothing for the frontier."

"Maybe not," answered Luke. "But as to Harmar's an' St. Clair's axpedeetions, they amounted to less nor nothin'; we were warse off after nor arfore 'em. They only proved how grudgin' an' scant were the efforts made for our safety. We fared about as well under Broadbrim rule. What's the differ atween a republican Gover'ment that can't help us, an' a lot o' white-livered Quakers who won't?"

"But, Wayne, father! There's Gen. Wayne's expedition now forming! The administration is surely trying——"

"Ay, lad," interrupted the elder Latimer. "Thar's the Wayne axpedeetion! An' what o' that? It drags wearily enough along. Wayne is crossed an' thwarted at iv'ry hand, an' fumes an' frets, an' betwixt you an' me can curse the Gover'ment as roundly as annyone. Whar's his army? Why, he'll be two or three years more, at this rate, in git-tin' together enough troops for til make a respectable showin' aven. What do the other States care for us? Lettle, mighty lettle, or they'd rally to the frontier, an'

want for all help us to be quit of our savage foes. Mind what I say, though I'm nayther prophet nor son of a prophet, if Wayne's expedection is iver a success at all, an' troops or volunteers from other States. Now, Jack, my son, what sort of a spectacle is that for the warld? It warks both ways, don't you see? An' if a Republic can't an' won't defend its sufferin' an' assailed borders, mayhap men 'll see small use for 't. I'm not sure but the rights of man' 'll be better sarved by makin' a new State out of Western Pennsylvany an' Virginy, an' mayhap even a Western Republic—"

"Stop, father! stop there!" cried John. "There's no objection to the new State if it can be brought about legally. But that last thought is rank treason. Don't think of it further, for God's sake, don't! Ay, and for your own! For, father, depend on it, though the States may be backward in sending aid to suppress the Indians, if the integrity of the Republic be once assailed they will rally to a man. And then what chance will there be for us? Better endure the evils we have than fly to others that we know not of. Or, as the Good Book says: 'The prudent man forseeth the evil and hideth himself.'"

"Well, lad, thank you annyhow for sparin' me the tail end of that Scriptur' quotation. But thar comes Panther, an' it's no' becomin' that he should see us aven in fri'ndly controversy. So we'll e'en drop the subjec' an' prepare for rest."

CHAPTER V.

NEW ACQUAINTANCES AND AN OLD STORY.

John Latimer sat at the Fort Pitt landing reading a pocket edition of Virgil, a gift from his instructor and pastor, Dr. John McMillan, and waiting for business.

"Good morning, young man!" said a military person who stepped upon the keel boat which lay with its nose against the shore lazily lifting with the rippling of the stream. John rose from his rustic spruce-wood camp stool, and returned the greeting with a salute something more

respectful than wont, as he recognized Gen. Neville, the chief revenue officer for the Western District of the United States. He was a tall, stoutly-built man, of seventy years or thereabout, whose swart closely-shaven face as dominated by large dark eyes well parted by a Roman nose with a bare suggestion of an upward curve at the tip. A strong face, one would say, with that cast which the habit of authority gives. His bearing, self-poised and confident without being aggressive, bespoke gentle breeding; and with this his dress comported, being a cross between the costume of a Continental gentleman and a soldier, with a modifying slash of frontier freedom.

The youth noted these points, for in the years just succeeding the Revolution the distinctions between the aristocracy and the commonality, which pervaded the Colonial period, were not wholly done away. At the same time he was conscious that he also was the subject of a close scrutiny, which, though he would have been the last to think it, he could well bear. John Latimer stood six feet one inch in his moccasins. His deerskin breeches were buckled at the knees over ribbed home-knit hose. A blue homespun jerkin, ornamented with metal buttons and topped with mink fur, hung loosely over his linsey shirt on whose bosom and broad collar his mother had wrought braiding. A well-turned head, fairly posed upon his neck, was crowned with curly chestnut hair. Clear blue eyes, honest, true and thoughtful, looked from beneath a forehead that showed white, where his cap had sat, against the ruddy bronze of his sunburnt cheeks. There he stood, strong, manly, a bit awkward perhaps just then, though graceful as a wild creature when in action; his broad chest tapering down to as proper a pair of legs (his mother said) as ever bore breeks. He could keep a coin at once between thighs, knees and ankles, the ideal test of trim legs in those days.

"Well, young man?" said the Inspector.

"Well, sir?" said John, with a slight twinkle in his eyes that showed him aware of the mutual inspection, and amused thereat. "Can I serve you this morning?"

"I am looking for a light-draft keel boat to take me and my niece as far down the river as Wheeling and back, and have been referred to Luke Latimer. You are not he?"

"His son, sir; but I can speak for him."

"Ah! I want passage simply, with a little camping for

the lady and hunting for myself by the way, with a stop or two between whiles. My niece wishes to see the river scenery and have a taste of frontier life. Could you take us, and what could you do for us?"

"We certainly could take *you*," answered John, "for you are doubtless used to campaigning; but I cannot speak so surely for the lady. We have but rough accommodation, sir, as you see; only a keel boat built for ferriage, for light freighting and for emigrants."

"Yes, yes, I see! But the lady will do well enough, I dare say, for a little while. Now, here is a bit of a cabin that might serve, I think, on a pinch." He pointed to a rustic booth thatched with leafy wattles which John had built in the bow, wherein he might loiter and read while awaiting custom, and also sleep at nights. The floor was covered with bearskins, and on the forked props hung his rifle, powder horn, leggings and hunting shirt.

"To be sure," resumed the General, "there's nothing luxurious here, but it's clean, at least."

Whereat John flushed, and said rather testily, "I should hope so, sir!"

"Nevertheless," remarked the General, "that's not what one can say of some of the boats I have looked at. When can you leave?"

"At once."

"Good! Then I'll take the boat for the trip; for a week at least, to leave this afternoon promptly at five o'clock; and here is your earnest money." He gave John a gold coin, and having arranged the terms and particulars of the journey, and bidden John wait on board for the stores and tent which he would promptly send, the Inspector gave a stately good morning, and retired.

Packages of provisions from the trader were already coming in when Luke Latimer arrived. John gave him the gold coin with well-pleased countenance, looking for applause when he told of the favorable contract he had made. But he was grieved to see Luke flush up angrily at the name of Gen. Neville, and fling the coin indignantly upon deck. Knowing his father's keenness for business the youth felt that he had indeed made a sore mistake, though marvelling to know wherein.

"What, my son," cried Luke, "would you help that inemy of your kin an' people to plot agin our p'ace? It

galls and grieves me sore that you 've done this. I'd as lief take a cargo of rattlers as that man Neville. What'll our fri'nds say to this? They'll be a-callin' us informers an' revenue spies, I misdoubt. Is that all your edication's worth, John, fer to let this rank traitor hoodwink you so? Fie, fie!"

John waited the first outburst of temper before replying, though his cheeks burned at the slight. Then, as beseemed a son, he answered quietly: "Father, you do me injustice. How could I know you would scorn the best-paid job we've had for many a day? What right had I to discriminate against anyone who asked our service? You have taught me that business is no respecter of persons. Besides, what reason could I give for refusal even if I had thought to do so? The gentleman plainly said that he was going principally on pleasure, not business, and for his niece rather than himself. You are the last man to do such discourtesy to a lady, father, and so am I."

"Ay, ay!" rejoined Luke, shaken much in mind, but testy still. "You can argy fine; specially on the side of the excise officers. The old doctor has dinged that intil you bravely, along with his Latin an' mathematics. But it ill behoves to flout your treason in your father's face."

"Father!" cried John, "this is too much! Have I ever failed in duty to you? But—let us bandy no more words about it. I will be off to Gen. Neville and tell him that my father forbids the contract, and returns the earnest money." So saying, he picked up the coin, and turned to leave the boat.

"Stop a bit, John!" said Luke, whose wrath had cooled before his son's reverend carriage as much as his cogent reasons. "I can't cope with your glib tongue in argymint, though quite the same I know it's all agee. But, let me think! Ye've pledged my word, you say; an' what if the Giner'l refuses to rel'ase us? What'll ye say til him then, lad?"

"What'll I say? The truth; that Luke Latimer keeps faith with all men but Gen. Neville. And if he mislikes that, he may make the most of it."

"It won't do, my son, it won't do! It's a sore pickle ye've got me into by your indiscretion, bad cess til it! I don't see my way out; though resolved I am that I'll niver sarve Giner'l Neville myself, nor bide with him in the same boat."

"Well," said John, turning back from the gang plank, "why should you have aught to do with the matter? Let me take the whole responsibility. If I can't get some one to help me, I can manage well enough alone as far as Indian Rocks. There I am sure to find Panther, who is trapping now on the Little Beaver, and will be at his camp on the Island, and will readily join me."

So at last it was agreed. Luke dearly loved his son, and liked not to see him humbled; and he loved his good business name, and would not have it besmirched, above all by one whom he so roundly hated as the Inspector. So off he set for Canonsburg, promising to meet John in a week again, and yielding to him all the care and profit of the journey. Thereupon John went eagerly to work righting the boat for such rare fares and freight.

"Good mor-r-ow, Jock!" called a cheery voice from the bank. The voice issued from a thick-set figure clad in homespun and leggings, who without more ado stalked over the gang plank, followed by a small dog of the breed known as fox-terrier.

"Good morning, Andy Burbeck!" said John. "What good brownie told you that you are just the man I'm looking for?"

"Ay, it's ginteel in ye for to say that, Jock, ma b'y; and jist at noon time whin A'm as hungry as a bear, not to say thirsty, which Peggy says is my chronic estate. But the deil's not al'ys as black as he's painted, an' A' niver let the malt git above the male. How are ye, lad?" He warmly shook the hand extended to him and took a seat in the booth.

"Ah! this is ilegant now, awfter long trudgin' in an August sun! Faith! a movin fut is aye gittin', tho' sometimes it's only a stumped toe!" Andy wiped his red head with a red handkerchief, and laid aside his hat, uncovering a shock of red hair that stood up all around his freckled face. "Sure, A'm hearty glad to see ye awfter yer trip down the river. An' so is Bounce, ye see. Hey, Bounce?" The dog had run with glad cry and wagging tail to John and was curving his back under his fondling hand. Thus questioned, he beat the floor with his tail, raised his head, and barked.

"Toe be sure ye are, ma purty! Was there iver a plainer 'yis' nor that, Master John? Ah! a dog's a firmer frri'nd

nor some human crayters A' wot of. But haven't ye a bite an' sup for a starrvin' neighbor, Jock?" Andy had a way of rolling his r's when somewhat earnest or excited, and the last sentence received an especially unctious trill.

"Indeed, yes. I was about taking a snack myself; so join me and welcome. Here's a bite of cold venison; and here's a loaf of home bread; and here's a pot of wild honey." He took the dishes as he spoke out of a locker. "And there, Andy, is the horn bottle; but water it well, old fellow, for I want you to keep a cool head, as I have some particular work for you."

"That A' wull, lad, an' obleeged til ye. But did ye iver see me with a hot head? Though, it looks red hot, A'll allow; an' Peggy says it flames out like Nebbyhadnazar's fiery furnace." Laughing at the conceit, he passed his red hand through his shocky poll, and proceeded to mix his grog. "Here's til yer health, Jock, an' good luck to the Fanny!" meaning thereby not a lady friend but the Latimer boat.

"By the way, Andy, what do you think of the Fanny now?" asked John. "You see I've been brightening her up a bit."

"Ay, A'm feared ye're gittin' vain, John," answered Andy, shaking his head with mock gravity. "An' that 'll be the ruination of a douce fine fallow. Tak' care, lad; ill weeds wax well. Why, this is quite a Cleopatra's bazzar, an' not an Ohio keel boat! Ye've grown pernickety, lad, sence ye've been among the Frenchers at New Orleans. Not but A' like a dainty taste maself; it's a sign of good blood. There's Bounce an' Betty, now! Bless ycr heart, they're tidy as an emmet, an' as ch'ice as a gentile in their bed an' board. They'd starve ruther 'n raven like a mongrel cur. Sure, A' call this a reg'lar lady's bowerr, John." He cast an approving eye around the booth, as he mixed another horn of grog.

"I'm glad you like it, Andy, for to tell the truth, that's just what it is—a lady's bower. And I want you for the next week or two to help take care of the lady. What say you? Have you an engagement ahead, and will you go with me?"

"No ingagement, John, an' A'm agrayable to sarve ye, if all's fair. But what's in the wind? Have a care, Jock! Better an impty house nor a bad tinant. Ye havn't capit-

olated body an' soul to one of thim French Papishers, hey? A've h'ard they're rigler Circes and Sirens, an' the very divil giner'ly with their big black eyes an' winsome ways. But A' niver thought that you——"

"Tush, Andy!" said John, impatiently. "No fiddle-faddle, please! It's a pure matter of business. Listen!" He recited the events of the morning, and explained that he wanted some one to help at the boat's poles and sweeps, and especially with the cooking. "You're a famous camp caterer, Andy, and I had been thinking of you not an hour ago, and wishing you could help me out of my scrape."

"Jist so, lad; talk about the angels, ye know—et cetera! Ma modesty forbids me to finish the proverb. Though, toe be sure, A' niver h'ard of an angel with red hair an' frowsy baird an' freckled face, though they might be warse appareled, A' trow. Howiver, it's a bargain, lad, an' A'm shipped on the Fanny for the nixt cruise as first mate, head cook, seaman an' cabin boy. Thar's four of us, John; and Bounce makes five. A fine crew, that, for a river cruise; an' yourself the sixth, Captain Jock."

"I don't know about Bounce," said John. "I misdoubt the General or the lady might object to a dog on board!"

"Objic? Not they! They're too good blood for that, A' pledge ye; an' blood 'll tell in sich matters. But if they do, then no Bounce, no Burbeck—hey, boy? We's not be parted, wull we?" Taking the cue from his master's tone, the terrier leaped into his arms and laid his head against his bosom. "There, master John, ye couldn't have the heart to siperate us now, could ye?"

"Plainly not, Andy," answered John, laughing. "And if I had, I wouldn't dare do it. But you must keep Bounce out of sight and hearing until we get fairly started."

"Trust us for that, lad! An' now A'm at your sarvice. What shall be ma first duty, Cap'n John?" He put himself into saluting posture, and touched his hat with mock obeisance.

Andy had a deft hand, and as he wrought with good will and good taste withal, the boat was soon in fair trim for its expected guests. The bower, as Andy would call it, was furnished with two comfortable chairs, borrowed from a friendly trader. A rude bunk was knocked together and thereon extra bearskins were laid down, making an inviting couch. A dressed deer skin, curiously decorated with

Indian totem signs, was draped across the bow end; and the rudder end was closed in with wattles, leaving only a door, over which hung a pair of panther skins. A square bit of canvas made by stitching together remnants of old government tents abandoned in various expeditions, was stretched over the thatched top, thus forming a roof reasonably secure from ordinary showers and river mists.

"Thar now," said Andy, "we're ready for ma leddy; an' it's a dainty enough bower for Lady Washington herself, God bless her! Ther's privacy if she wants it. Ther's a fair view of the river scanery whin she choices to draw her bow curtain. An' whin she wants fer to converse with the Cap'n an' mate, as she surely wull, bein' a lady of quality, why, ther's a nate door in the awfther cabin. An' thar's a bunch o' posies 'at King George's gardener couldn't furnish!" pointing to a crock full of goldenrod and field lilies plucked from the banks outside the fort. "An' yon'er she comes, lad, an' we're not a mort too soon."

The young woman tripped down the sloping bank in advance of her uncle; and with a merry outburst of laughter, as if in high spirits in prospect of her week's picknicking, leaped upon the gang plank. It made a little lurch, and frightened thereat the damsel threw up her arms for balance and uttered a slight scream. What then could John do, who stood at the bow to receive his guests, but reach forth his hand to steady her, and support her over the bulwarks? Merry black eyes looked up into the tall youth's face. A sweet voice said: "Oh, thank you!" and a dainty hand was laid in his palm. Are we so far from our young days that we cannot recall the thrill of some such touch as that?

John turned to receive Gen. Neville, who hurried aboard plainly ruffled at his niece's unceremonious advent. He was followed by a negro slave laden with wraps and carrying a lady's hand-box. Meanwhile, the maiden was already inspecting her bower, and giving vent to sundry pleased ejaculations.

"Luke Latimer, I suppose?" asked Gen. Neville, addressing Andy.

"Andy Burbeck, at yer sarvice," was the answer. "Yon's Captain Latimer, yer honor," pointing to John.

"Captain be hanged!" the General began, but bit short off his expletive and turned to his niece. "Excuse me,

Blanche; but it vexes me to hear these honorable titles given to boatmen and packmen, and every Tom, Dick and Harry on the border."

"True enough, yer honor," interposed Andy, not at all discomfited. "All the Stuarts aint cousins to the king. But if yer honor 'd 'a tackled succissfully the difficoolties an' dangers of the Ohio rriver in a flat boat, what with floods an' currents, an' snags, sawyers an' san' bars, ambushin' savages an' crrooked white men to dale with, mayhap y'ud think aven 'Giner'l' too humble a title for yer honor. An' what's the harem o' givin' the boatmen ceevil tarms, or for that matter other folk as well? It's al'lus best to be ceevil, as the old wife said whin she curt'sied to the divil."

Not deigning answer to Andy's double shot, the Inspector addressed John, whose eyes were kindling up at the discourteous words, which cut him more sharply in the presence of a fair maiden.

"Wasn't it agreed that your father should have charge of the boat, sir?" asked Gen. Neville.

"It was so understood and expected. But my father is otherwise occupied, and has left me to serve you."

"But I bargained for a man of experience, and stand up to my contract, nothing more or less. I'm not satisfied with this arrangement."

"As you please, sir," answered John, with a quiet dignity and tone of high courtesy into which he often dropped as naturally (his mother said) as a born lord. "I surrender the contract willingly, and here, sir, is the earnest money. Andy, take the gentleman's luggage ashore!" As he turned to cross the gang plank his eyes chanced to meet the damsel's, which looked so grieved and disappointed that he turned back, and making a stately obeisance to the General, said:

"Perhaps I ought to have apologized for any inconvenience you have suffered. It was beyond my power to prevent it, and I regret your disappointment. Nevertheless, I may say that no wrong has been done you, as I hold myself well able, with the aid I have employed, to do all that my father could have done to make your trip safe and agreeable."

It may be that the General would not have yielded, had not his niece given opportunity to do so without compro-

mise to his fancied dignity, by expressing her pleasure in the arrangements made for her comfort, and begging her uncle to go forward. "For," quoth she, "we shall surely do as well with these men as with any others," and turned a pleased glance upon John's stalwart and comely figure.

"Well, we shall see!" said the General stiffly. Then speaking to John, "I am satisfied to proceed. Hannibal," addressing the slave, "bring the traps aboard."

"Is the negro to go, sir?" asked John.

"Certainly; he will wait upon us. There are no objections I hope, sir?"

"None at all, General; but it was not so 'nominated in the bond,' and you seemed so set upon holding to the exact terms of agreement that I ventured my inquiry. I had made other arrangements for you, but if the slave adds to the lady's or your own comfort in the least, he is welcome."

The General flushed, and wondered inwardly where the deuce a keel boatman had picked up a Shakespearean quotation. John bowed courteously, pleased that he had turned the tables so deftly upon his intractable passenger. Then he drew in the gang-plank, made secure the fastenings of the towboat, and seizing a pole shoved the craft into the stream. Taking the stern sweep and setting Andy at a pole, he soon got the ungainly vessel under way, and the party swung lazily down the current into the shadows of the environing hills.

Blanche Oldham sat at the boat's bow with her uncle, who pointed out the interesting features of the scenery. On the left Coal Hill (now Mount Washington) lifted up its steep sides covered from summit to base with thick forest growth, that switched with its overhanging shrubbery the turbid waters of the Monongahela. They passed on the right the site and successor of old Fort DuQuesne, now bearing its newer name of Fort Pitt, in honor of the noble English statesman who pleaded for justice to his colonial countrymen during the trying Revolutionary conflict. Soon breastworks and block-house and the cluster of cabins and stores that formed the beginnings of Pittsburg were left behind. Now the clear current of the Allegheny swept around the point, holding aloof from the muddy stream of its confluent for a goodly space. It amused Blanche to trace the boundary of the two rivers until their waters were completely commingled. And so,

at last, they were launched into the wilderness upon the bosom of the Ohio.

Supper was served on the boat that evening, and as the moon came up early and nearly full, the sweep was kept steadily going until eight o'clock. As the craft glided over the moonlit river and the night voices of that new land came in from the wooded shores, and the balmy wind rustled in the dense foliage, chiming in with the dip, dip and gurgle of the broad sweep and the rippling of the water along the sides and bow, Blanche was continually breaking forth with glad cries and marvelings. The General well nigh forgot his pique, and even the boat's crew, familiar as they were with the scenes, felt the soothing spell of the summer night.

When the boat was made fast, the maiden retired to her bower. A rude shelter was fitted up for the General amidships. Hannibal, who had already turned in, slept in the stern; and John and Andy raked together a lair of twigs and dried leaves, and bivouacked ashore, keeping guard by turns.

CHAPTER VI.

A DOG AND CAT.

Blanche was up betimes, and came from her bower bubbling full of pleasure in the novelty of her situation. A jar of limpid water had been slipped underneath the curtain door. A rude bracket lashed upon one of the forked props held a wooden wash trencher for her ablutions, above which hung a small mirror. "A gentleman's shaving glass, I think," mused the maiden, as she knotted her black hair. "I wonder is it Captain John's?"

Her gown was a simple blue wool fabric, with yellow frog braiding across the bosom, such as military men affect. She had worn a blue hood with pink lining on the day before, as a shade from the sun, and her brunette face looked very pretty set about with the warm color. But for this morning she had donned a round cap made in the fashion of a frontiersman's, but of cloth instead of fur, and with an upright eagle feather instead of the drooping tail which woodmen wore.

A gilt embroidered baldric was slung over her shoulder and supported a small bugle such as huntsmen used in ancient forestry, a toy that an Eastern kinsman had given her, and which she had learned to wind with no little skill. "Who knows," she said laughingly. "I am going into American forests, and may need to sound my mots and show my woodcraft." However, she had had no cause to display her skill thus far, nor was like to have, save for her own amusement and the pleasuring of her friends.

The General welcomed her with a morning kiss and called her a little witch, which set John pondering the privileges of uncles and the mystery of witchcraft. Bounce also made his appearance, and, overjoyed to be out of limbo in which his master had held him, filled the woods with merry yelpings. As the lady at once made friends with him he had no more imprisonings, but wandered at will, having even the privilege of Blanche's bower, a favor which some higher animals on board sometimes coveted. Whatever thoughts John had upon this matter he bosomed up, and kept strictly to his duty, and urged all hands to an early start; "for," said he, "we must make the Indian Rocks in good time this morning."

Now Blanche wound her bugle, for she claimed the privilege of making signals, and sounding to break camp and tie up for the night after the fashion of rivermen, and once more the boat was off. The day was a long delight, though startled by no adventure. Shrubs and trees; birds and wild animals; creeks and brooks plashing into the river; an occasional cabin and field of corn where the axe had eaten little square patches of open in the forest,—these and like things kept Blanche occupied. But after the noon lunch on the green shore, the novelty of sight-seeing being somewhat broken, the maiden cast about for amusement among her fellow voyagers.

The tall young fellow in charge, a handsome athlete she thought him, much interested her. Doing two men's work without fuss, scant of words, but with bearing and courtesy far above his station, quite like a prince in disguise, she mused,—that was Captain John. "Captain" Andy would have him, and "Captain" he was, even the General at last falling in grudgingly, although John was thoroughly at one with him in contempt for assumed titles. Howbeit, he was not without claims to his own as captain

of a militia company. Blanche could not bring herself to address him with the familiar "John," he seemed so far above that; and if he were not a captain, why he ought to be! He had as yet said little to her, but she was conscious that although he seemed scarcely to note her, he was somehow always anticipating her wants, and as by instinct bringing things to pass for her pleasuring.

For example, how did he know, just now, that she was weary of looking at the hot river? But, from the high-stepped log set up on end, something like an upping block, on which he stood to manage the stern sweep, and which enabled him to overlook the roof of the cabin and thus have fair vision for steerage, he had plainly noted her weariness. The boat swept over into the grateful shade of a hill from which came the odor of pine wood.

"Come, Hannibal," said the Captain, "can't you relieve Andy at the pole for awhile? Miss Blanche wants him."

"O Captain, what a story!" said the astonished maiden in her heart. "I never thought of Andy!" But there was a quiet twinkle in those strong, comely eyes, and such an air of authority, that she spoke no word and waited to see what would follow.

"Now, Andy, you've not shown your terrier's virtues to the General, and he is fond of dogs, you see!" as indeed he was. "Won't you let Bounce give us an Irish jig?"

"Ay, that A' wull, with his honor's permission," said Andy; which the Inspector gave with a pleasant nod. "An' the lady's also?" turning to Blanche, who laughed her approval.

Andy removed his wool hat, whereat his hairs, delivered from their burden, at once rose up over his head as though charged with electricity. "Now, Bounce, attention!" The dog trotted up to his master, seated himself on his hind legs, drew his forelegs up and looked into Andy's face. "Now, my lad, we're about to axecute the famous Irish jig. An' mark ye, marrk!" holding up his finger, "yer under the eye of the gintry, this time; no common spectators, sorr! So none of your vulgar cavortin's! Do ye understand, sorr, an' are ye quite rready?"

"Yowp!" barked Bounce, nodding his head.

"Wull, now, salute yer pardner,—up!" Bounce rose upon his hind paws, backed a step then came forward again and barked.

"Now the band will strike up, an' away we go." Thereupon he began chanting a well-known tune, "Roy's Wife of Aldavalock," to the familiar but untranslatable words of

"Tidery—i—di, tider—y—um—tum!"

and commenced a swaying sort of dance, moving his arms up and down like wings. The dog seemed to enter at once into the sport of the occasion, and moved back and forth on his hind feet, around and around, eyeing his master and following his movements. There was not much regard to time perhaps, if one observed closely, but the idea of rhythmic motion was suggested, and the dog really seemed to dance. A round of hearty applause greeted the performance, and when Bounce was released by his master he ran to Miss Blanche to be caressed, and then received the General's fondling with evident satisfaction.

"Now, return thanks, sorr!" called Andy. Whereat Bounce got upon his hind feet, and following his master's pointed finger, gave two bright yelps and a nod, first toward the lady, then toward the General, and then Captain John.

"That's a good b'y; an' here's a bit o' sugar til ye." While the dog munched the sweet morsel, Andy craved the use of a chair from Miss Blanche, which he placed near the bulwark and sat down as though to rest. Suddenly he threw himself back with drooping head and hands hanging down, and called out in pitiful tones, "Oh! Bounce! your—poor—master's—sick!"

The terrier, uttering a piteous whine, sprang upon his master's bosom, put his forepaws around his neck, laid his face against his cheek, and kissed him again and again while uttering most dolorous howls. The mimicking of grief was so admirable that this feat was applauded even more than the dancing. But no applause changed the tokens of canine dolor until Andy slowly raised his head and sighed, "Ah! I—feel better—now!" Then the dog's whole being seemed transformed from sorrow to joy. He threw his head back, uttered gladsome barkings again and again, and fondled his master's face.

"Now Bounce, b'y, that'll do! Thank the gintlefolk for their sympathy." The dog leaped down, got on his hind feet, and again following Andy's fingers, barked and

bowed to Blanche, to the General and to John. Then catching the latter's approving eye, he ran away to him first of all, leaping upon his arm and growing happy in his applause. Plainly Bounce and John were old and good friends.

This performance and the repetition of it, and the chat about it, sent on the forenoon well towards the hour for luncheon. Blanche was enthusiastic in praise of Bounce's intelligence. "Ah—but, Miss," said Andy, "ye ought fer til see the two of 'em, Bounce an' Betty, th'gither, an' be-like some of their offspring with 'em dancin' a jig along with ma wife, Peggy. If ye'll honor our cabin at Canonsburg with a visit, we 'll be pl'ased to intertain ye. But mind ye, Madam, these are not performin' dogs, an' we are no show people. It's not for public idification, as parson says, but for our private delectation like, an' betimes, for a fri'nd or a veesitor that we show what the dogs can do. Ah, ye're right, Miss, they are purty cr'aters and quite human in their ways; indade A' wush all men were as dainty an' true as ma dogs. But it's not ivery man that's a Cap'n John, nor ivery dog that's a Bounce an' Betty!" With which rather irrelevant remark, as far as John was concerned, he went back to his pole much to Hannibal's comfort, for the negro was not well affected toward such work.

The Indian Rocks were reached by the middle of the afternoon, and as Gen. Neville was minded to tarry for a day's hunt, Blanche resolved to spend the night ashore. The booth which the Latimers had lately built needed only fresh branches to make it comfortable. A wattled partition was run through the middle; the skin curtains were hung in front, and one compartment given to Blanche, the other to her uncle. Andy slept on the boat, and Gen. Neville insisting that Hannibal should share in the watch, John set him the first part of the night, and wrapping a blanket around himself lay down by the great walnut tree after making the most solemn charge to Hannibal to be wakeful and alert.

"Sakes alive, Mars' Cap'n, yo' doan' spec' I could go asleep an' leave Miss Blanche an' de Gine'l widout g'yard in dis wilderness ob Sinai? Yo' shouldn't hab so po' a 'pinion of Hannibal, sah, 'deed not! 'Sides dat, I'se too skeered to sleep, do' pow'ful little I got lars night, I 'shore ye."

As the negro had done nothing but sleep the night before, John gave little weight to the last qualification, but thought that surely he might be trusted for a few hours. However, as he anticipated no danger and was weary with hard work, he was soon asleep. Well towards midnight he was disturbed by a low snarl from Bounce, who had curled down to sleep beside him. He hushed the dog with a whisper, fearing he might arouse the camp. But Bounce, though biddable, backed against his bosom and cuddled there still growling softly. John, now awake, observing that Hannibal was sound asleep, cast a glance toward the booth. The moon shed its full lustre through the forest leaves, and cast a broad silver paten against the front, showing Blanche seated outside, and dozing with her head leaned against the corner prop. The night being warm she had arisen, and putting a chair just outside the curtain, sat down in the breeze to enjoy the silence and beauty, and so had fallen asleep. It was a charming picture for a young man's study, and John had enjoyed it thoroughly for a few moments, when his glance was diverted from the maiden by the fluttering of a white object on the ground a few yards beyond her.

Ah! her handkerchief, which had dropped from her relaxed fingers, and been puffed away by the rising wind, and was just now being lifted further by a flaw. The youth let his glance follow the dainty thing, and had pleased remembrance of the perfume of lavender which it had exhaled when, during the afternoon, having dropped from Blanche's hand, he had restored it to her. Beyond the patch of moonlight it rolled with fitful turns into the shadow, where it stopped—kind Heaven! could it be?—against the very nose of a huge catamount! The gray form was crouching catwise, back curved downward, tail curved upward and lightly resting on the ground, head to the earth and forepaws outspread as though to spring upon its victim.

John felt at his heart a chill heretofore unknown to him, and his limbs were stricken as with a palsy. It was a full quarter minute (and it seemed an age) ere he could grasp his rifle and raise himself upon one arm, while Bounce silent and trembling crept behind him. Every sense was keenly alert now, and the blood beating like hot steam in his veins. It seemed strange to him that he could

note, in that awful extremity, such trifles as that Blanche twice nodded her pretty head; that a whippoorwill whistled from the hill; that a dead twig fell from the walnut tree upon his breast; and strange,—but strangest of all that he should ponder it and marvel over it,—that the panther stopped and sniffed the fluffy ball that the flaw had laid against its nose.

What could the beast mean? It relaxed its tense pose, that graceful, masterful attitude of the cat kind, the perfect expression of muscular vigor and beauty, when about to spring upon its prey. Its ears drooped forward. It put its nose once and again to the kerchief and sniffed as with pleasure; then closed its paws upon it and smelled it, and John thought he heard it purr as if enjoying the deliciousness of the fragrance. Whoever heard of wild beasts taking pleasure in sweet scents, especially ladies' perfumes?

He was conscious of all this undercurrent of thought and query, as with a swift and silent movement that even the brute before him could not excel, he dropped his rifle upon the toe of his moccasin, cocked it, marked and approved the priming, glanced along the barrel with as true sight as might be, and pulled the trigger. Then, as the shot rang out and awoke many echoes among the hills in the still night, he flung the rifle aside, seized his belt knife, and leaped through the smoke.

What followed passed with such quickness that it was like the vision given by a lightning flash into the darkness of night and storm. Blanche springing to her feet, startled from sleep with pitiful screams, with clasped hands and wide eyes looking this way and that; the General, standing in the moonlit opening of the booth, with hard face and pointed pistol in each hand, shouting fiercely: "Cursed traitor, take that!"—another crack of firearms into the echoing air; a sharp thud upon his side, as his rapid course was stayed, and he fell prone with outstretched arms and hands grasping the turf.

Then a dark form suddenly shot athwart the space, obtruding between John and the General. An iron hand grasped the Inspector's outpointed left arm and hurled it aloft as though it were a feather, while a third shot was heard, and the deflected bullet from the discharged pistol hissed through the overhanging foliage. A deep voice quavering with suppressed wrath spoke: "Does the white

chief kill his friends? Fool!" With a sweep of his arm, as though the man were but a dandelion stock, the Mingo, for it was Panther, felled the General and sprang to the side of his fallen friend.

"Is the Young Oak much hurt?" he asked with a voice that sounded strangely tender in comparison with the harsh tones just uttered. He knelt at John's side and stooped to lift him. But the Young Oak was not too much hurt to hear a plaintive cry from the booth whose anxiety pulsed upon his ear not ungratefully: "O uncle, you have killed Captain John!"

"I hope so!" cried the enraged man, who seemed dazed and terrified by a strange mistake; and rising he drew a poniard and sprang upon the Indian.

Panther, though unprepared and engrossed with the care of John, glided from his grasp, and hurling himself upon the General with that agility which had earned him his warrior name, bore him to the ground, and throttling him with one hand lifted with the other his tomahawk.

"Hold, Panther!" cried John, "for God's sake don't strike!" Blanche, who had thrown herself between the Indian and the Inspector, fell swooning upon her uncle's breast.

"Panther doesn't strike squaws!" said the Mingo, rising and turning to his friend, who was now getting to his feet.

The Inspector, who was not injured, said nothing, but glowered angrily upon the Indian, and sought to disengage himself from the fainting damsel. Andy appeared upon the scene hatless, his prickly hair unwontedly on end; while Bounce was sniffing and barking at the prostrate form of the catamount, and Hannibal sat upon hands and hunkers at the foot of the walnut tree rolling his eyes in mute terror, and despite the hubbub even yet half asleep.

"Is the Young Oak hurt?" again asked Panther, putting up his tomahawk.

"I believe not; but—I hardly know. Not much, at least. But never mind me. Let's look out for the young woman."

He arose, and lifted Blanche up and laid her upon the bearskins within the booth. The dainty form seemed but an infant in his arms, and the touch thereof thrilled along his nerves and seemed to heal whatever hurt he had. But he was not used to such duty, for a swooning woman was

quite beyond his experience. Only, in a blind sort of way, he knew that water was good and called Andy to bring a bucketful. It is questionable what he would have done with it, or how Blanche would have fared under his surgery, had not Featherfoot, fresh come from her wigwam on the nearby island, glided into the booth. With vast relief he gave over to her the task of reanimation, and left the place drawing the curtain behind him.

By this time Gen. Neville had recovered from his confusion of mind, and having seen the dead catamount lying within a few yards of the booth door, got a true view of the situation. When John came to explain, the proud man's mortification was pitiful to see. He apologized until John would hear no more; indeed, his explanation had been anticipated. Greatly troubled over the condition of revenue affairs, and knowing the popular unfriendliness with which he was environed, the Inspector's nerves were in a high state of tension and excitement. When startled from deep sleep by the rifle shot, he seized his pistols, and seeing John apparently rushing upon him with drawn knife, he believed himself betrayed and attacked, and so fired. The sudden appearance of the Indian only confirmed his suspicions; and, to cut the matter short, he denounced himself as idiot, lunatic, and cursed fool, and felt humbled and disgraced beyond expression. Even when all at length were again settled, and Blanche recovered and happy to hear the upshot of things, and quiet restored to the camp, the General's hurt pride would not let him rest. He paced back and forth between moonlight and shadow, cursing his folly and censuring himself with self-indignation and upbraidings.

John was grieved to see the proud spirit thus fretting against itself, and tried to make light of the affair. But Andy, less sensitive, suggested in an undertone, when an opportunity offered, "that it 'ud do the Ginr'l lots of good to dance awhile to his own music. It'll larn him a powerr of courtesy, mayhap, to go to school to his own blunders. It's hard gettin' breeks off a Highlander, or consideration for common folk off an inspector, and it's no good a-hinderin' him when he's in a fair way to gain a bit. There'll be little enough at the most, Cap'n John, atween you an' me an' the bedpost. So jist save your breath to cool your porridge."

But what of John's wound? There was no pain; no blood had flowed, and not until matters were settled would he take time to examine. The mystery was then easily solved; the pistol bullet had struck fairly against John's side and buried itself deeply within his pocket Virgil. The concussion stopped his headlong course and forced him to the ground, but otherwise wrought no harm beyond a bruise.

John lightly dismissed the whole affair, grieving most for the damage done his precious volume. Andy averred that Dr. McMillan would now have a fine illustration "of the use of haythen books if not of haythen larnin'," and that Captain John would henceforth have better reason than ever to hold Virgil as his favorite author. To the Inspector and his niece it was indeed a revelation that their keel-boat captain should turn out a classical scholar. Yet, in good sooth, Blanche seemed not so greatly surprised, nor perhaps would have been, had Captain John proved to be the Prince of Wales in disguise.

CHAPTER VII.

THE INSPECTOR MAKES SOME DISCOVERIES.

The next morning was thick with fog. It choked up the river channel. It hung upon the hills as a white veil, and obscured the more distant parts so that they showed as smooth, shaded humps. It hid intervening objects, leaving the long line of hills on the wooded summits of the middle distance standing out like an army corps in line of battle partly hidden by powder smoke. It thickened into wooly clumps over ravines and the clefts made by mountain brooks. It penetrated the nearer foliage masses, giving the branches weird shapes as their dark outlines thrust forth separate from their leaves or trunks, as though floating in the midst of the all-embracing mist.

Ere long, as the sun came up, a reddish yellow ball in the misty vista, the fog was dispersed, saving only the heavier masses above the river channel and the ravines. These overhung in white indented bulks and spiral pillars, and they too were gradually broken into sections, and rav-

elled away into gossamer-like patches and puffs that melted into blue sky. But the dampness still cleaved to grass and herbage and wrapped its stickiness upon all objects near the ground. Such a morning was not likely to gender mirth in our forest camp; for, not to give verdict upon the question whether or no fogs tend to depress the spirits, it is most true that the dank and clammy condition of things which they create subtract from one's comfort. Grass and shrubbery drip as one moves about, and one's clothing is soon saturated. Now, no human creature loves that estate; no, not even savages of whatever race; for man shrinks from wetness, and seeks artificial protection from it. Therefore familiars with forest life can feel the force of Mr. Alfred Russell Wallace's objection to the theory that our present naked genus homo has come through evolution from a hairy ancestor.

The first movements at Camp Indian Rocks were sombre and sluggish, which condition the broken sleep and excitement of the preceding night rather fostered. But Latimer, knowing the genial influence of a camp-fire, had early set the men to gather dry wood; and heaping the same dexterously against a great backlog, pierced the fog with a lurid and kindly blaze which presently won for itself a circle of warmth and dryness whose circumference overlapped Blanche's booth. When the maiden appeared, the view of the camp-fire brightened her comely face with welcome and good cheer.

Breakfast, cooked on glowing coals, wrought in kindly comradeship with fire and rising sun, and by the time the day was well advanced, all spirits, the General's excepted, were under full reaction, and the camp resounded with merriment. The night adventure was the theme of all tongues, and Miss Blanche's marvelous escape; but nothing was said in Gen. Neville's presence of his own blundering part in the event.

"All's well that inds well!" said Andy sententiously, "an' here's the biggest catamount that iver prowled the Ohio hills slain by our Cap'n John. An' what an iligant rrug it'll make as a memorrial to the ledy of her marvelous escape. So ye see, Miss, it's an ill wind that blows no good; though, faith, it was more by good luck nor good management." This bequeathment of the trophy no one was inclined to dispute, and Andy and the Mingo skinned the brute and prepared the pelt for dressing.

During the morning the Mingo more than once cast significant side-glances upon the Inspector, who, after consulting his note-book, and glancing from some memoranda therein to the Indian and back again several times, developed a peculiar interest in him. Finally, he caught his eye, made a significant gesture, and rising, carelessly sauntered into the woods along the river bank. When out of sight and sound of camp he halted, and presently Panther stepped noiselessly from the underbrush and stood before him.

"The Inspector called Panther; he has come."

"I have as yet said nothing to you," the General began, "about the wretched business of last night. I am sorry for my part in it, and thank you for your forbearance under great provocation. Does the Mingo understand?"

"Yes, Panther knows!" He smiled and touched his head. "Too much fire-water! It steals wisdom from the wisest. It is fire in the blood, fog in the brain. Yes, Panther has seen that in too many Indians, too many white men. It is bad, bad!" and he stamped his foot. "It curses my nation; it curses yours."

"No, not that!" Gen. Neville hastened to explain. "You are quite wrong there!" But as he saw a smile of incredulity playing over Panther's face, he changed his purpose, and after a moment's hesitation continued: "Well, let it pass! It was a weakness which will not occur again, and which I am heartily ashamed of. Now let us to business."

"Good!" said Panther. "The Inspector is wise to leave the fire-water to others. A chief should keep a clear head. The mountain brook is good enough for Panther. The Great Spirit gave that to the Indian. The White Manitou better have kept strong drink from his children! But the white chief spoke of business. Panther will hear him."

"The Great Father's War Secretary at Washington tells me," said the General, touching his handbook, "that you have been a scout of the Government for many years, one of its most trusted and valued foresters."

"It is true. Panther is proud of the Great Father's words."

"I have here directions from the War Secretary," taking from his wallet a letter bearing the seal of the War Office, "to seek the Mingo called Panther, and counsel with him as to the condition of this frontier. He thought, from

what was known of you that you could be of great use to the Government in notifying us of the state of feeling among the people along the Ohio and throughout Western Pennsylvania; and that you would be a faithful messenger in any service committed to you. I was told to seek you at the mouth of Yellow Creek; that was one of my objects in making this trip. It was most unfortunate that I should have met you here and as I did. But it will not raise a cloud between us? Panther, I hope, will listen to my words, and give me his wise and brave assistance."

The Indian reached forth his hand to the letter, and scanned the seal closely, and seemingly with content, for he uttered a satisfied grunt. "It is right!" he said. "Panther has heard the Great Father's message and he knows that it speaks truly. But when he became a scout it was in time of war. He gave his word to the War Chief at the Fort where the waters meet; and Panther knows no one else when he takes the trail. He does not doubt the Fire-Water Chief. He knows his word is true, but he cannot obey him until he speaks to the chief at the Fort."

The General was disappointed and fain would have tried to cozen or cajole, but knew that neither would serve. He was perforce content, and assuming a satisfaction which he felt not, said: "Panther speaks as a wise chief who has learned caution by long experience. He will see Gen. Wayne, or the commandant at Fort Pitt, and learn that Gen. Neville is working with them under the Great Father. Meanwhile, I am journeying down the river with my niece, and would like you to go with us. We are bent chiefly on pleasure; but I have several men to see on important affairs. I can demand nothing after what you have said; but if you will voluntarily aid me you shall be well rewarded. You know the troubled condition of the frontier on the matter of revenue, and may give me hints of great value. President Washington expects every soldier and servant of his Government to aid in enforcing the law and keeping the peace."

The Mingo hesitated a few moments before replying, being plainly in deep thought. At last he spoke: "Some of Panther's white friends are angry with the Fire-Water Chief and his people. They think the laws steal bread from their children's mouths. Maybe they are wrong; but Panther will do them no harm. Yet he will speak words

of peace, and defend the Inspector and Star Eyes. No harm shall befall either, if Panther can hinder. He will go forward on the trail and let the white chief or the Young Oak know. Is it well?"

"It is!" said the General. "I am pleased with Panther's consent, and here is a token of my good-will," offering him a gold coin.

Panther drew himself up, and waving aside the gold with dignity, said proudly: "The Mingo takes no gold for doing his duty. The white man's God bids him lay down his life for his brethren. The red man's Manitou tells him the same. The Mingo and the Young Oak are brothers; and the Young Oak's brothers are Panther's, too." So saying, he disappeared as silently as he had come. A few words with John, a few words in the Mingo language with Featherfoot, and the Indian entered his canoe and paddled down the river.

Gen. Neville had now given up his day's sport and ordered the boat to put off. It was past noon before landing was made at Fort Steuben, now Steubenville, named after a gallant foreign ally of the colonies, Baron Steuben, whose organizing abilities went far to convert the undisciplined militia of Valley Forge into a servicable army. Here, although the town had not yet been laid out, a rude landing stage had been built at the foot of what is now Market street, along which, near the river front, and not far from the charred ruins of the old fort, a few cabins stood. Among these was a tavern, which bore the name of the new Republic, "The United States," painted in sprawling letters upon a clapboard above the door. There was also a store or trading place.

The neighboring settlers had come to the village in larger numbers than usual. Horses were picketed in the unpaved road that passed for a street, from which all the stumps had not yet been taken, and several yokes of oxen attached to rough carts stood bowing under their heavy poles and meekly chewing their cuds. The arrival of a keel boat was enough to attract attention, and a dozen pioneers assembled at the wharf to ask for news. The Fanny and its owner were well known to these men, and John somewhat acquainted. As Luke Latimer was one of the staunchest of the patriots (for so the opponents of revenue laws termed themselves), his son was greeted cordially.

General Neville was recognized as he walked up to the tavern with Blanche and ordered dinner; and it was soon buzzed about that he had come, and that a settler, suspected to be a revenue spy, was also at the "United States" and doubtless closeted with him.

The pioneers now congregated at the store, one of those miscellaneous trading places that mark frontier merchandising everywhere, whose type is continued in the American country store, and out of which has naturally been developed our great city caravansaries. All manner of products that farmers had to sell; quantities of furs, ginseng, provisions, groceries, and rude household goods and implements; sickles and rifles, powder and shot; a few Bibles with Rouse's Psalms bound therein; drugs and ointments, tobacco and pipes,—were clustered around the long cabin room. Not the least thrifty business seemed to be done over the counter, where drinks were sold.

Around this spot a group of excited frontiersmen were gathered, denouncing with heated words and lusty tones the impudence of the Inspector in invading their domain. The clink and clatter of drinking mugs, the clank of vessels or clap of hard hands on the counter, the chink of small coin, the clang of heavy boots on the puncheoned floor, the click of metal as a rifle touched a belt-knife or hatchet, all mingled with the chatter and cackle of this human babble; and as the drink passed around, tongues wagged more loosely and loudly.

An Indian entered with a bundle of furs, and there was a momentary ceasing of talk, which was instantly resumed as the settlers recognized Panther. He was well known throughout that border as Luke Latimer's crony, and was much respected for his sterling merit. Greeting the white men with a curt but cordial "Howdee!" he turned his back upon them and began his barter. The trader observed that he was not quite so complaisant as usual, and resisted the cheapening of his pelts, and stopped to point out, one after another, their values. He was also somewhat more deliberate in selecting his exchanges, some powder, lead and tobacco for himself; sugar and tea, cloth and trinkets for his squaw. But in course of time the bargaining was over, and without more ado he left the store, having seemingly taken no more notice of the cabal of settlers than if they had been a covey of quail, an indifference which was

mutual. During his stay the settlers kept up without reserve their excited conversation, eagerly discussing what should be done in view of the Inspector's visit.

Ike Lamborn, "Wild Ike" as he was called, was for the extremest measures. "Ef ye'll jis' say the wored, b'ys, A'll make as short work with him as A' would with anny other varmin. What's the use of queryin' along of a matter like this? He's a public enemy, dawgon him! Let us sarve him as we did the Britishers, and show the Gov'ment that we're in arnest in this matter. Gimme a kag o' whuskey, an' A' promise ye he'll niver go back to Fort Pitt." Thereupon he lifted his rifle and dandled it across one arm.

"No, no, Ike, we musn't go to sich axtrames," said the trader. "Do no murder, mon! If bluid must be spilt let the first aggrission come from thim, not us. But A'm free to own that A' wouldn't grudge seein' the Inspector chucked into the river an' well sowsed."

"Let us lash him to a tree," Rob Ramsay suggested, "an' stamp the birch seal upon his back and breech with stout forest twigs. He's over perticular about his stamps an' seals an' what not, forcin' them on settlers. Now let's give him a taste of frontier gaugin' an' markin'."

This proposal was greeted with laughter and approval, and seemed to express the sense of the conclave. A few were somewhat divided between the administration of what they called "Moses's Law," that is, forty stripes save one, and the "Great Seal of the United States," to wit, thirteen stripes. Action was deferred to hear a middle-aged planter, named Means, who had taken small share as yet in the boisterous proceedings.

"Thar's one or two things, lads, which ye fergit. Gin-er'l Niville has his niece with him, an' it would be a most ungallant thing fer to meddle with her."

"Who's wantin' to harm the lass?" broke in one of the company.

"No one, I'll allow; but how are ye to strike the one 'ithout a-harmin' t'other? I've niver knowin'ly hurted women yit, an' I'm loth to begin now. We'd bring an ill name on our settlemint, do what you would to shield her; fer nayterally she'd stand up fer her kin, an' our ini-mies would declare we had connived an' consorted to insult an' harem a female. Now th'r's not a man here as 'ud like that repytation, I take it."

"True enough fer you, Jimmy Means," said the trader; "we'd not thought of the lass."

"Moreover," continued Means, removing his cap and brushing back a stubborn cowlick from his forehead; "we've got to allow fer John Latimer and Andy Burbeck. They're our frien's of coorse, but the Giner'l's in their care an' custody like; an' I'm mistaken in the young man ef he isn't his father's son in high notions of honor, an' all that. He'll stan' to the last an' die ef need be afore annyone in his care shall suffer hurt; an' Andy'll stan' by him to the bitter ind."

"We don't care a farden fer young Latimer, dod rot 'im! —nuther fer Andy Burbeck!" cried Ike with tipsy bravado. "What business is't o' their'n? A' reckon we're men enough fer to act 'ithout advisin' 'ith them; an' fer one A' meanter!"

"Ay, that's as it may be, Ike," said Means. "But it would be ill beginnin' our quarrel by killin' or bein' kilt by our frien's. It's no good blinkin' the fact that Giner'l Niville's an old Revolutionary soldier, an' Andy Burbeck is a very divil whin his blood's up, an' Jock Latimer has one of the stoutest arms an' surest eyes on the border. Now, lads, do as ye pl'ase, as of course ye wull an' oughter; but don't let us go intil anny wild wark 'ithout heed or hap. Giner'l Niville, though he were Sattan hissself, has the United States behint him, with Prisident Washington, Colonel Hamilton an' all the rist; an' anny harm wrought him wull start us on a long an' painful road. We'se beeta foregather a bit, an' council with our neighbors afore committin' 'em unbeknownst to onlawful deeds."

These remarks, which appealed artfully at once to the common sense and good fellowship, the gallantry and prudence of the settlers, carried the majority of the crowd, and concerted violence of any sort was abandoned. But Wild Ike left the store shaking his rifle and muttering, "Jimmy Means is little better nor a dawgond parson, annyhow; an' the whole gang are chicken-hearted cads!" A small majority of the more reckless held a secret confab outside the trader's door, the result of which was that, having learned that the keel boat was bound for Wheeling, they took canoe and paddled vigorously down the river.

Although the good sense and good feeling of the settlers had prevailed, they made the Inspector feel their ill will

quite sensibly as he left the tavern to resume his journey. A line of men, with scowling faces and angry eyes, lined the way to the wharf. Blanche was terrified at their looks, but the General took her upon his arm and passed on with haughty indifference. As he reached the gang-plank he turned and doffed his hat, made a stately bow, and said with mock courtesy: "Gentlemen, I wish you good-day, and an honest and prosperous settlement."

Not to be bluffed by the General's coolness, or outdone in politeness, Means plucked off his coon-skin cap, returned the bow with a good imitation of the General's manner and voice, and said: "Sor, a safe v'yage til you and yourn this time; but bad cess to yer plots and plans! An' de'il pity ye ef ye iver set fut in Steuban'ville agin."

"Thanks, gentlemen, thanks for your noble courtesy!" returned the General, repeating his obeisance. Turning to enter the boat he found John standing with vexed visage, who, seizing the plank, impatiently pulled it in with a bang, and pushed off shore.

"Sir," said he, addressing the General, when the craft was well into the stream, "this may seem a merry thing to you, but may prove a serious matter to others who should have, methinks, more of your consideration."

Neville flushed, and seemed about to take up the quarrel; but further anger was arrested by the sharp crack of a rifle from the shore, and the whistle of a bullet over the boat so close to the General that it clipped the crown of his chapeau and lifted it from his head. The officer caught it ere it fell, and turned coolly toward the spot where a white puff of smoke, curling out of a clump of underbrush, showed whence the shot had issued.

"Assassins, by Heaven!" he cried, and seizing a rifle which leaned against the bulwarks near by, he made hasty aim and fired.

"Yer honor might 'a saved yer powder," remarked Andy; "for the scapegrace 'at 'ud fire from ambush a murderous shot like that, 'ud be coward enough fer to shelter his miserable carcass, ye may depend on't. Good lead 'll niver ch'ate the gallows. But, Cap'n John, it seems to me this thing looks rather sayrious. Ther's no joke in bein' fired at in that way; it's a bit too perrtic'lar, ay, an' perrmiscus likewise. It seems to me our bit booth cuddy here is a frail barrier fer Miss Blanche agin sich clumsy wark,

to say nothin' of the Giner'l. Them chaps 'll be awfter us agin, as sure as death an' taxes, an' we beeta fix up a bit for 'em. As the barber says, weel soaped is half shaven. A good ready's half the battle."

Andy had uttered John's thought. He admired the cool fearlessness of the Inspector, but was wroth at the imprudence of his behavior, and inwardly chafed at the embarrassment of his own position. His interest in Blanche was deep. He could not understand, indeed, why such concern for her welfare possessed him. But he also fretted to think how his father would receive this news; and moreover, he was really anxious as to the outcome of affairs. He was resolved to shield Blanche, whatever might betide, and to stand by the General, as far as he could, as long as he was under his care; but evidently something must be done. What should it be?

A mile or more below the point where the shot had been fired, a canoe pushed out from the bank, and involuntarily all hands seized their weapons.

"Stop!" said John, "it is Featherfoot."

The squaw had not been missed in the excitement of the last few moments, but Blanche now informed them that she had left the boat at Steubenville to see her husband, and the fact had quite escaped her, so engrossed had she been with passing events.

Featherfoot was soon alongside, and addressed John a few words in the Mingo language. Thereat, the youth shunted his craft well toward the bank, and when opposite a bosky clump the squaw shoved her canoe stoutly shoreward. Then Panther appeared for a moment, and warily seizing the boat dragged it into shelter. It lay so close under the overhanging bushes that even John could not see it, though he had marked where it was put.

This done, Featherfoot beckoned John aside and told him concisely what Panther had heard in and outside the trader's cabin, and had communicated to her. Calling the General, John repeated her story, and after conference, the keel boat was pushed to the opposite or Panhandle side of the river and tied up. Then all hands were supplied with axes; Featherfoot was sent into the woods as a vidette; Blanche was set to watch the river, and John led his party into the pine grove that covered the shore. Having directed them what size timber to fell, he fell to himself

with zest, and the merry play of axes on trunks soon filled the forest with echoes.

The booth was next removed, not without some regretful sentiment on Blanche's part. The brush on the bank above the boat was cleared away, and logs, ready shaped and sized, were rolled down the slope, which made easy work, and so upon the boat's deck.

By sunset the booth had been replaced by cabin walls framed of light logs, but strong enough to stop a rifle bullet. Slab doors were swung on hickory with hinges. To finish all, wooden chocks of divers sizes soon rove logs asunder, and a slab roof was formed, hipped at one end to give due slope, and covered with the sail cloth well stretched to ward off rain, which now threatened. This done, camp was made for the night. John now felt that Blanche at least would be secure from ordinary assault, and the Inspector could be shielded from such a dastardly attempt as had befallen. He knew that no other of the party need apprehend harm, unless there should be an open attack, and the boat crew called to aid in defense.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONJUGAL CONCEALMENTS.

Mrs. Polly Latimer, standing on the green near her cabin at Canonsburg, welcomed her husband on his return from Pittsburg. Their little crop of flax had been already "steeped" or "retted" to the degree of softening that would permit the fibre to be separated, and was spread upon the grass to dry. The careful housewife was busy turning it that the plants might weather evenly, when Luke came home. The friendly but not demonstrative greeting over, the mother inquired the whereabouts of John, and was not pleased with the reply. She deemed Luke over-squeamish in refusing the Inspector's custom, and wished he would be as nice about some other folk she wot of. She opined strongly that he was like to go clean daft on the revenue business, and that if he knew what was for his good he would let the "Whiskey Boys" alone.

"Ay, ay," grumbled Luke, "I might 'a knowed which

way the wind 'ud blow with you, whin the parson an' the b'y are both on the side of the excise men. You beeta mind the flax, an' let men alone to look after ceevil affairs."

"Highly-tightly!" cried the dame, giving a bunch of plants a lusty toss, and turning upon her spouse. "Ceevil affairs, indade! Ye'd do well to kape a ceevil tongue in yer head, Luke Latimer. One dassent say boo til you nowadays, ye've grown so techy. I'd like to know whose business it is, if not mine, to kape ye out of mischief an' myself out of trouble? I misdoubt ye'll be l'adin' off the lad, too; though, thank goodness! he's got a head of his own, an' he's quite beyant ye in some things. Ye'd be none the warse yerself fer takin' the meenister's counsel. I don't know what's got intil ye, mon; what with yer argfyin', an' saycret doin's, an' night prowlin', ye're on a conteenooal strain, an' kape yer timper hated an' staymin' like a tay pot. Shame a haet 'll come of it but ill to you an' yourn, Luke Latimer! An' that's an honest opeenion an' ye niver git another." Thereupon the irate dame drew down her frock sleeves, one arm after another, and smoothed out the creases; then taking her apron at either end, threw it outward with a flirt as though tossing from her bits of rubbish. That was a way Mrs. Polly had when her mind was vexed with affairs.

Luke, knowing well the sign, and not caring further to provoke his wife, softened his tone and said: "Wull, Polly, thar's no nade fer til carry on so about the matter, annyhow. I meant no harem, I'm sure; an' if ye'll git the supper ready, fer I'm mortal hungry, I'll turn the flax fer ye."

"Ay, Luke, ye shall have bite an' sup without delay, though I wasn't lookin' fer ye; but that makes little differ. Yit, sence ye 've opened the way I'll e'en go til the ind on't. I've been a-hankerin' fer til spake ma mind til ye on this whole business. I know ma duty, as well as anny woman; an' though I've fallen short in some things, I wot well, I've niver been a fussy or interfarein' wife, ye'll allow. But I mislike these quare goin's on about the excise, an' I'm sure they betoken no good. Whin men git to rangin' the country at night, an' a-coverin' up their minds an' deeds from their fambly, an' a-caucusin' in saycret—"

"Why Polly, lass," interrupted Luke, "whativer pit sich notions intil yer head?"

"Luke Latimer," retorted Polly, turning her eyes full

upon him, "ye can't desave me, an' there's no use a-tryin' it. Ye're not one 'f the saycret kind, an' niver was cut out fer spy or plotter. Ay, mon, ye can't desave me! I've not lived thirty year with ye, agin next Friday, which is our weddin' day, without a-knowin' ye through an' through. Ye're by far too honest a man to be intreegin' an' traitorin' with the like of Dave Bradford. He's a traitor an' a sneak, that Bradford is, if there iver was wan, and he'll lade ye intil tr'ason; an' a sorry figure ye'd cut, Luke Latimer, a-swingin' at the tail ind of a hempen cord! O dear, dear! what then 'ud become o' me?" The good woman, deeply moved by the grim image her fancy had conjured up, burst into tears.

Luke was a soft-hearted man, and could not bide woman's weeping; and though he had been glowering with mingled surprise and vexation during Polly's outbreak, his wrath was dissolved before her tears. So soothing her, as he had well learned to do, he persuaded her into the house. Thus that domestic ruffle was smoothed over.

But withal, the man chafed under the thought that his wife's suspicion had set her on a true trail; and feared too, though he repulsed the idea indignantly, that she had read him more truly than he had read himself. In her momentary outburst she had set before him a mirror, and though it was but a glance he caught, that glimpse revealed to his consciousness an image of himself which, undefined, yet half suspected, had haunted his brain. And the image did not add to his self-approbation.

"Tut!" he said inwardly, and tried to banish the matter. "What can a woman know of such affairs? Polly's fidgety about her boy, I fancy; or mayhap it's wan of her spells. I don't know what to make of her betimes; she broods an' vapors sadly. I suppose its narvousness." Thus covering all consequences of his own irritating behavior, and accounting for all his wife's frets and humors under that most convenient term, he took up the fork and tossed and turned flax until called to his supper.

The Latimer cabin was one of the best in the village, for the main house was built higher and wider than common, and had a small entry to the door from which a rude stairway ascended to an upper room, which, by the great height of the building, was something more than a loft. In this John had his lodgings. Moreover, the cabin was

double, having a roofed porch closed on one side which connected, by a doorway cut in the gable, with a smaller cabin. This had no fireplace, and was used chiefly as a storehouse. Wooden pins and buckhorn brackets were fastened into the log walls of the porch, and thereon hung saddles, bridles, harness, flails, sickles, empty powder horns, old leggings and various implements and objects of husbandry and household and personal use.

These were of a miscellaneous sort, as might be expected from the varied vocations of the inmates. Here stood a loom for weaving flax or buffalo hair, or wool when it could be had. Here was an old wooden cylindrical churn with its dasher-stick standing out of the top. Here in summer time was placed the home-made dining table, that the family meals might be had in the pleasant open air; and here Mrs. Polly now served her supper.

The Latimers were well-to-do, as the phrase went, for Polly was a canny housekeeper, and Luke was somewhat "near," as the neighbors thought, but was far from being miserly, especially in aught that bore upon comfort of wife or son. So they ate their meal with relish, and talked over their affairs with that content which is wont to mark the conversation of folk with solid possessions. By mutual consent, the mooted question was not broached; but like a top sawyer in the Ohio River, it bobbed to the surface when least expected.

Polly took occasion to tell how she had arranged to have the negro man brake the flax upon the morrow; but Luke could do that himself or aid therein; which he, being a muscular man, willingly agreed to do. Then the mistress proposed a swingling frolic; to which Luke also consenting, Polly continued that she had bidden the neighbors for Friday next which, being their wedding-day, she thought would be seemly. True, she regretted John's absence; so would Luke, she knew; for though John had taken no fancy to any of the maidens (and that maybe was well enough), yet he was a royal hand at making a frolic go off blithely, and would be bravely missed at the evening sports, when the lasses came in.

"Friday, did ye say?" asked Luke.

"Ay, and why not?" answered Polly. "It's a slack time among farmers, an' there's fair moon for the goin' an' comin' o' nights." Observing a flush on her husband's

cheeks, and a troubled look in his eye, as though he were not favorable to the arrangement, she modestly added, "It's our weddin' day, Luke. Thirty year wull we be wed that day; an' the good God has kep' us through all; an' though manny's the sorrow an' burden we've borne thegither, yet His goodness and marcy have followed us. I know no better day nor that for merry-makin'. Ye've no call to be away on that day, Luke, have ye?"

"Ay, Polly, I had, indade," said Luke; then added with brightened face, "I dar say it's all right. I can make arrangements to suit, I doubt not. Annyhow, go ahead, lass, an' I'll make the best of it, an' we'll have a jolly time." Thus saying, he rose from the table and went forth to look after the cattle.

"There it is agin!" thought Polly, as she went about clearing the supper dishes. "It's somethin' about yon plaguey axcise meetin's, I ventur; an' Bradford's at the bottom of it, the miserable snake in the grass!" She was wise enough to keep her thoughts to herself, and was well content with herself for doing so when anon Luke came in, and saying he was going to the tavern to meet some gentlemen on business, bade her not to wait up for him, as he would not be home early. Not a word the good wife spoke, but her countenance fell as he left her.

"Ay, business!" she muttered, as her eye followed her husband's form. "It's a poor payin' business, I vow. Ill betide the day whin that mon Bradford lighted upon my Luke. Ah, well! what right have I to complain? He's better nor me, I ween. Oh Lord, good Lord, forgive me! It's a hypocrite I am, to chide him for saycret doin's, an' all these years—"

Whatever image rose before her she dashed away, and hurried off to household duties, which chanced just then to be the homely work of making tallow-dip candles, which would be needed against the frolic. Luke had brought her from the South some cotton yarn for wicks, which was a great improvement on the old linsey lint, she thought; but she was longing for a set of moulds which she had heard some neighbors speak of. A proud night it would be when she could show her gossips good moulded candles; but at present they must be content with the old-fashioned dips.

Thus inwardly conversing, she looped her strings of wicks upon sticks, a half dozen upon a stick, and put her

tallow to melt upon the coals. Now the unctuous liquid was poured into a wooden firkin, and holding up a stick, an end in either hand, she plunged the wicks thereinto. Lifting them next, and resting the wood across an empty vessel's edge, she took up another stickful, dipped it likewise into the tallow and left it to drip. Now the first stick was taken, when the melted fat had hardened along the wicks, which were once more soused into the liquid, gathering thereby a new coating. So on, one stick after another, the wicks getting about them at every dip a new layer, until enough had gathered to make the thickness of one's thumb. Then the sticks were hung in the porch to cool, each with its six candles swinging by the top loop of the doubled string. In due time these would be slipped off, tallow dips ready for evening lights.

Twilight was already past and night come ere this task was ended, and Mrs. Latimer felt lonely. Taking a candle in hand she mounted to John's room in the loft. It was her fancy, when the men were absent, or when troubled with a fit of the vapors, to go up there and brood over affairs. There was the cradle in which her baby boy had been rocked; and putting the candle on a three-legged slab that answered for a stand, she sat down before it with elbows to knee, and cheeks resting in her palms. It was a humble affair, that cradle; only half a keg or cask which had been cut in the middle and lengthwise, and the rounded part, after being well braced, set upon rock, rough hewed with a broadaxe. It was wadded within, and fitted with a bear-skin mattress, above which was a little blanket and counterpane of patchwork. That was all.

Why had she kept it? It would nevermore be of use to her, a matron of five and forty now; and John's weans would be rocked in daintier ware than that. Ay, the times had changed! Old-fashioned ways were going out. Folk were getting luxurious nowadays. What would they be coming to next? Yet it had been good enough for her, that cradle, in its day, and bravely had served its end. But why had she kept it; kept it in all her movings, though Luke wondered and neighbors sneered? Kept it, though moths had assaulted the furnishings, cloth and fur alike, and twice or thrice a year must she beat and fume and tend and dust it over? There are mothers perhaps who can solve the wonder, and tell why Polly Latimer had cherished this relic of bygone baby days.

Now rubbing the tears from her eyes with the corner of her apron, she moved about the room, stopping to finger this or that article, dust it and put it exactly back whence it came. John was a bookish lad, and had gathered his little library with great pains and cost. The volumes stood on shelves made by setting pegs between the logs and laying clapboards thereon one above another. They were chiefly classical and mathematical works for his studies, and religious books of the evangelical sort our fathers fancied. But there were also well-thumbed copies of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," Milton's "Paradise Lost," and, most valued of all by the owner, a volume of Shakespeare's plays. Only one volume, alas, for it was a broken set, which somehow had drifted over the mountains and so to John's hands. Polly put it back again, with a shake of the head, as if doubtful what might come of such light reading. She liked not even the name of play; it savored of vanities she had been taught to hold as most unwholesome.

Last of all, the mother's fingers lit upon a book which she fondled lovingly, and taking in hand sat down by the candle to look it over. It was a chubby volume, with heavy backs and two brazen clasps which, in modern hands, would be thought cumbersome, but was known to the men of that century as a pocket Bible. Turning over the leaves, Polly lamented first that John had left the book at home. It boded ill, thought she, that a lad could forget such a treasure. Indeed, she had believed that he had it with him, for she had felt it in his breast when he kissed her good-bye. But, poor lad, maybe he deemed it too precious to risk on his voyages; as indeed it is! * * * Ay, good Heaven, will he find it out some day? Leastwise, she will try to tell him, God helping her! So she drifted away into mental chidings for neglect of religious duties, and silent prayers for the Divine aid in all her doings.

As she turned the sacred volume, stopping to read a marked verse here and there, her thoughts went back to the early days at Indian Rocks, when John was a baby and little Moses came to them on the crest of the angry flood. That Bible was in the cradle with the rescued child, as if the mother or nurse had been reading it when the waters came up, and cast it suddenly down upon the infant's bedding, and never came back to book or baby. The Bible she had given to John when old enough to read, but she had

put carefully away the beads and locket and baby clothes, and other reminders of the river waif. There they were in that little handcase on the stand covered with red-dressed leather, with round brazen-headed tacks over it, and a lock without a key. Even then, though twenty years had gone, the kind-hearted woman wept as she thought of the dead child; and the image of his pale, sweet face came to her; and the wee grave in the tangled forest, side by side with the mound where they had buried Bended Knee, his hoary head gory with the wounds of the Indian fray.

Ah, that Indian raid! And that awful night! And, alas, her sunny-haired Meg, her blue-eyed daughter! Where was she? Was she dead? Had the savages spared and adopted her, as was often their wont? And if so?—her heart stood still at the thought of what she might be, a savage herself and the mother of savage children! Then she fell upon her knees, with the book open before her, and buried her face in her hands and wept again and prayed; and feeling relieved thereby, put back the Bible to its shelf and so to her bed.

CHAPTER IX.

LUKE MEETS THE JUNTA.

Meanwhile Luke Latimer had come to the tavern which stood at the foot of the hill on the main highway through the Chartiers Valley. His friends were soon there to meet him, and Polly had shrewdly guessed, for Bradford was at their head, and the business of the evening concerned divers affairs which may yet find record. There were eight persons, some of them men of substance, of whose personal history it will be well to take brief note.

Col. James Marshall was an early settler in the western counties, and a zealous forwarder of independence; had been high sheriff, county lieutenant, legislator and registrar of Washington County. He was counted a discreet and moderate man by his fellow citizens and was industrious and prosperous. His steady, reputable and conservative character made him a difficult subject for a political chief to handle; but, once committed, he was a formidable aid.

He had come from the north of Ireland in his youth. Benjamin Parkinson was a Pennsylvanian, and the president of the Mingo Creek Democratic Association. John Cannon was a respectable citizen of the village which bore his name; he had been a member of the legislature and advocated the forming of a new State from the western counties. Andrew Fulton was a distiller who had favored the excise laws originally, but had changed his views and joined the agitators against them. Besides these there were Thomas Spees who kept a store in Canonsburg and a miller named Lockry.

David Bradford, the chief figure in this junta, had originally come from Maryland, where he had studied law; had served in the Virginia Assembly before the settling of the State boundary lines; and he still practiced law in that State. He had advocated the Federal Constitution, but now wanted a new State, deeming, no doubt, that therein he would reach position and advantage that could never be his under the old State government. He had followed with deep interest the surgings of the French Revolution, with which he was in profound sympathy, admiring the methods of the French clubs, particularly the Jacobin Club, which he sought to reproduce in America, and meant to wield for his own purposes. He sat at the head of the table around which the group was gathered, their forms illumined by two tallow candles.

Bradford, thus sitting with his junta, told why he had called them together. There was important work to be done at the special meeting of the Democratic Association to be held next Friday evening. "Now, gentlemen," he continued, "we must not let affairs lag for lack of urging. We've much to contend with, and if we once show the white feather we're lost. The ministers are against us, and Doctor McMillan especially is bitter and determined. A good many of the distillers are inclined to give up, enter their stills in the Inspector's books, and do a regular business. It isn't every one who is willing to show the patriotism of Mr. Fulton, our associate, and band with us against the excise laws when they might make their own peace with the Government, and so monopolize business and eat up the little stills. We can't trust the leaders of the militia, for, like Gen. Neville, they'll most of them in the end side with the excise men."

"Who, thin," asked Col. Marshall, "can we depend on? It looks from that tally as if purty much all the power was on their wheel and none on ours; an' they'll git the grist while the hulls stick to our hopper." Marshall was a miller and his tropes had the flavor of his trade.

"Whom can we depend on?" retorted Bradford. "First of all on ourselves; don't let us forget that. But our chief dependence is on the people. The instincts of office make tyrants of all rulers. We thought we'd rooted out aristocracy by the war for independence, but it's as strong as ever. True, the Constitution has voided and banned titles of nobility, but the fact is here all the same, if the name isn't, and the Order of the Cincinnati has even revived the name. We must appeal to the people; to the pure democracy, like the Greek republics of old, ay, like the French Republic of to-day."

He had waxed louder in his speech, which he was continuing in the same strain, when Luke reminded him that the window was open, for the August night was warm, and there might be ears at the vent. Better speak low, he thought; and was there a guard before the window?

"There speaks the true scout," said Bradford. "But this time I anticipated you, and set a vidette in the yard to guard approach and give warning." Then resuming his speech he said, pointing across the table, "Now here's Mr. Ben Parkinson, the president of the Mingo Democratic Association; and here's Mr. Canon, the president of the Chartiers Association. They represent the people, and they may be trusted to stand up for democratic rights. Moreover, their societies are well organized and drilled, and most of them are armed, and so ready for any emergency."

"But, Squire Bradford," Marshall interposed, "these don't constitute all the people. We want a united effort. I'm not prepared to take steps for to divide our communities intil hostile camps. Let us be sure of success, or draw back while it's time."

"Nothing venture, nothing have!" remarked Bradford, with a sounding oratorical manner.

"Ay, no doubt. But well soaped is half shaven!" retorted Marshall. "Thorough preparation's half the battle. We behove to get ready if we're to jine issue with the government."

Bradford smiled at the quaint earnestness of the

speaker, well knowing that nothing so placates as acknowledgment of a man's sallies of wit. "Well said, indeed!" he remarked; "and yet I don't see where there's overmuch of a venture. We can rely upon almost every pioneer and ranger in the Virginia districts and along the Ohio."

"True, but they'll soon be off with Wayne after the Indians," said Luke.

"We'll have plenty of time for our business before Wayne is ready," answered Bradford. "Then, nearly all the newcomers from the North of Ireland will join us. They're fresh from the old despotism, and hate excise laws as the badge of their ancient oppressors and tyrannical land owners. As to the parsons, just let us let 'em alone and go ahead; they'll follow the flock, you may depend, when they see they can't lead it."

At this several of the junta uttered expressions of mocking dissent, and made Mr. Bradford to understand that he didn't know the unyielding granite of that sturdy generation of pioneer pastors, or he wouldn't say that.

"Well, maybe so; but let 'em keep to their pulpits and prayers! It's none of their business to be intermeddling with politics."

"Humph!" remarked Col. Marshall, "so I think m'self. But that's what some folk thought of the old Screepter prophets, if I mind aright. However, it makes small differ the now. Let's hear y'r plans an' we'll know how til advise. Most of us are well commetted, an' are ready for to go on with aught that's r'asonable."

"Very good," said Bradford. "We must keep up the threatening methods which we have adopted. Roseberry has been tarred and feathered for advocating excise laws. That's well; and we must fit the same coat on some more of the blathering agitators. Then, witnesses against the parties who disciplined Wilson for trying to serve his miserable warrants, were seized and carried off, and that will be a wholesome lesson to other informers and give security to our fellows."

"I didn't know it was men of our Association who did that," Luke remarked. "An' I lettle like sich maskin's an' seizin's. What came of the witnesses?"

"Oh, they're safe enough; no harm came to them. But they'll hardly get to the trial; they've changed their minds about that matter. Now, I propose that we aim a blow at

those who are letting their houses for revenue offices. We must make it so hot that no man will dare to harbor excisemen. We'll get rid of the squirrels if we cut down the trees; or, as old John Knox once said of the monks and priests, if we want to be rid of the rooks we must tear down the rookeries. Then these people who are entering their stills must be advised that it won't do. If the 'stillers hold together, we'll carry our point; if not, the jig's up. We want some hearty measures here, and I've two names to begin on, James Kiddoe and William Coughran. Have I your approval? I'll see it done and won't call on any of you, unless you'd like to volunteer for the work?"

Which no one doing just then, Bradford proceeded to unfold the chief plot in his busy noddle, which was no less than to seize and carry off the Inspector. That was a bold stroke, to be sure! It seemed just enough, Luke Latimer thought, for was not Gen. Neville the chief offender? It was a sneaking business to kill the cubs and let the old bear go. Besides, he was a traitor to the cause. He had been exceeding mad against the excisemen; had at one time even commended the harsh measures they themselves were now planning. Luke had nothing but contempt and hatred for the man, and would be glad to see him trapped like a beaver. But what would they do with him? Luke would have no bloodshed; at least, except in open, honorable combat. There was the difficulty, in his thinking; what could they do with the Inspector? A man might catch a wolf by the ears if so minded, but what then? Easier caught, perhaps, than let go.

Bradford didn't propose to injure the Inspector, only to keep him in quad a few days, thoroughly alarm him, and release him only on condition that he resign the office and never more serve.

Col. Marshall thought that would do nicely if it worked; which, by the way, was the trouble with so many new-fangled things that seemed well enough to the ear, but failed in execution. And, if the Inspector were seized and spirited away, broken Lornets' nests would be nothing to the consequences! The Government would be so openly challenged that it would have to do something and would light upon them with all its forces. And what then?

"Ay, what then?" exclaimed Bradford; "why then victory, to be sure; the right to free distilling, a new State for

the Trans-Allegheny region, and perhaps—but never mind!” The arch plotter would go no farther with his dream of a Southwestern Republic. “Such a bold stroke would cast the die. Men would have to come out and choose sides, and if matters were conducted aright they would be sure, most of them, to side with our bold and organized band. Besides, it is quite out of the question that Washington and his administration should think seriously of armed coercion. What had they to gain by it? A month’s expedition would cost more than ten years’ excise income; and if worse came to worst, a regiment of determined Western men could hold the mountain passes against the whole Atlantic seaboard.”

All this was fair sailing for the conspirator, but he struck a snag when least looking for it. He had heard of Gen. Neville’s visit to Wheeling, and knew, through what channels he said not, that thence he would cross the country by the Virginia Pan Handle (as we now call it) and organize his excise work at Washington town. A short trip that, of twenty miles or so, and he could be seized on the road. Or perhaps better, they could capture him on board the keel boat at Wheeling Creek wharf. “All the more readily,” he concluded, “since our good friend Luke Latimer is the proprietor of the boat, and his son John is in charge.”

“Stop jist thar, Squire!” broke in Luke, with no gentle cadence to his speech. “Nuther I nor ma son nor ma boat wull have aught to do with sich a schame. It w’uld be most despiseable to have a man inunder my care dealt foully with; an’ it shall niver be! Besides, there’s a lady with tle Inspector on the boat; an’ no hair of her head shall be harmed, an’ no disrespect or damage wrought her feelin’s. Jist drop that plan, p’ase, wanct for all!”

“Oh,” began the conspirator chief, not yet knowing well his man, “we’ve no thought of hurting the lady. It’s the Inspector himself we’re after; and there need be no responsibility with you for the act of the citizens. The public would know nothing about your part in it; and if they did, it’s small blame you’d get.”

“Now, Squire Bradford,” retorted Luke, “you’ve a glib tongue in y’r head, no doubt, an’ can both lade an’ convince us in all r’asonable ways; but here’s a p’int quite beyant ye. Do ye suppose John Latimer ’ud allow folk

whom he'd agreed to pilot up an' down the river to come to harm in his hands without a blow in their behoof? He'd die thar on his deck, ruther'n see Sattan himself pulled out of the keel boat, if he wair one of his passengers. If ye can git holt of Neville after he's left John's care an' charge, well an' good. But if not, I'm fornenst ye ivery time, an' all the time. I'll go so fur with ye, but won't stir a peg furdur."

"Hist!" said Bradford. There was a noise of trampling feet outside the window. "Eavesdroppers! Down with the candles!" The lights were set under the table, leaving the men's forms in deep shadow, and then all was still.

"Mr. Latimer, will you play scout for us and see what's the matter outside?" said Bradford.

Luke, nothing loath, left the room and stealthily crept to the rear of the tavern. No one was near the window, but he thought he saw a dark form glide behind a tall sugar maple a hundred yards distant. He seemed to recognize it. Could it be Panther? Impossible! He ran to the spot only to find it unoccupied; but a faint rustle in the adjoining cornfield convinced him that some person was gliding on all fours through the margin of the standing maize. Not thinking it well to follow further, he hailed the vidette, who had seen nothing, since he had stupidly kept watch in every direction except towards the window.

In the meanwhile Bradford took occasion of Luke's absence to push to a conclusion his scheme to trap the Inspector, promising that the freighter's foible should be respected. When Luke returned and brought the matter up again, he was told that he might be easy in mind, for nothing would be done to prejudice his honor, or compromise and endanger his son. With this he felt that he must be content, though far from satisfied; but not wishing to be at cross-purposes with his associates, nor to challenge their honor, he said no more.

Soon the meeting broke up, and as Latimer and Marshall walked home together they could not but wonder what they had been called for, unless to endorse Bradford's plans. Verily! But then what more could a chieftain wish than that he should find substantial citizens on whom to shunt the responsibility of his deeds, if need should be? Not well assured of his wisdom, and with heart fluttering

at the seeming lawlessness of the proposed emprises, and glad to be quit of the committee and the pent-up and stuffy room, Luke came to his home through the bright moonlight and clear, sweet evening air. Polly awoke at his footsteps, but forbore to chide, greatly to Luke's content.

CHAPTER X.

MRS. POLLY LATIMER'S SCUTCHING FROLIC.

Forty women of various ages assembled, after the noon-day meal, to begin work at Mrs. Polly Latimer's scutching frolic. They were fine samples of pioneer women; above the medium height, for the most part strongly and some of them stoutly built. They had fair complexions, eyes of various shades of gray and blue; round heads well shaped, full faces, generous lips, cheeks ruddy and with high bones; broad and high foreheads with brows well overhanging and wide between the eyes. Faces they were which indicated a thoroughly warm-hearted, loving, intelligent and courageous stock, a race worthy and likely to be the mothers of a noble progeny.

One would not look for elegant toilets in such a gathering, but the dresses were at least suitable to the event. The newer comers to the settlement wore woolen frocks which pioneer life had not yet had time to fret into tatters. Many had home-made linsey or linen gowns. A few had found the art of using dressed deer-skins, especially for jackets and slip-ons. The white linen folder over the breast was common. Hoods and sunbonnets covered the heads, and the elders wore frilled caps that girdled the face. Shoes were rare, though some owned such articles, for Sunday use, however. On ordinary occasions such as the present, they were shodden with home-made cloth shoes known as shoe-packs, or with Indian moccasins of deer-skin. The women had come in their work-day uniform, with somewhat more carefulness to be trim and trig, and that they were. A sweet and wholesome company, honest and true to the core of their kindly hearts, lusty and supple, and ever ready to go merrily to work or devoutly to worship.

Since we saw the Latimers at the finishing point of ret-

ting their crop of flax, it had passed through the brake, a rude machine for cracking and separating the boon or pithy heart of the plant. Thus far had Luke, aided by his hired man and Dungy the slave, carried the work when the women came to do their part. Already the scutching blocks had been sent in from the neighborhood, and stood about the yard in the shadow of overhanging oaks and maples. A scutching block was simply a chunk of a tree trunk, chopped fairly into twain, a triangular section cut from the middle, and mounted on four legs. Each matron had her swingling knife, a wooden cleaver or paddle about two feet long having a broad blade with one thin edge. These were the rude instruments needed for scutching or swingling flax. And now to work.

One party sorts out the sticks into equal lengths for more convenient handling, and lays them beside the various scutching blocks. These the swingler takes, and holding them along the groove with one hand, swings her wooden claymore with the other and beats it down upon the stalks, careful always to strike lengthwise of the same. So, turning the flax with one hand and beating it with the other, the tough and stringy plant is separated into its multitudinous fibres or threads, which at last lie in the groove of the scutching block, a coarse, fluffy mass ready for hackling, the next stage in the progress toward cloth.

It was a merry chorus indeed that the women made, as their swingling knives fell with regular thuds upon the blocks, and their tongues ran glibly of this and that. The exercise was not so slavish as to bow the body into uncomely or weary-looking attitudes, but was vigorous enough to send the blood tingling, and set warm colors to the cheeks. Thus, by reason of varied postures, such as the rhythmic rotation of the left arm in turning the flax back and forth; and the heaving up and beating down of the right arm; and the movements of the trunk and limbs while standing to the block, the muscles of the whole body were forced into active and graceful play. Withal, the animation of cheerful chat, and the head turning this way and that for question and answer, to listen or make speech; and the smile brightening over the features; and the hearty laughter parting the red lips,—all this set forth these frontier dames and damsels at their best.

Soon the swinglers had made ready their first lot of

material, and now came in another group to hackle it. A coarse comb was the instrument used, and with this the scutched flax was raked and pulled until the rougher part, known as swingling tow, was separated from the finer which was, in short, the linen fibre ready to be spun into threads of greater or less fineness. Thence it would be made into cuts, and so to the shuttle for weaving.

A lively and attractive company this, it must be allowed, grouped upon the green, engaged in their several tasks, while the trees above gave shelter from the August sun. And what had they to talk about? Verily, more than like gatherings of modern times. There were the children, that oldest and most familiar, and also exhaustless theme, since mother love is in all and in all ages the same. The mystery, sweetness and perversities of childhood were discussed between the blows of the scutching knives; and though for awhile elbowed aside for other themes, recurred again and again until breaking-up time came. That burning question of to-day, domestic service and servants, made few tongues wag at Polly Latimer's scutching frolic. For, in sooth, every woman there wrought with her own hands all household duties; although a few of them had negro slaves to assist in the rougher labor of the home and the garden.

Styles of dress claimed full share of speech then as now; but the harder problem "wherewithal shall we be clothed?" was the living question for those women. Then there were the Indians, terrible and never-absent theme; the last newcomers to the settlement; also the last outgoers, and those who, alas for women folk! with soothless restlessness were again devising a flitting to some further West. There was the stir over the excise laws; and, perhaps most absorbing to that generation, the church and pastor, the log academy, the young students for the ministry, religion and its "gracious revival."

Let us enter this group of matrons, drawn together by the affinity of greater age and the presence of the pastor's good wife, Mrs. John McMillan, who has broached the question of the need the frontier has for ministers, and their own efforts to supply the want.

"There's a little band of students at the Academy," said she, "looking to the ministry, and another studying Divinity with my husband, and well on their way. True fellows

they are, and our own border boys, with the smell of forest mould upon them, and knowing well how to win the people's hearts. It's little they need, to be sure, and willing enough to work; but can we afford to have them break away too often from their studies, ladies? No indeed; we must keep them to their books, and hurry them into the field for the love of God and dying souls."

"Ay, ay," quoth Mrs. Latimer, who had left her stewing and baking for the nonce, to pass courtesies among the several gossips. "It's aven so. My John knows them bravely; an' Thomas Marquis had bed an' board with us for two s'asons, an' slep' with my lad. A faithful fellow is he, as was McGready afore him. Now I'm resolved that a good stent of the linen that comes from this flax shall go for coats an' breeches for the probationers."

"Thank you truly!" said Mrs. McMillan. "It's like your own kind heart, Mrs. Latimer. Indeed, our quota of cloth will soon be due, and the Chartiers congregation must not be behind the other churches that have banded together to help the young men. By the way, how shall we dye the linen for their clothes?"

"Try the new mown hay," said Mrs. McDaniel. "It makes a genteel black quite fittin' for a meenister, an' as fast a color as anny."

"Indeed? Let it be so then; and I dare say Mrs. McDaniel will manage it for us? I wish, now, the doctor would try some cloth for *his* breeches. But, dear man, he is so wedded to his buckskin that I can't persuade him to change."

"Tut, Madam, we'd be loth to see the doctor change aither his breeches or his theology!" said sturdy Mrs. McDaniel. "He is jist suited for a people in a land like our'n; a chosen vessel of the Lord, if there iver was one, an' a blessin' through all the border."

"Well, Dolly," said Mrs. Peggy Burbeck, "I'll no differ with you about the breeches. But don't you think we could stan' a little less predestination in our theology? Oh, you naden't shake your head; an' I mane no offence, Mrs. McMillan. But I like the doctor best whin he swings away from the ol' lines an' casts the Gospel net out broad an' free. He's jist gran' at sich times! It's small won'er we've had revivals, sence the meenisters are all preachin' so hearty the free grace of the lovin' God. For my part I don't

envye the ol' fashioned preachin' which, as my man would say, is too often long grace an' little mate."

Mrs. Burbeck was a short woman with black eyes and black hair; plump, though wiry; and red-cheeked, though her face was somewhat swart, and a little show of hairs covered her upper lip. Peggy was as much a favorite in her circle as was Andy in his, and much for the same reason; her cheerful nature gave forth brightness, while her candor and sturdy womanhood won respect. No one seemed ready to join issue with her, and several pairs of eyes shot forth quick approval; but a hush fell upon the circle as though here, indeed, was trespassing on forbidden ground.

What a masterful creature is a good woman, with wise tact. The pastor's wife was equal to the emergency. Nodding pleasantly to the speaker, she answered: "Ay, Mistress Peggy, it is sweet, indeed, to hear of the free grace of God, and none the less because it's sovereign grace as well. But you'll like the preaching of our new set of ministers, I'll be bound! The carpenter is known by his chips; and the doctor's theology may be tested by the lads it has trained. You've heard of McGready now, and what a Boanerges he has come to be, and how a great revival has already sprung up from his preaching? You will give us an extra yard or two of linen, Mrs. Burbeck, I'm sure, for the love you have for that sort of preaching."

A ripple of laughter cut through the teasing sound of the hackling, in which Mrs. Peggy good-naturedly joined. "Fairly caught," she cried; "an' so deft a turn by the pastor's wife is worth a good yard of linen. Ye shall e'n have it an' welcome, Mrs. McMillan. An' we're truly thankful for the encouragin' news. I al'ays liked the lad from he cam' to work his way with the doctor."

"Mr. McGready is not the only one of our new lot of preachers," continued the pastor's wife, "whose work is being owned by the Holy Ghost. There's Joseph Patterson, who is serving the congregations of Raccoon-Creek and Mountour's Run; he is like to prove a most pious and useful minister."

"Thank God for that!" said Mother McCormack, whose Scotch burr betrayed her nationality. "A' mind the lad weel. He was unco' powerfu' in prayer, and wud aft bring tears to ma een. It's aye so; when the meenister melts at

his devotions the people will melt at his sermons. Heaven-movin' prayer mak's soul-savin' preachin'."

"Very true," said the pastor's wife. "And the men now coming before Presbytery are not a whit behind him. Now, there's our silver-tongued Marquis, whose musical voice is already known in our prayer meetings. He has his parts of trial, and will be soon licensed, no doubt. But I must not speak of him, for here is his good wife just at hand, and she might get vain at our commendations."

Mrs. Marquis stood hard by wielding a swingling knife with hearty fervor, while her daughter, a maid of fourteen, sat on the grass near the block and sorted out the sticks of flax. Resting the end of her knife upon the block and leaning an elbow on the handle tip, the comely dame replied:

"Ah, Mrs. McMillan, there's little fear that ministers' wives, especially while they're probationers, will get overly vain. With all kind service and loving friendships of God's saints, there will be quite enough to keep us humble. However, I thank you for your good words, and indeed, for all your many helpful acts. I do hope and pray that Thomas may be all that we could wish. I'm sure, at least, from the time he was converted in old Fort Vance, he's been set on preaching the Gospel; and glad enough I'll be when he's ready to settle to the work."

"By the way," said the pastor's wife, "you remind me of that wonderful incident in your husband's life. Many of the neighbors have never heard it; can't you tell us all about it?"

"Since you ask it, Madam, certainly; that is, if the ladies would like to hear?" A matter which was settled by a hearty chorus of "yes, yes!"

"Come then," cried Mrs. Polly Latimer, turning to the group of workers, "you've all had a brave turn at scutchin' an' may ease up a bit. Jist rest the knives a spell, an' listen." Those who were distant closed up to the group of matron hacklers, and Mrs. Marquis began her story:

"My husband was born near Winchester, Virginia, and having lost both parents when a child, was brought up by a pious uncle. We were married in 1775 and with a number of friends migrated to the Cross Creek country. We had a pack horse train, and I rode when tired in a willow creel, balancing on one side of a horse with freight hung on the other. But I marched a good part of the way, as on the whole pleasanter."

"Ay, indade!" cried Mrs. Peggy Burbeck. "Don't we know that quite well?"

Sundry ejaculations and laughing remarks passed around the circle, as one and another recalled the hard experience of the tramps and camps, the toils and terrors of that mountain journey to the Trans-Allegheny settlements. The associations were so strong that for a few moments they kept a gap in the narrative. At last there was silence, and Mrs. Marquis resumed.

"That part of Washington County was then an almost unbroken wilderness. Everything was to be done; forests cleared and trees girdled, cabins raised, plantings made, and at the same time a close watch kept on the Indians, who were threatening the frontier, encouraged by the outbreak of the Revolution. Oh, the terrors of those days, when the men were away in the fields at work; and of those long nights when every howl of a wolf or hoot of a night hawk startled us from our restless sleep with the fear that the savages were upon us! At last, and not long after our arrival, the Indians fell upon our new settlement, and my poor brother Park was the first to fall, tomahawked and scalped close by our own cabin."

Her voice choked; tears moistened her eyes, and as she paused after a brief space, many a sigh escaped, and that not simply from sympathy, for a number in that company were thus reminded of a like experience in their lives.

"Then we fled from the settlement," the lady continued, "and all the neighbors gathered within Fort Vance, while those who had rifles and could use them sallied forth to scout. There we were, shut up within the log court and the block house walls, grieved, sore disappointed and in terror, and knowing not what to do. The only pious man in the Fort was a farmer named Patterson, and you may be sure we turned to him to help us by his prayers. He was a devout Christian, one whose zeal and piety had stood the stress of removal to the border, under which so many have yielded their profession. He concluded to improve the occasion by talking to us about religion; and we were nothing loath, for we were sad-hearted and needed comfort, and shut up within the fort with time hanging heavy on our hands. So we listened while he read the Bible and talked to us of an enemy more to be dreaded than the Indians.

"He began by speaking only to husband and me, not thinking of open speech. But one after another came about us, and so at last personal exhortations to a few friends became public addresses. It was a strange and moving scene. There in that wilderness fort stood the plain man of God talking to us of salvation, and there and then the power of the Holy Spirit fell upon us. There was scarcely one in the fort who was not seriously concerned about his soul, and ere we left the walls twenty or more were led to Christ, among them husband and myself.

"That farmer, whom God so owned, is now the Rev. Joseph Patterson. Three years afterward we were visited by the Rev. Mr. Power, who preached at Fort Vance the first sermon ever made in that region. And there this lass," nodding to her daughter, "was baptized, the first child given to God in baptism in that section. Our little company of believers was organized into a church, and built our first log sanctuary near the fort."

"And should the parts of trial come off all right," said Mrs. McMillan, taking up the story, "and no one doubts that, it is an open secret that the Cross Creek congregation hope and expect that Rev. Thomas Marquis will be their pastor." Thus the story ended, and the party went back to their work, while the talk gradually veered around to the growing excitement over the excise taxes, and the disorders which were being fomented throughout the Western country.

Mrs. McMillan, as a loyal pastor's wife, stood with her husband against what she called the infatuation of the people, and stoutly, but with conciliatory manner that soothed all friction, opposed any violence towards the Government. Mrs. Latimer, for reasons which have already appeared, curtly took off the whole proceedings as a plot of Bradford's to serve his own ends at the expense of their husbands and themselves.

"Ay, trust him!" quoth she. "He'll hatch his own eggs under our hens, an' they'll be cockatrice's eggs you may be sure; an' but for the marcy of God they'll sting us sore. An' women folk are iver the warst sufferers in sich tumults as Dave Bradford would stir up. But what cares he? A sly an' frothy Gashmu! Dear hearts, it behoves to keep our men out of the hubbub if we can."

Mrs. Peggy Burbeck stood almost alone in opposing the

agitation on the then novel theory that the higher the tax on spirits the less would be made, and the less made the better. "There's nothing but sorrow in the cup!" quoth she. "I'd rother have less to do with, an' kape sober company. In troth, there's not a haet of gain by the stillin', for what's saved at the spigot is let out at the bung. The idleness, illness, waste an' wantonness that the liquor gend'ers more than devour the profits of the trade. It's the ol' story of Pharaoh's lean kine that eat up the fat wans."

These utterances by no means expressed the prevailing sentiment of the women, for a decided majority were in sympathy with their husbands and sons in hostility to the excise laws. Fortunately for the good temper of the party, the men began to arrive, they having been bidden come to the supper when the work should be done. The absence of Dr. McMillan was much regretted; he had gone on Presbyterian service to an adjoining neighborhood. However, several of the church elders came. The divinity students and young men of the academy with other youth of the settlement began to drop in, and a genial time was had at the evening meal, which was furnished with the bountiful hospitality for which the Latimers were famous.

A sore disappointment awaited. Supper ended, the young women began to organize games such as prevailed at that time in the West. But to their amazement, the partners whom they had confidently expected to share the sports were not to be found. Where could they have gone? In like manner the matrons, looking around for their spouses, perceived that from one cause or another they too had disappeared. They had dropped silently out one by one, until only a few old men, some students and a few of the younger fellows remained. Luke Latimer took the matter good-naturedly and quite as a matter of course, though his manner was a little nervous and constrained. Mrs. Latimer was not so self-poised. She was flustered and fretted, and her disappointment cropped out in various uneasy expressions. Yet she was well content that Luke stayed by her side to aid in the entertaining, instead of mysteriously slipping away as so many had done.

The incident cast a damper on the party. The mystery which the elder women could not solve, and the men would not explain; the disappointment of the young women at the departure of their beaux, and the loss of the amuse-

ment which they had promised themselves,—all this sorely disconcerted the company. Therefore, despite the efforts of Mrs. Latimer, seconded by the genial activity of Mrs. Burbeck, the party broke up early. The absence of so many of the men disposed the women to go home sooner. However, the August evening made delightful walking over the roads and by-paths, and the moon came up after sunset. At last, there remained only Mrs. Burbeck, who as her husband was away had agreed to bide the night with Mrs. Polly, and a young woman lately come to the settlement whom Luke had offered to escort home.

CHAPTER XI.

A NIGHT CONCLAVE.

When the last visitor had been lost to sight, Luke went to the stable to look after his stock. As he entered the yard he heard a light footstep behind him, and an uttered "hugh!" which caused him to start, and whirl rapidly about. There stood Panther!

Luke was well enough used to Indian manners to know that this sudden apparition meant something important; but also that it was not becoming to show undue excitement. He quietly bade his red friend welcome, and brought him into the kitchen, where Mrs. Polly gave him a kind reception and a hearty meal. Hunger appeased, Panther uttered a word of thanks to the housewife, and left the cabin followed by Luke. Through a crack in the door the matron watched the two men as they stood in the shade of a sugar maple tree exchanging communications.

The Mingo was somewhat moved from his wonted statuesque manner, and seemed unusually earnest. Luke was at first visibly excited; he stamped his foot, threw out his hands with an indignant gesture, stirred about a little upon his heels, then gradually recovered self-control and stood motionless. Polly knew by those signs that her husband was in a mighty passion. It was his wont, under provocation and danger of all kinds, first to make uneasy bodily movements; but soon he put on a calm exterior, and only showed his inward fervor by his pale face, burning eyes and

quiet carriage. She was not surprised, therefore, when he entered the house and told her that he must leave immediately on important business, and take two horses with him.

"I had thought that I would ask you, might I take your pony with me, too?" he continued. "For, indade, she may be sore naded. But no, I'll not ask that."

"Take her an' welcome, Luke dear!" interrupted the wife. "She was your gift, an' well I know you love Snowball as dearly as I do, an' will take good care of her. I'm truly sorry you must go, an' on this night, of all the year; but what must be will be, an' I dar' say you know best. Have you no word for me as to where you're a-goin'? Is anything gone wrong with John?"

"There's nothin' so very saycret, Polly, that you may not know; but whist! not a word to your gossips. I'm a-goin' down til Wheeling. Dave Bradford's been in divilment, an' played the traitor with me. It's summat about the lad; leastways he may be consarned therein; an' though there's naught wrong with him, I hope, as yet, there may be, an' I'm off to hender that. So good-bye, love, an' take good care of yourself."

The exigencies of her life had inured Mrs. Latimer to such sudden movements of her husband, and danger was too common an element in their pioneer conditions to cause undue easiness or protest. So, hastening to make up a haversack filled with cold bits, she bade Luke good-bye, and watched him ride away with Panther toward Washington, leading Snowball by the bridle.

"Well, Jenny," she said, addressing her young woman guest, "Luke was sore troubled that he could not company you home, as he promised. But, 'dade, the business was pressin', an' I offered to take his place. Mrs. Burbeck can go with me, and then I shall have company back home, an' good company at that. It's a fine night, soft an' bright, an' I'm not the laste bit feared. Indade, I'd rother be out in the open air nor bidin' here in the cabin. The walk 'll help wark off the disapp'intment an' vaxation of the avenin', an' I'll be all the better for it."

So it was agreed; and as the full moon shone over the hills, the trio started, accompanied by Mrs. Burbeck's fox-dog, Betty. "As rare a beau," she averred, "as maid or matron nade want. For she kapes a respictful distance be-

hint an' a keen eye ahead; an' though she disn't worry one with her idle claver, she can give tongue sharp enough, if nade be."

Not far from Chartiers Creek the women left the main road and took a bypath over the side of the hill that led more directly to Jenny's house. It was a common shortcut to the church, and still worshipers pass up that way from the village. The path led them through an open oak grove, not far from the Hill Church premises, and as they entered it the terrier uttered a short growl and ran to the front. Her hair bristled upon her back, her tail dropped, and her general attitude was that of a canine who has discovered a nearby enemy.

"Aha!" said Mistress Burbeck, "what have ye found, Betty? Is it a rabbit in the brush? Or—" The question was interrupted by a sharp bark, and a rustling in the bushes from which stepped forth a man whose appearance so startled the women that they uttered cries, and fell back in a little group one upon the other.

"No harm, ladies!" said the intruder in a gruff voice evidently disguised. "But you mus'n't pass this way!"

The phrase "must not" has a strange effect upon people, especially if their blood be well charged with Scotch-Irish temper. It roused the ire of these frontier women, and at once dispelled their fears by the presence of a stronger passion.

"Mus'n't, indade!" exclaimed Mrs. Latimer. "Highty-tighty! a fine thing this, that ladies must be stopped on their way home by masked prowlers. Scaret, forsooth! We're not a bit scaret, sir. We weren't born in the woods to be scaret by an owl."

Nevertheless, the women made no forward movement, but stood gazing upon the man who had thus interrupted them. He was dressed in the usual garb of a frontiersman, except that a bit of white linen was pulled down over his face as far as his mouth, with openings at the eye spaces permitting him to look out. A not very complete disguise, certainly; but in the dim light of the grove sufficient to conceal identity.

"Can't help it, ladies," said the sentinel, stretching his rifle across the path to prevent passage. "That's my orders, that no one darst go over this path. Sorry to cause you anny inconvanience, but you mus' go roun' by the woodside or through the meadow."

He spoke in the same disguised tone of voice, but had not succeeded in concealing his identity from Betty the dog, whose demeanor underwent a marked transformation. Her barks sank into growls, and her growls again into low whines, while contemporaneously her tail and back passed through the usual stages from objective anger to objective gratification. She even wagged her tail, and came up in a fondling way to the sentinel; and finally leaped upon his knee with strong expressions of recognition and approbation. This threw the man off his guard, and kicking his leg forward, he exclaimed in a more natural tone of voice, "Get out, Betty, you beast!"

Thereat Mrs. Burbeck exclaimed, "Aha! I think we know who this masked gentleman is. Tom Spenser for all the world. You can't conceal it, Tommy; we know ye now, and you might as well let us by."

Whether or no it was Tom Spenser was not then settled; for notwithstanding the women's protestations, the sentinel insisted upon observing his orders, and the upshot of it was that the trio had to leave the grove and pass through the meadow by a somewhat longer course. They were all agreed that these maskings meant no good, and shrewdly suspected that the excise troubles were at the bottom of them, and that it was to attend some sort of conventicle or lodge that the men had left the women so unceremoniously at the scutching party.

Influenced still by curiosity, they directed their course as near as might be to the meeting house. Once more they were shunted off by the appearance of a sentinel from the shadow of a tree, who, without speaking, gave them to understand by motions that they could not pass. They crossed to the rail fence which separated the meadow from the adjoining field and formed a part of the eastward boundary of the church lot.

No doubt, discretion would have got the better of curiosity, and the party would have proceeded directly to Jenny's house beyond the hilltop, had not Mrs. Latimer as she mounted the rail fence turned her eyes toward the road and discovered something that strongly excited her interest. She sat on the rider or uppermost rail with hand over her eyes and looked intently. A bunch of horses picketed beyond the churchyard was joined by a party of two mounted men leading a white pony. Mrs. Polly recognized her own Snowball!

She had caught but a glimpse of the group as they crossed the road, and the riders were immediately lost in the shadow, yet the form of her pony was too familiar to permit mistake. Had not Luke and Panther gone up the main road to Washington? How came they to be in that crowd of men, gathered yonder in the shadow of the church wall, and under the spreading oak trees? There they could be plainly seen, and the murmur of their voices heard as they seemed to discuss some exciting problem. It did not take the woman long to resolve that the mystery should then and there be solved, if at all solvable. So, bidding her companions remain where they were, or go forward to Jenny's house, as they pleased, she declared her purpose to get nearer to the meeting, and find out what was going on. She said no word of her more important purpose, not caring to make her companions confidants in her home affairs.

She held along the fence, which after the fashion of the times was overgrown in the angles with tall clumps of grass, wild flowers and elder bushes, and afforded much concealment. She inched her way carefully nearer and nearer to the roadside, and almost within earshot of the picketed horses. Here she had a fair view of what had attracted her attention, and learned that her husband and the Mingo were there, and Snowball with them.

Presently, Luke left his companion and joined the body of men several rods beyond, on the shaded side of the meeting house. He was not long gone, although it seemed an age to Mrs. Polly, watching in that strange position at that unusual hour. When Luke returned he was accompanied by David Bradford. The two walked to a spot apart from the crowd, and began a heated discussion. Not a word reached the listener's ear, but the tones of voice and manner of her husband satisfied her that something serious was in his mind, and that he was near the boiling point, and likely at any time to break forth into violence. Now one sentence reached her, sounding forth clearly upon the night air, for Luke in his excitement forgot his caution and raised his voice.

"You must go with us, or by Heaven—"

Bradford raised his arm in caution, and Polly heard his whispered "hush" as he dropped it, and Luke's voice ceased to be heard. Then the lawyer turned from his companion rather brusquely as if to rejoin the meeting. Thereat Luke

gave a signal, and Panther, who thus far had been hidden, darted from the shadow of the picketed horses and placed himself between Bradford and the crowd. The agitator shrank back so suddenly at this unexpected spectacle that he almost stumbled to the ground, while the Indian with hand holding his tomahawk stood like a bronze statue in the moonlight.

Bradford soon recovered, and turning to Latimer exclaimed:

“What does this mean, sir?”

Luke’s answer was quiet, but decided (his wife could make that out), and ere long the two seemed to come to an agreement and together entered the crowd.

Mrs. Latimer waited for their reappearance five, ten, fifteen minutes; a long, weary wait it seemed. Then, no one appearing, and the crowd beginning to fray off from the borders, scattering here and there by singles and doubles and groups, she deemed her position no longer secure. Not caring to be caught at eavesdropping, she stooped low and ran back under the shelter of the fence to her companions, who, for their part, had become much alarmed, and were glad to welcome their friend.

Without more ado the three fell into the shadow of the fence which they followed to a safe distance, and then struck across the field in the full moonlight, and so to Jenny’s house. The latter tried to persuade them to remain over night, and Mrs. Burbeck was anxious to do so, for the shock and alarm had discomfited her. Mrs. Polly herself was in anything but a placid mood, and her nerves had been well shaken. Notwithstanding, she decided that the secret meeting would soon be broken up and the men all dispersed to their homes, so that the way back to her own cabin would be unmolested. So they found it; yet, they traversed the homeward path with many side glances at the grove and clump of trees.

Mrs. Polly had scant sleep that night. She was turning over in her mind, and over and over again, the strange behavior of her husband, and wondering what it all might mean, and what it all might lead to? When she fell into sleep at last, her dreams were troubled. She woke up in the morning in a flood of tears, sorely unnerved for the day’s duty, and feeling more the loneliness of her situation than she had ever done when keeping solitary watch with

her baby on the banks of the Ohio, in the midst of the Indian country.

CHAPTER XII.

A CABIN IN THE WILDERNESS.

When John Latimer and his party had finished the log cabin on the keel boat the day was well advanced. Thinking it wise not to travel after dusk, it was settled to make camp near Mingo Bottom, a fertile river plain three miles below Steubenville. Mingo Bottom is associated with one of the most shameful and one of the saddest incidents in pioneer history. Here, on the fourth of March, 1782, rendezvoused the expedition under Williamson that massacred the Moravian Indians at Gnadenhütten, one of the bloodiest and most inexcusable incidents in American history, and one that cast a deep shadow upon the Scotch-Irish race, from whom the assassins were chiefly drawn.

Nearly three months later, May 20, met also at Mingo Bottom the ill-starred expedition of Col. Crawford, and thence departed against the Indians on the Sandusky, to return beaten back and defeated. The second in command was the leader of the Moravian massacre. These events were still fresh in the minds of the older members of our party. Many of the participants were personally known to them, and some were friends and kin.

The Mingo Bottom lands were at that time taken up and settled; and fearing lest some of the planters might be unfriendly, John pushed a little way beyond to the settlement of Fergus Kelly, a friend of Andy's. Now the boat's nozzle was moored to the bank hard by where a clearing and a cabin showed the beginnings of a home. The house was an ordinary log structure, except that at the middle in front a jutting bastion was made, into which the door was set, thus giving play for rifles, if need be, from loop-holes on either side. At the right and left windows were cut which were glazed with coarse linen greased with bear's oil to make it more translucent and preserve it from the weather. The roof was covered with clapboards or hewn slabs of timber, which were laid from ridge to eaves and held in place by cross logs braced by wooden pegs. As the boat

stopped, a child's voice was heard through the open cabin door singing a familiar tune.

"Hist!" said John, raising his finger. The noise of mooring was eased to note the child's sweet song, that floated out in the deep forest stillness. A most touching thing, a child singing in that western wilderness! Now, listening, they caught the words of a hymn which the home missionaries had taught the border folk:

"Ye little birds of Heaven
On every bough that sing,
You shame me with your early notes,
While on your morning wing."

It seemed a morning rather than an evening hymn. But the little maid, for it was a girl's voice, recked not and perhaps knew not the difference. She sang on prettily, but with that somewhat melancholy strain that pervaded melodies of the border, perhaps induced by its hard life. Winding their way along the river, Andy, followed by the General and Blanche, crossed the Virginia rail fence which encompassed the croft or adjacent clearing, and peering into the cabin found their forest songstress to be a lass of some seven or eight years. She was rocking a rude cradle, which was little more than a slab trough set on rough-hewed rockers, and chanting her lullaby song over a ruddy baby.

She rose up with a startled look at the sound of a strange voice greeting her, as if ever mindful of prowling savages; but was at once composed at the pleasant sight of friendly faces, and especially of a lady. She was clad in a coarse wool petticoat. Her swart face showed the touch of sun and air, and was clean and attractive. Her long and unkempt hair fell back over her shoulders, giving her an unked seeming, which was heightened by her bare legs and feet covered with red marks of irritating insects' bites. She held in her brown hand a leafy twig which she had used to whisk mosquitoes and flies from the infant's face. She glanced her black eyes with wonder from face to face of the intruders, and then rested them with unmistakable signs of admiration upon Blanche, who must have seemed to the lonely frontier lass like the angels of which she had heard.

When told who they were and for what come, her face

lit up with pleasant recognition of the "Fanny." For having so little to engage her thoughts, the child had learned to know the names of and even to recognize all the passing boats, and from her parents had caught an inkling of the owners. To Andy's friendly question she said that father and mother and brother Aleck were in the far clearing, pointing to rings and wreaths of smoke rising beyond the top of the girdled woodland. Listening now, the sound of an axe merrily beating against a hard tree trunk could be heard, and its echoes answered over the water from the bluff on the opposite shore. Standing beyond the tall patch of corn, they could see the woodman at his chopping, and the wife and mother, aided by a sturdy lad of ten years or so, busy about a brush heap which they were burning. Logs, stumps and branches had all been piled together and were being burned, as the shortest way to be rid of them.

Blanche wound her bugle, and that sound being known along the river side as the signal of a passing boat, the pioneers ceased their toil, and came over the clearing, well pleased to have a chat with human beings, and to hear news of affairs "in the settlements." Andy was greeted as became an old acquaintance. The Inspector, who feared but a grudging welcome, was surprised and pleased when Fergus shook his hand, saying in a frank yet deferential way:

"Giner'l Niville, sir, ye're hearty welcome to our plantation. I dar' say you don't re-cognisé me, but I mind you fine. When we moved intil Wes' Pennsylvania in '84 from Carlisle, we were in sorry plight enough; but your wise counsel and ginerous aid stood us in good stead. I've h'ard sore lies about ye sence, and mayhap some truths too (fer I don't like axcise laws anny better nor my neighbors), but I'll niver believe that a kind heart like yourn can go so far wrong. Axcuse me, sir, fer a-mentionin' of it, but I wush you well, an' you're hearty welcome!"

That bluff, warm-hearted greeting was sweeter to the General's palate than any word he had received for many days. In truth, he had contributed greatly to relieve the sufferings of settlers in his vicinity. He had accepted the Inspectorship chiefly to gratify President Washington; for he was a man of wealth, as the term went, having large possessions, a hundred slaves, and one of the finest mansions in the settled region. He had put his all at hazard for Colonial independence, and at his own expense had

raised and equipped a company of soldiers, marched them to Boston, and placed them with his son under the command of Washington. It was with a bitter spirit that he thought of these things, and how readily his fellow citizens forgot them when heaping maledictions upon him in these heated days. All the more, therefore, did this woodman's greeting give him pleasure, and awake generous emotions which late events had embittered.

The pioneer's wife joined in the welcome with cordial hospitality; a trait which characterized the early settlers, and which, being graft upon the customs and so upon the characters of that and the next generation, laid the foundation in good heredity for many of the beneficent schemes which honor and bless the present age.

Mrs. Kate Kelly was a fair sample of the sturdy pioneer women whose vigorous bodies, good sense and industry, and brave hearts made them fit mates for the men who conquered the wilderness. She was clad in a linsey-woolsey petticoat, and coarse linen waist whose short sleeves displayed muscular arms brown with work. A home-made kerchief was folded across her throat and bust, and fastened with a thorn. She wore moccasins, and had a sun bonnet of linsey built in the scoop fashion that yet prevails in some rural parts. It was furnished with many plaits, into which were thrust strips of birch bark in lieu of stiff paper, which kept the headgear in shape, and were taken out when the bonnet must go to the wash. She was not at all abashed in the presence of her nicely-attired lady guest, but with matronly independence, though with becoming modesty, made all welcome to her cabin.

As the camp must be prepared for the night, the men excused themselves, leaving Blanche with Mrs. Kate to inspect the cabin and gossip over divers affairs. However, the offer of milk was accepted, and that it might be fresh from the cows, for milking time was now come and the day's work about done, Mrs. Kate went out to the milking, while Fergus joined the men in their duties. It was agreed that the settler's family should sup with them in the open, much to the delight of Janet and Aleck. As Gen. Neville had stored the boat with sundries which were luxuries alongside the mush and milk, pone cake and bacon, hominy and game that formed the staple food of the cabin, the children carried the feast in memory many a day.

Blanche went with Mrs. Kate and got thus a good view of the home surroundings. A clearing around the house was given up to a field of Indian corn and pumpkins, a patch of potatoes and a small planting of flax. Beyond this the high timber was girdled, or ringed around the butt with an outchopped belt, to kill the leaves and cut off the shade, and thus allow a few plants to grow between, time and help being too scant to permit full clearing at present. A sty close by held a sow and a litter of pigs. Other porkers were running wild in the woods, feeding upon the rich mast. Beech nuts, hickory nuts, pig nuts and acorns were abundant in their season, not to speak of other lush morsels that swine affect.

"But what good can they do you," quoth Blanche, "running wild that way in the woods?"

What good? was the echoed answer, as if surprised at such a question. Had they not guns? And though Fergus commonly gave chase when they wanted pork, Mrs. Kate was by no means dependent on him. She could take her own rifle from the buckhorn bracket over the fireplace, and shoot a wild porker, or other wild beast, for that matter.

It would be ill housekeeping in the wilderness, the housewife continued, if it were not for the hog. To say nothing of its flesh in various forms, as ham, sausage, side meat, souse and spare ribs, the bristles helped in the rude sewing in vogue through the use of leather and deer-skin clothing. Brushes, too, came of them, though not as serviceable as might be. Moreover (and the cabin mistress seemed to think this no small matter), the pigs were enemies of rattlesnakes and copperheads. Oh! these were the terror of her life, next the savages. She trembled not for herself alone, but for the children, and never knew when they might be poisoned unto death. Blessed Ireland, where no snakes ever harbored! That very day had they unnnested and slain a brood of rattlers (Ugh!)—and burnt them in the brush fire with uncommon joy.

When the pigs were turned loose so far from fleeing from the snakes they sought them. They were agile in avoiding the poisonous fangs, and seizing the reptile, would tear it to pieces, or throw their sharp hoofs upon it and stamp it to death. Ay, indeed, they were useful animals, a true gift of God to poor pioneers! Thus Blanche learned,

and we may also, that the "Great American Hog," the subject of much modern diplomacy, has been a considerable factor in the progress of civilization. Who will rear a statue to the honor of this humble beast?

Turning from her pig-sty, Mrs. Kate came into the stable yard where three cows were nipping wisps of hay from a rick of tall stakes, a number of which, crossed like the letter X, were placed close together, and the hay tossed into the open top. Blanche thought it strange that cows with so much pasturage would take hay.

"Ah, but it's salted!" quoth Mrs. Kate. Salt was a most costly commodity, but the cows were almost half their living, with milk and cream, and butter, and bonny-clabber, and what the Pennsylvania Dutch call smearkase. So a pinch of salt in a pan of water well sprinkled over the hay brought the cows home regularly to the evening milking; for, poor things, they loved the salt and needed it, too, as much as themselves.

The tinkle of a bell tied about the throat of one of the cows ever and anon dropped a pleasant note upon the quiet evening air. "Why do you bell the cow?" asked Blanche, "and why not all of the herd?"

One was quite enough, the housewife averred; for being sociable creatures, the kine would be sure to keep together. The sound of one bell served as well as several, for it gave warning of the presence of the herd. The forestry was so thick around them that the cows need stray but a short way to be out of sight. Then, whether evening or morning, she knew just where to go to bring them in. And oh! it was indeed a comely sound, the tink-tinkle of the bell as the beast walked along and nipped the grass; or the sharper rink-tink, *tink-a-link*, as she swung her head back to whisk off the flies and gnats. Ever in the morning that was the first sound listened for through the river mist. When she had nearby neighbors, and the herds got together, so nicely did her ear get tuned to the sound of her own cow bell, that she could tell it amid all the clangor of the rest, as one could tell the voice of her own child in the hullabaloo of a score of romping children.

When the bairns were small, she would tie them in bed to hinder them from gadding off, and to fend them from fire and snakes. Then taking trail by the tinkling of the bell, she would make her way through the rank growth, all

beaded with dew, to where the cattle grazed; and so back to get the breakfast with dabbled skirts, and moccasins soaking wet and clammy to the feet. No! your deerskin shoes may be pretty, and all that, but in wet weather they are only a respectable way of going barefoot! How she missed the stout leathern shoes and the warm wool clothing of dear old Ulster! "Ah well, but we've a lordly domain of our own," quoth Mrs. Kate, "and half our acreage would be a noble barony in the auld country."

Thus she prattled on, while the milk was squeezed from the udders into foaming buckets, with many a cooing word as "so-oh, sookey! ho-oh, bossy!" and the like, such as milkmaids are wont to soothe their cattle with. Then they returned to the cabin, not forgetting to look into the log stable where two horses of excellent breed were haltered to their feeding trough. Horses, though at first scarce on the border, soon became quite plentiful, as much attention was paid to breeding them because of their great service at plowing, packing and pulling, and for saddle use on the warpath or the chase.

Thus four beasts, the hog, dog, cow, and horse, have jointly with man subdued the mighty wilderness. The sheep, too, has had its part; but while wolves were plenty frontier flocks grew slowly. Therefore, wool came in more tardily to add to the pioneer's comfort, who, driven by necessity, made use of dressed skins, and the flax with which his old country life had made him familiar.

By this time evening had come. The camp-fire was flaring on the river bank, and its lurid tongues were reflected on the still water of the little cove. Beyond the girdled wood the brush fire was burning with a steady glow, the flames having reached the heart of the pile and fastened upon the heavy logs, which added to the weird effect of night in the forest. The General's tent had been pitched for the first time, and therein Blanche's quarters established.

The boat table was brought ashore and spread with sundry stores, while Andy, as chief cook, prepared the game and Johnny-cake on the red, clean coals, in that implement known to pioneers as a "Dutch oven." Roasting ears, too, contributed by Fergus from his field of green corn, and baked in their husks within the hot ashes, added a luscious bite to the bill of fare. All being seated, the General at the

head said grace, or, asked a blessing, as it was there called, a matter in which he was punctilious. Then, all fell-to heartily; and it was fine to see the Inspector's courtly manner with no smack of superiority, and the jollity and goodwill of all. The negro caught his master's urbanity and served all, Mrs. Kate said afterwards, "as though we were quality folk!" So indeed they were, of the finest sort, if the world only knew it.

There was at least one of the company who for a time had his enjoyment of the meal much abridged. The boy Aleck found before him, as he sat on his log seat, a little cup (as he afterwards related) "stood up inside a bigger one, with some brownish lookin' stuff in it, which was nuther b'iled milk nor broth." What could it be? And what to do with the little cups and wee bit cutty spoon that belonged to them, he could not guess. He could make a fairish horn spoon, and whittle out a wooden one, and knew bravely what to do with them too, when it came to venison soup, and mush and milk, and succotash. But these toys? Tush!

However, he would ask Janet. But she was as dazed as he, and shook her frowsy pate with a despairing negative. Ah! he would watch the lady and the other big folks. They lifted the cup and supped from it. So did he. Ugh! the drink was nauseous beyond anything he ever had tasted. How he longed to sputter it out! But his pride checked him, and with the spirit of an Indian, he gulped down the deuced black draught, and made no wry face, though the tears streamed from his eyes. But must he drink it all? Ay, that he would if it choked him!

When the vessel was empty, and Hannibal came with his bland manner to refill it, the boy inwardly cursed the blackamoor, yet dare not say "no," but, sore distressed, heroically undertook the second helping. Now he noticed that some put cream into the mess, which he also did, and that whitened the black draught, but slopped it over into the "big cup" beneath. Still, it tasted a little better. Then he noticed that some put sugar within and stirred it with their cutty spoons. That he also did, and found the drink more palatable, but nasty still. Dear heart! could he only have the sugar without the other!

The lady must have read his thoughts, for there was a merry look in her bright eyes as she turned them upon him,

and then a sorry one, as she said: "Here, Hannibal, take some of this cake to the children. And fetch away their cups and saucers and give them some sugar. I dare say they have had enough coffee."

Coffee! And so that nasty truck was coffee, whose loss he had heard his folk bemoan so often, as they vaunted its goodness? Well! for all him, the darky might keep it in his big flagon, or let the others quaff their fill! Now, delivered from his misery, he contentedly regaled himself with his sweets. Do not be incredulous, dear reader, for this a true tale of the experience of a frontier lad, at his first sight of cup and saucer, and first taste of coffee.

John's hap was to get a seat by Blanche, and he could not but note how bright and pretty her face looked in the glare of the camp fire. Her dainty manners, too, he noted, and contrasting them with his own rude ways felt awkward and embarrassed. As graceful as the wild deer when at his own proper work and sport, he now felt somehow out of place, though in sooth he knew no other place he would choose rather to be in. He was not, indeed, as great a novice as the boy Aleck in the ways of the gentry. As a student in the Log Academy he had come in contact with many superior people; and some of the old-style folks with courtly manners were interspersed here and there among the settlers. His business with the officers of the garrison at Fort Pitt, and those of the troops already beginning to rendezvous for Gen. Wayne's Indian expedition, had also put something of an edge upon his backwoods behavior, to say nothing of his own natural instinct.

Nevertheless, as he drew his hunting knife from his belt and attacked his meal (for he was ravenously hungry), there was a pull upon him, and an embarrassment that came, he was conscious, from his rearness to Blanche Oldham. He felt the softening influence as a check upon his natural eagerness of hunger, and like Aleck, though with better disguise, he observed her table manners and modified his own thereby. Withal, he felt himself alongside of her but a clumsy, blundering clodhopper. Then he flushed, and thought within himself what a fool he was! And what difference could it make what this lady might think of him? And why should he ply his knife a whit more gently for her, or dally with his food? So the lusty fellow chafed while the fire burned within him, and little thought that

the young woman at his side gave no heed at all to his manners, whether good or bad, but only admired his manly beauty, and wondered how such as he could ever have come up in such uncouth surroundings.

Ah, fair lady, you may learn by and by, if you have much to do with these frontiersmen, that they are not so different in their make-up, take them by and large, from the remainder of mankind. For the gentle and the simple, the noble and the base are of every race and cult, and so quite independent of local rules and fashions. John Randolph of Roanoke once said, speaking of the decline of the bland and courtly manners of the old school, that he knew of but one real gentleman left in Virginia, and he was an old, gray-headed slave. Verily! True nobility, like love, laughs at locksmiths; and, who would think it? even Blanche Oldham might come to love a forester.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BRAVE DAYS OF OLD.

Now the talk came to the news of Washington County, and there it stayed for the rest of the evening; for the Kellys were hungry for tidings of their old friends. Being religious folk, like so many of the settlers in those parts, the most important intelligence was the late death of their beloved friend and pastor, the Rev. Joseph Smith, one of the earliest and most devout of the missionaries. He was a fine classical scholar, a preacher of moving eloquence and most devout piety. He always kept his cloak near his bed, that, waking up at night, he might throw it over him and rise to spend a season of prayer. Withal he was brave, manly, and rarely gifted with good sense to counsel and lead his people. A great loss, such a man, thought Gen. Neville, to a new country where moral restraints were so much needed, and the few pastors were the only public teachers of religion, morality and civil duty.

So drifted John Latimer into the conversation, and prompted by Andy, he told the story of his father's first flat-boat journey to New Orleans. Well he told it, too; halting somewhat at first, but warming with his subject,

and having a natural gift, put into it a color and pathos that made all hearts tingle, and brought the tears more than once to Blanche's eyes.

JOHN'S STORY OF FATHER SMILEY'S VENTURE.

Thus it came about. Mr. Smith was settled over the congregation of Cross Creek and Upper Buffalo.

"What an odd name for a church!" quoth Blanche.

"True enough," interposed the General. "Our people have the habit of naming their places of worship from their localities, particularly from the creeks and runs near which they are always built. This sometimes gives an uncouth, not to say irreverent title, as for example, the 'Raccoon Creek Church,' or the 'Church of Horseshoe Bottom.' But our Scotch-Irish settlers would think that it savored of the 'dregs of prelacy' to name a meeting house 'St. Andrew' or 'St. Paul,' although their Scottish ancestors had no scruples, it appears, in holding to such titles. Excuse my interruption, Captain. Go on with your story."

The people of that section, John continued, had been anxious for a pastor of their own faith and order, and pledged him what was thought a competent sum for a living; and so it was, if he could have gotten it. It was quite necessary that, like his neighbors, he should till a farm and eke out his stipend, and to that he gladly assented. But being limited as to locality, he must buy a farm convenient to the meeting house. Having no money, he bought his land on credit, promising to pay with the salary pledged by his people. So he set to work, lovingly, zealously, and successfully.

He was truer to his flock than they to him, for after several years his salary was far in arrears. There was little or no money in circulation. Plenty of wheat there was, but no market, and a shilling (twelve and a half cents) a bushel in cash was its highest price. Salt had to be brought across the mountains on pack horses, and was worth eight dollars a bushel. They were worse off for a grain market than folk are now (quoth John), which was saying a good deal.

So matters stood when the time came for the last payment on Mr. Smith's farm, and he was told that he must pay or go. Three full years' salaries were due, and for lack

of this his land and improvements must be lost, and his pastorate abandoned. In this strait the people of the two congregations were called together, and the case laid before them. They were unable to pay a tithe of their debt, and no money could be borrowed. Plan after plan was suggested and abandoned, and so in despair they adjourned to meet the next week.

Meanwhile, a subscription of wheat was proposed. There was nothing else to do, it seemed; and at Moore's Mill, the only grist mill in the county, they found they could get their wheat ground on reasonable terms. So, when the congregational meeting gathered, a great quantity was subscribed, and afterward packed on horses, in some cases twenty or thirty miles, to mill, where in a month's time it was made into flour.

Again the people were assembled. The usual prayer being had, the question came up, "Who will run the flour to New Orleans for sale?"

John Latimer, who had lately made that journey, could speak understandingly of its present hardships and dangers, but a few years ago these were immensely greater. So then, it was a startling question, that, with which the congregation had to wrestle. It was a perilous adventure, perilous in the extreme. Nearly all the way was a wilderness. The air was full of gloomy tales of the treacherous Indians who lined the river banks. More than one boat's crew had gone on that journey and come back no more. If New Orleans was reached safely, the return journey was either by sea or a march over a stretch of two thousand miles, for the boats could not be brought up the river so far against the current. Much of this way was through swamps and everglades poisoned with fevers, and all of it beset by roving savages, and lawless robber bands the scum of exiled English criminals and Eastern desperadoes. Even should the adventurers be so fortunate as to return, their trip must cost them months of time. It was a stubborn question and a sore test that,—“Who will run the flour to New Orleans?” Who would give the time, endure the toil, brave the danger?

There was silence in the meeting, and they were no cowards, those hardy pioneers, with men like Adam and Andrew Poe among them. Not a volunteer offered himself, neither young nor middle-aged—not one. The scheme

was like to fail. Yes, it had failed! There was naught to do but to adjourn the meeting, and go home, and let their pastor leave. Some of the women, in truth, gritted their teeth and wished they were men! However, it was noted that they who had men folks fit to go, were not so free of speech. There was an awful silence, which at last was broken by a voice somewhat shaken with age and trembling with emotion:

“Here I am, send me!”

Every eye turned upon the speaker. It was Father Smiley, an elder in the church, sixty-four years old, an age which in frontier countries is riper than elsewhere, for exposure and toil and nerve-fret through Indian perils, make deep draughts upon vital forces. He was a hoary-headed man, and there he stood in the midst of the astonished assembly, saying again: “Here I am, send me!”

Well, there followed a strange scene, John had heard it said. The people were swayed with emotion like the forest leaves before a high wind. Father Smiley’s offer was like a clap out of a black thunderhead, which breaks up the cloud and lets out the rain. Men and women were melted into tears, as their venerated and venerable elder stood there devoting himself to the work from which they had shrunk. They rose and clustered around the old man with question and wonder and remonstrance, only to learn that his resolution was fixed. Rather than lose their pastor he would brave danger, toil and death.

“But he could not go alone?” asked Blanche.

No, surely not alone; but some one, it was thought, would now volunteer to consort with him. Even then the matter hung fire. At last Luke Latimer offered, and another young man came forward to volunteer as assistant with him, to whom if the enterprise were successful, a large reward was promised.

The day came for starting. There lay the boat on the Monongahela, loaded with its freight of flour coopered snugly by willing hands. Never a flat boat there or elsewhere, before or since, had such a send-off as that. At the meeting house the pastor had met his flock, and there were none wanting, you may be sure, who could come forth and beseech God for the adventurers. Young and old, from far and near, from love of Father Smiley and their deep interest in his mission, had gathered together.

“Would they not go down to the river,” some one asked, “to speed the voyagers thence with their presence and cheers?”

“Yes, that they would!” Then, though the church was full fifteen miles away from the landing, forth they went with their pastor at their head, and came down to the bank of the river, to bid the old man and his aids adieu. Was there ever a parade like that? Over rough bridle roads and forest trails, within the sights and sounds of that maiden land still with its wilderness robes upon it, marched they on to the Monongahela.

Now they assembled upon the green sloping shore, while the man of God offered a prayer, tearful, tender, and mighty with fervent trust in the Heavenly Guide of men Who had led Israel of old through the wilderness journey. This ended, they sang the twenty-third Psalm in the old Scotch version. How the woods and waters rang with it, and the echoes trembled over the wooded hills and the bosky bluffs forment them!

“The Lord’s my Shepherd, I’ll not want,
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green; He leadeth me
The quiet waters by.
Yea, though I walk in Death’s dark vale,
Yet will I fear no ill,
For Thou art with me, and Thy rod
And staff me comfort still.”

“There,” said the old Scotchman, “untie the cable, and let us see what the Lord will do for us!”

“Good-bye! God bless you!” thundered forth from the throng, as the boat slowly floated away, down the Monongahela. Then there was a great silence until the vessel was lost behind the next jutting curve, and sadly the people dispersed.

Four months passed with no word of Father Smiley. Five, six months were gone, and many hearts were fearful that ill had befallen him. Seven, eight months passed, and few there were who hoped to see his dear face more. But always in the public service of God’s House, and in family worship and secret prayer, Father Smiley and his forlorn hope were remembered. At last, nine months and more had gone since the expedition went forth, and the most sanguine had surrendered hope, and waited for Eternity to uncover the hero’s fate.

So came about, once more, the Sabbath day, and as the people gathered to worship in their log sanctuary, lol on the rude bench before the pulpit where the elders were wont to sit, there sat Father Smiley, composed and devout!

Dear, dear! How hearts leaped up, and tears welled forth, and grateful spirits up went to God in Heaven for this mercy! When they came to the psalm the minister gave forth, as on the river bank, at the parting:

“The Lord’s my Shepherd, I’ll not want.

There was no room to line it out, for the people quite ran away from the precentor and sang off-hand. It was a merry welcome, and most devout that the old man had; and the young men who had shared his adventure shared also his loving greeting.

When it came to the intimations, the people were asked to assemble at early candle-lighting next day and hear the report. So once more all were there together, and when thanks had been rendered to Almighty God for his safe return, Father Smiley arose and told his story. He touched lightly enough on his perils and labors which, indeed, John supposed, judging from his father’s account, would have taken a week for the telling. But the gist of it was that the Lord had prospered his mission; that he had sold the flour for twenty-seven dollars a barrel, and got safely back. So said, he drew forth a leathern purse, and canting it over the Communion table, pulled the thongs, and out ran a clinking stream of golden coins and made a shining hoard the like of which many of the spectators had never seen before.

From this was set forth, as agreed, for each of the aids a hundred dollars. Then Father Smiley was asked to name his charges for the nine months’ services. He meekly answered that he thought he ought to have the same as one of the young men, though he had not done quite as much work.

“Ay, forsooth, good man; God bless him!” quoth the people.

It was forthwith proponed to pay him three hundred dollars; which, however, he sturdily refused to take until the pastor’s account was fully satisfied. Then they counted the money. All eyes were fixed upon the elders as they sat

there underneath the pulpit, in the dim light of the candle dips, and told the coin, laying down the pieces with a merry click and chink that sounded forth sweetly in the ears of the eager people.

"What is the tale? What is the tale?" they cried when the elders were done.

To make end of the story, there was enough to pay the three years' salary due Mr. Smith, and another year's salary in advance; to reward Father Smiley with three hundred dollars, and to leave a goodly dividend to those who had contributed money to build the flat boat and furnish the needful supplies the expedition. It was over-canny on their part, some thought, to receive all this remainder, since its value came almost wholly from Father Smiley's adventure; but let that pass! Thus their debts were paid, their pastor fully relieved, and until his late lamented death, he broke for them the bread of life. Now the good man sleeps in the churchyard at Upper Buffalo, and Father Smiley's bones rest not far from his.

The Inspector listened with marked pleasure to the young man's recital, and seemed unusually thoughtful when all was done. At length, breaking the silence, he said: "Well, Captain John, that is a moving tale and well told. I've been thinking that it uncovers, better than anything I know, the hard straits of our borderers in the matter of their crops. I dare say you think me severe in my official duties; but, in truth, I have often felt the deepest sympathy with the settlers who are driven to such stress and peril to find a market, without which their crops lie worthless on their hands. No doubt, the Government does not sufficiently apprehend the need that drives them to put their grain into the most portable and salable compass; for that is the problem that lies at the root of all our revenue troubles. It's mainly a question of transportation, and Western civilization waits upon its solution. Ah, me!" He sighed as he rose from the table. "It is truly a hard task at times to know one's duty; and yet harder to do it when it pinches and angers one's friends and neighbors!"

Now preparations were made for bed. The children, who had long been yawning, were led away by their parents to the cabin. Featherfoot, who had declined to sit at table with the others, not liking the restraint, and ate by the camp fire, shared a moiety of the tent with Blanche. The

General slept in the other part, a blanket screen being hung between. The newly built boat-cuddy served for the others, though John again divided the night watch with Andy. No incident, however, disturbed the slumbers of the camp, and no sounds save the usual cries of night-prowling birds and beasts, broke the wilderness stillness.

CHAPTER XIV.

LOVE-MAKING IN A CABIN A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

The incident at Mingo Bottom was so pleasing to Gen. Neville that he concluded to tarry for a day's shooting. John remained to protect the boat and care for Blanche, and Fergus volunteering to serve as guide, the two set out together accompanied by Hannibal. The day wore on pleasantly with Blanche, to whom a frontier settlement was a novelty, and who found interesting companionship in Mrs. Kate and her two children.

The morning duties of the camp were soon done, and John had leisure to devote to his fair passenger. He was loath to intrude himself, but the affair of the catamount had broken the ice of reserve, and Blanche was well disposed to be friendly. The lady having expressed a wish to take a jaunt into the forest, John summoned Featherfoot, and the trio started across the wooded bottom to the hills beyond. The day was bright, and the animated life of the forest all agog. Squirrels in great number leaped among the trees, and quails piped their shrill whistle from the underbrush. Woodcock ever and anon darted across the pathway, showing for the nonce their reddish-brown colors, and disappearing in the chaparral. The wild turkeys sounded their rolling bass, and at least one fine gobbler showed his dark, glossy metallic feathers, as he dodged his wattled head and hurried out of sight. The rapid tap-tap of woodpeckers sounded through the silent woods, and now and then one was seen perched upon a decaying trunk or an old stump, bobbing its fine red head and apparently taking no heed of the obtruding strangers. Mocking-birds whistled in the low brush along the shore; and meadow-larks, whose sweet notes may be heard from the Atlantic to the Pacific shore,

sang one to another in the little patches of mead on the river side.

Blanche at last grew weary, and John found a charming forest sofa upon a fallen log which was covered with green moss and gray lichens, and gave a softly cushioned seat. There he sat by her side, and while the dog curled himself at Blanche's feet, and Featherfoot on a mossy boulder hard by wrought at quilling a moccasin, they talked of life in the woods and forest experiences until the near approach of noon admonished them to return to camp. The recollection of that forest jaunt and the bright chat in that woodland boudoir and on the way to and from it, long remained with both maid and man as one of the most delightful treasures of memory.

The noon meal ended, a long afternoon lay before the campers in Mingo Bottom. The air was still and the August sun glowed hot upon the shining river. There was scarcely a movement among the leaves in the tall sycamores, oaks and beeches overhead, and their far-spreading limbs cast a grateful shade. Underneath one of these forest monarchs John spread a wide mat of skins and there ensconced Blanche, and warned Featherfoot to bide with her lest she should be frightened in the lonely woods. The maiden yielded to the lazy influence of the summer day and open air, and after fighting awhile with prying ants and other insects, covered her face with a kerchief and gradually dozed off into a sound nap.

Presently she awoke, and as time began to drag heavily, was pleased to welcome John to her forest bower. He, intent upon duties of hospitality, brought his violin, and an hour merrily passed with the music. Blanche aided with songs; and won by the cheery scene, Andy came with Bounce and presently set the latter to dancing to the fiddle. At last growing tired of this, John proposed that Andy should spin a yarn; and knowing well his best points in that line, urged that he give them an account of his own courtship.

"He has given me several tempting bits," he remarked, turning to Miss Blanche, "and has promised some time to give me all. I'm sure we shall enjoy it, for I've heard mother say that she'd go a day's journey any time to hear Andy Burbeck tell his story of 'Settin' up with Elder McKeag's Peggy.'"

Blanche added her entreaties to John's, and at last Andy consented. The party settled themselves in lounging attitudes upon the grass and rugs, and Andy taking seat upon a mossy rock, bade Bounce lie down at his feet, and after a few preliminary explanations, began his love tale. It would be a shame not to preserve as much as may be of his rich Scotch-Irish dialect, if it were only for the sake of the vocabulary. But if the reader will pardon the liberty, we will leave his own imagination to supply the rolling burr which commonly gave such peculiar unction to Andy's speech.*

SETTIN' UP WITH ELDER McKEAG'S PEGGY.

"Whar ye gawin', Andy?" siz mother, who sat on the hearth a-peelin' apples.

"Why, mommer," siz I, "I'm a-thinkin' of settin' up with Peggy McKeag the night."

"Ah, sonny," siz she, "A' misdoubt ye've a pore chanct with yon gial."

"Wull, mom," siz I, "A' crave's a fair field an' no favor. Annyhow A'll try, for you know bravely that Peggy McK'ag's the likeliest lass in all the settlement!"

"Ay, Andy, Peggy's a rare well-favored lass, A'll allow," siz she. "But she's been contrairy with ye this twel'-month, an' don't seem to care a farden for you. She's no better nor you, for all her puttin' on airs. An A' wair in your place A' wouldn't go the len'th o' the doour for to pleasure her."

"What, mommer," siz I, "don't you think she cares jist a weeny bit for me?"

"Shame a haet!" siz she; "though Ah'm sore pained for til say't on your account, honey. But A'm feared it's all no good. Ye've been sure of her nigh a dozen times, off an' on; but she's like the Irishman's flea, whin ye put your finger on her she isn't there. Give her clane up at wanct, Andy. Letabee for letabee, siz I, an' there's as good fish in the say as iver was caught. A' misdoubt Peggy's tuck up with that poky numskull, Bill Mackinzie."

* It may be allowed the author to take the reader into his confidence and inform him that the chief purpose of Andy's story is to assemble in a brief compass a large number of the current folk words and phrases of the Scotch-Irish speech at that period.

"Well, mom," siz I, "A'll take ma chanct along o' him, and deil take the hin'most. Faint heart ne'er won fair lady, you know, so here goes! Mebbe after all A'll make the riffle. Who knows?"

Thereupon havin' done the chores, an' tanded to the critters, an' righted things around the barn, A' got on ma Sunday duds, trigged up a bit, slicked ma hair with the reddin' comb, an' about sundown started acrost the clairin' to Elder McK'ag's cabin.

As A' drewed nigh the house who should A' see but Bill Mackinzie comin' cat-a-corner acrost the fields jist foranst me. He was dressed up to the nine's, an' fine he knowed it. "Dawgon him!" thinks I, "the jig's up for this time. A'll have no chanct the night fer to git a word in aidgewise with Peggy." Howiver, A' hurried up to the picket gate peart as you pl'ase, but feelin' mighty jubous, for all that.

"How air you?" siz I, chipper enough, for A' minded the sayin' that it's alluz good to be ceevil, as the old woman said when she curtsied to the divil. But in meh heart A' was a-thinkin' how kin A' git shut of that long-legged codger—an' marvelin' if A' wouldn't hev to knock the hindsights off'n him afore A' was done with it.

"Lollyguin!" siz Bill, startin' back, "you baint hyur agin, Andy Burbeck?"

"Wull, mester sassbox," siz I, feelin' my dander risin', "whar am A' then, ef A' haint hyur? Belike, A've got a better right nor you to be hyur. Annyhow, ef my prisence mislikes you, you haint no call to go furder, an' kin jist take the back trail!"

"Hold your gab!" siz he, "you beeta hadn't gimme anny of your impidence or I'll—"

"What'll ye do?" siz I, takin' a step for'ad an' comin' clost til him, for A' was gittin' powerful het up, you see. "Tech me if you dar!" says I. "You'll have your wark cut out for you, my brave laddie. You dassent do't, bad cess to you! You dassent lay the heft o' your finger on me! Somebody'll git hurted ef—"

Jist then the cabin door opened and Elder McK'ag stepped out. Both on us wilted at wanct, an' turned tor'd him sorta sheepish like.

"What's all this rumtion, lads?" siz he, a-lookin' at us with a quizzical cast to his eye. "Come in! you beeta come until the house, an' stop your carryin'-on out thar."

“Good aven, Elder,” siz Bill, kindeh dazed like. An’ “Good avenin’ til ye, Elder,” siz I, quite put out an’ all in a swither, an’ hardly knowin’ what I sayed. “We wair jist a-comin’ in, but stopped a minute to pass the time o’ day.”

A’ knowed he opined purty clairly what was agoin’ on atween us; tho’, whin he h’ard what A’ telled him he niver let on. But A’ suspicined he was a-chucklin’ inside, an’ mayhap wusht we’d gone off a bit funder an’ smashed other to smithereens. For the Elder was a widder man, an’ had nary childer nor Peggy, an’ he didn’t care much to have anny bucks a-takin’ a shine to her.

He stood a-lookin’ at us awhile with his thumbs hitched intil his galluses, and then sayed: “Ay, ay, lads! Ah’ll uphold ye for that. But it sounded rayther rambunctious-like, for passin’ the time o’ day. It was a heap o’ cacklin’ for so small an aigg. Howsomiver, walk in an’ tak’ a sate.”

In A’ marched, an’ Bill a-follerin’; but his legs were so long that he had to jouk his red head as he wint inunder the door jamb. The table was set for supper in the middle of the room, an’ a taller dip was a burnin’ on’t. A big backlog was in the wide chimbley with the flames eatin’ a right smart chunk out’n the heart. The crane swung in’ard with the kittle a-sizzin’ an’ a-stamein’; an’ a spider full o’ bacon a-brilein’ on the hot coals, an’ a pile o’ flannel cakes on a plate jist ready to be sarved.

But hokey-pokey! all that was nought to Peggy, who stood thar anent the h’arth! She had on a smart red an’ black plaid flannel gownd, span new, an’ a white apern, an’ a linen hankercher folded acrost her buzzum, an’ beaded moccasins on her nate little fut. Her cheeks were like peach blooms in the springtime, an’ her sleeves rolled up above the elbows, a-showin’ her well-turned arms.

My fathers! wairent she the verra pink o’ perfection! Mother allus wanted me tuh kape company wi’ Sal Martin, becaze, she sayed, she’s better nor she’ bonny. But gimme Peggy McK’ag, siz I, for she’s both better *an’* bonny. Sal Martin’s not a patchin’ til her! An’ thar she stood as purty as a picter, a-grinnin’ an’ a-kackelin’ at us uns, as we traipsed in after her dad, Indian file.

Now, A’d alluz been the bashfulest an’ awkerdest kind of a gawk when A’ wint for to see the gials, an’ A’ suspicined that was why Peggy didn’t set so much store by me. But seein’ her thar so all-fired han’some, an’ thinkin’

of me a-losin' of her all along o' Bill Mackenzie, riled me so's A' didn't keer a bawbee what A' sayed. A' felt like all possessed the whole night, from A' come intil the door till A' left the cabin. So A' yorked off my coonskin cap, an' makes my best obe, 'eience, an' bid Peggy good avenin', an' wusht her good health. "Though," siz I, "th's no need-cessity for that, for ye're the picter of rosy health, an' purtier nor a posey."

She wasn't uset til sich compliments from me (no more was A' myself, for that matter!), an' sort o' started, an' blushed, an' looked quare, an' belike a bit miffed, to boot. But hit or miss, siz I to myself, it's now or niver! So A' spakes right up agin.

"Peggy, my dear, mother bid me fer til tell you that she's got that recait from the meenister's wife for makin' a black dye out'n new mown hay. An' ef ye'll jist come over the morrow, she'll show you how to mix it for dyein' the Elder's Sunday breeches, as you was inquiren' about."

"A'm sure A'm much obleeged til her," siz Peggy, with a bit blush a-tippin' her two cheeks. "An' til you tco, Andy," says she, "for a-tellin' of me. But hav ye had supper yit?"

"Not a haet," siz I; "an' ef it wont put ye out too much ye may plaze put ma name in the pot."

"Sartan," siz she, "an' hearty welcome A'm sure, ef ye'll take pot luck wi' us. Good avenin' til ye, Mester Mackenzie," siz she, a-turnin' to Bill an' droppin' a curtsey as genteel as rale quality. "Won't ye take a cheer an' have a bite an' sup?"

"That A' wull, an' thankee kindly," siz Bill; an' takin' up a stool he toted it acrost the room an' sat down aside Peggy, as brash as a town beau. But what manners could you expec' (thinks I) from sech a lunk as that Bill? You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, no how; an' it's hard gittin' breeks off a Highlander. All the same, however, A' noted that Peggy hadn't ast me to take a sate, an' A' was gittin' to feel a lettle huffy about it, when the Elder, seein' Peggy had sarved the supper, sayed: "Come, lads, have a snack! Jist set right down an' fall to."

Now, bein' s'ated, and Peggy behint a st'amin' pot o' sassafras tay, with crame an' maple sugar on one side, an' a crock o' bubblin' mush an' the milk piggin on t'other, the Elder turns to me an' says: "Andy, wull ye do the biddin'?"

"Axcuse me, Mr. McK'ag," siz I, "it ud ill become sich as me to ast a blessin' in the prisence of an Elder of the Church. Axcuse me, plaze!"

Elder McK'ag looked askant at me, as though ruther juberous how to take what A' sayed, then turned to Bill, who sat fornent me. "Mester Mackinzie," siz he, "wull ye do the biddin', then?"

Now Bill was a perfesser, though a powerful weak un, leastways in spots; an' A' reckon he tho't he'd a chanet to cotton to the Elder an' git on his good side an' show off agin me. So he jouked his noddle an' shet his eyes, an' began:

"For what we are about to racave," siz he, startin' off as peart as a parson. But then, seein' he'd got onto the wrong trail an' started the 'Piscopal grace, which he knowed 'ud rile the Elder powerful, he balked an' stuttered, an' got red as a gum tree after frost. Then hopin' he'd make out nex' time, he struck in agin: "Now—I—lay me ———O good land!" siz he, breakin' off short, clane upset an' all thro' other.

Peggy snickered right out, but A' helt in sober as a jedge, more by good luck nor good guidin'. Ther' was an awful pause. Peggy got redder'n a beet, an' then whiter'n a lily (Good bless her dear heart!) an' looked up scaret like intil her father's face. But the old man niver let on, an' sayed nary a word savin' only "Humph!" an' pickin' up knife an' fork began to sarve the bacon.

Wull, A' didn't envey Bill that releegious axercise! Nor A' didn't pity him nuther. You'll sing small now, my larkie, thinks I, an' was fairly bustin' for a good guffaw, but dastent do't lest the Elder 'd' come down on me like a thousand o' brick. Besides, A' seed that Peggy, bein' kind o' sorry for Bill, an' thinkin' she had hurted his feelin's, was castin' about fer til smooth things over a bit, an' was mighty perlite til 'im, an' jist sort o' gi'me the go-by for the rest o' the male.

"Oh, yes," thinks I. "You're keerless enough o' my feelin's, but thunderin' pertickler about hissen?"

Supper over, "Come, Peggy," says the Elder solemnly, "Le's have warship now." But A' noticed that he didn't ax Bill to take the Buk. So Peggy brought the Bible an' set it down afore her father, an' shoved the taller dip alongside him. But A' couldn't listen much, nor pray nuther, as far

as that goes, for thinkin' that the plaguey gial had sot down clost to Bill, an' for watchin' him a-castin' sheep's eyes at her, whiles, through all the readin'.

"Bonny perfessor that!" thinks I, "a-sparkin' at sich a time!"

Warship done, the Elder lit his pipe an' sot down in a corner of the chimbley-place to smoke. Then what does Peggy do but hurry up with the best cheer an' set it down right by her dad, an' ast Bill to tak' a sate! He was tickled to death at that to be sure, an' sot down as large as a lord an' began a long crack wi' the Elder.

Seein' how things was a-gawin, my heart sunk most intil my boots; but gittin' despert agin, A' shuk off the doldrums an' spunked up to Peggy an' says:

"Wull, Peggy, seein' there's nought else for me to do, A' reckon A' beeta turn to an' help you redd off the table. Men folks is no shucks at tidyin' up things, an' too many cooks spoil the broth," siz I, lookin' hard an' glum at Bill. "But willin' heart makes light work, an' A'll make out for lack o' better; so here goes, Peggy, ma dear."

With that A' nabbed a han'ful of plates an' toted 'em intil the little leanto whar Peggy kep' an' washed her chainey things. Land o' Liberty! All unbeknownst A'd fallen onto a streak o' good luck! Thar A' was in that cuddly all meh lone with Peggy, peekin' out of the lettie door at Bill an' the Elder argifyin' hot an' heavy on the Stamp Act an' the Sons of Liberty, an' havin' sich interteenin' discourse that they gave nayther heed nor hap to Peggy an' me. That was my las' chanct! Now or niver, thinks I! Go in, Andy, an' make a spoon or spile a horn!

My heart was a-poundin' like a churn dasher as A' stood thar a-watchin' Peggy swash about the plates in the smokin' hot water, an' lookin' sweeter nor a sprig posey.

"Peggy," siz I at last, leanin' over clost to her an' sp'akin' low; "Peggy, A' can't stand this anny longer. A' love you more'n all creation, an—"

"*No, no! that won't do!*" sings out the Elder, so loud an' pat that we both started an' turned tor'd the door, a-thinkin' he was sp'akin' til us uns. But thank stars! he was a-settin' thar cool as a cowcumber, lookin' intil the fire an' argifyin' with Bill, an' it was him he was hollerin' at, not me. A' don't know, an' niver shall, A' axpec', what possessed me to do it, but as Peggy turned back her face from

the door A' jist up and kissed her cheek. A' couldn't a' helped it ef old Sattan hisself had 'a bean thar to hender.

Jiminy! A' felt that buss clane down til my toes. But, sakes alive! thinks I, what hev A' done? A've spilt the fat intil the fire this time, sartain! Now A'll git my walkin' papers, sure as shootin'!

"Goodness-gracious-me, Andy Burbeck!" siz Peggy, droppin' her plate intil the pan. "How dar ye do that?"

"Peggy," siz I, still kindeh possessed an' thinkin' A' might as wull die for an' old sheep as a lamb, "Peggy," siz I, "bein' as you wush it, A'll jist show you how A' dast to do it." An' A' up an' kissed himagin!

What did she do? She didn't do nought! But blushed, an' hung her purty face, an' sayed "Andy" as low an' as sweet as a cooin' cushat, an' looked down intil the pan, an' wint on quietly washin' the dishes!

"Peggy, my darlin'!" siz I, most wild with hope, but feared lest A' might blunder, an' nip the rose in the bud; "Peggy, you do love me, A' belave. Tell me that you do, Peggy, my love, an' A'm the proudest an' happiest man in the Wistern Survey."

She looked up askant, an' sayed: "Hoosh, Andy; don't spake so loud, plaze. Bill 'll overhear us, an' then—"

"Drat Bill!" siz I; "spake out, sweetheart, an' tell me the good news wi' your own swate lips. Do you love me, Peggy?"

"Wull—Andy," siz she, slow an' solemn, but tinder an' arnest like, "A'—allow—that—A'—do!" An' she pursed up her red lips jist a lilly-bit, an'—wull, A' rayther reckon A' didn't neglee' that Providential oppertoonty!

"Ah, Peggy," siz I, lookin' over at Bill, who was six good inches taller nor me, an' A'm no runty, nayther, "it aint alluz the longest pole 'at knocks the persimmons, is it, darlin'? But what possessed you to favor Bill so an' slight me, the night? Whin ye wint an sot beside him at warship, an' than give him the best cheer beside your dad, A' tho't it was all up with me."

"Tut, tut! Andy," siz she, "what 'ud 'a happened ef A'd 'a sot you thar? But belike you'd wush to swap places now?" siz she, lookin' up slyly.

"You lettle witch!" siz I, givin' her another kiss. "A' niver dremt ye was sich a sly puss." A' don't know axac'ly how long them dishes was a-washin'; for A'd wiped 'em, ye

see, an' A' niver was extry brisk at that sort o' business. But whan they was done A' says: "An' now A've got what A' come for, A'll e'en be goin home fer til tell the good news to mother. A' kin trust ye with Bill for wan night, darlin', an' he won't be here, A' allow, whan A' come to set up wi' ye the morrow. An we's 'll hev a jollier time then, Peggy, my love, for ye see two's company, but three's a crowd."

"Wull, Andy," siz she, "A' suppose you beeta be goin'; though dearie me! it's a sore night A'll hev on't, A'll be bound! But thank goodness! A'll soon be redd of that poky blatherskite, Bill. But Andy, darlin', do ye love me truly?" siz she, lookin' tinder an' longin' like intil ma face.

"Deed an' double, A' do!" siz I. "A'll crost ma breast to that anny day, ma dear. An' ef the Goodman spares us, an' your dad is agrayable, we's 'll be wedded sure an' sartin, Peggy," siz I.

"Wull, Andy," siz she, "won't you win the clock for me afore you go? She alluz runs down of a Saturday night." Now, the old Dutch clock stood in the ind of the settin' room fornent the fireplace, an' as Bill an' the Elder had their backs tor'ds us, A' jist tuk a kiss for toll atween each weight as A' wun 'em up, an' an extra kiss for the finishin'.

Bad cess til him! Jist then that pesky Bill turned roun' an' caught us at it! My crackies! how he stared, an' glowered, an' dropped his chops till his mouth looked like a suller door. Peggy blushed redder'n a rose, but she niver flunked, but jist r'ached up an' gi' me a quiet kiss an' whispered "Good-night, darlin', an' don't you forgit me. Let Bill glower! We hae'nt no cause to be ashamed, an' A' don't keer a buckie for him."

So A' came forad an' shuck han's wi' Elder McK'ag, an' bid him good-night. An' feelin' so tiptop, an' not wushin' to be out with Bill, A' tho't A'd e'en make up with him, seein' A' was all right with Peggy. So A' says, "Good-night til ye, Bill!" an' helt out my han'.

"My name haent Bill!" says he. "Leastways not to you," siz he, grumpy as a bear an' makin' no sign.

A' felt like fetchin' him a side-wipe for his ill manners, an' he desarved a cloutin' too. But, laws-ee! who'd look for manners in gawky Bill? As lief go to the divil for a dishclout. An' what's the use o' quarrelin' with sich as him, thinks I. Fight a skunk an' git a bad smell! Besides,

he's sore enough fretted a'ready, an' they's no use a-pourin' water on a drowned rat. He'll be warse afore he's better, A' lay a pretty penny. So A' spoke out:

"All right, then, jist as you plaze. Good night, Wull'em—Mister Wull'em Schomberg Mackinzie!" siz I, an' left the cabin.

Mother seein' me a-comin' home so soon, looked up from her knittin' an' shuck her head, thinkin' all had gone ajee.

"Wull, sonny," siz she, "Bill run ye out, did he?"

"Leastways," siz I, puttin' on a solemn face, "A' left him a-settin' up with Peggy an' the Elder."

"Ay, honey, A' telled ye so!" siz she. "It's jist as A' opined. But ye would threap me down, an'—"

"Hold on, mommer," siz I, goin' up an' kissin' her. "Ye're barkin' up the wrong tree this time. Peggy's all right, an' A'm all right, an' Bill Mackinzie's badly sacked. That's the long an' short of it, an' A'm chuck full an' runnin' over."

A' couldn't hold in no longer, an' jist swung loose, an' danced a jig around the cabin, whustlin' the while "Haste to the Weddin'" an' "Roy's Wife of Aldevalock!" An' dear old mother! she was daft as m'self, an' fust cried an' than laughed, an' beat time with her fut an' knittin' needles, an' lilted away in tune with my whustlin' as merry as a milkin' maid.

"A' don't understan' it, Andy," siz she, at last. "Bill's folk all bragged that Peggy an' him war to be wedded, an' they seemed so sartain an' sot up about it."

"It's lettle differ what Bill's folks say, mommer," siz I. "They've missed it this time, an' a miss is as good as a mile. It's best not to praise a fair day afore avenin'," siz I.

"True enough, honey," siz she. "But Bill is so well to do, you know, an' the Elder is a canny soul, for all his piety; an' the neighbors telled me that Bill allowed he was plumb sure of Peggy."

"Nothin' but talk, mother," siz I. "All cry an' no wool, as the shoemaker said when he shore the pig. Manny a slip 'twixt cup an' lip; an' Bill's out on Peggy, though he may coort her dad, an' welcome, for all me. Peggy's mine, mother, A' tell ye, Peggy's mine! An' A'm the happiest lad, as she's the bonniest lass in all the land!"

The hearty laughter and applause that greeted Andy's story of his courtship would have satisfied the most exacting raconteur. Blanche was delighted with the racy Doric of Andy's colloquial, and with the spicy proverbs, and glimpses into pioneer life. Bounce, who seemed to know instinctively where the good points came in, added his joyous yelpings to the human demonstrations of favor.

Now the shadows began to deepen in the forest, and Andy commenced his culinary duties, a pleasant service always in open camp, and one which has strong fascinations for observers. Blanche, at least, so found it. It was rare pleasure to see the camp-fire crackle and shoot up, and the blue smoke rise in a straight column through the trees and gradually spread out above their tops, floating off on the gentle zephyr which began to stir. There was strange interest and even beauty in such homely acts as filling the camp kettle with water from the purling rill close by, and hanging it over the fire upon the forked stick that served for a crane. Then came the play of lights and shadows in the woods, as the sunlight slanted in from the west, the gathering of the rosy glow upon the shimmering river as it ran by, and the various sounds of wood life as the evening approached. These and many more delightful novelties won the pleased admiration of the Eastern maid.

Gen. Neville with his party came in by dusk, well satisfied with the day's hunting. They had met much small game; and a streak of good fortune which greatly pleased the Inspector was the killing of a large brown bear, whose skin Hannibal bore along with him that it might be preserved as a trophy. It was nailed up against the cabin to stretch and dry, where already the skin of the catamount had been fastened that it might be in good shape for Blanche when the trip was ended.

CHAPTER XV.

A RIVER SKIRMISH.

The next day our party bade a kindly farewell to Fergus Kelly and his family, and resumed their journey down the river. The twenty miles or more to Wheeling were made by one o'clock in the afternoon, and as the town came into sight John ventured to speak to Gen. Neville about his plans. Would he leave the boat at Wheeling? And would he venture, as he had proposed, to go up into the village and stop at the tavern?

Certainly, that was the General's plan. He would ask John to wait with the boat until he had attended to certain matters which required his special care. He would take Blanche with him, for she wished to see the settlement. He hardly thought that the people would molest him. At all events he was an officer of the United States and he would not permit himself to be driven from his duty and his rights by the threats of an ignorant mob.

"They may be ignorant, sir," responded John, "but they are the real citizens of the settlement, and are honest in the opinion that they are right in this matter of the revenue, and that we are wrong. That, however, is neither here nor there, it seems to me. Can you convince them of their error by putting yourself in their power. For surely you will see that they have the power." He pointed to a crowd of settlers who were clustered together upon the ridge above the landing, drinking at the Indian Spring, or standing in knots earnestly conversing as they watched the "Fanny's" slow approach. Then he added: "What can you do, sir, against such a company as that?"

"What can I do?" exclaimed the General, with a peculiar emphasis upon the first personal pronoun. "Do you mean to intimate that you will leave us to ourselves? But I see how it is; we have no right to expect—"

"Stop sir! You have no right to expect of me more than I promised. While you are on this boat and thus in a measure under my care, you and your fair ward will be protected to the extent of my power. What I may be willing to do beyond that, I do not say. But, sir, can you

expect me to be more careful of your own safety and that of your niece than you yourself are? A moment's calm reflection must show you that these men are resolved to seize your person or to do violence of some sort; and the forces at our command will not hinder them, if you put yourself in their power. I know the temper of these men; some of them are desperate; all of them are determined, and they are ten to one against us."

"Say no more!" said the General. "We will land. Put the boat to shore."

"So be it, then!" said John.

With a heavy heart, and cheeks pale with excitement, he steered the boat towards the mouth of Wheeling Creek, and laid it alongside the landing, just below old Fort Henry. The crowd on the crest of the bank watched the proceeding with sullen looks. It was Saturday afternoon, a time when the settlers were wont to come in from their plantations to barter the products of their traps and of the chase, and buy such store goods as they required. Most of them were armed, after the custom of the times.

John bade Andy stand by, ready to push off at any moment, and setting his own pushing-pole where it could be readily seized, took his rifle, stepped on land and quietly surveyed the scene, anxiously awaiting the issue. Gen. Neville, with Blanche on his arm, walked slowly up the landing, Hannibal following carrying the lady's wraps.

"If you are compelled to come back hastily," John had said in a quiet voice as they passed, "you will find us waiting here to push off instantly."

The General stiffly bowed, Blanche shot forth from beneath her hood a grateful glance, and the party moved up the slope. As they drew near the crowd and looked into their sullen, determined faces, an armed mob standing there silent and threatening, the General's heart began to fail him. But the die was cast; it was too late now to retreat; and as Thump McKay, who had apparently assumed the leadership, stepped forth and demanded his surrender, he saw how serious a mistake he had made. Releasing Blanche's hand from his arm, he committed her to Hannibal, whom he ordered to go quickly back to the boat, and then drawing his pistols faced the crowd.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I am here in the service of the United States. I come in the discharge of duty. If you

interfere with me you do it at your peril, for you invite the heavy hand of the Government against yourselves. I warn you to desist, and call on all good citizens to aid me. Make way, there!"

The only movement was an extension of the flanks of the crowd, until the General was almost surrounded by a band of fifty or sixty armed men.

"Gen. Niville," said McKay, "that is all bluff. You know bravely you kin do nothin'. We've made up our minds that we'll have none of your excise spies an' officers here. You've got men to dale with as knows the'r rights an' power. You may order your nagurs about, but your hectorin' won't pass muster with us. We mane no bodily harm til the lass, an' not a hair of her head shall be touched. But we've got you in our hands an' we meaner hold ye ontill we've done with ye. Jist drop them shootin' irons an' surrender, an' we pledge ye our honor that no bodily harm shall come to ye. But, ef ye pull ary trigger, by the Lord Harry, we'll hang ye higher'n Haman!"

The circle of determined faces closed around him, and for a moment the old soldier stood like a wild beast at bay, almost determined to sell his life as dearly as might be, though he could easily see the hopelessness of his position. The deep silence was broken by a stir on the outer edge of the crowd. An authoritative voice exclaimed: "Make way, men; make way! In the name of the Democratic Association of Washington County I command you to desist!"

Thus speaking, David Bradford elbowed a way through the crowd, closely followed by Luke Latimer. The two men had just dismounted from horses that stood on the level of the ridge above, and which Panther was hastily tying to a hitching bar. The nags were wet and steaming with sweat, signs of hard riding over rough roads.

At Bradford's command the crowd made way, respecting the voice of their recognized leader. The leader of the incipient revolt and the representative of the Republic now stood face to face. They had met before under more favorable circumstances, for Bradford's occupation as a lawyer had brought him more than once in contact with the Inspector.

"General, this is no time for ceremony," said Bradford. "I need but to remind an old soldier that when a battle's

lost there's nothing left but surrender or retreat. It is idle just now to press the question whether you are right or wrong. Whatever we think of you personally and of your actions here in the West in the matter of excise duties—and you know our opinion pretty well, I reckon—we will respect the Government which you represent. Luke Latimer will escort you to the boat; and”—lowering his voice and putting his lips close to the General's face,—“take my word, sir, you have no time to lose! My power over this crowd holds lightly. Make way there, men, make way!” He waved back the circle on the side towards the river, and the ranks slowly opened. Ere Neville fully realized what had occurred, Luke had grasped his arm and hurried him down the landing slope.

John, who had fallen back to the boat when Blanche returned, stood with pole in hand, ready to push off from shore. The General leaped aboard, followed by Luke. John and Andy with vigorous shoves sent the boat well out into the river, and then seizing the sweeps pulled with might and main.

“We will be safer from stray shots under the lee of the island,” said John. “Miss Blanche, please go into the cabin. And General, if you want go in with her, at least keep out of sight, for these men are desperate enough to pick you off, if you are exposed to their aim, and their shooting would endanger us all.” The Inspector promptly acted on this good advice, for he was frontiersman enough to know that nothing is gained by useless exposure in a running quarrel.

Meanwhile, the escape of the boat acted upon the mob like a spur to a mettlesome horse. The momentary check which Bradford's authority had given their plans was swept away as they saw their victim escaping. With whoop and halloo they made a rush for the bank, which Bradford tried (or pretended) to stay, but without avail. Half a dozen skiffs and canoes tied at the landing were seized, and in a few moments were filled with excited men and in full swing in pursuit. It was clear to John that the keel boat ran great risk of being overtaken ere it could reach the island which he hoped to gain, and thus be screened on one side at least.

“I misdoubt we'll have warem work, son,” said Luke. “Do you warn 'em off. We can fight 'em better at long range, if we must fight at all.”

John turned over his sweep to Hannibal, seized his rifle and hailed the foremost boat. "Neighbors," said he, "I warn you that we are five determined men, well armed. I beg you to stop. I beseech you, as friends and neighbors, do not compel us to shed blood. But mark you! If you won't stop we'll fire, and your blood be on your own heads!"

Andy seized his rifle, and came to John's side. Luke stepped into line. The Inspector joined the three, and Featherfoot, who had seized a stray rifle, which she well knew how to use in emergency, took her place behind the bulwark, poised her piece and waited with the others the word of command. Hannibal, who was not lacking in courage, left the sweep and stood behind his master armed with a musket.

The assailants were stout-hearted men, but the heat of passion was somewhat spent, and the instinct of self-preservation asserted itself. They saw that the log bulwarks and cabin walls gave the keel boat folk great advantage in repelling assault, while those in the open skiffs were in point-blank range and with no defense against bullets. They knew the mettle of the men they had to deal with, and that two of them at least were among the surest shots on the frontier. They ceased rowing. One or two skiffs began to back water; and Thump McKay, who was still recognized as a sort of leader, attempted a parley. One of the boats, however, kept straight on. It was a birch canoe, manned by a solitary oarsman, who wore a gray blanket wammus and a coon-skin cap. His face could not be seen as he rowed with back to the keel boat, turning only a side glance to get his direction.

"Stop!" shouted John, "or I'll shoot!" He drew up his piece, and fairly covered the hardy canoeist, who nevertheless pushed straight on.

"Hist!" cried Featherfoot, stepping quickly forward and pushing up John's rifle. "You no see? Panther!"

John had scarcely lowered his rifle ere the canoe shot to the bulwark and Panther, flinging off cap and coat, leaped upon deck with a satisfied "hugh" and nod of recognition, and shaking aloft his rifle took his stand in the line of defenders.

His movements had won the attention of the men in the little squadron of boats, and the diversion served the double purpose of giving their thoughts a new bent and

bating somewhat the heat of their feelings. It was now clear to them that to carry out their plans would cost the lives of several of their party, a sacrifice which would hardly repay them for any advantage to be got by the Inspector's seizure. Backwoodsmen are quick to take in the logic of such a situation, and their familiarity with Indian warfare had given them so much of the savages' method and spirit that even though the chances seemed good to capture the keel boat by assault, they thought it better to retire for the present. This they did, not without vigorous demonstrations of disappointment, and loudly voiced threats which were directed as much against John and Luke as against Gen. Neville.

"Bad cess to ye, for an unked lot!" exclaimed Luke. "Ye shall not be without a chance to put your threats to proof, and try who of us is in the right. Ye wull all be 'shamed of these doin's yit, or I'm fur out in my reck'nin'." So saying, he cast loose Panther's canoe, jumped into it, and rowed after the retiring squadron.

"Surely," exclaimed Blanche, who had watched the proceeding from the cabin door, and now came forward to remonstrate; "your father does not mean to venture himself among those dreadful men?"

How did she know that Luke was his father? John could not make that out, for she had never seen him before; nevertheless, he was pleased at the interest which the maiden took in Luke's welfare. "I am not greatly concerned about father," he answered. "He knows well the men with whom he has to deal. Many of them are old friends and neighbors, and he will find plenty of sober heads who will stand by him against the wild spirits who came out to attack us. Moreover, father has some sort of official power over the men who made the most trouble, though what it is I cannot say, as I am not associated with them, nor much in sympathy with their views. However, be the danger what it may, Luke Latimer is well able to take care of himself; and if he were not, it would be idle for us to try to change his mind. Besides, yonder are his horses hitched on the ridge of the bank. I know them well, and mother's riding mare "Snowball" is with them. It would be a sore peril indeed that would stay father from caring for his stock. We need not trouble about him. A more important matter is for us to look after you and your uncle, and plan some way of getting you safely away from these tumultuous spirits."

So saying, he took the tiller, and bidding Andy and Hannibal go to the sweeps, soon laid the keel boat under the northern shore of the island. Little now remains of the original form of this bit of land, which serves as a pier for the railroad bridge that passes from the Ohio shore to the city of Wheeling. But in that early day it was covered with heavy timber, and the bank rose for many feet above the water's edge. As the evening was now falling, a camp-fire was kindled and supper prepared. Panther was set to watch from the summit of the island, and bidden report any threatening movement from the shore. Then after conference, it was agreed to rest where they were during the early part of the evening, and when the moon was fairly above the hills and trees, they would quietly pull out and make as much headway towards Pittsburg as they could.

Supper passed off with some hilarity, for Andy's good spirits were not to be quenched by a trifling skirmish; and most of the party were so elated at their deliverance from the assaulting boatmen, and by the prospect of escape, that they bubbled over in jests and laughter and merry speech. The Inspector alone was somewhat glum, for he was disappointed and mortified at his reception in Wheeling, and his enforced retreat. Even more, he was chagrined that he had scorned so cavalierly the young captain's advice, and been compelled by hard facts to acknowledge that his own self-will had brought his party beneath the shadow of what might have been a calamity. However, he composed himself to rest upon the deck, while Blanche retired to sleep, much comforted by the companionship of her Indian friend, Featherfoot. Hannibal, to whom sleep always came as naturally as to dumb beasts, curled himself under the lee of the cabin.

A little before nine o'clock Panther slipped like a shadow across the gang-plank and summoned John, who followed him rapidly to the summit of the island. "See!" said the Indian, pointing out a dark spot on the river that gradually drew nearer. A boat had pushed from the southern shore, and sweeping well around towards the Ohio side, was gradually approaching the northern bank of the island. A half dozen frontiersmen were seated in the skiff, which was being paddled by two of their number with that silence which white men readily learned from the aborigines,

and which one may observe even now among the guides and watermen of the Adirondacks.

"They intend a night attack," said John. "Fools! Do they think us such poor woodsmen as to be taken by surprise? What shall we do?"

"Humph!" answered Panther, softly patting his gunstock. "Canoe six men; keel boat, five. We in ambush; they in open skiff. They dead men, sure!"

"No, no!" John replied. "Not that! unless necessary. Can't we arrange to scare them away?" He watched with a troubled face the noiseless approach of the skiff, whose outlines were growing more distinct.

"Ah, I have it!" He exchanged a few words with the Indian, who seemed to give unwilling consent, and the two crossed to a point on the northern shore, where a huge rock rose sheer from the waters. The trunk of a large fallen tree jutted over the precipice, whose roots still held to the earth, and the overhanging branches were covered with leaves.

"The skiff must pass this point," said John. "Watch here behind the tree till I return." He sought the keel boat, put Andy on his guard, with instructions to arouse the General, and soon reappeared carrying two large copper kettles full of water, one in either hand. These vessels formed part of a cargo which some enterprising merchant had shipped to the frontier for use in boiling maple sugar water, and now were part of the Fanny's outfit. Sheltered behind the old tree the two men watched the gradual and noiseless approach of the skiff, which was cautiously paddled under the jutting shore, and stopped just beneath the spot where John and Panther waited.

Here a whispered parley was held by the adventurers, who were evidently planning to make a spurt to the keel boat, whose inmates they believed to be asleep, or off their guard. The men then examined the priming of their rifles, and at that moment John lifted one of the kettles, and swashed the contents down upon the group in the bow. The effect was equally startling and amusing. Had a rifle shot been heard in the night silence these hardy backwoodsmen would not have lost their poise. But here was a new experience, a most gruesome and unnatural mode of assault, never heard of in Indian warfare, or in the wars of white men! As the stream of water swished through the air and

doused the boatmen, slushing their faces and filling their eyes, they lost their natural caution, and jumped up and uttered a loud cry.

The lurch of the skiff and the sudden surprise thoroughly alarmed the men in the stern of the skiff, who, quite off their guard, rose to their feet and were almost unshipped by the rocking and splurging that followed. They instinctively cocked their rifles, and not knowing whence the assault had come, nor indeed quite apprehending the nature of it, were staring wildly about, peering through the darkness, when John seized the second kettle, and emptied it upon them.

As John had given the vessel a slight twirl, the water fairly covered the faces and breasts of the boatmen, and what was more to the purpose, dabbled well the priming pans of their guns. The climax was complete. They joined their fellows in loud cries and curses. All sense of prudence seemed to have gone from the whole crew. Some of them dropped back in the boat, while others seized the oars and began hastily to retreat.

Panther, issuing from his throat low gurgling grunts intended for laughter, gazed with gratified mien through the leafy branches at the absurd scene beneath him. John, well satisfied, and also assured that the rifles of the men were so thoroughly wet that they were now disarmed, took rifle in hand, and showing himself upon the edge of the rock, called out:

"Neighbors, had we wished you harm we might have shot everyone of you before you touched the island. That we did not do so ought to show you that we wish you well. If you are wise men you will now go your way; and I pledge you no stray bullets shall follow you. Good-night, and good-bye!"

Human nature was too strong in some of the frontiersmen to accept this chivalrous conduct in the spirit intended by John, and one of them saluted him with an outburst of the strangely-seasoned profanity in vogue on the frontier.

"Keep cool, Charley!" said John, who recognized the man. Then, struck by the absurd feature of the adventure, he broke into hearty laughter, and added: "There's no use crying over spilt milk, you know!"

"Keep cool?" echoed Charley, with somewhat mollified but still angry tone. "We're like enough to keep cool for a

long spell, with your dawgoned sliddery swash a-runnin' down our backs an' breeches. Spilt milk be derved! I feel's tho' ye'd spilt half the river in my buzzum. Dang it all!"

Thump McKay, who was one of the attacking party, had some sense of humor, and also some capacity to appreciate the generous spirit in which John had dealt with them. The ridiculous position of the party, wet as muskrats and their good rifles disarmed by the swash of John's sugar kettles, struck his fancy; and Charley's grumbling comments opened the gate of mirthfulness. He began to smile, then to snicker, and at last a loud roar broke from his stentorian lungs, the infection of which his partners could not resist. Even the profane Charley caught the contagion, and joined at last in the glee.

"Thank ye, kindly, Cap'n Jock!" said Thump at last. "It was mighty ginerous in ye to mind the old proverb not to throw water on a drowned rat. Good night til ye! Give way, lads!"

John, well pleased at the issue of affairs, laughed heartily from his high vantage ground, and with renewed farewells and expressions of good will, the strange assault ended. The skiff, not silently as it had approached, but with noisy splash, pulled away towards the Virginia shore.

In another hour the moon began to creep over the hills, and soon a fair light shone upon the river, giving an open course. Without disturbing Blanche, who all this time had been quietly sleeping within the cabin, John sent the men to the poles and sweeps, took the tiller, and turned the boat's bow up stream. His mind was at ease, for he felt that after the night adventure none of the mob would be likely to attack the boat. As the next day was Sabbath, he well knew that even men banded for such attempts as he had been so fortunate as to thwart, would be held by their own conscience and their leader's strict regard for the sacred day, from attempting open violence.

When Wheeling was lost to sight, John set Panther upon the southern shore, that he might learn what fortune had befallen Luke Latimer, and report the next day at a rendezvous up stream, or sooner if aid were needed. The Mingo had already told them how Luke had been brought to the rescue, and Bradford with him, much against his will, but under the joint influence of personal fear of Latimer's

vengeance and of politic wish to save his larger plot from exposure and rupture.

In due season Panther hailed the keel boat, and gave the good news that the mob had quietly dispersed, much moved thereto by Thump McKay's story of the night adventure; and that Luke was on his way homeward. With light hearts the keel boat party resumed their journey up the river, which was no easy task, for the craft was ill constructed to make headway against a current. There was much hard work with the sweeps and poles; much towing with ropes from the shore when free footing was given; and yet more within the dry bed of the river, which still ran low in its channel. But at last, after several days' pleasant voyage, Pittsburg was reached, and the party separated with kind adieus and interchange of good wishes.

For the first time in his life John felt loath to take the wage of his hard work, though he was vexed at himself for the feeling. "What was Gen. Neville to him? And what was Blanche? A comely maiden, no doubt, with sweet and winsome ways and a strange power to stir his heart and hold his thoughts. But, tush! what nonsense to moon over the matter! A summer holiday acquaintance, pleasant enough, to be sure, and with somewhat lively accompaniments! But there it ended, of course. Let it end! There's serious work before you, young man, and plenty of it."

As for Blanche, she had many a pleasant tale to tell of her journey down the Ohio and its exciting incidents. She seemed to herself to allow full credit to Captain John, who had been the chief hero of the adventures, but her uncle thought it odd that she should give scant praise to the young keel-boatman who, he averred, was a fine fellow, a rare fellow—for one of his rank! Whereat Madam Neville, wiser in certain niceties of women's ways than her lord, inwardly said: "I must look to this! Blanche must be weaned at once from such an outlandish fancy."

CHAPTER XVI.

A SACRAMENTAL CAMP.

Blanche Oldham had come over from the Inspector's to visit another relative, Gen. George Morgan. He was a revolutionary veteran who had settled within the bounds of Dr. McMillan's parish, at a point now known as Morganza. The October Sacramental Communion drew near, and services were to be held both day and night during the preparatory season. Thursday was appointed for the "ante-communion fast." It was observed as a most solemn day, hardly less sacred than the Sabbath itself, with abstinence from food and with vigils of prayer. In many a lonely spot in the woods the voice of supplication was heard. Startled birds, squirrels, chipmunks and other beasts stayed their flight, and looking back saw with amazement the spectacle of a human being whose office plainly was not to harm them, but who seemed to speak to some One, alone there in the forest depths. What could they have conjectured within their wee beastie brains?

Blanche set out for the meeting-house green to attend the ten o'clock morning service, accompanied by her Aunt Morgan. Her escort was a young officer of the Fort Pitt garrison, where her relatives, Majors Craig and Kirkpatrick, were also stationed. Lieut. Ruel Burd was a Philadelphia gentleman, of comely manners, fine soldierly appearance, a few years older than Blanche, and a most agreeable companion. His attentions were happily free from officiousness on the one hand and frigidity on the other, and while courtly, were natural and sincere. He had been much won by Blanche's beauty and sprightly character, and was a favored visitor at the Neville mansion.

The party were mounted ahorseback, and their way lay over country roads and wooded trails along the winding banks of Chartiers Creek. Such a ride on a fine October day is a rare pleasure. A soft haze overhangs the landscape and tints the air. The balmy days are full of sunlight, yet not with relaxing warmth. In mountain regions and among the hills, and later in the lowlands also, the evening frost hastens the natural change of chlorophyl and

cell structure wrought within the fading leaves. Then comes the glory of the year. The sumac bushes are on fire with scarlet. The Virginia creeper, with various hues of green, brown, russet and red glowing on the same vine, enwraps living trees, or stumps and broken trunks, that stand up in the woods like vast and splendid columnar plants. The maples are a mass of yellow foliage. The gum trees glow with bright red. Ground plants and low bushes repeat with endless variety the colors of the forest leaves.

As our churchgoers rode by the fields they saw the Indian corn standing in rows, every stalk bannered with russet brown blades and darkish silken tassels, while here and there a yellow kernel peeped out from a rent top, like teeth from laughing lips. Again, a farmer with his family and hired man, or mayhap with his negro slaves, would be at work "shucking" the corn. They hurled the ears, as they stripped them from the husks, upon yellow conical heaps that lined the furrows whence also big pumpkins turned up their round golden sides to the sun. From standing cornstalks and fence-posts, from stubble fields and herbage everywhere floated out long streamers of white gossamer, that dallied with the breeze and flapped and glistened in the sunlight. No wonder that the maiden thought this an ideal time for life in the woods, and for such open-air meetings as the pioneers were about to hold.

As the party approached Chartiers Church they were joined by others afoot and ahorseback, some riding double, that is, a woman or child mounted on a pillion behind the man. These turned into the highway from the plantation roads, and formed quite a cavalcade at last. Once a year these sacred assemblages were held, and the Lord's Supper administered. Far and near the tidings went, and attracted those throughout many miles of surrounding country who gave heed to religion, for ministers and churches were few and widely scattered. The ancient manners of the Church of Scotland, as practiced also among Ulster Presbyterians, were those to which the people had been used. As far as might be they carried them out, only limited by conditions imposed by the new country. Hence had originated camp meetings, or four-days' meetings, or sacramental camps, by all which titles the assemblages were known.

It was a novel and interesting sight presented to Blanche as her party moved among the hills to the Char-

tiers meeting house. The edifice stood well aloft upon a high hill slope. Already a number of campers from a distance had settled within the adjoining grove for the four days' meeting. They had arranged their wagons in a semi-circle facing the green. Some tents also were pitched, and booths of leafy boughs had been builded. Couches were provided for the women and children within the canvas-covered wagon beds, while the men bivouacked under the wagons or in adjacent booths. Rude fireplaces were extemporized, with forked stakes and cross-pieces, and pronged cranes on which to swing iron pots for boiling. Further within the woods the horses were picketed to young trees.

As the hour for service was near, the congregation was already assembled. The people were seated upon logs laid on the ground, or on boards and slabs which rested upon stones and wooden chunks. These rude benches were grouped in blocks, like pews in a church, before and on either flank of the preaching tent. Many of the worshippers, however, had brought with them chairs and stools. The preachers' tent was a wooden shed with a raised floor approached by several steps. It was roofed, but open at the sides and in front. It served not only as a platform and sounding board, but to satisfy the people's sense of the dignity due the clergy, and as a shelter for the officiating ministers. These were three. The first was Dr. McMillan, the local bishop, who presided. He was a tall person, with broad shoulders and heavy frame, strongly inclined to portliness. He had smooth-shaven cheeks after the fashion of the times; a long face with dewlaps to the chin, broad high forehead surmounting a long head, and large eyes with drooping under eyelids. In complexion he was unusually swart, "a black-avised man," as the people phrased it. His countenance had a stern aspect, and to a stranger rather forbidding. His features were prominent and strongly marked, and the face was not an unpleasing one, though it savored less of culture than of masculine strength and sincerity such as became a pioneer preacher. He wore a simple clerical coat, with black buckskin breeches tied at the knees with leathern thongs in lieu of silver buckles.

The second minister was the Rev. John Patterson, a man of about forty-two, especially noted for his piety, unction and marvelous power in prevailing prayer. With these was an aged clergyman, Rev. John Clark. He wore a huge

white peruke or wig, somewhat, it must be confessed, to the scandal of some of his auditors who thought this fashion savored of vanity. But the sanctity of the venerable man gave tolerance to his adherence to the old custom. The ministers did not wear the Geneva gown, but their garments had something of a clerical cut, or rather of a Quaker fashion, and differed little from those of their people in quality, though they were dyed a blackish color.

By eleven o'clock the people were all gathered, a large audience, far too many to find room within the church. They were seated reverently on the rows of benches, and took eager part in all the services. Dr. McMillan began the public worship by announcing a Psalm from Rouse's version. This was still the favorite, although Watts's Imitation," for alternate use with Rouse, was coming into vogue on the flood tide of the late revival. The Psalm given out, the precentor, who stood upon a little elevated desk immediately in front of the pulpit, proceeded to read a line in a high and rather drawling voice, almost intoning it, indeed. He sounded the last syllable read on a dead level with the first note of the tune which he set for the piece, and thereupon the whole congregation joined with him in singing. Thus, line by line, throughout the whole Psalm the precentor read, and then repeated the same in melody, being followed by the people.

The whole had a strange effect upon Blanche, as she listened for the first time to this infracted mode of public praise. The deep silence of the woods, broken only by the monotonous intonations of the precentor; then the sudden outburst of song from the throats of the multitude, to be as suddenly checked and succeeded by the same silence, all this issuing out of the open grove, in the bright air of October, deeply moved the young woman.

The custom of "lining out" was quite universal in those days. It was compelled by the fewness of Psalm books, and opened the only way for the people to take a vocal part in public praise. The fashion became seated in the congregations, and continued long after the need for it. Men of sixty now living can remember when even in Eastern Ohio "lining out" was continued in some churches, though cheap printing had supplied plenty of books. At first, but one line was read by the precentor; and it seemed a grave step and a serious breach upon "the good old ways," when two

consecutive lines were announced. When at last the whole custom was displaced by cursive singing, many good folk felt that they had lost an important ordinance from their spiritual lives, and vigorously protested. The controversy over the respective merits of the "read line" and the "run line" left bitter feeling in many congregations.

Ever and anon Blanche observed some one rise to his feet, and stand a while in the midst of the sitting congregation. Another and another would follow, so that a dozen or more in various parts of the audience, who seemed to take no heed at all thereof, would be on their feet at once. On inquiry, Blanche learned that this was the manner of the hard-working farmers to keep themselves from falling asleep. So little used were they to rest, save when they lay down at night, that a cessation of labor while seated in meeting soon brought on drowsiness. This they overcame by jumping to their feet and standing still until the spell was broken.

The morning service being ended, a recess was had until three o'clock in the afternoon, when a second preaching would be held. In the interval luncheon was eaten in the grove by the campers and many neighboring families. Some who lived near by, and those who would not tarry for the after services left the grounds. Meanwhile the pastor and elders met in the church to distribute "tokens" to intending communicants, and give instruction to enquirers. The sacramental token was a bit of flattened lead about one-sixteenth of an inch in thickness, and half an inch square, having stamped in the middle a letter "M," the initial of "Member" or, perhaps, "McMillan." The custom of giving tokens to intending communicants was almost universal at that period, having been brought from the Church of Scotland and its branch in northern Ireland. It is now entirely abandoned, or survives only in some conservative and rustic corner of the land where men hold tenaciously to old ways.

From the meeting ground the Morgan party took horse and rode to the house of Mrs. George McCormack, which stood on the main street, well up the slope of College Hill. Most of the village houses were open on these sacramental occasions, and a free hospitality dispensed to those who came for occasional service, or were not disposed to camp out. In the language of the country, "the latch string was

out." Mrs. McCormack was a Scotchwoman, somewhat of an invalid, whose husband, an Ulster man, kept a country store. He had been mixed up with the rebellious risings against the British government whose oppressive measures were opposed by the Presbyterians and Roman Catholics, who, as united Irishmen, in this matter made common cause. Now he was in full cry after the excise law, banded with the most aggressive element. This fact had somewhat strained the relations between his family and the Morgans, whose kinship with Inspector Neville cast their sympathies that way. However, matters were not yet come to the point of open rupture between the men, and the women kept up their kindly intimacy.

The flower of the McCormack flock was Fanny, a maid a little older than Blanche. She was a comely damsel, whose features were limned with that vigor of character and mind that so often mark women of her race. She was the acknowledged belle of the settlement and was highly esteemed as a noble hearted maid. Young as she was, her voluntary offices were in demand wherever sickness prevailed. In a section nearly destitute of ready medical aid, the domestic remedies at her command were often of highest value. She had that knack of nursing and of compounding simple remedies which Nature allots to certain gifted ones. Her cheerful deportment and genial spirits, smiling face and sympathetic manner, wholly free from fussiness, officiousness and pretense, were as good as medicine to sick folk. She was practically the head of the McCormack family, to whom her mother looked in all emergencies. It was her welcome that made the visitors, especially Blanche and her attendant, feel entirely at home.

The servants were P'line and Dave, negro slaves. They were characters in their way fairly representative of a considerable element of the western population. P'line was well skilled in cooking frontier delicacies, but especially noted for her toothsome and varied cuisine of corn bread,—pone cake, Johnny cake or hoe cake, griddle cakes, and the decoction known as "mush." The latter, elsewhere called "hasty pudding" or "stirabout," became a tempting article of food in P'line's hands. The dish was served freshly boiled, in curdy mass like porridge. When cold and hardened it was sliced, fried and served with fresh butter or maple molasses, or with maple sugar or fruit sauce, thus forming

in itself a varied menu. With rare historic fitness the Pennsylvania Scotch-Irish Society has adopted it as their typical ancestral dish, like baked beans to a New Englander, under the title of "Pioneer Porridge." P'line had an unusually sweet, clear voice, and could often be heard above the whole congregation when at public worship. As the man Dave was a famous bass singer, with a deep, rolling and unctuous voice, the two McCormack servants were welcome additions to the religious convocations of the neighborhood, and were wont to sit near the precentor and lead off in the congregational singing.

The following day Blanche, accompanied by her uncle, who bore her needful belongings in leathern saddle-bags, galloped over to the village, arriving at the McCormacks flushed and in high spirits with the delightful exercise. She had come upon a short visit to Fanny McCormack. After due rest, Gen. Morgan, who had a mind to see Andy's terriers, went over to the Burbeck cabin with Blanche and Fanny, where all were greeted with great cordiality. Bounce and Betty, prinked out with gay neck ribbons, were in high feather, and showed off to fine advantage both in dancing and in the trick of sickness and recovery. Then Mistress Peggy played a game of hide-and-seek with them, and Andy exhibited them in a new trick, greatly to the delight of his visitors. The company broke up well pleased, although Andy was disappointed in one particular. He had made a point to tell John Latimer of the intended visit to his house. He thought the Captain would like to see Miss Blanche and would drop around "sort of onintintional like." But John held aloof, not being minded to thrust himself upon Miss Blanche's notice without her consent. Andy, who for some occult reason was strongly possessed of match-making intermeddling between these two young people, was much vexed. In truth, he was now disposed to think that his wife might be partly right. She had told him the night before, while exchanging matrimonial confidences ere they fell asleep, that he "beeta mind his own business, for he would be sure to spill the fat intil the fire afore he was done with it. Besides, why need he bother about Blanche Oldham? There was Fanny McCormack, whose little finger was better nor the whole arm of the eastern lassie. Though, to be sure, Miss Blanche was a trim and comely leddie, and true quality; there was no denyin' that."

Gen. Morgan being disposed to walk part of the way homeward, ordered his colored man to meet him with the horse on the high road. Accompanied by Andy, who had a mind to enjoy the distinguished man's conversation, he started down the hill, and so off towards the Morgan house. As they passed a large oak tree on the wayside near a fork of the road, they saw fastened upon the trunk a paper bill, a common way of posting notices in that day.

"What's this?" asked the General.

"Some intimation about the camp sarvice, A' dar' say," replied Andy. "We beeta cast our eyes over it." Drawing near the General read aloud, with much agitation, the following notice:

"To all Good Citizens:

"You are hereby advised that it has been resolved to take all legal methods to obstruct the operation of the iniquitous and oppressive Excise Law. You are hereby warned to have no fellowship with such as accept offices under it, and to withdraw from them every assistance of whatever sort; to withhold the comforts of life; to refuse to sell or to buy the labor of, or to employ as laborers any and all persons who accept such offices.

"By Order of the Committee,

"TOM THE TINKER."

"Did you ever hear the like of that?" exclaimed the General indignantly. "It makes an honest man's blood boil, the presumption of these nameless banditti. Who is this Tom the Tinker?"

"Feint a haet can I tell," said Andy, somewhat warmly. "How should I know more nor your honor?"

"Do you know Luke Latimer?" the General asked, after a moment's pause.

"To be sure A' do, an' an' an' honest man don't walk the ground. But what of him?"

"I have heard it whispered about that he is Tom the Tinker; that he inspires all the notices in the *Pittsburg Gazette*, and these placards on the highways and byways. He is not sufficiently educated to prepare them himself, I learn, but has a clever son who is hand in glove with him in hatching this excise rebellion, and who puts the Tom the Tinker outgivings into shape. Have you heard that?"

"Lord save us!" cried Andy, throwing up his hands in amazement. He took off his hat in his angry excitement, and taking from the crown his red bandanna, mopped his face with it and then fairly waved it in indignation. "Be'lzebub, the father of lies, niver uttered a bigger whopper nor that. Luke Latimer Tom the Tinker? Dawgont, sirr! A'd as lave think of yoursilf bein' the chief of the saycрет committee! An' John Latimer a-writin' Tom the Tinker's screeds? A fine pass, that! It 'ud be as near the mark to say that St. Paul wrote Paine's 'Age of R'ason,' an' it 'ud be quite as r'asonable. Wheriver did ye pick up sich rubbish as that, sir?"

"Why," said Gen. Morgan, hesitating somewhat, "I have heard the rumor several times. A man was telling it to Gen. Neville at his house the other day in my presence—"

"An' did Giner'l Niville believe it?" asked Andy hastily. "An' did he spake no worrd of contradiction for John Latimer?"

"Well, no; the General did not believe the rumor, and in fact pished and poo-hooed it a good deal; but—"

"But? The devil take his buts!" interrupted Andy, now fully aflame. "Giner'l Niville has good cause to know that there's no truer man nor John Latimer. An' in plain truth he owes his life til him, to say nothin' of the life of the young lady, his niece; which latter is nothin' to John's credit, of coorse, fer anny man as is a man 'ud do as much for a rale lady like her. But Giner'l Niville should 'a knocked the cullion down, sirr, as made such a charge. A'd 'a done it out of hand, an he were the gov'nor himself, sirr! No one knows better nor the Inspector that John Latimer is clane ferninst the Whuskey B'ys an' their doin's, an' has got manny a rebuff and hot worrd for the same."

"But his father is one of their leading men, isn't he?" asked Gen. Morgan.

"True enough, he's agin the axcise, as most of us is, sirr, an' as Giner'l Niville was himself afore he got to be Inspector. An' Luke Latimer is apt to be at the front of annything he's in. But what of that? If your father 'd been a rank Tory, would that 've imp'ached your own patriotism and splendid war record? Do ye condimn the childer fer the father's faults? A' tell you, sir, the story you h'ard an' telled me is a wicked slander on both father an' son, an' especially on Master Jock, God bless him!"

Here the negro came along with the horse. Gen. Morgan made some polite speech to soothe Andy's ruffled spirit, and with a pleasant "Good-day" rode away. But it was long before Andy's mind cooled down to equilibrium; particularly as his indignation was fanned anew as he walked around the camp and saw several more copies of the Tom Tinker placard nailed up in public places. Several times, not being able to contain himself, he whipped off his cap and thrashed his leg therewith, and vented his wrath in the only oath he was known to use:

"A'll be dawgont! Bad ccess til him! O Lord, forgie me! An' me jst comin' forad to the Saycramint. But,—gach! It is a dawgont shame. Heth!"

CHAPTER XVII.

A NIGHT SCENE IN THE FOREST.

At the approach of dusk, Blanche and Fanny accompanied by Andy and Peggy Burbeck, started to the camp ground. At the foot of the village hill they fell in with the Latimers. The young people made a group by themselves, and jogged on over the moonlit road, and along the winding path by which worshippers still ascend Sanctuary Hill to Chartiers Church. Blanche, in fine spirits, elated over the novelty of her situation, was reminded of her Ohio River experiences, and went over them again, telling them to Fanny and chatting gayly with John. As they drew near the meeting green the sound of singing was heard, and the glow of the camp fires, flaring through the trees, was seen. The music was plaintive and sweet. It floated up through the forest on the night air with a strange witchery in Blanche's ears, to whom all this was an unwonted scene.

Fanny recognized the voices of their servants P'line and Dave drifting in now and again over all the rest. The negroes of the settlement had gathered in advance of the hour of service, and were enjoying themselves, as they highly relished, with songs. They sang the old Psalms, which sounded with sufficient quaintness upon their tongues. But they favored "Watts's Imitations," which better suited their livelier religious feelings. The people

meanwhile were slowly assembling, and as the little knot of Africans, sitting at the side of the preaching stand, sang away heartily and melodiously, the incomers listened with pleasure and sometimes joined in the psalm.

"Hark!" said Fanny. A stronger wave of song rolled up the slope of the hill on which the churchyard cemetery stands, and which they had now approached. "Do you recognize that song?"

"Ay, indade," said Andy. "It's one of thim new-fangled airs that the Yankee singin'-master McKnight brought in with the New England Puritans who settled Marietta. The warse luck til him! A' like ma fiddle an' jolly songs on a week day; but on the Sawbbath A' want no jigs an' liltis in the house o' God. Gi'me then the old twelve saccred tunes o' Dahvid, as well as the old Psalms! They were good enough for the fathers, an' they're good enough for me. The martyrs sang them in their kirks, an' made the wild heathered moors echo with 'em whin they were driven to the hills in the killin' times. They chanted them on the scaffold, an' their lips trimbled with thim as their heads dropped offen their necks under the Maiden's Axe in the Edinboro Grassmarket. They're good enough for me, are the old Psalms, an' no thanks to McKnight for his ungodly innovations. Ay, A' want none of his spic an' span new pieces. It's a true sayin' in psalmody that 'the old is better.'"

Blanche was surprised to hear such conservative sentiments from her jolly friend, but made no comment. "Pray, what are those twelve tunes you speak of, Andy?" she asked. "I didn't know that any of the music of David had come down to our times."

"Ah, well, A' won't jist say that Dahvid himself, or aven Asaph or Ethan, or anny of the sons of Korah composed Dundee or Stilt, or Martyrs or Elgin, or French or Duke's Tune an' the other Twelve Common Tunes. But they've been sung along with Dahvid's Psalms so long 'at they're wan flesh, as it were, like man an' wife; an' it seems saicri-leegous to divorce 'em."

"But what is this song that the slaves are singing now, and which you do not seem to like, though it sounds so sweetly in the gathering twilight?"

"That is one of the few stories that Andy doesn't relish telling," said Fanny. "So I'll e'en tell it for him. You

must know that our churches have always used in public praise the metrical translation of the Psalms known as 'Rouse's Version.' For a long time they had been sung to twelve tunes which are quite familiar to all the people, and are held in a sort of reverence as if they were themselves inspired. In the year 1788, a part of the New England expedition that settled Marietta under Col. Putnam, missed the ark built on the Youghiogheny to take them down the Ohio River. They had to stay all winter at Simerall's Ferry within the bounds of the Rev. Mr. Power's congregation. Two of the company were singing-masters, and they introduced some of the new tunes now sung in the East, greatly to the disrelish of many of the people who clung tenaciously to the old ones.

"Much bad blood was stirred up; and one Sabbath when the precentor at Mingo Creek had started a new tune, a member of the congregation took up the Psalm to one of the old Twelve Common Metres. You may fancy what a discord and confusion followed. One part of the congregation sang with the precentor to the new tune. The other, and larger part, sang lustily to the old one. The minister looked on in great distress, quite helpless to stop the unseemly proceeding. There is no telling what might have happened if Col. Cook, an influential elder, had not risen and rebuked the people with a warm speech. This shamed them out of their course, and so brought order and peace.

"The same contention came into our coasts; but the younger folk were for the new tunes, and Mr. McMillan sided with them. The first Sabbath that the precentor started a psalm to one of the new tunes, one of our worthiest elders, a Mr. Glendenning, rose from the elder's bench at the side of the pulpit and left his seat. He walked down the aisle with a slow and solemn step and with face hard set into an expression of mingled indignation and grief. So he marched to the door and went home, and has never come back. The young people have named the tune which happened to be sung at that time 'Glendinning's March,' and so it is known among us; although, perhaps, it is not very kind nor indeed reverent, to call a sacred melody by a jocular name of that sort. That's the tune our colored people were singing just now. We were sorry to have Mr. Glendenning leave us in that mood. But most of us believe that an Old Testament psalmody should not be imposed

upon a New Testament Church, and that there should be larger liberty in the use of tunes."

"Ahbut," said Andy, taking up the subject with some warmth, "ye beeta remimber that the rale New Tistament Church, the Church of our Lord Jesus an' his Apostles, an' of all the primitive belavers, niver sang aught but the old Psalms. Indade, they had nought but thim to sing. A'm in favor of Apostolical succission in the matter of psawlmody, annyhow!"

"Well, Andy, my dear," said Mrs. Burbeck, drifting into the conversation, "bein's ye're so stiff in your reelegious principles, I'm surprised that ye didn't secade along wi' the elder. It's a bonny parade ye'd made of it, step-pin' down the aisle afore all the people, in rare o' elder Glindinnin'!"

"Ay," said Andy, "an A' 'd 'a jaloused his drift sooner, an' been a bit nearder the door, A' might 'a done the same."

"Nearder the door!" exclaimed Mrs. Burbeck. "There was Mither McKibben, who sat not tin feet fram ye! She took up her tistimony, as she calls it, along with her Bible an' Psalm book, an' shuck it at the bench of elders,—the book I mane, not the tistimony,—an' wint a-flyin' out of the meetin' house after Glindinnin', a-cryin', 'We'll a' be bawck to Bawbylon direckly!' Ye might 'a done as well as that, Andy, an your conscience was so tinder on the psalmody quistion."

"Hoot, Peggy, love," Andy responded. "They's no nade of gawin' intil that! Ye know well enough that A' was wedged in atween you on one side and Mrs. Elder Logan on t'other; an' ye a-pluckin' at ma coat tails, at that, an' a-sayin' 'kape still, Andy, an' don't make a fool of yoursilf!' An' warst of all, there right forninst me in the big poolpit sat Parson McMillan a-towerin' an' a-glowerin', an' the great thunderin' tones of him beginnin' fer til growl all around his chist an' boeels, an' ready for til break forth. The Elder and Mrs. McKibben were a mite too quick for him, for he's rayther slow on the trigger, or they'd not 'a got out of the kirk athout a followin' shot or two, ye may depind on't. My crackies! A'd been a sore mishandled traveller an A'd jined Glindinnin's march, that day! Besides that, my mither larn't me to riverince the Lord's an'inted, an' A've too much respect for the meenister, A' hope, to whup off in a huff an' turn my back on him that

a-way. More's the pity, Peggy, my dear, that your mither hadn't larnt you to have the same riverence for the clargy: ay, an' for your husband too, accordin' to the Scriptur con-carnin' a wife's duty an' obedience." Mrs. Peggy greeted the sally with a hearty laugh, and there the conversation ended, for the party had come close to the limits of the camp meeting.

Blanche could now see the method of lighting up the grounds. At the four corners of the camp and on either side of the preaching tent were "torches," stout posts on which were fastened strong cross-pieces whereon slab floors were laid. On these thick coatings of earth were spread, making elevated hearths on which were placed billets of dried wood and pine knots. These when kindled made a bright high blaze that lit up the grounds, and penetrating into the woods revealed the white tents and wagon covers, and opened striking vistas of light amid the deep darkness of the forest. The aromatic odor of burning wood pervaded the air, which pleasantly recalled to Blanche the evening camp fires during her river trip. Columns of smoke arose from the four torches, and hung in blue orles and thin veils over the open space, giving to the moon above a weird and misty look.

Soon the service began. Blanche and her party had seats well upon the outposts of the sqzre, yet every word was distinctly heard. The prayers and psalm announcements were conducted by Mr. Patterson. An exposition of a psalm by Father Clark followed, and then Mr. McMillan rose to speak. His swart face in the strong light wore a sterner aspect than usual. His manner, which was generally marked by a studied plainness, was somewhat hurried and excited. He seemed laboring under suppressed feeling, which-to the keen ears of the congregation, who knew his moods, was betrayed by the tones of his voice. They were looking for something unusual, and were not disappointed.

His text was: "Oh, Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in Me is thy trust." He began in a low but distinct voice, which at first grated harshly on Blanche's ears, but mellowed as the discourse proceeded and he warmed to his work. He opened with a somewhat didactic description of the nature of sin, quoting freely from Scripture and the Westminster Confession and Catechisms. Then he proceeded to the consequences of sin. As he unfolded the

wrath of God and the danger and doom of the impenitent, his manner became impassioned. His language was clear, earnest and thrilling, though there were no flights of imagination. His huge form trembled with the earnestness of his address. As he held forth the divine punishment of sin, the hush within the assemblage deepened into awesome stillness. The most hardened and irreligious quailed beneath the stately and fervent eloquence. The deep, strong voice vibrated like low thunder through the open air, and echoed from the wooded slope of the eastern hillside beyond the camp. Again, as he became absorbed in his subject, he unconsciously threw into particular words and phrases a pathos and tenderness that made an admirable foil to the stern and terrible outflow of his speech, and added to its effect upon feelings and imagination.

The sermon, rude and massive as its preacher, strongly moved Blanche Oldham, and the effect was deepened by the weird and novel surroundings. The open vault above was spangled with stars that twinkled through the transparent air with undimmed brightness, or glimmered and winked through the puffy veils of smoke. The flickering of the torches, the play of light, and the deep contrasting shadows upon the people; the preaching tent and the surrounding trees gave weird effect to the scene. This and the strange influences of the night in an open forest, wrought strongly upon the maiden's imagination.

A feeling of loneliness and terror fell upon her, as she sat intently gazing through the shadows towards the preacher, whose form showed almost lurid in the glare of the pine knot fires on either side of the stand. Quite unconscious of the act, she slowly shrank towards John Latimer, who sat next to her. She was awakened from her reverie by feeling her body press against his arm. Then, starting away hastily, with cheeks burning at the thought of what she had done, she cast a startled glance into John's face, and edging close to Fanny, put her arms about her.

"Oh, I am frightened! What shall I do?" she whispered.

"Be quiet, dear!" said Fanny, softly. "He is done with that part now. Surely you have no need to be concerned about what he has been saying. 'Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect?' Have you not chosen Christ, dear? And has He not assured you of His love and pity and full pardon of sin?"

The maiden spoke softly and with true sympathy, as she pressed her lips to her friend's forehead. But there was a strange twitching at her heart, withal. She had seen the shrinking of Blanche's unconscious form, as though, in her alarm, to get near John's protecting arm, and had noted the eager answer of the young man's eye. Well; there was naught in such an incident, to be sure! she reflected. Only, John—But what was she thinking about? Her thoughts were wandering like the fool's eye, even from the pastor's sacred lesson. God forgive her! She would turn again to the sermon! She drew her arm about Blanche, who nestled closely against her bosom.

Meanwhile, Dr. McMillan had begun the practical application of his sermon, having wrought his hearers into a frame of mind that might give heed to duty and solemn warnings. He pointed out the sin of unbelief, the deep tap-root of all evil behavior, and its enormity was set forth with fitting vigor. He showed what unsavory fruits had sprung therefrom,—as Sabbath desecration, profanity, the neglect of God's House and ordinances, the abounding greed and lust for gear that robbed God of tithes and offerings. These were set forth in clear and fearless terms, with plain, strong almost rude Saxon speech. There was no mincing matters, for this backwoods bishop, like the martyred Anglican bishop Latimer, was wont to "call a spade a spade."

All these were old-fashioned and familiar sins. The people had heard their pastor descant upon them aforetime, and were somewhat inured thereto. Therefore, the ministerial rebuke and warning were received without apparent sensation, though with due attention and solemnity. Not so, however, the particular sins which followed. Against them the preacher launched forth the whole energy of his nature, and his full vocabulary of pulpit denunciation. The novelty of the attack at once stirred up the audience, who showed those signs of eager interest which one may still observe under like conditions. A fluttering sound, as of a light wind among treetops, moved from bench to bench. Bowed and listless forms sprang suddenly into erect and attentive attitude. Heads nodded or wagged. Faces grew radiant with smiles, or clouded with frowns in approval or disapproval. Ever and anon one would nudge his neighbor, and turn to him with approving glances and

nods, as much as to say: "Ah, that is good!" or, "True, true! I endorse it all." Another would change his position, or stir uneasily in his seat, or cast hasty glances about him as though to gauge his fellow worshippers' opinions. Another would droop his head upon shoulders, and shoulders on hips, like a closed opera glass, in an attitude of sullen protest. Indifferent alike to signs of approval or disapproval, the stalwart forest prophet spoke on, the voice of another John, like the baptizer of Judea, crying in the wilderness, "Repent, repent!" This is the substance of what he said:

He had noted what seemed to him a rapid growth of immoderate drinking, especially among some of the younger men. No doubt this was stimulated by the habits of some of those loose characters, bred in the heats of war and the license of the camp, who were ever wont to drift to the frontiers of civilization where there is less restraint of law and custom. No doubt, also, the excitements of the times, and the craving for news and discussion thereof that brought men together, had wrought this evil. But however it came, there it was. Men gathered about the still-houses, neglecting farms and families and other duties. They drank and disputed and quarreled, and then drank more to patch up a peace. Thus they were like to fall into vagabondage and drunkenness.

Now, said the preacher, our people have ever drunk liquors in moderation, as among the good creatures of God to be received with thanksgiving and temperately used. But here as elsewhere the Scripture should be heeded: "Let your moderation be known unto all men." He is no man who cannot control his appetites. He is no Christian man who neglects his duty for convivial drinking. He is an apostate, a reprobate, who allows the love of strong drink to grow into drunkenness. Upon him falls the denunciation of God's Word: "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without a cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine." These texts were so much in sympathy with Dr. McMillan's style, that one might almost have imagined the old Solomonian Preacher of Ecclesiastes, or the rapt Isaiah standing there before him, thundering forth the

terrible denunciations of Jehovah upon the ancient inebriates of Judea.

Then followed words of homely advice and warning to the young people of the flock on the social improprieties of "promiscuous dancing," and an offensive custom which somehow had crept into the parish, known as "bundling." Thus the preacher came to the climax of his discourse. As he touched upon it a deeper silence fell, and every auditor listened with absorbed attention. He had a heavy concern upon his mind and a burden at his heart which he must discharge. He had watched with anxious eyes the slow fomenting of the excitement over the excise laws which now agitated and disturbed the community. This he deprecated and condemned. It distracted attention from lawful business and labor, from family duties, from the solemn obligations of religion. His private opinions had not been concealed, but he had thus far withheld himself from public warning and reproof, hoping that the agitation would die away without serious issue or ill to any.

Instead of subsiding, the excitement grew. It threatened to breed not only local riots but an open outbreak against the general government. Public officers had been threatened and mishandled; private individuals had been thwarted by the abduction of witnesses, and citizens terrorized by secret and open threats. The spirit and methods of the French Revolution, and its Jacobin and infidel authors, had been inaugurated in this Christian country. The paid agents of France had circulated among them, stirring up ill feeling and opposition to Washington's administration. Secret societies, fashioned after the Jacobin clubs of Paris, had been organized in their peaceful rural community. Armed insurrection threatened to raise its horrid front upon their border, bringing in riot, bloodshed, anarchy, pillage, lawlessness and war.

He must speak out, though all his people should turn against him. He knew their burdens, and even their wrongs, and if he could relieve them, gladly would he do so, Got wot! But there were lawful ways of redress, peaceful modes of agitation and protest and opposition. Riot and rebellion would never right their wrongs, but would plunge them into deeper waves of trouble. No relief lay in that direction. In the name of God and peace and duty and their country, he bade them pause and turn back ere it should be too late.

God had set him as a watchman for the House of Israel. He dare not hold his peace. If the watchman see the sword come and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come and take any person from among them, his blood will the Lord require at the watchman's hand!

Here the preacher paused, and stretched out his hands toward the people who sat or stood silent and attentive before him. Not a soul moved in the vast throng. The flickering of the torches could be heard, so deep was the hush upon the open ground. From beneath a belt of striate clouds in the eastern horizon the moon broke forth and poured its light into the open space. It fell upon the preacher's tent, and brought out into sharper outline the strong, tall form of Dr. McMillan, who stood with uplifted arms as in the attitude of petition. From the woods nearby came a whippoorwill's plaintive note. In the intensity of feeling pervading the audience every one heard it, and more than one afterwards confessed, as did Luke Latimer, that "it gave him the creeps to hear it;" for the bird was held as of ill omen, and its whistle believed to portend approaching death. The silence was broken by the preacher's voice.

"Oh, my people, hear the sound of the trumpet and take warning this day. Remember the doom of misguided Absalom who stirred up rebellion against his father, the king and the Lord's anointed. Dear to this Republic, and as truly anointed of God as was David of old, is the great and good Washington, the Father of his Country. Shall we his children strike at his heart, and at that of our country, the cruel blow of insurrection? God forbid! Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O House of Israel?"

Then followed a warning that the Sacrament must be denied to those who took part in riotous and rebellious proceedings. God had declared that rebellion was as the sin of witchcraft, and the church must so deal with it. The powers that be were ordained of God. They must not be resisted, except when tyranny and persecution and enthroned and legalized lawlessness overwhelmed natural liberty, and made life intolerable.

A closing psalm was sung, and the whole audience arose, and reverently bowing their heads, received the pas-

tor's benediction, which he gave with arms stretched forth and open hands raised above the people. Not the least picturesque feature of the evening service was this solemn, patriarchal act of "pronouncing the blessing." The deep hush that had fallen was broken by the stir of the great congregation as it slowly dispersed.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A SACRAMENT IN THE WOODS.

Now began an animated and anxious, even an angry discussion of the sermon. Those who were encamped upon the ground gathered in knots, here and there, before tent doors or in the light of torches, in animated discourse. Those who had come from the village and neighboring plantations, wended their way by trails through field and forest, or over bypath and road to the village. As they walked or rode they pressed together in groups, and took up the same burden as their fellow worshippers on the camp ground. The point whose interest absorbed all others was the minister's utterance on the excise agitation. Here and there a voice was raised in approbation, but the overwhelming opinion was adverse. The Latimer party returned by the road, partly for variety of scenery; partly because some of the village folk had joined them, and had fallen into eager converse on the common theme, for which the broader way gave better scope as the groups huddled together.

"My certie!" said Mrs. Burbeck, "yon was no hummel-corn discourse, at anny rate! There was not a farmer on his feet through all the sarvice; for there was snuff enough in the sarmon to kape folk awake. An' what do you think of that, Andy, ma dear? It would be an awkert sitoation if the Doctor would kape you back from the Saycramint for incuragin' rebellion."

"Thankee, ma dear!" said Andy. "That's not likely; an' it's a long trail til the onpossible. But ye was iver meetin' troubles half way. Now A'm not faultin' the meenister for hev'in' his own opeenions or spakin' out his mind. But A' fault him for a-tryin' to father all the sins of this

excise trouble onto our people. Now, it al'ays taks two to mak' a quarrel, and ginerally both are in the wrong of it. A' would jist like to praich a sarmon on the other side of the quistion, a-showin' up the sins of the Gover'mint an' the excise officers. A'd not want for plinty of matter, at laste. Fair play, siz I, an' aven in the poolpit it's jist as well to give the divil his due. The Doctor's argyment the daay was as wan sided as a jug handle."

"Do you hear that now, Luke Latimer?" said Peggy. "Here is my Andy thinks he would like to praich a counterblast on the axcise! Bring hither gown an' bands for Andy Burbeck, an' let us all be solemn, an' hearken to our bonny new parson! An' what text would you choice, your riv'rence? Mebbe ye'd find one in Roomans Thirteenth, somethin' about obeyin' the powers that be, for axample?"

"Well, now," said Luke Latimer, not relishing this banter, which touched himself more than Andy, "one might praich a very good discoorse from that chapter you quote, Mrs. Burbeck. Espeecially whrs we are admonished that the ruler bears the sword for the terror of avil doers an' the praise of thim that do well. It's small trouble they'd be in these coasts over the axcise if none but avil doers had to suffer. I dar be sworn, now, Andy might manage to praich a fairish sarmon on the subjec' of onjust taxation. An' a fine text would be 'oppression maketh a wise man mad.' I would raccommind that to Mr. McMillan when he next tries a poleetical praichment. It's not a releegious quistion, as I make it out; an' I'm not favorable to bringin' poleetical subjec's intil the pulpit. We've all our opeenions of sich matters, an' the Doctor has his'n. But he can nayther bullyrag us nor threap us down by paradin' his own poleetical views in the garb of releegion. I'm not over fashous about thim matters, I allow; but an the Doctor ast me, I'd 'a ventured to say that he could 've intertained us with a more agrayable as well as more profitable subjec' for his ante-communion discoorse."

Would the minister venture on the morrow to "fence the table" against those who had been taking an active part in opposition to the excise laws and officers? That was the question which continually recurred, and quite pushed aside all consideration of the civil and religious principle at issue. As a large and respectable part of the congregation were more or less incriminated in sundry offences,

there was a deep undertow of feeling, which showed in strong currents of protesting and murmuring speech.

The young folks, little disturbed by the discussion of their seniors, strolled along the road, stopping at times to view the fair scenery. At the forks of the road near the church they lingered long, while Blanche looked southward and westward at the hills that rolled away, range beyond range, until lost in the distance where the stars in the night horizon touched their wooded tops. Over all, the moonlight laid its silver glory, save where the shadows of the forest trees stretched their pall into the edges of the settlers' clearings. A fair prospect this, then and now, whether by day or night. Further down the road the view lay north and east along the sinuous valley of the Chartiers, on whose waters the moonlight quivered where the trees did not embower it. Yonder, two miles away, on the slope of its hill, looking westward and toward the stream, stood the Morgan mansion, its roof aglow with the moon's reflected rays. And there you may see parts of it to-day, if you will; and the spot where the Revolutionary veteran, the master of Morganza, had his grave made just back of the house.

Sabbath morning dawned lustrous and soft, with a beauty in air and sky and on the earth and forests seen only in American woodland landscapes in October. The parti-colored leaves checkered the wood foliage with yellow, russet, brown and red. Among the shrubs, the sumac's lance-like leaves flared their bright scarlet points against the green. From every quarter and for miles around, the worshippers were seen wending their way on horseback and on foot toward the sanctuary on the hill. By ten o'clock the rude seats in the grove were filled with a devout congregation. Many of the young folk, ay, and their elders too, had walked long journeys barefoot; and, as they neared the meeting ground, stopped and drew on stockings and shoes that thus far they had carried in their hands. They wished to come to the meeting in seemly garb, but leathern foot-gear was a heavy charge on their small earnings, and must be sparingly used.

Within the church the pastor and elders were met "in session" to distribute sacramental tokens to late comers; and out of the door dribbled a thin and ever-narrowing stream of communicants. At length, the last applicant

had been served. Now the ministers issued from the church, followed by the elders walking two by two, and carrying the vessels containing the sacred elements for the holy feast. Gravely they threaded the path around the churchyard cemetery, towards the camp where the people waited in solemn silence.

In front of the preacher's tent, the soil had been thrown up into a long heap of rectangular shape, looking like the ancient Israelitish altar of earth, upon whose sodded top hewn clapboards were laid, and all overspread with cloths of snowy linen. Hereon the elders laid the flagons and cups, and the patens with their spotless napkins on which lay the sacramental bread. This was in long unleavened rolls whose whiteness was flecked with spots of russet brown.

Down the central aisle and across the open space in front of the communion table had been placed long narrow tables of hewn logs, with rude benches such as served the worshippers for seats set on either side. These tables were covered with linen cloths, all woven and bleached and washed into spotless whiteness, and ironed with loving devoutness, and spread in their due place by the women pioneers themselves. It never occurred to them to think of themselves as such, yet surely these were veritable deaconesses of the Church in the Wilderness.

In all this there was no aiming at effect and no suspicion of picturesqueness. But the event, so simple, so unaffected, was athrob with that truest life of human souls which has lifted man in all ages above the beasts around him—religion. The arena thereof was hemmed in by mighty forests and everlasting hills, and roofed by the blue dome of heaven lambent and vital with the light of autumnal days. An eagle slowly soared in rising circles above the worshipping throng. Birds whistled and trilled in the trees, and afar off a wood-dove's mournful cooing was heard. Blanche Oldham was moved with a sense not only of the grandeur, but the beauty of the scene. A true artist, a da Vinci for example, had he stood at her side, would have caught its spirit, and might have wrought another Holy Supper piece for the world to admire. What can our poets and artists be about, that they wander into all lands and ages after themes, while events in American life and history such as these are neglected, and even unknown?

The day's worship began with a solemn invocation, during which they all reverently stood. Then was sung a psalm, led by the precentor from a narrow desk just in front of the preachers' tent, but on a lower level. The Gospel followed, giving an account of the institution of the Lord's Supper, and the authority for observing the same "until He come." This was read by Father Clark, who with touching pathos that melted all hearts, commented upon and pointed out the meaning of the Lord's words.

Then another psalm, and Dr. McMillan rose to preach the "Action sermon." At this a sigh of relief was heard, especially in the furthest parts of the audience, where were gathered the hottest opponents of the excise, and those most chargeable with overt acts. They had gone there, suspicious to the last that they might be debarred from the Sacrament (though most of them had their tokens), and not caring to be conspicuous in that case. They nudged one another's elbows, and looked to this side and that with well satisfied faces and nodding heads.

"Ay, we will not be shut out the day!" whispered Luke Latimer to his next neighbor, Col. John Canon. "The Doctor kapes to the Action sarmon, and Mr. Patterson will fence the tables. That manes a sight more liberty in comin' for'ard, and lower fences for the erring, or I'm a long ways off the trail."

The people had truly judged. The pastor had not even seriously thought of debarring any on that occasion. His Saturday sermon was a warning blast of the trumpet, that the people might know what awaited them should they persist in the proscribed way. The one brooding cloud had now passed from the scene, and thenceforth all was serene, and sweet, and full of high and holy pleasure to those forest worshippers of the Father in Heaven and followers of Christ.

The preacher's subject was the Sodality of the Heavenly Graces: "Now abideth Faith, Hope, Charity, these three, but the greatest of these is Charity." One discouraged soul that heard it, gave his own experience of it as follows: "He first treated of Faith, and when he had done defining and limiting it, I was in a despondent mood, and could not see that I had that grace. Then he took up Hope, and after he had dealt with that fully, I greatly doubted if I had that grace either. Then the Doctor took up Charity,

which he defined as love to God and love to others. As he went on in his exhibit of that grace, I began to have a bit of comfort, for I felt that I did have that. Then he came to the conclusion of all, and said 'now, if you can feel in your heart, and perceive by a candid self-examination that you have any one of these graces, you may know that you have all the rest, for they are never alone.' Then my heart leaped up, and a holy peace and gladness came to me that I had never known before. Though I had doubted if, as an ungrounded and graceless professor, I might come to the Supper, I now saw the way clear, and went forward with the rest. The pastor's closing words kept coming to me again, and again, and rang up within me the sweetest sentiments. "The three sister graces always dwell together. If you have one, you must have the rest, *for they are never found alone!*"

The Action sermon was followed by a psalm; and then Mr. Patterson arose for the function known as "fencing the tables." With many ministers of that time this was a tedious office, sometimes occupying an hour or more. All the sins forbidden in the Ten Commandments were passed in review, with all the outshoots therefrom detailed in the Shorter Catechism. One profane wit remarked that the preacher never stopped till he had solemnly debarred from the ordinance every one of his people, and himself to boot! But Dr. McMillan was not favorable to undue length in preaching, and had a favorite saying that "he never knew a conversion to be made beyond the hour." Mr. Patterson was of the same opinion; and especially in fencing the tables leaned to mercy's side, and was content with a half hour's address.

Next was announced a psalm, and the invitation was given to the first table. While the people sang, the families of the ministers and elders, and the older members of the congregation and their families, arose and filed by households into the aisle, and took their places at the long tables, and sat with heads bowed above the board. When the singing ceased, the elders arose from the bench at the side of the preachers' tent, and passing along the tables, thrust an open palm before the communicants in turn, who dropped therein their tokens in evidence of right to be at the Sacrament. Meanwhile, the congregation sat in silence, not a sound breaking the stillness but the dull thud of the

elder's feet as they slowly passed from person to person, and the muffled click of the metal tokens as they fell into the outstretched palms.

This service done, the elders returned to their places. Then two of them lifted from the vessels containing the bread and wine the cloth that had covered the table during the foregoing service. Next the minister offered the eucharistic prayer, and set apart the elements from their secular to their sacred use, touching with his hands the patens and cups as he pronounced the words of consecration. This done, the elders stood up before the communion table to receive the bread, and thence dispersed to the various tables, each with a paten in hand. This they placed on the table between the communicants seated on either side, who broke off with their own hands a morsel of bread. Then the elders moved the plate along the cloth to the next, and so on until all were served. The elders who had served their sections, stood in silent waiting at the furthest end of the aisles until their fellows were all done. Then they walked down the aisles together, two by two, and returned the patens to the communion table, a most solemn and impressive procession. Meanwhile, however, the senior elder had given the bread to the ministers also.

Then Father Clark made an address to the communicants in administering the cup, which was handed about in the same manner as the bread. After this a psalm was sung, and during the singing those at the table retired, while others took the vacated seats. There was stir and movement in the congregation, of course, during these changes, but no sign of confusion. The utmost decorum and reverence prevailed; and those who did not commune looked on with solemn mien, and no doubt often with serious reflections. Thus table after table was served, following the same simple ritual, but with ever-varying incident according to the manner of the officiating clergyman, until the number of empty seats before the sacred board showed that no more remained to come.

"This will be the last table," said Dr. McMillan. "If there are any others who wish to commune, let them now come forward."

A few stragglers, timid Faint-hearts, for the most part, who had held back to the last in conflict of hope and fear, now, with nervous haste or hesitating steps, slipped into

some of the vacant seats, and the last administration proceeded. It was late in the afternoon when the service closed, yet were the people not weary. Few left the meeting save those who were compelled to do so, and they mostly mothers whose children demanded their care.

It was a scene that Blanche long remembered. She returned home by the hill path, escorted by Lieut. Burd who had come to the Sacrament with Mrs. Morgan, and Fanny McCormack and John Latimer walking close at hand. The solemnities of the service and the beauty of the day wrought in her heart a holy pleasure and quiet, which seemed to the maiden, in the religious fervor of the hour, a foretaste of the Eternal Day and the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Who would have thought that over these peaceful scenes should soon drift and beat the passions of riot, and the terrors of war and rumors of wars?

CHAPTER XIX.

A SHOOTING MATCH AT LEGIONVILLE.

John Latimer made up a small party to attend the Legionville shooting match. Blanche Oldham, in whose honor the excursion was planned, was eager to accept, provided her aunt would go with her to matronize. That duty Mrs. Morgan willingly undertook, for the occasion was a notable one, and would pleasantly break the monotony of frontier life. Legionville was an encampment made for the troops which Gen. Wayne was gathering at the forks of the Ohio for the South Western expedition against the hostile Indians. When Washington's government determined to check the inroads of savages upon the settlers, and vindicate the white warrior's prestige, so far fallen by the unfortunate expeditions of St. Clair and Harmer, the hero of Stony Point had been put in command. No man was more popular among both western frontiersmen and eastern soldiers, and there was full confidence in his ability to defeat the Indians. Yet recruiting went on slowly, and Wayne was sorely tried and well nigh disheartened.

At last, enough of an army had assembled to justify hopes of success. But the surroundings of Pittsburg were

not favorable to discipline and drill. Wayne chose a site for a camp about twenty miles below the forks of the river, nearby a settlement known as Logtown, which stood upon or near the present site of the town of Economy. Thither he marched his troops and established them in winter quarters. Log huts were built from the forest that covered the hills, and these were laid out in regular streets in good military fashion. The commander named his temporary settlement "Legionville," because "The Legion of the United States," as, with a touch of classical affectation he called his army, was there to be trained for service. Well-marked remnants of the camp were to be seen as late as the middle of this century, such as the burned and blackened stones built into chimneys and fireplaces. These, with other débris, enabled one to mark out quite readily the course of the streets and sites of the huts. Even now traces of the alignment of the cabins and trenches may be observed.

In order to quicken ambition and to promote the proficiency of his recruits in marksmanship, Gen. Wayne appointed a rifle tournament, or, in the less stately vernacular, a "Shooting Match." Prizes were offered for the best marksman among the troops, and several lesser prizes for inferior grades of skill. Further, a prize was offered for the best marksman of all comers, troops and pioneers alike, including hunters and scouts. The need for such an expedient to promote skill in rifle practice was far greater than modern folk suppose. Many settlers had small knowledge of firearms. Immigrants from Ulster had no practice in shooting in the old country. Even Revolutionary veterans knew only the musket, and required to be trained to use the rifle after the methods of Indian warfare. The skill in rifle shooting which tradition rightly assigns the frontiersmen, was largely confined to hunters and trappers who had been born on American soil, and had drifted westward and northward from eastern and southern colonies. But the Ulstermen were not sluggish pupils. Many of them soon became handy enough with the long and graceful rifled tool that pioneers delighted in.

Far and wide the news of the match had gone. No tournament of knights ever awakened deeper interest in the days of chivalry than did this trial of skill in that weapon upon which American pioneers depended for food and

safety. In all seasons it guaranteed to their larder a toothsome supply of the edible game of the forest. Against wild beasts and more savage men, it was their weapon of defense and offence. The crack of the pioneer's rifle was the first herald cry of coming civilization.

Thus, with eager interest, from all parts of the frontier the settlers thronged to Legionville. They came by boat and canoe, afoot and on horseback, by forest trail and over the rude roadway that the troops had cut from Pittsburg. Among these excursionists was our company from Canonsburg. A pleasant afternoon's ride ahorseback brought them to the hamlet that had grown up around the trading post of the Frenchman Pierre Chartiers, located at the junction with the Ohio River of the stream which still bears the old trader's name. This was the site of the Indian town of King Shingis before the incoming tide of white settlers had bidden the red man move on. The free hospitality of the frontier gave hearty welcome for the night, and it was a merry company that John received on board his keel boat in the early morning.

At nine o'clock the boat touched at the mouth of Legionville Run. That creek flows into the Ohio through a narrow bottomland, then bordered on either side by wooded ridges, and which narrows, as one ascends the run, by a gradual approach of the hills. At a point one-third of a mile from the river where the hills nearly approach, and on the western side of the run, the military city was built. The shooting match was to be held upon the triangular plain that formed the parade ground on which the troops were exercised. The discipline of the camp was for the day relaxed. Friends, settlers, planters, citizens from Pittsburg, officers from Fort Pitt, hunters in their picturesque garb, a few friendly Indians standing in silent groups, were commingled with the soldiers and officers of the Legion. Flags fluttering from the headquarters tent; horses picketed in the engirdling forest; leaves already bright with autumn hues, the camp with its streets and log houses and tents showing white against the green of the hills, and above all the crowds of eager and anxious people surrounding the parade ground, made up a unique picture of frontier life, and as picturesque as novel.

The morning was spent in the competitive shooting arranged for the troops, and in the general trial at which

all comers, whether soldier or civilian, gave proof of their skill. Then, after due time for nooning, and a merry lurching hour, the bugle once more summoned to the field. The final decision was now to be made, and the issue had narrowed down to six persons. This fact, together with the wide notoriety of some of those concerned, vastly heightened the popular interest. Excitement ran high. Parties, as is wont, were divided more by the line of personal or local sympathies than by the merits of the several contestants. Lieut. Burd, of the Fort Pitt garrison, was one of the six, and the army officers and a large portion of the troops adopted him as their special champion, and loudly cheered him as he stepped forth. He wore the undress uniform of an officer of that period, which is distinguished by this generation as the "Continental buff and blue."

John Latimer was the favorite of the settlers throughout the whole surrounding region, where he was well known as a skillful waterman and prime shot. Loud cheers greeted him as his name was called by the Adjutant and he took his place beside Lieut. Burd. He wore the uniform coat of the Chartiers Riflemen, the company of young militiamen of which he was captain, which was a green hunting shirt and cape with orange edging and fringes. His shapely limbs were clad in buckskin wrought into shape by the Pittsburg "Breeches Maker and Skin Dresser" instead of the usual leggings, and in ribbed woolen stockings, his mother's handiwork. His feet were shod with high moccasins prettily beaded along the outside, the gift of his friend Featherfoot. Pouch and powder horn were slung across his breast by a broad baldric beaded like the moccasins and by the same hand. He wore a soft wool hat cocked up on one side by a silver clasp which held a buck-tail plume. Beneath the hat his long curling chestnut locks freely hung, unmolested by ribbon or queue.

Then came Robert McClellan, the famous scout, surging forward with long lope into place. He stood leaning upon his rifle with a careless air as if little interested in the issue which, as he justly conceived, was already settled as far as the first premium was concerned. He wore the regulation frontier dress, in pattern quite like John Latimer's, but of plainer material and rudely cut. The coat was made from a Government blanket, a fashion which

was not uncommon at that period, and from which, no doubt, by an easy and natural evolution, have come the parti-colored blanket coats to which the lumbermen of the Northwest are so partial. His breeches and moccasins of deer-skin were fastened with thongs. He had a well-worn pouch and powder horn, and a coon-skin with the long tail of the animal dangling behind to his shoulders. The only approach at ornament was a fringe of otter fur upon his coat and cape, and a beautiful beaded belt which carried his knife and tomahawk.

The fourth contestant was Morton Sheldon, a young Connecticut pioneer. He was tall, thin, angular, straight as an Indian, and with high cheek bones, black eyes and tawny skin. He was a good example of the type that has led some folk to fancy a resemblance between New England scions of the Puritans, and the aborigines of the soil, a product, they say, of climatic environment. Although only five or six years John Latimer's senior, he had taken part in the closing scenes of the war for Independence. He wore a light blue camelot coat and buff waistcoat, with belt, pouch and powder horn, and moccasins as any other hunter. His gray woolen cap was a cross between the cocked hat, the fashion of the day, and the old-fashioned Puritan peaked hat. The brim was turned up on one side and clasped with a rosette of red, white and blue, which under all circumstances, whether hunting, scouting or visiting, at home, church or frolic, he insisted on wearing. He was thoroughly trusted by all who knew him, and especially by Gen. Wayne, who had found him an efficient scout. He was well liked by his friends and associates, among whom with equal regard for his steadiness of character and his partiality for the national cockade, he was known as "Old Tricolor."

Panther, the Mingo scout, was next called, and joined the little circle before the pavilion, his Indian presence and accoutrements adding to the picturesqueness of the group.

One more name remained, and there was much laughter intermingled with cheers of the crowd as the Adjutant announced it. The person who responded was somewhat below the medium height of men; was clad in the conventional dress of the western hunter, except that the hunting shirt or tunic was longer than usual, and hung below the knees. The cheeks were swarthy and wide at the high

cheek bones, the eyes blue, the light brown hair was worn in a long braided queue tied with a bright red ribbon. The coon-skin cap had a tuft of heron feathers fastened upon one side with a broad silver clasp. Long-shanked moccasins completed the outfit, which, as well as the hunting shirt, were tricked off with beaded ornaments somewhat in the fashion of an Indian squaw, whom, indeed, the figure more resembled than a white hunter. But the easy manner in which the rifle was borne, showing perfect familiarity with the weapon, and the masculine step with which the person strode to the front, showed that no novice in woodcraft was there.

"Who is he?" asked Blanche, as the people continued to shout in a fashion that savored quite as much of merriment as of approval.

"Who is he?" echoed Fanny. "Who is *she*, you should rather say. That is Mad Ann Trotter."

"What! Is that really a woman?" For better view Blanche rose from the seat near the pavilion front to which the ladies had been assigned by courtesy of General Wayne. The huntress quietly leaned upon her rifle, apparently undisturbed either by the chaff and cheers of the populace, or by the presence of the General and his staff and other prominent people before her. A slight flush darkened her brown skin, and her blue eyes kindled, and then relapsed into that cold and stony seeming which one notes at times in people of Anglo-Saxon blood. Otherwise she stood motionless until the clamor ceased.

"Pray tell me who is this strange creature?" Blanche asked. "She looks masculine enough to be a scout, no doubt. But it is a pleasant face after all, and not unwomanly when one comes to study it. I like it well. Surely she cannot be crazy, as you intimate?"

Fanny smiled and nodded assent to Blanche's analysis. "I am not sure that she gives any better cause for being called 'Mad Ann' than that she chooses to don this manly attire, and affects manly sports and actions. But she has the reputation of having an unbalanced mind, and so people let her have her own way. Whether a natural or a fanatic, I cannot tell; but she is harmless enough, and an attractive character, at least to many of us. She loves the woods, is an adept in woodcraft, is a fearless and successful hunter both of game and Indians, and one of the best

shots on the frontier. Her story is a sad and indeed romantic one, not uncommon on our border so far as men are concerned, but rarely if ever having one of our own sex as the heroine. Her maiden name I have been told was Hennis. She is English by birth, having emigrated from Liverpool with her husband, Richard Trotter, who was a volunteer in Dunmore's War of 1774. He fell fighting at the bloody Indian battle of Point Pleasant, and from that period Ann became possessed with a savage spirit of revenge against the Indians. She forsook her housework, and began practising with the rifle and at throwing the tomahawk. Thence she went into the forests hunting wild game until she became an expert shot. As she grew familiar with the rifle, she would ride about the country to every muster of scouts or hunters. She discarded female attire and, as you see, her common dress differs little in style from that of the ordinary scout. Her rifle is her constant companion, and she has frequently carried off prizes at shooting matches. But she is not likely to fare so well to-day, for she will be pitted against the best rifles of the border. Most of her time she spends scouring the woods, so that she has become as skilled a forester as any of our best guides. She loves nothing better than to follow an Indian trail, and many is the savage who has fallen before her fatal weapon."

"See!" exclaimed Blanche. "Something has happened that ill pleases Ann. Look how she flushes up, and pulls down her brows, and glowers at someone in the company before the General. What can be the matter? Ah! there is some trouble among the contestants. Lieutenant Burd is speaking to Gen. Wayne with no good temper, it would seem. Hist! We must hear what is going on."

"No man wishes to contend with a woman at any time," said Lieut. Burd, "much less at a public tournament. It never occurred to me that any but men would enter the lists, or I should not have been here. I trust your Excellency will not permit this person to compete with us?"

"But you made no objection when the lady shot in the general trials," said Wayne. "You should have urged your remonstrances then."

"True," was the answer. "But I did not think you or any one else took seriously the woman's appearance at that time. I thought it had been tolerated simply for the

entertainment of the people, and would not have done the Commander the injustice to suppose that so grotesque a figure could be permitted a serious part in the final contest. It would surely detract from the dignity and value of the occasion."

Gen. Wayne hesitated. The Adjutant fumbled with his papers. The silence was broken by Mad Ann herself, who spoke in a deep but not unmelodious voice and with an accent that showed her English origin.

"Well, yer honor, didn't you give me an invite to the trial, h'as well as the gentleman from the garrison? Just look at your proclamation, if yer honor please, and see h'if Ann Trotter 'asn't as good a right 'ere as Leftenant Burd. 'Ow does it read, Mr. h'Adjutant? 'Know all persons by these presents,' and etcetry. Isn't that it? An' if a woman isn't a person, will the gentleman be good enough to say w'at she is?"

There was a ripple of pleased excitement in the company at the good point which Ann had made. The Adjutant hurriedly turned up the order proclaiming the shooting match and handed it to Gen. Wayne.

"She has the advantage of us there, Lieutenant," said the Commnader smiling. "Neither 'man' nor 'men' appears in the paper. The call is made out to 'all persons.' I must decide, I think, that this permits Mrs. Ann a lawful place in the trials, though I am free to say I had no thought of her or any other female marksman when I signed the paper."

"The point seems well taken," said Lieut. Burd. "But some regard ought to be had for the contestants. I dare say others think as I do, that it is not seemly that a woman take an active part in a public shooting match, and is unfitting that men should compete therein with women."

"Troth," said Ann, in a deep undertone, as though communing with herself. "The young gentleman disremembers that 'is h'own mother was a woman. It's an ill *bird* that fouls its h'own nest!" said she, quoting the old proverb with a peculiar emphasis on the word "bird," and a knowing glance at the Lieutenant.

This sally was received with much amusement, not so much for its wit, as for the odd seriousness of manner in which it was uttered. Some of the company laughed outright, but others, among whom were Mrs. Neville and Mrs.

Morgan, expressed their decided disapprobation. Gen. Wayne raised his hand to check the rising merriment. Turning to the contestants he said:

"Gentlemen, I hesitate to decide this case. Lieut. Burd has appealed it to you, and I am willing that you should decide it. But let it be understood that you must all abide by the decision. You agree? So then it shall be. Lieut. Burd votes against admitting Mrs. Ann to the trial, I suppose?"

"I do, most decidedly!" said the Lieutenant.

"What say you, Mr. Sheldon?"

"Wall, I dunno as sex's got anythin' t' do with good shootin', one way or 'nother. Stiddy narves, an' a true eye, an' a trained sight are the main things, I calc'late; an' ef woman's a better man than me in thet partic'ler, I dunno's I ought to hender 't. Let her shoot, sir, for all me."

"Panther, what say you?"

"Indian no send squaw on warpath. Mingo braves shoot game for their families. Let squaw stay in wigwam, mind papoose, cook succotash. Panther says, no!"

"Ay," muttered Mad Ann, "an' plant an' 'oe the corn that goes into the succotash, h'as well! By my faith, Mr. Burd, I wish you joy of your fellowship. No doubt it's 'igh satisfaction to know that your h'opinion of a woman h'agrees with the savage's."

Burd flushed. Panther did not even vouchsafe a grunt of disapproval. Gen. Wayne turned to McClellan for his vote. The scout, already as famous on the border as a modern Buffalo Bill, declared he did not care a continental for the matter. That for his part he thought a woman's place was in the cabin and not the forest or field. It "went agin the grain," he freely allowed, "to have a female a-traipsin' through the woods with sculpin' knife an' rifle, an' ridin' a-straddle—"

"Bobby McClellan," quoth Mrs. Ann, interrupting the scout. "Bad 'cess to ye for a h'ungrateful dog! You were glad enough to ride be'ind me, straddle or no straddle, that day on the Tuscarawas w'en Ann Trotter with 'er black geldin' carried you h'out o' reach of the Wyandottes. Deil take me if I iver again give myself the trouble to save that shocky sculp o' yourn from the h'Injun's knife."

The scout joined heartily in the laugh which this retort raised, and Gen. Wayne interrupted by querying: "You

vote with Lieut. Burd and Panther, then? That is three to one, and it seems to settle the matter."

"Hold on thar, Giner!" exclaimed the scout. "I haven't so said, by a long shot, nor I don't meanter, nuther. Matron or man, mad or sound witted, I'm blessed if I rightly know which she is. But I do know she's a brave body with a kind heart, an' has been a good friend to me and many another borderer. So let her shoot, say I."

"A tie!" exclaimed the General. "This grows quite exciting." He turned laughingly to John. "Now Capt. Latimer, the casting vote is with you. What say you?"

The young man's face flushed a deep red in the embarrassment of the situation. He felt that all eyes were fixed on him, though his own were scarcely raised from the ground. A deep silence fell upon the circle around the headquarters tent, most of whom were now on their feet. The incident, which seemed trivial at first, had come to have unwonted interest to the company. At last John mastered his embarrassment, and said:

"Since the issue must be with me, your Excellency, will you suffer me to give a reason for my vote? If we five men were leaguered in a block house, and set to defend the lives of helpless women and children, would we not heartily welcome the rifle of this woman? In good sooth, we would not scorn it because of her sex. How then, can we in justice refuse to recognize it here? Moreover, it seems to me that as a matter of good policy it would be better to foster than discourage the use of the rifle among the women of our frontier. Their life is a lonely one, and sore exposed to perils which might often be kept from fatal issue were the maids and matrons instructed, like our lads, to handle firearms deftly. As to this trial of skill losing dignity or worth from the competition of this good woman, let me assure you and my friend Lieut. Burd, that you have no reason to be ashamed of Mrs. Trotter. To be sure, folk do call her 'Mad Ann;' but not so much from any lack of wit as for the presence of that quality, made notable in her case because so rare in women, that led his admiring countrymen to dub the leader of the forlorn hope at Stony Point 'Mad Anthony Wayne.' I vote, ay!"

The modesty of the young man's speech, its manly good sense and chivalry, and the wit and skillful diplomacy of his closing words, so won upon the hearts of the company

that they gave forth open applause. No one clapped hands more heartily than Blanche Oldham and Fanny McCormack. Lieut. Burd, who was a true gentleman in both heart and manners, bowed to the Commander, and lifting his chapeau gracefully to Ann Trotter courteously wished her good luck.

"Thank'e for your courtesy," quoth Mad Ann. "I 'll not begrudge you a like wish. But h'it's my opinion, after all, that you'll be a winged 'bird' afore the shootin's h'over, though it'll not be from a woman's rifle, I suspect. An' that 'll be a bit of comfort in your honor's disappointment, no doubt."

An inkling of the discussion around the headquarters tent had in the meantime reached the crowd of troops and spectators. The gist of the matter was fairly understood, though the details were not known. This added to the interest which frontier people always take in trials of athletic skill. Therefore as the contestants, marshalled by Mr. Adjutant McDowell as master of ceremonies, moved forward to the firing point, they were noisily greeted, for the folk were highly content to see the contest under way.

CHAPTER XX.

HOW FRONTIER RIFLEMEN SHOWED THEIR SKILL.

The test of skill began with the practice known as driving the nail. Fifty paces were measured off, and hand-wrought nails (for the machine-made articles were not yet come in) were set fairly in a broad slab erected at the butts. In the trial of skill Mad Ann and Sheldon clipped the nail. Burd and Panther bent it. Latimer partly drove it, and thereby won a round of applause, chiefly from the settlers, led off by a group of enthusiastic friends from Washington County, headed by Andy Burbeck, who had taken their stand at a point quite near the butts, whence they could easily and quickly observe the results of the shooting.

"Thar's no use a-wastin' iron," said McClellan, as he stepped to the firing point, and drawing a bead upon the nail just struck by John, fired and drove it fairly home, a feat which vastly pleased the spectators.

The next course was popularly known as "snuffing the candle," wherein the point of merit lay in striking off with a bullet the charred wick of a tallow candle without quenching the light. The test was made at forty paces, and as a fair breeze was going which drove the flame to and fro, and to give the marksmen the benefit of a darkened background for their target, an empty barrel was raised upon stakes, and therein the burning tallow dip was placed. This hindered the spectators on either side from noting the success of the several shots, but the Sergeant who kept the score and made faithful record, gave announcement after every firing.

All being ready, the first round began, Mrs. Ann taking the lead and sending her bullet through the flame above the wick. Lieut. Burd who followed, struck the candle well below the flame and quite drove it to the barrel head. Latimer came next with a better shot, but not successful, for he cut the wick just below the snuff, thus quenching the light, though not upsetting the candle. Mort. Sheldon and Panther clipped the edge of the candle, twirling the same about but not extinguishing the light. McClellan paused but a moment before firing; there was a quick pulsation of the flame, no other visible token of the shot, but the Sergeant announced that the candle had been fairly snuffed.

Sheldon led off on the second round with a shot that cut through the flame. Lieut. Burd followed, much to the dissatisfaction of Mad Ann, who grumbled that he would have the advantage of the long snuff which had settled by reason of Sheldon's failure to disturb the candle. Nevertheless, the marksman did not score a success, although he made a good shot, cutting the wick but quenching the light, as the bullet passed a mite too low.

John Latimer chose from his pouch a well-rounded bullet, placed it in the hollow of his hand and fairly covered it with powder. Then from a little box in the butt of the rifle he selected a linen patch, and touching it with a bit of grease in the corner of the box, rammed the bullet home and fired. There was a slight flicker in the flame but the candle seemed untouched.

"A miss, a miss!" cried some of the officers around the headquarters tent, who could observe the result from their position, and were so strongly enlisted for their comrade

that their courtesy was quite carried away by their partiality. The troopers nearby caught up the cry, and fancying that the victory rested with their favorite, cheered him lustily. But now the Sergeant at the butts raised his hand, and as silence fell, announced that the marksman had made a clean snuff, and the best shot as yet scored.

"Best not cry afore you're hurt, gintlemen," exclaimed a voice which John recognized as Andy Burbeck's, who thereupon led off three stirring cheers for "Captain Jock," in which the most part of the settlers joined vociferously, and which at least two ladies at the General's pavilion encouraged by waving of handkerchiefs. McClellan closed the series by a clean snuff, and when this had been announced, exclaimed: "Hold a moment, Sergeant! Set the candle back and give me the favor of an extra shot."

The Adjutant giving assent, the Sergeant replaced the candle, and McClellan charged his piece, choosing the bullet with more attention than usual, and giving a little more care to his aim. As the smoke rolled away, he rested on his piece while the Sergeant held the still burning candle aloft and announced "a double snuff." The scout had aimed so successfully that the tip of the wick had just been touched, carrying away the small amount of charred matter that survived the first shot.

The next two contests were of skill in running shots, and as these required more action, and had the seeming of good markmanship even beyond the facts thereof, and were altogether more sensational in manner and results, the popular interest was correspondingly increased. A squad of soldiers hurried into the arena and fixed in a row six slabs about the average height of a man. Upon the top of each was placed a rudely rounded block the size of a man's head; and upon one stick near the middle of the group was nailed a white heart-shaped target about the bigness of one's hand. To add to the grotesqueness of the whole, with a view to popular effect, a stick was lashed upon each side of every slab, reaching out therefrom like human arms. Two hundred yards from the firing point a Government wagon was placed, and the rules of the match required that every marksman in turn should start therefrom, and while passing before the target at a distance of fifty yards, in full run, should deliver a shot at one of the blocks. Having fired, he must pass around the wagon to

a tree hard by, reload, and returning on the run, fire at the white heart target at forty paces. A record of the time consumed in the course was taken, as well as of the accuracy of the shooting.

McClellan led upon this round, and having driven a bullet into the centre of the block and got back to the wagon, disdained to pass around it, but leapt quite over it, cover and all, though it stood eight feet and a half high, and without apparent interruption of speed, got behind the tree and began to reload. The populace broke forth into a frenzy of cheers at the flying leap, amidst which the nimble scout returned, and delivered his bullet into the very centre of the heart-shaped target. Such an achievement as this would have discouraged those who were to follow, had not all parties well understood beforehand that Robert McClellan would be only nominally in the competition, and that the real conflict would be between the others. Therefore the remaining contestants, without chagrin, and with good humor turned to their own work.

As for the people, though they well knew that nothing would follow in point of excellence which would compare with what they had seen, yet their interest was in no wise abated. Men are so constituted that a competitive display of merit always awakens a higher concern than the contemplation of merit in the abstract. A race against time, though done with higher speed, does not quicken the heart as a trial of mettle between inferior creatures struggling side by side. The love of competitive games, races, sports, is in our blood. It were folly to try to obliterate this ethnic trait, so especially strong in young hearts. The way of wisdom is to suffer its normal outlet, and to give it true direction, that it may tend to manliness of character and virility of body. What reason is there that the spirit of ancient chivalry, its unselfishness, its courtesy, its fairness, courage and strength, should not dominate our nineteenth century sports, and these take on therewith all the finer tone of kindness and humanity which our era apprehends?

First came Mort. Sheldon to the firing point, and squarely hit the block that crowned the stick assigned to him. Back he returned with long swinging lope, covering the ground rapidly, and on the return lodged his bullet just short of the edge of the white heart. His time record

overpassed by two seconds that of McClellan himself, and won him well-deserved applause. There were few who could pass the long and supple-legged Yankee in a simple trial of speed in running, a fact which had won him the Indian name Long Loup. Next followed Panther, who plumped his block fairly enough, but clipped the edge of the central stick with his bullet. However, he made a record of time five seconds shorter than Sheldon, a feat that also won applause, which even the strong frontier prejudices against Indians could not hinder from being hearty. Much to the surprise and disappointment of many, Mad Ann declined to take part in the last two trials. She shouldered her rifle and walked off the parade ground, amid the good-natured and most cordial cheers of the spectators, which had lost the tone of merriment and chaffing that had marked her first appearance.

The two chief contestants for the second prize now remained, and Lieut. Burd moved toward the starting point at the wagon amidst the fixed attention of the assembly. His agile form swept by the target at high speed, the bullet entering but little short of the centre. Back to the starting point; once more before the target; and the Sergeant announced that he had clipped the edge of the white heart and had equalled McClellan in time.

"Bravo, bravo!" cried the troopers, who shouted again and again at the masterful shooting, as Lieut. Burd, thinking his work now over for this round, crossed the field to the pavilion where he was greeted by waving handkerchiefs and clapping hands.

"Bravo, indeed!" cried Andy Burbeck from the midst of his coterie of settlers. "We 'll begrudge no man well-earned laurels; but jist wait, if ye plaze, ontill Cap'n Latimer delivers his shot."

"Tut, Andy!" cried Corporal Meldrum, a sturdy Scotchman hard by, who knew the man well enough to venture in friendly chaff. "Let that fly stick to the wall, wull ye? Yer Captain Jock can't beat that record, I'll be bound."

"I'll lay you ten to one," Andy began, removing his cap and passing his ruddy fingers through his stubble of red hair, "that Cap'n John—" But further speech was stopped by his wife, who thrust her hand over his mouth, and laughingly bade him bet his small coin first, and to keep still, for Mr. John was already at the wagon and about to start.

"The score! The score!" resounded from every side, when John's two shots had been fired, so keen was the anxiety to know the result. But the Sergeant gave no response.

"The score! The score!" cried Andy Burbeck, seconded by his friends, and muttered aside: "What diviltry is agoin' now? Surely they're not cahootin' to euchre Cap'n Jock out of his rights?"

"Hoosh, Andy," retorted his wife soothingly. "Don't minton it. How dar' ye suspect the honor of sich an officer as Adjutant McDowell!"

Meanwhile the Adjutant carefully measured the targets with his pocket rule, once and again, with a coolness that chafed the waiting observers. Then followed a comparison of time records and without any announcement the Sergeant was sent to the pavilion to make verbal report to Gen. Wayne.

"What can the matter be?" cried Mrs. Peggy. "I'm fairly a-dyin' to know the score. Why do they kape it back?"

"I suspec'," answered Luke Latimer, who was an eager spectator of the scene, "they don't know much better nor yourself, Peggy. I fancy it's nip an' tuck wi' the two men." Luke Latimer was right. The Sergeant returned to the butts, and after reporting to the Adjutant, announced that the record showed an exact tie both in the time of the runs and the nearness of the shots.

This was a rare incident, indeed. In all border experiences of shooting matches such an event had never before been known. Of course there was nothing for it but a new round, and Lieut. Burd returned to the firing point followed by a volley of "Good luck!" wishes from his comrades and lady friends. As he rejoined John, the two young men saluted, and while they stood pleasantly chatting, awaiting further orders, they challenged the admiration of all beholders, many of whom agreed that it would be hard to match them, far or near, for stalwart manly grace and vigor.

Now came a messenger from the pavilion saying that it was Gen. Wayne's pleasure that the contestants should make trials together instead of separately. This method, though it had some disadvantages, certainly gave fresh zest to the conflict, and added to the popular interest

therein. After certain arrangements had been made, needful to prevent collision or interference between the two men, which might give ground for disputing the results, Latimer and Burd took post and awaited the signal to start.

"One—two—three, and *go!*" cried the Adjutant, and the two competitors started at high speed. Shoulder to shoulder they ran, across the open area of the parade ground, for at least half the distance, when Lieut. Burd gradually led the race, coming first to the firing point and delivering his shot a fraction of a minute before Latimer. Thereat, his partisans, unable to control their feelings, raised a mighty shout and cheered on their favorite with cries of "Bravo!" "Good, good!" "Go it!" and the like.

"See yon, Andy," exclaimed Corporal Meldrum, his face aglow with glee. "Your mon's beat for sartain. Our Leftenant's i' the lead and 'll keep it!"

"Best not halloo afore the death, Corporal," retorted Andy. "Cluckin' time's aye canty time, they say. But you 've clucked afore the eggs are laid, mind ye!" For all that, the honest fellow betrayed his vexation by an anxious face, as he stood with neck eagerly craned to follow the swift flying athletes, ever and anon venting a yell of encouragement to his favorite who, meantime, neither heard nor heeded, but strained forward with mighty leaps and overtook his rival just at the appointed goal. The two disappeared behind the covered wagon, one on either side, at the same moment.

The whole assembly was held in silence from intensity of emotion during the brief interval in which the marksmen were charging their pieces. When Capt. Latimer, having first finished, bounded into view, and with trailed rifle headed for the firing point several yards in advance of Lieut. Burd, the settlers, seeing their time had now come, lifted up their voices in a shout that filled the air and awakened echoes among the neighboring hills.

"Whar's your mon now, Corporal?" cried Andy, carried away with joy and pride, and swinging his hands in rapid oscillation through his hair. "Ha, ha! Your eggs weren't worth all the cacklin', this time! Ah, mon, there's manny a slip twixt cup and lip! Do ye mind that, now?"

It was the trooper's turn to show chagrin; but as the runners came to the boundary, and two shots rang in close

sequence, and the contestants halted and rested on their rifles, he held up his courage by remarking: "Juist mind your own advice, Andy, an' don't crow afore you're out o' the woods. Good marksmansheep's no juist a matter o' lang legs. Your Captain Jock's na doot a bonny land louter, but that's no the main thing. Wait until you hear the Adjutant's report of the shootin' afore you cry the victory."

But the Adjutant's report did not change the result, for the Sergeant announced that while both marksmen had made equally good shots at the top blocks, Capt. Latimer's bullet at the second shot had entered the white heart, while Lieut. Burd's had clipped the outer edge, thus giving the former a better score.

This set the cheers agoing once more, and now the officers and troops, touched with the beat and stir of the environing joy, gave sympathetic response by joining in the applause; for although one other trial remained, it plain that Latimer's claim to the second place and prize could not be set aside by any turn of fortune. Indeed, Lieut. Burd had already given the winner his hand and generous congratulations.

"I could have wished that fortune had favored me," said he, "not only for my own sake, but for the credit of my corps. But since I have lost, I am truly glad that the laurels have fallen to one who is every way worthy to wear them."

A generous youth, indeed! And the spectators who saw the young men shake hands, though they heard not a word, were pleased thereat and cheered again, this time also for Lieut. Burd. At the pavilion the current of favor had run quite undisguised towards the young officer, but there were some who tried to hold an impartial spirit and one or two were quietly happy at the issue.

The last trial, "the running load" as it was called, was in some respects the most unique and interesting in itself, but as the element of personal competition had now been practically eliminated, the enthusiasm with which it was witnessed was much subdued. The targets were arranged as in the foregoing match, but the white heart centre was renewed. The rounded blocks on top of the sticks were turned to present a fresh surface to the bullets; and to gi e an added touch of grotesqueness and thus tickle the fancy

of the crowd, a wild goose feather was thrust into every block. The rules of the match required each contestant to run from the pavilion to a log laid upon the parade ground one hundred yards from the targets; to take shelter behind the log and fire from the ground at the white heart. Then rising he must run to the wagon as if pursued by an enemy, and return to the log, loading his rifle upon the course without stopping; and having reached the log again, fire quickly at the blocks, either standing or kneeling as he might choose.

With our modern breech-loading firearms such a feat would scarcely be worthy of mention; but with the muzzle-loaders, flint-locks and priming-pans known to the pioneer, none but the most expert and experienced could gain great success. The most expert of all the borderers in this exercise was the famous scout, Louis Wetzel, who however had not come to this shooting match, much to the regret of many who would fain have seen a trial of skill between him and McClellan. That would have been a meeting as noteworthy after its kind as the duel between Achilles and Hector on the plain of Troy.

That the reader may learn how this feat was performed, let him note the movements of Robert McClellan who, the others having finished their trials, closed the series and concluded the match. At the word he springs from the pavilion front, and crouching low with trailed piece sweeps over the field with noiseless stride. He has reached the log, has hurled himself prone behind it, and with scarcely a moment's interval has fired into the centre of the white heart. Ere the smoke of the discharge lifts, he is up and away toward the wagon.

See how he tucks his rifle under the right arm and lowers it until the butt hangs as near to the ground as may be without bumping. Now the left hand lifts the powder horn to the teeth which pull out the stopper. The right hand is raised; into the hollow thereof the charge is decanted; the horn drops; the rifle is transferred to the left arm, and, the butt still hanging low, the right palm is closed over the muzzle and the powder dropped therewith. See! the rifle is held aloft while a patch is taken from the little box in the butt, and thrust with finger point into the muzzle as the piece is once more lowered. It is easier to get the bullet from the pouch; but here you observe that

even McClellan, in the haste and difficulty of the movement, drops one bullet, and has to go again to his pouch ere he gets a ball fairly stuck within its place.

Now comes perhaps the most difficult part of the performance. The rifle is at trail, the butt thrust far back, and the right hand withdraws the ramrod. Steady, there! Never were coolness and care more needed; for a dropped ramrod will send the competitor out of the lists, and in a running fight with an enemy might cost one's life. The ramrod is safely out. It is grasped by one hand near to the butt end, and with the left hand near to the rifle muzzle, the two hands are approached and the stick given lodgment within. On the marksman strides, a push—a leap—the bullet is home! Will he put the ramrod back? Not now. He grasps it by the middle with his teeth and holds up the rifle to note the result.

Do you see him snap open the flint-lock? Do you note how he scans, as he runs, the priming pan? Is the powder fairly up? Alas, no! See him tap the rifle-butt lightly against the ground as he leaps along to jar the charge into place; and swinging it up to his left arm, once more he scans the priming. Bad, bad! Failure again! The chances of success, of a life it may be, cannot be taken on such a showing. Once more the rifle is swung under the right arm, but this time with the stock forward and the lock well under the face. Up comes the powder horn, and from the open nozzle the priming is dusted in. Keep a steady hand, good fellow, as you swing around the wagon. No over-leaping the canvas cover on this tour of duty. Ah, ha! All is well, for you may see that he is getting the ramrod into its place.

Ay, and you may hear the token of the good news; for the scout, flinging back his head, utters a war-whoop so fierce and loud, that echoes are set agoing among the hills, and the ladies in the pavilion feel their hearts beat quicker, as with a sense of terror. Surely it is a grim image of the war spirit that one sees, such war spirit as the combats of the border knew and evoked, as this man crouches to the ground, and with every muscle swollen with exertion, and eyes fairly aflame with the excitement of the mimic combat, rushes down upon the firing point.

A moment's pause; a brief word aside to the Adjutant; a nod of assent. Crack! The feather on the mock foeman's

head flies away, while the welkin rings with lusty huzzas. The people at once had divined the meaning of the brief interchanges between scout and officer. McClellan had changed his aim, and clipped the edge of the block just where the feather was thrust in, and sent the goose plume to the winds. At one hundred yards! And with the haphazard and imperfect charging compelled by a running load, and which, as every marksman knows, would vastly heighten the difficulty! Even the hosts of skilled riflemen there present might well be carried away with enthusiastic admiration of such skill.

To McClellan was adjudged the first prize, a silver hunting watch. To Capt. John Latimer was given the second prize in both courses; a new rifle with powder horn, pouch and belt, and a silver compass. Gen. Wayne delivered the trophies with a few words of compliment; then the drummers beat the assembly, and the troops fell in for evening parade. Most of the visitors waited to see this always beautiful exercise, and then slowly dispersed. For many a day, on many a trail, at many a bivouac, and in many a cabin, were discussed the exciting incidents and excellent marksmanship seen at the shooting match at Legionville.

"What will John do with his prize?" queried Mrs. Polly Latimer. "He has a good rifle which he would not exchange for any in the country, and two others of less worth. If he could swap with McClellan now, he might get some value from the shooting match."

John soon resolved all doubts as to his purpose, for ere the boat was pushed off from shore, and as he was speaking a word of good-bye to Panther and Featherfoot, he placed the prize rifle in the Mingo's hands. "I beg you to accept it," said he, "as a mark of gratitude for service to my family and myself. You taught me the use of the rifle, and if my skill was greater than yours to-day, it was due to you. Moreover, since I have heard from father how you saved my life and the lives of my kindred at Indian Rocks, I have longed to show how kindly I remember it. You need a new rifle for the hard and delicate service before us all. There, take it, and God bless you, my old friend and teacher! I will keep the pouch and belt, which I know you do not need, and for which I have other use."

Luke, who stood by, was delighted with his son's act,

than which nothing could have been more timely, for he felt sure that Panther's only reason for contesting at the match was in the hope that he might win this very object. The Indian's pleasure was unbounded, and its intensity and the surprise at the gift came near upsetting his stoical self-control. His delight burned from his black eyes and suffused his face, relaxing its wrinkles and giving its red a warmer hue. He removed the water-proof covering of deer's bladder from the stock, sprung the lock to and fro, examined the pan, peered into the muzzle, drew out and bent to and fro the tough hickory ramrod, swung the butt to his shoulder, and glanced through the sights. Then he rested the stock upon the ground, and reaching forth his arm grasped the young man's hand, and with something like a tear glistening in his eyes, muttered his thanks:

"The Young Oak is the Big Heart. Panther will never forget his gift; and the Big Heart's enemies shall know its cry and bite. It shall go with him to his death; and may the Good Spirit grant that he may carry it in the Happy Hunting grounds." Thereafter to the end of his days, with Panther, at least, the *nom de guerre* of John Latimer was not "Young Oak," but "The Big Heart."

Another person had come to exchange adieus with the boat company. Lieut. Burd begged the favor of joining the party, and with especial attention to Mrs. Morgan and her niece, walked from the parade ground to the river. The boat was ready to pull off. Capt. Latimer and Lieut. Burd stood on the shore, the former with the boat painter in his hand. Luke and Andy at the bow had poles ready to thrust out. The women were waving handkerchiefs to friends who were also embarking in canoes and barges. Blanche stood at the bow merrily winding her bugle, whose echoes gave answer from the two opposite islands and the river hills beyond. Burd waved his farewell and turned to bid John good-bye.

"Come!" said the latter, looking his late competitor fairly in the face. "You might as well join us and accompany the ladies as far as Chartiers. As I go on to Pittsburg I can land you at the garrison."

There was a peculiar flush about the eyes as the generous youth gave this bidding. Was it quite sincere? Did it cost a quail of self-denial? Was there a latent hope that it might be declined? At all events, it was heartily uttered,

with a degree of hospitality in the tone that almost carried compulsion.

For a moment Burd hesitated. He glanced at Blanche Oldham, who with face aglow with vivacity and the excitement of the novel situation, stood like a divine daughter of Triton, waving her horn at the shore. It was a sore temptation. Why should he not yield to it and accept the invitation? But he too was a generous youth. He looked at the tall and comely man before him.

"A backwoods Apollo!" quoth he to himself. "As comely a specimen of manhood as I ever saw. By Jove! a man might well fear such a rival even if he is only a hunter. But no, this is his chance, and it would be mean to thwart him in it. I doubt the adage that all things are fair in love, though it may be so in war. Besides—but—enough of that!" With a movement of the hand he seemed to brush some unworthy thought aside. Then bidding Latimer a cordial farewell, and with a warm grasp of the hand, he turned back to Legionville.

The author may so far take his reader into confidence as to inform him that the obtruding image which Lieut. Burd repelled, was the thought that in a few days he was to lead a military escort across the mountains, and that several of the officers' wives were taking advantage of this protection to return East. Moreover, Gen. Neville had arranged that Blanche should accompany the troop as far as Carlisle on her way home to Philadelphia. What better opportunity could a gallant and handsome officer wish than this service, with its romantic conditions, its constant protection and close propinquity, to win a maiden's favor?

Now the keel boat was off, and Luke and Andy marched back and forth in alternate measure along the running-board, with butt of poles against their shoulders, and tip thereof on the bottom where the depth allowed, pushing the vessel up stream. When the depth of the channel was too great for poling, they manned the sweeps and thus got headway.

The sun went down behind the hills in a glow of striate clouds, red and green and lavender and purple, and shedding his rays far beyond the zenith, set into rosy flame the high floating banks of cirrous cloud in the East. Blanche was watching this scene from the little cabin door hard by the upping block from which John was steering. He

lashed the rudder and approached the maiden, having in hand the prize pouch and horn, with their bright-beaded baldrick. Would Miss Oldham honor him by accepting the same? He knew that she was collecting trophies of her Western visit to decorate therewith her Eastern home. Here were objects too fair by far for a hunter like himself and for the rough service of his trade. Would she accept the memento?

With her aunt's permission, yes, indeed, most gladly and thankfully!

The damsel ran to where her aunt sat with the other ladies, and with face beaming forth gratification, howed her treasure and begged to keep it. The three matrons bent over the trophies and were too intent upon admiring the quaint carving on the powder horn, and the beautiful bead work on pouch and baldrick, to note that the blood went from Fanny's face, leaving it pallid, and then returned again until it flushed bright red. Why should not she also have hastened to congratulate her friend upon her gift?

"Don't you like it, Fanny?" quoth Blanche, noting her hesitation and coolness. "Ah, I understand! You have seen so much of this work that you cannot appreciate it as I do, to whom it is so novel." Thereby admonished, Fanny came forward and gave hesitating and guarded praise; for was it not so, as Blanche had suggested, that these objects were no novelty to her? Blanche returned to the tiller where John stood, and graciously accepted the proffered gifts much to the young man's content.

Was John's mother as highly pleased with this bestowment as with that of the rifle? She kept her thoughts to herself, at least, but could not keep back from her husband the wonder that John had not given the knife and belt with the other objects, for surely, he had enough and to spare of such trappings about the house. "Young men's trumpery! What a litter the lad does keep around him with it all! It's aye follow after and redd up. But they're all alike in that pertic'ler, are the lads—God bless them!"

Later in the evening, though the space on deck was small, a moonlight dance was proposed. Andy Burbeck brought forth his fiddle, for the pioneer watermen were skilled in the use of both that instrument and the winding horn. John led out Mrs. Morgan, and the McCormack lads the other matrons, and a merry time was had, while Luke

slowly poled the keel boat against the current. Then the maidens had their turn; and was it by accident that Fanny McCormack was led out by John? When the dance was over these two partners were chatting pleasantly in the bow, watching the water ripple against the beak and bubble off along the sides. What a temptation it is,—and was there ever a maiden who could resist it?—to push up sleeve of frock, and thrust bare arm within the soft rushing water, and plash and paddle therein? Leaving Fanny toying thus with the current, John excused himself for a moment as though to look after the steering, and presently came back carrying the prize belt with its sheath and hunting knife.

“This is yours, Fanny,” he said, “for auld acquaintance sake,” and he drew it about her waist. “I wouldn’t like you to cultivate the stalwart gifts of Mad Ann, and practice with the scalping knife. But perhaps you may find for the implement some domestic and peaceful service, mayhap that of a bread knife. Yet, who knows? Our border women may soon have need of ruder tools than spinning wheel and baking pan. God in mercy forbid; and give the victory to Wayne and his Legion! It’s a poor fit, isn’t it?” he continued, with a light laugh, seeing how the belt overlapped the maiden’s waist. “But you have a cunning hand with needle and scissors, Fanny, and can quickly remedy that.”

“Oh, John,” the maiden said. “How good in you to remember me!”

The moonlight was not bright enough to show the tear that dropped upon the bead work and consecrated that gift to most sacred memory. Nor did the youth dream—and what would he have thought if he had known?—that when he turned away to his duties with a light word, and vanished behind the cabin, this maid, the playmate of his childhood, the friend of his youth, bent her head and raised the beaded sheath of the hunting knife to her lips and kissed it, as she murmured:

“For auld acquaintance sake’ he said. Yes, acquaintance. Ah, indeed, that auld acquaintance can never be forgot!”

What with the little boat-cuddy and the log cabins at the trading post, the company spent a comfortable night at the mouth of Chartiers Creek, and the next day took horse and rode over to Canonsburg, while John with Andy

for aid, poled up the Ohio to Pittsburg. Nearly two years passed ere Blanche Oldham and John Latimer again met, and strange and terrible were the circumstances that then brought them face to face.

CHAPTER XXI.

A MEETING AT THE FALLS OF MINGO CREEK.

The Mingo Creek local regiment of militia had been summoned to meet at Mingo Church on the 16th of July, 1794. The purpose of the call was to form their quota of the national militia. The settlement was largely made up of men of Scotch-Irish descent who had strong opinions on the excise issue. The Democratic Association of Mingo Creek was numerous and active. At least three hundred of its members were enrolled in the regiment, and thus had a controlling influence. It was therefore a favorable field wherein David Bradford might foment his plot for a separate State, and beyond that, perhaps, an independent Western Republic.

On the day before that appointed for the rendezvous, Bradford rode past the Mingo Creek Church and graveyard to the waterfall a short distance beyond, where three men awaited him. One was Luke Latimer. Another was Benjamin Parkinson, a tall spare man with red hair, the president of the Mingo Creek Democratic Association, and owner of the ferry over the Monongahela River bearing his name, which is now the site of Monongahela City. The third was Major John McFarlane, a man destined to a sad immortality as the leader of an expedition which precipitated the Western Insurrection, and brought an invading army across the Allegheny into the Western counties. He was forty-three years old; had served with courage and credit throughout the War of Independence; was a citizen of Washington County, wherein he had acquired considerable property, and was esteemed by neighbors and a numerous and respectable circle of acquaintances. He was of orderly deportment, but enthusiastic in his opposition to the revenue acts and their enforcement, which he believed to be an invasion of the rights of the people and

tyrannical towards his section. He was above the medium height, of erect carriage, not demonstrative in manner, but showing his feelings by the changing expressions of his swarthy features and keen eyes.

Bradford had adopted the methods of the French Revolution, then in full progress, as the model of his proposed insurrection. He was an especial admirer of the Jacobin Club and its mode. Robespierre was his ideal leader. Where his associates and compatriots threatened tar-and-feathers or hanging, he spoke of the guillotine. Following this affectation, the committee now meeting with him at the Mingo Creek Falls he was pleased to regard as the "Directory," and saluted his associates as "Citizen Directors." Greetings were soon over, and descending the steep bank of the stream to a retired spot, the men sat upon the rocks beneath the overhanging trees while the arch plotter unfolded his schemes.

Beyond them the creek had worn a circular pool into which it tumbled over a series of shelving limestone rocks. From one jutting shelf to another it ran with goodly volume when the waters were high, and thence swirling around the ribbed walls of the pool, rippled off noisily over a lumpy incline into a quieter channel. Now, in the height of summer, the stream ran scant, and the splash of the fall and lapping of the current were not loud enough to disturb the men's speech, but gave a pleasant accompaniment by their droning cadence.

"Gentlemen," began Bradford, "the United States marshal has been passing through the counties serving his writs upon delinquent distillers, and everywhere has been received with almost servile docility. It looks as if all grit had gone out of the distillers of our section, and that all will fall into line and register their stills unless something is done to stop them. What then will follow?"

"That is 'asily told," said Luke. "The stillers will combine with the excise officers to enforce the laws, an' the people will be shorn of their rights to free manufacture of sperits. The price of grain 'll be at the mercy of the cabal, and the planter, forbidden to use it in the only profitable way, unable to pay taxes, an' kep' from providin' his own market in New Orleans, will have to sell at starvation prices. But how is it to be handered?"

"That is the question now before us," said Bradford;

"and the future of this cause hangs on our decision to-day. Something must be done at once to arouse the people. They must be urged into some step that will commit them thoroughly to opposition. Some of them are ripe for a rising. The rest must be committed to it; be dragged into it if need be."

"That 's 'asier said nor done," quietly remarked McFarlane. "The folk out this way are not the sort that can be driven into measures agin their will an' conscience. Great Britain larnt that lesson to her sorrow, and we beeta not forgit it."

"Hold!" said Bradford, "I said dragged, not driven. There's a vast difference in the words; and by dragging I do not mean a violent pulling against popular will. Men are often led by unseen cords, and they go all the more blithely because they think themselves self-drawn. I would have something arranged here and now that when done will compel the masses to stand by their leaders, and force the administration to take some aggressive action. And what can it do but threaten? We are too far off for the Easterners to strike us, and the mountains lie between us and them. There can only be one issue to the controversy; an independent State west of the Alleghenies. Then we will make excise laws to suit ourselves."

There was here a manifest eschewing of the fact that the United States Constitution puts excise laws beyond jurisdiction of the several States. But Bradford knew that he was not dealing with constitutional lawyers now, and could afford to overlook such trifling obstacles. Besides, it was difficult for men, in the early days of the Federal Union, to rid themselves, in ordinary thought, of the old Colonial methods of independent control of revenue matters.

"It would be easy enough for a few of us to do some overt act," said McFarlane, "and perhaps get our neighbors to indorse it. But, sir, it will be harder nor you think to stir them to insurrection agin a Gover'ment so many of 'em have fought to erect. You may bring a horse to water, but you can't make him drink, you know. You may bring folk to the aidge of rebellion, but can you get 'em to jump over the brink? I'm not so sure of that, sir. It will take some mighty excitement and deep wrong to force 'em into sairious opposition til the Gover'ment."

"Well, and there is no thought, nor will there be need of serious opposition," answered the wily plotter. "One demonstration of the fixed will of the people of these counties will settle the matter. Besides, even if it were to come to that, haven't we the same right to rise against tyranny at Philadelphia that we had against tyranny at London? Have we lost our liberties and manhood by adopting the Federal Constitution? I trow not."

"Well, well," interrupted Luke. "Come to the p'int. There's small use a-discussin' principles now. Say what is your purpose at wanct."

"I will do so. To-morrow the Mingo Creek regiment meets. Mr. Parkinson is the president of the Mingo Creek Democratic Association, and Major McFarlane an influential officer. Let us, as the Directory, order a movement on Inspector Neville's house to demand that he surrender to us his commission and promise that he will resign his post."

"An' if he refuse?"

"Then notify him to leave the country, or stay at his peril."

"Good heavens, gentlemen!" cried Mr. Parkinson, who was reputed to be more inclined to foment trouble than to face its consequences. "Gen. Neville is not a person to submit to that sort of thing. There will be fighting, sure, and bloodshed it is to be feared."

"Pooh!" exclaimed Bradford. "Fancy a handful of white men and a few score negro slaves attempting to fight a whole regiment of armed men! It is absurd. The mere show of force will compel submission; and if Neville gives up we have the game in our own hands. But if he don't give up, and there should be fighting, what then? It was the first shot at Lexington that raised the echoes of the American Revolution! So the rattle of rifles on Bower Hill will be the signal of a new Revolution and of a Western Republic. But no! there is little fear of that. Our show of force will settle the matter, you may depend upon it."

The two military members of the committee, McFarlane and Luke, were not as sanguine of the result as Bradford. But on the whole they approved, and agreed to make the attempt. What further had he to propose?

Bradford proceeded to enlarge on the Continental

policy at the beginning of the Revolution to seize the forts, and thus capture the strategic points. Thence he went on to point out the commanding importance of Fort Pitt, and queried whether it might not be well as the movement progressed to take the garrison there, and secure its munitions of war.

"Good land, sir!" cried Parkinson. "That will be war, open war! It would cost many lives to take Fort Pitt." Major McFarlane and Luke said nothing, but looked their incredulity. Bradford continued:

"Haven't forts been taken by surprise? There is little or no watch kept at Fort Pitt against the people. Nothing could be easier than to arrange a plan by which a superior number of determined men should go inside the stockade on a fixed day, and at a concerted signal surprise the guards, seize the cannon, and capture the fort before the officers would even suspect that anything was wrong. It is entirely practicable, sirs, entirely! Do you not remember how Col. James Smith and his eighteen 'Black Boys' captured Fort Bedford? With Fort Pitt in our hands the game is ours. That would end the era of excise tyranny, and begin a new and noble era of honor and prosperity for us all."

Bradford's plans might then and there have fallen still-born, had not an interruption occurred which gave them vigorous life and set them at once upon their feet. The eagerness of conversation and the monotonous plash of the falls had hindered the conspirators from hearing the sound of horses' hoofs beating upon the road, that here follows near the bed of the stream, until the approaching horse-men were quite near. The men ceased conversation and listened. The riders were coming rapidly. Suddenly the patter of hoofs ceased, and a loud voice exclaimed:

"Hello! what the deuce does this mean? Here are four horses hitched in the brush. Ay, and one on 'em's Luke Latimer's bay filly. I'd know her among a thousand. And t'other is Ben Parkinson's gray geldin'. What's in the wind here? If them critters weren't stolen, their owners be'nt far off. Yo—*hee!*" The speaker raised his voice in a musical halloo well known thereabouts as a sort of quest call.

A moment of silence followed, during which Bradford looked anxiously at his comrades. "It's all right!" ex-

claimed Luke. "I know that voice well. It's Sandy McMichael of the Canonsburg Democratic Association, an' le's true to the cause." He left his companions, ascended the bank and greeted McMichael and his comrade, whose heated horses showed that they had been riding rapidly.

"What brings you here at this gait, Sandy? Anny-thing happened?"

"Ay, that there has. I've got stirrin' news, an' am on the way to Parkinson's Ferry with 'em. But what the nation are you hyur for? And who's them with you? That's Ben Parkinson's horse, I know—"

"An' the other," interrupted Luke, "is Major McFarlane's, an' they are both just by, an' David Bradford is with 'em." A secret signal had passed between the two men, which assured Luke that the third party was to be trusted with this knowledge.

"Then by all that's good and bad," exclaimed Sandy, "they're the very men that oughteh hear our news. Whar are they?"

The parties needed no summons, for already they had ascended the bank, and after brief greetings gathered around the horseman and awaited his news.

"Yesterday," began Sandy, "the United States marshal called at Miller's to sarve the last writ of a large number which he'd been issuin' agin the stillers. Giner'l Neville was with 'im, the Lord only knows what for, onless to pilot the federal sheriff through the woods to our plantations; or mebbe 'twas only through pure domineerin' divilishness. Miller was a-gettin' in his harvest. It was jist noonin', an' the harvesters were at dinner, an' p'raps a little axcited by drink, for it's roastin' weather you know, an' harvestin' 's droughty wark. They seemed to be riled at the Inspector's prisence, which looked as if he 'd come out jist to threap an' crow over 'em. There was hard words, a bit of a row, an old musket was fired off in the rumpus, an' Niville an' the marshal rode off fancyin' they'd been assaulted, an' talkin' fierce about revolution, insurraction, riot an' all sich stuff, an' a-threatenin' that Miller should be arristed an' sent over the mountains to Philadelpy.

"That angered Miller and his men. They thought that Niville would git out warrants agin 'em, an' drag 'em off to Philadelpy for trial. You know what that manes. It 'ud 'a kep 'im away from wark through the autumn an'

winter an' mebbe spring. They was a-mind to hender it, ef they could, an' thought they could force Niville to let 'em alone. Th' axcitement spread through the neighborhood, an' among some of the militiamen who were gatherin' for the muster. By sundown John Holcroft had got thirty or forty men around him, an' led 'em off to Niville's house, jist about four miles from Miller's."

"What did he do that for?" interrupted Bradford. "What right has Tom the Tinker to interfere in this business, and set himself up as a leader?"

"Can't say about his rights," answered Sandy. "But to hear Holcroft talk you 'd think he's the Captain Giner'l of the whole business; an' I reckon he *has* stirred up affairs a heap. But as fur as I kin make out, his idee was to make old Niville disgorge the papers agin' Miller an' others, an' promise fer to give up his commission an' let folk alone in futur. Annyhow, off he goes with his troop to Niville's, not countin' on anny speecial trouble. But the Inspector had suspicioned somethin' of that sort, mebbe had news of what was abrewin', and had his men an' darkies armed. As the crowd came up, athout awaitin' for attack or aven parley, they fired on 'em. It was bad business. Six men were wounded and one killed."

"Dd they return the fire?" asked Luke.

"They didn't seem to hev any chanct. It was a one-sided affair all round; they say they didn't aim to do anny shootin' when they went. They were tuk by surprise like, an' the reception was so hot that it tuk all sperit out of 'em."

"And they left athout an effort to avenge the slaughter of their friends, did they?" cried Luke, indignantly.

"So it seems. And p'raps that was the wisest thing for 'em to do; for folk say that Niville has a cannon in his entry, an' it's tough wark a-facin' grape shot. Annyhow, the neighborhood's mighty wrought up over the affair, and there 'll be pipin' hot times, I fancy, at the militia muster to-morrow."

"This is stirring news, indeed," exclaimed Bradford. "At all events, whatever comes of it, that settles John Holcroft's presumption to be a leader in the excise revolution. The people will have no more Tom Tinkers, I promise you, to lead expeditions where men of brains and grit are required. It's one thing to go a-sneaking through the

country, plastering trees and taverns with squibs and pasquinades and pompous proclamations, and quite another to organize and marshal a mighty revolution. The shoemaker to his last, say I, and the tinker to his pans and soldering iron!"

There was nothing more to be had from the messengers. Accordingly they were urged to hurry on to Parkinson's with their tidings. As the horsemen disappeared around the curve in the road, Bradford turned upon his associates a face radiant with gratification.

"Gentlemen," he said, "could anything be more fortunate than this? Is it like the answer of fire to Elijah on Mount Carmel. The very thing has happened that we have been waiting for. Providence has given us the signal to go forward."

"Humph!" said Major McFarlane; "I doubt ef Providence has gone into cahoots with Mr. David Bradford and his Directory. I'm loth to think the Good Bein' has killed off one man and hurted five others jist to set our plans on leg. I've no notion of puttin' Tom Tinker's wretched bunglin', nor our own poor wark, for that matter, onto Providence. But this event at Miller's sartainly will anger our people despartly. I know them well enough for that. They'll need lettles aggin' on now to march agin Neville's, for their blood 'll be up at the shootin' of citizens. But it's plain, sir, we're not agoin' to have a mere taffy pullin' out there on Bower Hill. Neville's prepared to resist all approach of the citizens, an' he'll likely be more rather nor less prepared after this affair. It'll be no child's play, as some of us 'll be like to find, to our cost."

All were agreed that a new face had suddenly been put upon the situation by the exciting incident at Miller's. How should it be utilized? There was but one answer. They would hold to their plan, and bring the matter before the militiamen on the morrow, and persuade the entire regiment to march against Neville's house. Who should command the expedition? That was the only question which it seemed important to settle.

"Manager Bradford himself, of course!" said McFarlane.

"Nay, nay, that cannot be. Remember that I am prosecuting attorney of this county. Were I to be personally present at the affair I should be placed in a posi-

tion which would compel me, in case anything serious happened, to be arrayed against my associates and friends. It is important for the cause that I should not show an appearance at Bower Hill." Then he laid his hand upon McFarlane's shoulder, and exclaimed: "No, no, the leadership is not for me. Thou art the man!"

McFarlane shook off the hand with an impatient gesture, and bluntly refused the honor. Perhaps his reverent feelings were repelled by this lugging of sacred language into such an affair. All the more so as he discerned, what Bradford had not noted, the infelicitous associations of the text. He had no fancy for the role of a modern King David before such a Nathan as the Washington lawyer.

Bradford insisted upon his point, playing upon such feelings and hopes as seemed to his view assailable. The trans-Allegheny State when once formed would summon to highest place the men who had led the Revolution which achieved autonomy. Who could tell what honors might be won by the leaders of to-morrow's expedition that is to strike the first blow for liberty and independence? With honors will come wealth. The Continental veterans were ill rewarded by the victorious colonies. Perhaps they could not help that, at least at first; for the Revolutionary struggle left them impoverished. But they might have done better had there been stronger purpose to sacrifice for the old soldiers who bore the burden and heat of the day. At all events, many of the veterans were poor men. What was needed was a new deal of the cards. The men who should shake off the Philadelphia and Quaker régime, and should carve out a new State from the Western counties, would have the cards in their own hands, and would see to it that the offices and rewards of success fell to those who had fairly earned them.

The two men had gradually separated from their associates, and strolled up the road until just opposite the falls. Here they walked to and fro, and while the dash and thud of the water kept monotonous accompaniment to the gurgle of speech, Bradford plied, with plausible words, arguments that have always appealed with great force to men's love of honor and reward.

Behind the noblest purposes there lurks some form of selfishness, often unrecognized by ourselves, that holds the balance of power in our wills. Some of the most potent

factors of character lie underneath the plane of consciousness. Their existence is not even suspected until at some crisis they emerge, and decide the issues of character and life. Bradford certainly had not formulated these ideas, for he was not a philosopher. But with the instinctive policy of an ambitious and selfish manager of men, he spun out his temptations as though these ideas were to him self-evident. Not with the blunt and clumsy directness here set forth, but with concealed approach, with laterigrade advance and retrogression, and with antennal deftness as of an emmet feeling its way in the midst of supposed enemies. McFarlane gave little response, but listened silently, walking beside his companion with arms behind his back, and troubled face bent upon the ground.

Bradford shifted his ground of attack. Here was a clear call to duty and service. The cause of liberty was assailed. The rights of the people were endangered. Petitions and appeals had failed to move the authorities. The purpose to enforce the odious excise laws was plainly fixed. Neighbors and fellow citizens had been butchered in cold blood as they came to remonstrate against wrong. Patriotism demanded some sacrifice from all. It was absurd to urge leadership upon himself. He was only a lawyer, ignorant of military ways and usages. He could serve his country along his own lines of ability, and was trying to do so. He would be sure to make a blunder and mess of it, worse than Tom Tinker had done. But McFarlane was an experienced soldier. Let him give his tried ability to the cause. Was it not his destiny? Had he not been raised up and qualified for just such service? One ought not to fly in the face of the clear will of Heaven! So they paused in their promenade on the brink of the waterfall, while the deep silence of nature was broken only by the monotonous beat of the descending stream.

"And now," said Bradford, hoping to clinch with authority of Holy Scripture the nail he had so well driven: "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the Kingdom for such a time as this?" The text had a surprising effect, but not exactly of the sort that Bradford had anticipated.

"Deil take y'r preachin'!" was the wrathful response. "When Sattan takes a text, the honest man may well fly the sarmon. For Heaven's sake, sir, cease off a-quotin' Scriptur til me. I 've too much honor for God's word to

hear it mishandled this way, in a matter like this, and by a man like yourself."

Well, well, what a mistake you have made, Mr. Bradford! This is none of good Father Clark's elders, certes; and it is to be feared you have upset the fat into the fire this time. But no! Has the reader ever noted that some men are ever wont to take ways marked out for them, protesting, defiant, kicking against the goads that urge them on? They grumble, but go. They are never so near the yielding point, it often happens, as when most vigorously declaring their purpose never to relent. An explosive negation and outbreak of impatience are the signal of near submission, as the crash of thunder presages the breaking of the clouds into grateful showers. Patience, then! Do not take this ebullition of temper, these poundings of Thor's hammer, these mutterings, and oaths it may be, as tokens of an incorrigible will. Deal deftly with such outbursts of soul; for a coarse and tactless touch will here spoil all. Wait. Above all, be silent. In a little while the turbulent one will go hence and put on his harness (your harness, that is), and quietly ignoring all protests heretofore made, pull kindly along the way of your pleasure.

So it befell this struggling spirit at Mingo Creek Falls. When the two men rejoined their comrades, Bradford announced that Major McFarlane had consented to take military leadership of the expedition against Inspector Neville's house on Bower Hill. The Directory would accompany him—for was not this the method of the French Revolution?—to give counsel in all things, and supreme decision in matters other than military. But Bradford himself would not be present for reasons which they could well appreciate. He was prosecuting attorney of the county. His sworn duty was to take note of all alleged offenses against the law. As there might be suits at law in the future by Neville and his friends, though he hoped not, it would be to the interests of his own friends and associates that he should not be present. Thus then the matter stood, and the members of the committee went their several ways.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE MARCH TO BOWER HILL.

On the morning of July 16, 1794, Mingo Church green was thronged with excited men. All who were liable to military duty had assembled from the surrounding district to choose the congressional quota from the Mingo Creek regiment of militia. Few adult men of the section were absent; for apart from the hearty response which such duty received, there was a special attraction in the news of the Miller episode. The story had run quickly through the neighborhood and, as usual, had waxed and grown more lurid as it went. Men covered the roads, bridle paths and trails, all headed toward Mingo Church, discussing "the massacre" at Bower Hill with passions as hot as the intense sun of July that beat down upon the scene. What is there in the sun of July that charges Americans with such excess of passion that they are touched off into explosions of violence that would have been impossible in a cooler month? The railroad strike of 1877 was a July affair. The Chicago debsomania of 1894 was an event of July. Was it simply a coincidence that the Revolutionary fathers were wrought up to a Declaration of Independence on a July day?

Several hundred men were assembled in the little bowl-shaped dale wherein the Mingo Church stood (and its successor now stands) sheltered by a natural grove. The two front doors of the low log structure were open, and men were seated and standing within awaiting the beginning of the public meeting. Outside, the scene was more animated and picturesque. Horses were picketed at every convenient point on the green, and fastened in the hitching sheds. Only one spot was unoccupied,—the graveyard on the hill slope. It lay just across the road which passed along its edge, and winding through a slight depression in the hill led on towards Canonsburg. Rude limestone slabs supported on columns placed over the corners of the graves, or head and footstones of the same material then fresh made for the most part but now grown gray and mossy, dotted this square of consecrated soil, soon, alas! to be opened for some of those stalwart frames throbbing now with life and hope and passions of war and revenge.

In the clear space before the sheds and hard by the little creek stood a liberty pole, from which floated a streamer bearing the ominous words: "NO ASYLUM FOR TRAITORS AND COWARDS." Beneath this was a banner in form of the American flag, except that the fifteen stripes, then borne upon the fly, had been converted into six bars or broad stripes. These symbolized the six Western counties of Pennsylvania and Virginia whose people were most deeply concerned in opposing the revenue laws, and out of which the new State was to be formed. On one of the broad white bars was printed the motto: "EQUAL TAXATION AND NO EXCISE." The raising of a liberty pole is in modern eyes a trivial affair. But it seems to have been otherwise a hundred years ago; for this singularly harmless and once popular pastime was one of the serious tokens of treasonable intent urged by the Government against the Western insurrectionists.

As this was a gathering of the militia, all these men were armed, and many of them uniformed after the rude and miscellaneous fashion of the frontier. Hunting shirts, and remnants and variations of the old continental uniforms were most in vogue; but the frontier taste, or rather lack of taste, had asserted itself in divers picturesque varieties of the prevailing species. Major McFarlane, now the recognized leader, moved about quietly, a tint of paleness on his swart visage despite the excitement and the July sun, but with no shadow of wavering thereon. The features were stern and with determined set, as resolved to go through with this business now at whatever cost, and make it no child's play. He wore a blue camblet coat, buff waistcoat, leather overalls and cocked hat, and was armed with a cutlass whose belt hung from his shoulder.

The groups of excited men broke up and dribbled in little streamlets towards the meeting house. There was no tumult within the primitive sanctuary. Not that it was held in that reverence with which many minds regard a church edifice. To those pioneer settlers the House of God was also the house of the people, and served at once for Sabbath worship and for public meetings wherein the vital interests of the community must be discussed. The assemblage was composed of sober citizens, the bone and sinew of the country; self-contained and hardy characters, not demonstrative of manner nor, with a few exceptions,

given to unseemly haste and passion. No doubt their feelings were wrought up to a high pitch of indignation; but they would hear the facts and carefully determine their action.

First of all were brought forward matters of detail relating to the formation of the regimental contingent, the formal business which had called them together. Thus the way was clear for the subject that filled all minds, and the meeting was organized as a popular assembly to consider as citizens what the crisis called for. The conclusion was as follows: That General Neville's conduct was a betrayal of the community in which he dwelt; that it was treasonable to their true interests and could not be further tolerated, especially as he had added thereto the killing and wounding of citizens. That they would move upon his house the next day to notify him of the views of his fellow citizens, and beg him to desist in the interests of peace, good fellowship and good citizenship, and join with them to protect their section from tyrannous and oppressive measures. Moreover, they would go in such numbers as to overawe opposition, and armed to execute their purpose should the Inspector prove intractable. In that case they would warn him that he could no longer have home and harborage in the county; and that he must at once surrender to them his commission, and all papers prejudicial to persons or properties of citizens, and within an allotted time leave the neighborhood. To that end they would rendezvous the next day at Couch's Fort, and Major McFarlane should be their commander.

Thus the meeting decreed and so adjourned. The die was cast. The so-called "Western Insurrection," whose fomenting had heretofore broken forth in sporadic irritations, with minor acts of lawlessness and rioting, had now been drawn to a head. Some of the citizens moved away slowly, with grave demeanor and thoughtful face and troubled hearts. Others marched off in high spirits, with laughter and jocose speech, and cheers, and loud threats, and high hopes, and serene unconsciousness that disaster and defeat might come, and of what would be the consequence.

Couch's Fort was an abandoned log fortress erected in earlier days for refuge against Indian incursions. It stood on the south trail leading up to the old Washington

and Pittsburg road, on the north branch of McLaughlin's Run. It was about half a quarter of a mile west of Bethel Church, which still stands, with its ancient graveyard, upon the over-hanging hill, and looks down upon the McKeesport road. The creek is hard by, for convenience to running water was a necessary condition in choosing a site for fort or church. It was four miles distant from the Inspector's house, and the road thereto lies through a rolling upland which breaks down at Bower Hill, a high crest on which Gen. Neville had reared his spacious mansion.

Five hundred armed men were now marching afoot or on horseback over that road among the hills of Washington County. Half-finished clearings lay on either side of the Virginia worm-fences. Here, a bit of virgin forest shaded the way; there, lay a yellow stubble field dotted with shocks of wheat garbs. Again, among the tree stumps would appear a patch of potatoes; or a field of Indian corn, whose broad green blades and yellowy brown tassels waved in the light breeze, and glistened under the sun with a seeming joyous eagerness for its hottest beams. Nestled under the hills, where the limestone springs bubble forth or the clear brooklets run, were the log cabins of the settlers. Women with babes in their arms stood at the doors waving greetings to the passing cavalcade, alas, often with heavy hearts. Lusty children ran down to the road, and cheered from very exuberance of animal spirits, or mere effervescence of joy in the excitement and hubbub, knowing little and caring less for their cause. How the men cheered back again!—and greeted the ruddy lads and lasses with smiles and pleasant chaffing words, with a touch of tenderness within their voices, as though there had obtruded the query: What if to-morrow some of these or our own bairns, mayhap, should be fatherless?

They have reached the summit whence the prospect stretches over hills and valleys, far and away on every side, as noble a view indeed as Moses got from Pisgah. The column has halted. What is the matter? Some messenger? No! Crowd up to the van now! Horses and footmen are forming in the road under this overshadowing walnut tree, a living crescent whose cusps are thrust across the rail fence into the adjoining field. The centre of the crowd is there where the roots of the great tree have been

cut to make space in the roadway, which runs several feet beneath.

Here, on the grassy interspace between the humped backs of the main roots where they unite with the vast trunk, stands a venerable figure upon whom all eyes are fixed. It is Father John Clark, the first pastor of Bethel, who shares his bishopric jointly with the Mingo Creek congregation. For thirteen years he has gone in and out before these people, revered and beloved by his parishioners, esteemed and venerated by all who know him. In appearance he is a spare man almost to leanness; is above the ordinary height, somewhat stooped by the weight of his seventy-six years; of grave and solemn demeanor. He wears the old-fashioned dress of the clergymen of his time, a black suit with breeches, and silver buckles clasping his black stockings at the knees. His hat is held in one hand, thus uncovering long white hair, combed back from the forehead and worn in a queue, a bit of old-time dignity from which even the unconventional manners of the frontier could not dissuade him. The pallor of age is heightened upon his bloodless cheeks by the intense emotion which possesses him as he stretches out one hand, and lifts up his voice.

Thus he stood like an ancient prophet, with the spirit and burden of prophecy shining from his eyes and burning in his speech. His tones were weak and trembling, but they deepened and grew stronger as he advanced in his speech. A sabbath stillness fell upon the throng as they listened to this man of God who had stopped them there as Elijah did Ahab of old; as Shemaiah did Rehoboam.

"Brethren, fellow citizens and friends," he cried; "I have come to raise my feeble voice against the business of this day. I cannot forbear speech. Duty, conscience, my office, the Spirit of our Divine Lord and Master, a high and loving concern for your temporal and spiritual good, all compel me to warn you not to persist in your hostile purpose. You are in the way of rebellion; and rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. You are going with evil intent to shed blood; and it is written 'Thou shalt not kill.' I know that you feel yourselves aggrieved by the Government, and you believe that your quarrel with Gen. Neville and his excise officers is a just one. I will not discuss that question here. It may be true that they have bound heavy burdens and

grievous to be borne, and laid them on men's shoulders. It may be that they scorn your petitions, and will not move your sore burdens with one of their fingers. But, consider this, my friends, no wrong can be righted by the doing of greater wrong. Your act is one of war, disguise it as you may. War upon officers of the United States, war upon its laws, war upon its Government, war upon the great and good Washington. You do not mean that? Truly not!

"Have you thought what the issue may be? Suppose you banish Gen. Neville? Will it end there? Alas, you yourselves, like King David of old, may be driven into exile, weeping and lamenting as you go. Suppose you destroy Gen. Neville's house? Do you think the matter will end there? Beware lest your own houses be left unto you desolate. You think that the Inspector will not openly resist you? Do not be deceived! Bethink you what yourselves would do in like estate. He is a man of like blood and passions with yourselves, a man of war from his youth, who has waxed valiant in fight heretofore. He is armed himself, and has armed his family and slaves, like Abraham of old when he went against the kings of Sodom. This day will not be without shedding of blood if you do not turn back. Return to your homes ere it be too late! Remember the word of God, an awful word to you this day:—"

Here the venerable speaker dropped his hat to the ground and stretched forth both hands to the people. Moving slowly his eyes around the circle of upturned faces he fixed them for a moment,—was it by the merest accident?—upon the spot where Major McFarlane was seated upon his horse, surrounded by his lieutenants and the members of the committee. Then he finished his sentence—"They that take the sword shall perish by the sword."

"God forbid, my brethren and friends, God forbid that any of you should throw your lives away in such a quarrel. Your leaders are self-deceived. They are deceiving you. They are blind leaders of the blind; and, alas, you shall both fall into the ditch unless you heed these words of holy warning. Remember your solemn duty to your country. Remember the oaths of allegiance that so many of you have sworn in the noble and patriotic days that tried men's souls in the struggle for Independence. Remember your wives and children who this night may be widows and

fatherless. Remember your homes and plantations placed in peril of loss by this day's doing!

"Oh, my friends, hear me! I speak out of love for you and yours, your bodies and your souls. You have never had cause to doubt, you have never doubted my love for you, and zeal in your behalf. I would lay down this life for you if I might purchase your assent to my pleading, and thus seal my testimony with my blood. Out of this love and zeal I speak to you, I plead with you, I warn you! Hear me, brethren, hear me! Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die, O house of Israel!"

The patriarch ceased, and dropping his arms, closed his hands before him and with bowed head stood in silent prayer. The hush that had fallen upon the audience was broken by many sighs. Then followed the stir of shuffling bodies, as is wont after an eloquent passage of speech or song. The men turned and looked at one another with mute inquiry, as much as to say, "shall we go on?" Many faces had a subdued and awe-struck visage, as when men are impressed with a supernatural presence. Was not this a warning from the Most High? Dare they despise the counsel of this venerable man of God? A word from any leader of good repute would have changed the whole current of their purpose, and have turned that company back to their homes. But it was not spoken.

Major McFarlane dismounted from his horse and approached the aged minister. He took the pastor's hand and pressed it warmly. "Father Clark," he said, "we thank you for your loving interest in us all. We know truly that you believe all you have said, and have spoken for our good as you see it. We reverence you as a man, and honor you as a minister, and in all things spiritooal we are ready to give 'arnest heed and following. But this is a secular affair that concerns the laity more nor the clargy. In sich matters it is no discredit to you to think that we may trust our own judgment and axperience. We have maturely considered all that you have told us, an' we have not acted hastily. We have solemnly covenanted together to right this wrong, an' we must go for'ard. Were we to turn back now, we would be ontrue to our own convictions, an' would be the laughin' stock of all the world.

"Comrades," he cried, lifting his voice and gazing

around him, "how could we face our fellow citizens, an' meet the jeers of our inimies were we after all this parade an' pomp, to sneak back to our homes, like a lot o' wayward children afore the rebuke of a schoolmaster?" Then bowing gravely before the minister, and bidding him a hearty farewell, he remounted his horse.

"Attention! Forward!" he cried, and the column moved slowly down the road.

"This is pride," murmured Father Clark, as McFarlane turned away. "Sinful pride! And pride goeth before destruction, and the haughty spirit before a fall. May Heaven save and shield you, my poor, erring flock!"

A few gathered around the venerable man, and assured him that they would heed his voice and return to their homes. Others as they passed grasped his hand, and with moist eyes besought his prayers, and invoked a blessing on his gray head. Not a man, as the column moved by, failed to remove hat or cap before the good and faithful pastor, and many wished that they might with honor follow his advice. But how dare they? The pride of self-consistency has a firm lodgment in man's soul, and when allied, as it commonly is, with the fear of ridicule, is responsible for many of his follies and not a few of his misfortunes and even crimes. He is a man of finer mold and higher mettle than common who can break away from courses that he knows are wrong, and separate himself from his associates in the face of their jibes, their ill will and abuse, or even in fear thereof. Our social world may have a narrow horizon, and lie on never so low a plane, but, withal, its public opinion is well nigh omnipotent with most of us; and the terror of being branded as heretic, traitor, turncoat, scab, or what not, is mightier to us than the voice of God. Count it no marvel then that these men of Mingo Creek, each one fearing and not knowing his fellow's opinions, followed the leader of the hour's tumult, and turned their backs upon the holy man who had so long been the prophet of their better selves.

McFarlane halted his column in the woods half a mile from Neville's, and there picketing the horses marched afoot to the house. Gen. Neville's mansion was the finest in the western country, much of its material having been brought from the East and England by the tedious transportation methods of the time. It was a large wooden

house, a single story and a half in height, with wide halls, and broad verandah covering two sides, after the style of old Virginia houses. It stood on the crest of a hill that looks westward across steep wooded slopes that descend to Chartiers Creek, which encircles its base and was crossed then as it is now by a bridge. Beyond lay the Valley of the Chartiers, a broken and rolling plain bounded by enviroing hills.

On the opposite bank of the creek and almost directly facing it, stood and still stands Woodville, the house of Col. Presley Neville, the Inspector's son, who had shared with his father the dangers and honors of the Revolutionary War. A broad straight avenue or open look-way had been cut through the forest on the hillside by trimming out branches and lopping off treetops. This left an open space through which, from the upper windows of either house, the other could be seen, and the two families could signal one another. For exchanging the ordinary wants and happenings of related households, a code of signals had been arranged.

The advancing host emerged from the woods and ascended the Neville hills, carrying in the van their flag with its six broad bars. As the flank of the column swept around to the west, a woman's form was seen standing in the gabled window under the peak of the roof, waving a white cloth. It seemed a senseless act to the most part of the company, but was not without grave meaning to a few who knew the fashions of the Neville family. Toward the east and south, Bower Hill, the name of Gen. Neville's place, but especially given to the elevation on which the mansion stood, rolls rather abruptly, forming a short ravine. Through this runs a narrow stream, fed by a spring whereat the traveler, if he will, may still quench his thirst as did the Mingo Creek militiamen on that fateful day. Along the western slope were built the cabins or quarters of the negro slaves, and nearby, where the lap of the hill closes the ravine, stood the distillery, an establishment deemed necessary to every considerable plantation. Facing this, so as to form the rude outlines of two sides of a hollow square, were the barns and stables. Thus the house was well protected from these directions, and assailants were exposed to an enfilading fire.

McFarlane saw at once that his movements were not a

surprise. The peaceful home on Bower Hill had become a citadel. Uniformed soldiers from Fort Pitt garrison were on guard upon the porches. In the negro quarters, in the barn, and in the distillery, sturdy slaves were entrenched, armed and officered by members of the family, by the white laborers, or by the soldiers. As these structures were built of heavy logs, they afforded a formidable defense. The situation needed no interpreter. It was plain that Gen. Neville had been informed of the expedition, had prepared his retainers for the assault, and had summoned troops from the garrison, in which Major Kirkpatrick and his son-in-law, Major Craig, both officers of the United States army, would be only too ready to assist. In fact, although it was not then known to the assailants, Major Kirkpatrick was himself within the house, serving with musket as a common soldier.

"We shall have warem work the day, I doubt," said McFarlane to Latimer, as the troops were taking their positions.

"Ay, it does promise that," said Luke. "Neville's a wise old coon and not 'asy to catch nappin'. But there's nothin' for it now but to go ahead and trust to luck. Yet he is too good a soldjer, one would think, to wager battle agin sich a force as our'n. There's not more'n a dozen soldjers, as I count, and the blacks are poor fighters, aven behint shelter. Mayhap the Giner'l 'll come to tarms after all. Leastways the first thing to do is to try him. Shall we sind a flag of truce to the house?"

Yes, the Commander so wished; and so decreed the Directory, who held counsel apart on a commanding knoll out of gun-shot. Accordingly, three men of good standing in the county were sent forward carrying a white handkerchief on a ramrod, the troops resting on their arms and eagerly watching the result. Lieut. Burd, who at his own request had been put in command of the squad of eleven men sent from Pittsburg, advanced beyond the garden palings and awaited the messengers.

"What is your will, gentlemen?" asked the officer.

"We wish a personal interview with Inspector Neville on matters of most serious public concern."

"I have to say, gentlemen, that Gen. Neville is not at home, and his family and premises are for the time being under my charge as an officer of the United States army.

May I ask you to state your business, and for what reason a peaceable household is thus threatened and surrounded by a host of armed men?"

"Sir," was the answer, "we have no quarrel with you, and our business is such as you cannot transact. But as Gen. Neville is absent, we demand admission to his house and possession of his public papers."

"Gen. Neville's public papers are not his," was the reply, "but property of the Government which, as its representative, I am here to preserve. I must deny you entrance to the house unless you will come in simply to share the family's hospitality. Moreover, let me warn you to desist from further threatening and annoyance. My orders are to spare the shedding of blood if possible, but to defend these premises at whatever risk."

Here the interview ended. Lieut. Burd returned to the house, from whose porches and windows the guard and inmates had anxiously looked upon though they could not hear the interview. The messengers withdrew to a wide-spreading sugar maple just beyond the lines, and reported to the Directory.

"Gentlemen of the Directory," said McFarlane, "what will you do? You doubt the statement that Gen. Neville has fled from his home. Sertainly he is not the man to shirk danger or responsibility, whatever his faults may be. At last, you doubt that his public papers, which you are especially intint on gettin' intil your han's, have been removed. Very well, are you still resolved to have them?"

"We are!"

"There is nothin' for it then," quoth McFarlane, "but to advance our lines an' take the house by storm. Farther dallyin' is a waste of time. I shall order the assault at once. I'm sorry indade to expose our men. I fear, poor fellows, that some of 'em will fall; but I shall first advance upon the cabins and barns, an' inunder cover of the open grove on this side of the ravine. After that—"

His speech was interrupted by Luke Latimer, who had been watching, with swiftly changing emotions of wonder, indignation and anxiety, the approach of a tall soldier in a green hunting shirt.

"Good heavens, John Latimer! What brought you here?"

John came up and shook Luke's hand. Then bowing

courteously to the gentlemen of the Directory standing around: "I hope I am here for no harm. Surely a son may follow where the father leads?"

"No doubt, no doubt!" exclaimed Luke, blushing at the retort. "But it is well known, John, that you have scant sympathy with your father in the matters now on hand; and it is my mind that you beeta be away from here."

"Come," broke in McFarlane, who had indeed given little heed to the conversation, his mind being concerned with more serious affairs; "we have no time to lose in talkin'. We have now another duty to attend to. We make no war on women folk. Neville's family are in the house, if the General isn't. We must send another flag of truce to notify the women to retire, and to offer them safe conduct beyond the lines, perhaps to Col. Neville's across the creek."

"Let me have that service, Major!" said John Latimer, eagerly. "Father, you are one of the Directory; give your assent. I admit that I came here on an errand of peace, not war; and this is a peaceful errand, and wholly at one with both my taste and conscience. I beg you to let me go."

No one objected. McFarlane was pleased to send a man like John on such a duty, and Luke assented as eagerly as John had asked. Would it not take the lad out of harm's way? Was it not a very godsend to free him from all complicity with a deed which promised to make no small stir in the country? "Ay, let him go, and see the ladies safely across Chartiers Creek." And Luke inwardly prayed that it might be a long journey and a late return.

Thus, parental affection, in whatever speech or language its voice is heard, utters the same unselfish sentiment. Whatever perilous enterprise or self-will or necessity urges us to risk our own lives or honors thereon, we would fain shield our offspring from the same. A venture seems a light affair to ourselves until we see a child going into it. Dear heart! then it straightway dons another and more woeful visage. Perhaps the reader may share with Luke Latimer the wonder how John Latimer came thus suddenly upon the scene? Therefore we may pause here and preface our further history with the telling.

CHAPTER XXIII.

JOHN LATIMER TAKES UP THE ROLE OF KNIGHT ERRANT.

John Latimer, Mort Sheldon and Panther had been sent early in June on a scouting expedition into the northern parts of Ohio. Gen. Wayne wished to know the plans and movements of the Indians of that section, that he might advance with more confidence along the western frontier of the territory to strike a decisive blow against the combined tribes in the Northwest. Thence, the instructions ran, having sent one of their number to report, the scouts were to proceed to the Muskingum, and there await Luke Latimer and others who would join them about the middle of July. Thence again they were to move westward and unite with Capt. Wells's company of scouts, and co-operate with Wayne's Legion in the general movement against the hostiles.

The scouting party having finished its work, Sheldon started west with the report, and John and Panther proceeded to the rendezvous. There they were met by a message from Gen. Wayne ordering them to Fort Pitt on secret service. Exaggerated rumors of the state of affairs in the western counties of Pennsylvania had caused Wayne uneasiness. He feared that such tumults around the head waters of the Ohio might interfere with his supplies from the East, and encourage the pacific tribes to take the war-path. He therefore sought authentic information both from the commandant of the garrison and from the personal observation of his scouts. Thus John and Panther were unexpectedly found at Pittsburg. There the Mingo awaited the preparation of the official packet, and John hastened to Canonsburg to see his parents.

Mrs. Polly Latimer, who was preparing an early mid-day meal, suddenly found herself clasped in the arms of a stalwart young man, and had lifted up her voice to cry and her hands to smite, ere she recognized her son. Then followed loving kiss and joyful embrace, with tears aplenty, for indeed the good woman was highly wrought up.

And was father at home?

"No, indade not! He is rarely at home nowadays, but

stravagin' the county, a-traipsin' here an' there at beck an' nod of that pettifoggin' Ahithophel Dave Bradford, an' that shilly-shally, milk-an'-water Tom Marshall. They're all heels over head in the ax ise troubles; an' you may know how ill it fares with your father whin aven his own business matters are all through other; for he ha iver been canny and careful with sich affairs. Ahbut, letabee with that matter until you've dined; for belike you've not had a dacent mayl sence ye left home."

Already Mrs. Polly had been making a radical change in her menu; for women are commonly content with picked up meals when they have only themselves to cater for. But the advent of men folk quite transforms affairs; for the male of the genus homo loves heartier feeding than his mate; a fact which mothers and wives instinctively discern and duly respect. John looked on the while, and giving forth bits of information as to his late whereabouts, sniffed the savory messes preparing with the high satisfaction of a normal manly appetite. Having appeased his hunger, he insisted on knowing more about his father's doings, for his mother dropped forth hints throughout the meal that betokened something serious.

"Where is he at?" quoth Mrs. Polly. "Deed it's more'n I can rightly tell; but that he's at no good you may be bound, since he's off a-axcisin'. But I can talk as I redd up the things; so sit you there and rest, for I misdoubt it's liddle comfort you 've had lately. Good Lord presarve us! What with the Indians and the excise there's no p'ace for women nowadays. But it behoves to be resigned and quiet, I suppose, for a booin' and cryin' woman 'll mend no man's manners. But men's ways are awful aggravatin' for all that, an' the best on 'em's contrairy at times, and as skit-tish to handle as a yearlin' colt."

She smoothed down her apron until her hand reached the corners, then gathered them up into a lump and flung the ends forth (after her fashion when excited), as if she shook bits of rubbish away.

"Not that I have aught to say agin' Latimer, leastways to his son. But I'm sore troubled about him, to spake the honest truth; an' I've had no one sence you've been gone to sympathize with or talk to about him; an' to talk to strangers I will not, for it's ill wark to wash one's foul linen in public. But not to beat about the bush anny furdur this is jist how it stands."

Thereupon Mrs. Polly recited in her own racy way the events of the last few weeks, giving an account of the Miller affair, and the Mingo Creek meeting, or as much of it as she had managed to extract from her husband. That, however, was about all that the reader knows, except some of the secret caucusing at the Falls, and the keen-witted woman gave a shrewd guess at that.

"This is news indeed!" quoth John, who had followed the narrative with great attention.

"Ay!" his mother answered. "An' now he's gone off long afore daylight a-randyvooin' at Couch's Fort with Major McFarlane of the Mingo Creek rigiment. He's wan of the Directory, your father is—God save the mark!—an' Bradford at the head—who but he, forsooth? It's mighty lettle directin' anny on 'em 'll do, with Dave Bradford's sly hand at the helm. O that man! He's like the ship's governor in the Good Book, and turns ship and crew to an' fro whithersoever he listeth. Jist to think of it! Five hunder men, Latimer says, armed to the teeth, are a-marchin' to-day agin Giner'l Neville's house, an' Heaven only knows what 'll be the outcome of it all!"

"What! This is serious business!" exclaimed John. "This sounds like war and rebellion. And father at the head of it? Oh, if you could only have kept him out of this affair!"

"Kape Luke Latimer out when he's bent on goin' intil a thing!" exclaimed Mrs. Polly. "Ah, ma lad, don't you know your father better nor that? Ma old mother l'arnt me that a man is like a sailin' boat, an' you must give him some headway if you'd guide him at all. So I e'en gave way to his fads, as I thought 'em, an' made no contrapsions about them, an' kep' my tongue off'n him, as is becomin' in a wife, hopin' I'd be likelier to git the guidin' of him by an' by if he had his own way at first. But it was a sorry mistake, I doubt. Deary me! An' now he's off a-sojerin' an' a-directorin' with the militia; an' Heaven only knows what 'll become of it. Giner'l Neville's not a man to let a ragtag lot o' mustermen dictate til him; an' he'll sind them a-packin' quicker, you may be sure. There 'll be shootin' an' burnin' an' murder afore the day's done, with Major McFarlane an' that rabble at the tail of him. It's a sorry heart the women have this day, an' Neville's women folks as well. An' it's a poor welcome that pretty Miss Oldham

'll have to Bower Hill, an' she jist on from the East. What a horde of ragamuffins an' bla'guards she must think our people are!"

John Latimer in the fervor of his excitement had been walking the floor while his mother was giving these details, but this last item of news brought him to a pause. "What is that, mother? What are you saying of Miss Oldham?"

"Jist that she 's at her uncle's, whither she came from Philadelphia three days agone. Fanny McCormack was a-tellin' me, who had h'ard from her, an' was a-plannin' to visit her this very day."

"What! Fanny McCormack too! But she has not gone, I hope?" queried John hastily.

"No, Fanny's safe enough; for your father bade me warn her of the trouble, an' I was over there 'arly. But she has been carryin' on about Blanche and Mrs. Niville and Mrs. Morgan, too, who, as bad luck would have it, is over at Bower Hill on a visit. Alack! one trouble al'ays comes to kape another company. But I telled Fanny there's not the laste use for til worry about the women folk, for not a hair of their heads 'll be harmed, I 'm sure. Latimer would niver hear of that, nor Major McFarlane, nor indade anny of the rest of 'em, for that matter. Daft as our folk are about the axcise business, they're not so far gone as that."

"Ay, ay," said John; "I have little doubt of it. But there are many rough spirits on the border, and the scum always comes to the top in seetling times like these. But what time, said you, were the militia to rendezvous at Couch's Fort?"

"It would be nigh about eleven your father allowed."

"Eleven? And it's just past noon. What horses are in the stable?"

"Sure, John, you won't be for mixin' up with these affairs? Isn't it enough to have my husband there, athout my son also—"

"Come, mother dear," exclaimed John. "I cannot bide here and father in danger. I must go and be near him; and who knows, I may save him from harm in the hurly-burly. And the ladies will be no worse off for my presence, even if they are no better. Do not delay me now, there's a dear, for go I will. Besides, I think it's my duty to go, for here is the very information that Gen. Wayne sent me to secure."

"Ahbut, isn't it enough to have my husband in the whirl, that you must go too? What crayturs men are! It's touch an' go with 'em all. They're a rampageous an' combatant lot, an' smell the sound of battle afar off, like Job's war horse, an' the voice of the captains an' the shoutin'. Woe's me! But, mayhap it's for the best you should go! Your father took the bay filly, an' George McCormack has your chestnut mare. There's my Snowball! She's a keen jade for a canter, but ower fat for fast ridin', I'm a-thinkin'. But your father's black geldin' Marion is in the barn, an' in prime condition."

Ere the words were well spoken, John was out of the house and into the stable. His advent was greeted by that pleasant whinny of recognition so like a human cry of joy, with which horses greet their lovers. The great swimming eyes of the animal,—wonderful objects, so full of beauty and expression,—beamed a delightful welcome as John came in. Stopping but a moment to return Marion's salutation, and rub his cheek against the horse's nose, he flung on saddle and bridle. Then kissing his mother good-bye, for she had followed him to the stable, he mounted, and giving the horse full rein, hied away.

"Ten miles and more! Ay, but the lad 'll make it in good time at that rate," murmured Mrs. Polly. She stood and strained her eyes after the fast-disappearing figures, until horse and man were quite out of sight. Then she entered the house still talking to herself; for the solitary life which she had led had brought on the habit of soliloquizing aloud. Her own voice seemed company to her in the deep quiet and solitude of the primitive forests. Thus, even in her village home she continued her monologues.

"There he goes after the father, an' intil the hurly-burly! 'Deed it's true, the old cock crows an' the young un l'arns. Though, it comes nay'tral enough and nades no l'arnin', for they're all of a piece, them men! An' nayther tane nor tither bethinks him of her who must bide here alone at home, an' carry the fret an' tear of it all in her heart. If men could be women for the space of aven one of the wars or riots they're so keen to stir up, they'd be far more p'aceful times in this world. Ay, a day or two would do 'em, I'm a-thinkin'! They'd give manny an affront the go-by rother nor stay at home an' bear the strain an' fret an' unsartainty; an' their hearts a-jumpin' intil their

mouths at ivery clatter of hoofs on the roadway; an' they startin' up in their slape with woeful drames, an' cheeks hot an' cold by turns, with that deadish and die-away feelin' at the heart at the thoughts of—no one knows what! An' all the more worryin' becaze one dissn't know what. Welladay! so it has always been, an' will be I dar say ontill the millennium. I beeta go in an' sit down to my spinnin', an wark off these vapors an' doldrums.

“How lonely the place seems athout 'em. Hulkin' fellows! they go a-clutterin' an' stampin' roun' the rooms, or a-pacin' out an' in, an' weavin' back an' forth like a caged cat, on'asy for somethin' to do. Or jist as likely dawdlin' about an' settin' themselves in the way, an' refusin' to stir a peg if they're wanted to lend a hand. One time they'll be a-wheedlin' us til ye'd think butter wouldn't melt in their mouths; an' then grumpy an' techy an' argifyin', an' contrairy like all possessed. Yet, sakes alive! as soon as they're gone, w're a-frettin' fer til have 'em back. An' that's a woman for ye! Deed, we niver miss the water till the well goes dry. The Lord kape 'em from all harrm! Amen! I'm loth to see the lad mix up with sich harem-scarem doins'. But Luke 'll be the better for his prisence, for he carries a stiddy head, an' his blood is not het with the axcise folly an' passion. Well, well, sence I can't have my own way with 'em, I reckon the will of the Lord must be done! Heigho!”

Thus it came about that John Latimer, urging his good horse at the top of his speed, reached Bower Hill to startle his father by his unexpected appearance, and just in time to be made the bearer of a flag of truce, and in behalf of the insurgents offer safe conduct to the ladies of the house and the women of the household.

At the outer line of the negro quarters where a soldier kept guard, Lieut. Burd met him. As he stood face to face with his competitor of the shooting match and offered him cordial greeting, there suddenly came a strange confusion of sentiment, and a feeling akin to terror. There was a coldness in the answering salute of the officer; a flush of surprise upon his face, as of dormant contempt just awakening; a couchant indignation that started upon John's sensitive nature an image of horror, as a lightning flash on a stormy night brings vividly to view some object before unnoticed, and fixes it upon the brain and holds it there

long after the glare has gone back into the blackness. That high look, that indescribable something in Lieut. Burd's carriage—what could it mean?

He saw it all now. Fool! He had not before thought that his act had publicly and officially committed him to the insurgents' cause! In his chivalrous earnestness to help others, in his consciousness of loyalty to his country, and opposition to all treasonable acts and interests, it had not occurred to him that his motives might be misunderstood and his conduct misconstrued. Oh! why should he have rushed into this affair? Could not some one else have borne the flag of truce and given equal safety to the Neville ladies? Ay, triple fool! Quixotic and hair-brained act! And what would those ladies think; and how would they feel towards him? He, John Latimer, their friend and guest so often, one of the whiskey insurgents! An assailant of their house, and associate with and leader of an armed mob, to exile them, and threaten and maltreat their loved ones, and burn and murder, it may be!—Oh! And Miss Blanche! And he to set up for and come forth as their knight! Knight? Bah! Quixotic idiot!

There he stood, his cheeks aflame, his eyes dazed and downcast, while these thoughts quivered along the very quick of his brain, and he was conscious of the high looks directed upon him by Lieut. Burd. Ay, and it is he of all men who stands there the defender of the Nevilles and of Miss Blanche! And John Latimer stands as a representative of their despoilers, an insurgent mob, to offer them safe conduct!

"Well, sir, what message do you bring from your fellows?" Lieut. Burd's calm question cut through John like cold steel, and that awoke him. Yes, he had been a fool, but folly will not cure folly. There was only one course now open to him. He must follow upon the first promptings of his spirit, and knowing his worthy motives, trust to Heaven and time to vindicate them. But should he explain his exact relations to the insurgents? And could he honorably do so, and not betray a trust he had sought at their hands? Would he be believed? At all events, he would speak the truth and say how he came there. That at least was due to honor.

With this resolve, his blood beat more clamly. His manhood was atop again, and he stated his commission and

offered to conduct the ladies to Col. Neville's house, which, he was assured, would not be molested, and wherein the ladies would be safe.

"So much for my official duty. Now a word of personal explanation is due alike to myself and all concerned. I do not represent these men who are besiegers of the house, and with whom you may soon be in hostile combat, except in this single act of mercy to the defenseless. With them and with their purpose I have no part nor lot. I have not been thirty minutes upon these grounds, having hastened hither from my home on the first tidings of what was afoot, with the double purpose of watching over my father, who is one of the leaders, and of using my influence with him and the others on the side of forbearance and peace; or at least to bespeak the utmost courtesy towards the ladies. I beg you to explain my position, for I am concerned not to appear in false colors from the one side or the other. Moreover, I have just come from Gen. Wayne, directed as a Government scout to gather all information bearing upon the character of the disturbances in Western Pennsylvania. As such I have felt and feel it my duty to be present here to observe transactions and report in accordance with the facts."

If an expression of doubt, a passing interrogatory, as it were, came over Lieut. Burd's face, it was but momentary, and vanished like the shadow of a drifting cloud. That look and manner which had started such a tumult in John's soul disappeared, and with a glance as of restored confidence and respect, the officer bowed. "I will not forget your message," he said, "and I need not say that it gives me pleasure both to hear and bear it. I must ask you to remain here by the sentinel until I return."

John can hardly be blamed for mentally wondering if Lieut. Burd would say all he wished him to say? Would he make it quite plain? Even to Blanche? And would he be believed? The few moments that elapsed seemed a long interval ere the officer returned, and reported that the offer of the insurgent leaders had been accepted, with such thanks as were due for that much consideration. Capt. Latimer's kind offer to act as escort was also accepted, and the ladies would be committed to his charge. Would he be good enough to follow him to yonder picket gate in the outer yard fence? As the two men walked together, Lieut.

Burd asked, "Are you at liberty to say how many men the insurgents muster, and how they are armed?"

"Yes; as far as I know they have no wish to conceal anything. Indeed, they had hoped that their numbers would overawe opposition and save bloodshed. There are at least five hundred men, and they are well armed with rifles and muskets."

"What manner of men are they?"

"They are the best citizens in these parts. Many are of blameless life and character. There are a number of Revolutionary veterans among them, and their leader is an officer of some distinction. They are deeply in earnest and conscientious in their action."

"Will they go the length of firing on us?"

"Undoubtedly. And if I might be permitted to advise, I would urge you to treat with them and not attempt resistance. Your position is not defensible against such odds. You may hold it for a little while, but with your force the bravest defender must in the end perish or surrender. Resistance will certainly cost loss of life on both sides, and will inflame the passions of the besiegers, and make further bloodshed inevitable. A battle here to-day will kindle open insurrection throughout the Western counties. Prudence, peace, conciliation here may save us from a civil war. I beg you to pause. I would count it a high honor could I serve as a medium of peace between you and my misguided friends yonder."

Lieut. Burd listened attentively. His serious face showed that he felt the high responsibility resting upon him, but he made no response. The two men were now nearing the picket gate upon the east. Just outside, in the shelter of an oak tree that grew hard by the smoke-house where the family meat was preserved, stood a knot of women. Mrs. Morgan was in the foreground. Behind her was a bevy of negro slaves, all with packages and hand-bags containing their portable belongings, for so the Directory had allowed, prohibiting only the public papers of the Inspector.

But where is Blanche? Ah, there she comes, her Aunt Neville leaning on her arm and weeping, while a negro woman carries their satchels.

John's heart leaped upward at the sight, and his cheeks grew pale, and the muscles of his arm twitched as he

inwardly cursed the folly that had caused such a scene. Blanche seemed taller than when he saw her last, and more womanly. Her clear brunette cheeks were rosier than wont with the excitement, and her eyes flashed with alternate indignation and pity. There was not a trace of fear in her carriage. She came of good blood, of a race of brave men; and blood tells. John would have sprung forward to meet her, but hesitated a moment, for he was not assured of his reception. While he hesitated, Lieut. Burd advanced, and giving the weeping matron his arm led her to the gate of her home, Blanche closely following.

It was hard for John to check the impulse to greet the fair maiden and offer his arm to her, but he restrained himself. The frigid greeting of Mrs. Morgan, and the glum and glowering looks of the servants had chilled his heart and chained his free action. To lose confidence concerning one's favorable standing, especially before ladies, smothers self-complacency, puts self-poise off pivot, and leaves a young man at sad disadvantage. The angry and lofty bearing of Mrs. Neville and her formal bow of greeting cut him to the quick and gave no relief. There was something in the look that Blanche cast toward him, and the sudden mantling of her cheeks, that gave him better heart.

He bowed deeply and would have spoken—he hardly knew what. But the silence that had heretofore brooded was broken by a musket shot from the woods beyond the spring. How it echoed and re-echoed along the ravine! The ladies started. The servants set up a cry. All eyes turned in the direction of the sound, where a light puff of smoke curled up among the trees.

"Heavens! Have they opened fire?" cried Lieut. Burd.

"God forbid!" exclaimed John. "No, it cannot be. It is only a signal, but it bids us hasten. Madam," addressing Mrs. Neville, "I grieve to say it, but we must hasten our departure. God knows I would spare you—would spare you all (a glance at Blanche) the sorrow and affront of this day. But we are in the hands of God, and must bow to His will. Hark! another signal. Come, we must go."

A second shot was heard from the opposite quarter, and by a stir in the gray line of human forms on the crest of the hills beyond, it was seen that the insurgents were preparing to advance. Slowly the little company of forlorn women took up their way along the driveway and thence

to the road where the coachman awaited with horses and carriage. Lieut. Burd handed Mrs. Neville and Mrs. Morgan into the coach, and now John had courage to offer his hand to Blanche for like service. How dainty her hand looked as it lay but a second in his open palm! And what a thrill it left! Was it only a fancy, or did it leave also the slightest pressure thereon as the maiden stepped into the vehicle and received her package from John's hand?

A third shot! The last signal. Mrs. Neville looked out of the coach window as the horses moved off, and gazed eagerly, alas! and for the last time, upon the stately mansion which so long had been her happy home. Then, bursting into tears, she drew down the blind, and throwing herself back upon the cushions sobbed aloud, and her companions, in sympathetic grief, wept with her.

John turned to Lieut. Burd as the servants fell into line behind the carriage, and held out his hand which was wamly grasped. "God guide you!" he exclaimed, "in this day's sad work; and God protect you! Good-bye."

He moved rapidly forward and took his place at the side of the coach, while Lieut. Burd turned sadly to the duties before him. As the mournful procession reached the curve in the road where the descent of the hill becomes more marked, it was challenged by a sentinel; for the house was surrounded, and egress by the inmates was cut off from every quarter. John advanced and answered the challenge, but the sentinel refused to be content. A written pass signed by McFarlane, which had been hastily prepared in case of need, was produced.

But the guard remained obdurate and denied passage. He had been told to allow no one to pass, and especially to search any one coming from the house for papers, and bring such before the Directory. The pass might be all right. He wouldn't say anything about that; but right or wrong, he must search the carriage and search the women. Whereupon he advanced to make his word good.

"Halt!" cried John, placing himself in the soldier's way, and speaking with no gentle voice, for he grew impatient at this needless delay. "Call for the officer of the guard! You're an ignoramus, and do not know the commonest duties of your post. Here is the Commander's pass bidding all sentinels respect the bearer, and pass the ladies in his charge. Dare you set yourself against such authority?"

"An' who the devil are you, sor?" was the tart response, "that presooome to taych your better? John Latimer, forsooth! Ay, I've h'ard tell of yees as a stuck-up tory, an' inimy of our cause. My opeenion is that you're little better nor a spy an' traitor, an' be hanged til you. Stand out of my way, or—"

Ere the sentence was finished John had wrested the threatening musket from the guard's hand, and with a quick turn of his foot brought him to the ground, then quickly reversing the piece, held the bayonet to his breast. The soldier lay for a moment stunned, and then lifting up his head, showed a face on which surprise and terror were equally depicted, and lustily cried for quarter.

"Get up, then," said John, bringing the musket to a rest, "and see if you will let us go now." His rage had already softened into a glint of laughter at the sentinel's forlorn and dazed appearance.

"Let you go?" echoed the sentinel solemnly, who now had arisen and was brushing the dust from his clothes. "Go, ay, go, an' be dawgond til ye! As soon as you're a mineter, for all me. Ye've got the better of me this time; but I'll be aven with ye yit, mind that now, John Latimer."

The ladies, alarmed at the delay and hearing something of the commotion, opened the coach door and asked what was the matter. "Nothing at all now," answered John quietly. "A little delay in passing the guard line. But it is all right, and the sentinel is quite satisfied. Drive on, coachman. Guard, do you fall in and follow us to the foot of the hill."

Meanwhile the controversy had attracted the attention of others whose complaisance John feared he might not so easily count upon. Several sentinels from the picket line within the adjacent wood were moving rapidly toward the road. Another and more serious impedient threatened, and John began to be gravely concerned, when among the advancing forms he noted a hatless man who bore on his sturdy shoulders the red shocky poll of Andy Burbeck.

"By all the powers!" cried Andy, rushing forward and grasping his friend by the hand. "It is Jock Latimer himself! An' how in the name of all that's wonderful, came you here? I thought you safe enough among the red savages, and here ye turn up, like a bad penny, in the midst of a white man's riot! But ye're out of the fryin' pan intil the fire, my boy, bad luck to us all!"

“You’re a godsend, Andy, as usual;” said John, who was never more delighted to see the honest red and freckled face. “But I have no time to talk now. I’m escorting these ladies to Col. Neville’s beyond the Chartiers, and you must join me. The sentinel has delayed me, though I bear the Commandant’s pass. Here it is. Where is the corporal of the guard for this post?”

“Ay!” said Andy, glancing at the pass. “This is all right an’ rig’lar, an’ A’m the man ye’re a-lookin’ fer—Corporal Andy Burbeck, at yer sarvice!” Turning to the other two guards who had now come up, he dismissed them to their posts.

“I think,” said John, “I can now venture to return this piece.” With a pleasant smile he handed the obstinate sentinel his musket, which was received with a wry face and grimace that savored of anything but gratitude. Andy took in the situation at once.

“Ah, Davvy, ma b’y,” said he, “whan ’ll ye be l’arnin’ a little good sinse? Ye might ’a knowed this pass is all right, aven if ye couldn’t rade it. An’ didn’t A’ tell ye to call the corporal of the gyard, an’ not trust til y’r own wit? Sure y’r head ’ll niver fill y’r father’s hat. An’ ye must nades try a throw with John Latimer, hey? He nades a long spoon who would sup with the de’il, an’—”

“Come, come,” interrupted Capt. John. “Mind the master’s copy, Andy, ‘comparisons are odious.’ But we are losing precious time. Shall we move on?”

“Ay, that we wull, an’ A’ll see ye safe down the hill, an’ God bless the ladies! Stay here, Davvy,” he added addressing the sentinel, “ontil A’ come back; an’ ye ’ll know Cap’n Latimer better the next time ye mate, A’ promise ye.”

“Suppin’ with the de’il, indade!” muttered the guard, mumbling over Andy’s proverb. “Ye may well say that, Andy Burbeck!” He rubbed his elbows, which had been bruised by the fall. “There’s niver a livin’ bain’, barrin’ the de’il an’ John Latimer, that could a’ backed Davy Dandruff that away. But letabee! I’ll bide my time, an’ it’s flat enough I’ll lave him ere I’ve done.”

The lines once passed, the servants recovered their courage and spirits, and as is usual with such folk, became bold as they receded from danger. They hurried down the steep road, and passing the carriage, which must move more cautiously, took familiar bypaths and cut-offs, and

were soon scurrying over the bridge in little groups, and telling their exciting news to the Woodville servants. At the bridge, Col. Neville met the carriage. He had started from Pittsburg at news of the impending attack, accompanied by marshal Lenox and a young man named Ormsby, who now awaited him at the mansion. From the summit, and through the thick woods came now and then the sound of a musket shot and the snapping crack of a rifle. Another! Two or three together;—then a rattling volley. The battle had begun!

Committing his charges to their kinsman's care, John answered his scant courtesy and formal thanks with a stately bow. Not caring to tax the ladies with further duty of grudging courtesy, he bade Andy follow, and hurried up the road. Yet, having mounted to a point close by a small frontier sanctuary known as St. Luke's Church, beyond which the woods shut out view of the bridge, he could not forbear turning and casting a glance downward. What does he see?

The carriage has not moved; the door is open, and those within are evidently telling Col. Presley Neville their bitter experience. One of the ladies stands on the bridge and pats the horse which the Colonel rides. It is Blanche. See! She turns and looks up the road. She has caught sight of the two men, and knows that they are looking towards her. A wave of a tiny handkerchief;—a hat lifted from the head—that is all. Yes, it is all! The maiden enters the coach, whose heavy wheels give forth a rumbling that rolls up the knoll. John climbs the steep road that here curves sharply upward from the little log church, with a pace that sets Andy puffing and protesting.

The musketry firing grows apace. The whistle of bullets is heard as they cut through the leaves. The hoo-oo-izz! of one bullet as it sings close above their heads, warns them to caution. John pushes on with vast strides. Andy labors after him, and the Captain thinks of—his father? Of his duty as a scout? Andy thinks what fools they two be, not to shy around from the broad road and take the shelter of the trees. A wave of a handkerchief! How long can a lover's hopes live on a favor so slight as that? How many dreams of love and happiness can a lover's fancy weave from the fragile fabric of such a trifle?

As they neared the Bower Hill house they found that

the picket lines had been thrown backward so as to command the road while keeping the sentinels out of range of their comrades' bullets fired from the opposite quarter. Therefore Andy, with consent of the officer of the guard, accompanied John to the headquarters of the Directory where he duly reported.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE INSURGENTS ATTACK THE INSPECTOR'S HOUSE.

From the outbuildings a steady fire was kept up by the armed slaves. On the other hand the militia were slowly contracting their lines, and directing their firing against every exposed person within range. The aspect of the scene was varied and exciting as John watched it from his elevated outlook on the bridge beyond the ravine.

Major McFarlane was advancing his men in the frontier fashion, borrowed from the Indians. Once ridiculed by the conservative officers of European troops, it was the evolutionary basis from which has been developed the method of open order attack in the skirmishing tactics of modern armies. Every clump of bushes, every tree trunk and log, or slightest irregularity, were seized upon as shelter by the militiamen. Occasional puffs of smoke, followed by the crack of rifles, marked their irregular line of approach. Here a human form was seen crouching low on the ground and crawling like a couchant beast through the grass. There, one left his shelter and bending low with trailed piece rushed across the open space to a tree further in advance. This feat was at once signalled by blue orles of smoke issuant from the cabins or the windows of the mansion, and by the rattle of musketry and singing of balls through the air, and their dead thud as they sank into tree or ground. In turn, the momentary exposure which this required was instantly followed by a broken volley from the watchful besiegers. Thus back and forth the musketry of the besieged gave tongue now in sporadic notes, and again in rolling unison, and was answered by the staccato barking of rifles from the woods or the rattle of a full vol-

ley. John Latimer's experience in war had been limited to a few engagements with Indians, and a combat of this sort was new to him. He watched its progress with anxious heart, and dread at every outbreak of the firing to see the bodies of dead and wounded brought to the rear. But the losses were few. Now came a pause in the firing. Major McFarlane was preparing for a final charge upon the negro quarters which, once captured, would compel the surrender of the little mansion garrison or insure their destruction. With that eager curiosity which attracts men nearer and nearer to the seat of danger in all conflicts of human passions, John changed his position and gradually approached the line of combatants. The Directory too had moved forward, and Luke Latimer had joined McFarlane to take part in the final attack.

"God save us!" exclaimed Andy. "There he goes intil the thick of it as calmly as though he were bullet proof. A willfu' man nades to be unco' wise, as the sayin' goes; but savin' your prisence, Cap'n Jock, your governor has more will nor wisdom. He's the beatenest man for self-will A' iver knowed. What's the good of bein' a Directory if one can't kape at a safe distance in a shindy like this? There's Mr. Parkinson, now, knows whan his bread is buttered, an' stays back by that big tree. He's the sort of Directory that suits my fancy the now. An' there's yoursilf, Mr. John, what do ye be axposin' yoursilf for? This is no quarrel of your'n whatsomiver. An' you unarmed! You're a non-combatter, an' ought for til go to the rare with the wounded, like the parsons,—that is, if we had anny, which we havn't! The parsons are all on t'other side of the axcise fight, like good Father Clark; an' these poor lads, A' misdoubt, will some of 'em die athout the banefit of clargy. An' yoursilf, Cap'n Jock, among 'm, if you don't be more careful! Hold stiddy now! If ye be hasty ye 'll niver be lasty, mind you! You won't go back? Ay, it's the old story,—childer's childer to the third and fourth gineration! You're as like yer dad as two peas in a pod. An' my good instructions are all thrown away on ye. Ye'll mand when ye get better, no doot; but in the manetime, how are ye goin' to take care of your father if them garrison chaps or the plaguy darkies make a target of ye?"

"Come, Andy," said John, "you're not afraid, are you? This is a new sensation for you, I'll be bound. But cheer

up! What sayeth one of your proverbs? 'He 'll never be drowned who is born to be hung,' or does it run the other way?"

"No matter," quoth Andy. "Like an Indian canoe, the sayin' goes as well one way as tother. But heth! jist spake aisy whan ye mantion hangin', wull ye, for this 'll be hangin' business for some of us, or A'm no prophet. Look at that now! God guide us!" he exclaimed, as a bullet peeled the bark from a tree just beside him. "Sure there was a stave out of ma noggin whan A' vantur'd intil sich a sinseless scrimmage."

"Well, Andy, you're quite right," said John. "There is neither courage nor sense in useless exposure."

"True for you, lad. That's quite right. Ahbut! it was a close shave. Howsomiver, a miss is as good a mile; but jist now A' had ruther tak' a mile an' make surer of the miss. A've no stomach for this business, an' A'd niver 'a been here if that blissed mother of your'n hadn't 'a persuaded me to come an' look after your father a bit. A'm a-thinkin' if A' iver git out of this scrape, my Peggy 'll have a sittlement with her over that affair,—if she iver finds it out. But see yon smoke! It 'ud be a fire in one of the cabins belike; an' A' fancy the lads are a-tryin' to smoke the blackies out. There 'll be crackin' warem work now."

Not stopping to answer or even note Andy's comments, John hastened to where McFarlane and his father stood in the shelter of a clump of oaks. "Is this an accident, Major?" he asked. "Surely you don't aim to burn the house?"

"You're quite right, sir," answered McFarlane. "I don't know the cause of the fire. Some of my men may have kindled it, but it's agin orders, and I've jist ordered it put out."

"Then that is work I may help in," answered John. Waiting no further word he sprang away followed by Andy, who with all his protests and assumed timorousness, was one of the boldest of men. After these came a squad of insurgents who had been detailed for the service. The negroes were fleeing pell-mell from the burning cabin toward the house, whose garrison opened fire upon John and his party, thinking that they were making a charge. McFarlane, to protect them, ordered the whole line to

open upon the mansion, and the smoke of the heavy fusilade, mingling with that of the burning building, soon filled the ravine. The negroes in the adjoining quarters seeing that the purpose was to quench, not to spread the flames, joined in the service, and for a while the adversaries, under John's direction, wrought in kindly unison amidst the battle roar of their contending associates. The fire was readily subdued; and covered with smoke and char and sweat from the heat and exercise, John returned to headquarters not disdaining to screen himself from the flying bullets when opportunity served.

"What is that?" asked Luke, pointing toward the mansion. "I h'ard someone a-callin' from the house. An' is yon a white flag?"

Major McFarlane stopped and peered through the smoke. "It is that, indeed," he said, "a flag waving from the gallery window. Thank God! I'm aweary of this wretched business, and would save funder bloodshed. Heaven knows we've had too much a'ready. Cease firing," he shouted.

The order was obeyed on the line near him, but on the flanks, where perhaps it had not been heard, the shooting continued. Impatient thereat, the commandant stepped from the shelter of the tree behind which he had stood, and ran forward into the open road. He waved his rifle (for he had been taking active part in the attack) and repeated the order:

"Cease firing!"

Did the garrison deem this a signal for assault? Had the white flag been only a wretched ruse to gain a brief respite? Had there been any flag at all? We shall never, perhaps, be able to determine this point. All we know is that a volley was fired from the house, and Major McFarlane fell.

A cry of grief and rage rose from the nearby ranks. Every weapon broke forth in vengeful discharge. The garrison and the cabins replied, and amidst a leaden hail that cut the leaves overhead and cleft the earth underneath, John Latimer sprang forward, and lifting the commander's prostrate form bore it to the shelter of the trees and laid it tenderly down.

"Run for the surgeon!" he cried. Men hurried away towards the rear. The pale lips moved.

"Is it water he wants?"

At the bare hint Luke Latimer ran to the spring close by, heedless of flying bullets. Returning therefrom, the hand which held the leathern cup suddenly fell. He staggered, recovered, picked up the cup in the other hand, ran back to the spring, and now came safely to where the dying chief lay supported in John's arms.

Too late! Lay him down, now! He is dead!

Tenderly, as though he were a sleeping infant, John laid the body down, composed the limbs, and stood gazing sadly on the pallid and blood-stained face. Just behind him, Luke Latimer leaned against the trunk of a tree, his own face almost as white as his dead commander's. Andy Burbeck touched him.

"Don't you see, mon," said he, "that ye've been hurted y'rself. Come away out of this to the doctor." He pointed to Luke's right arm which hung limp at his side, while a stream of blood ran down over the fingers.

"Whist, Andy, it is nothing. Not a word to anny wan. I must take command now. Jist help me tie it up."

He tried to raise the wounded arm, but the expression of pain on his countenance showed that it was not easily done. However, as no word of Andy's could prevail upon him to leave the field they retired to a clump of bushes. Andy ripped up the coat sleeve with his hunting knife and banded the wound with his kerchief. Having thus stayed the blood-letting, he made a rude sling for the arm. His rough surgery was followed by a drink of spirits from his canteen; and revived thereby, but weak and shaky with intense pain, Luke moved off, accompanied by Andy, to take charge of the insurgents.

"McFarlane is killed!"

The news ran along the lines. "Killed treacherously, under cover of a white flag!" Men were enraged beyond control at the foul act. They charged with cheers and curses and vows of vengeance, upon the outhouses whose defenders fled to the mansion.

"Burn out the nest of traitors!"

Some one raised this cry, and there needed no urging to the deed. The still-smouldering brands of the cabin, which a few moments before some of them had risked their lives to extinguish, were fanned into flames and applied to cabins, to barn, to distillery. The continued play of mus-

ketry from the house was unheeded. Indeed, it was soon diverted towards the opposite quarter, for the line of besiegers pushed on closer, and poured volley after volley into the house. All the energies of Lieut. Burd and his little band were required to check their advance.

The negro quarters were burning. The stable was on fire. The barn was blazing. The distillery slowly kindled, taken quickly, as the tongued flames caught the taste of the spirits with which the woodwork was saturated. The wrathful soldiery, their passions rising with every exercise of the destructive faculty, beat in some of the whiskey barrels and rolled them to the fire, which licked up the combustible stuff and spit it out in blue sheets of flame. All the buildings were soon burning, and the smoke of the conflagration rose in gray clouds from the high site of Bower Hill, and being seen far and wide, gave signal to the countryside of the sad work being wrought.

Soon the mansion itself was threatened. The flying sparks kindled here and there patches of fire. The rising wind sucked straight toward it. The place was doomed! No human skill could preserve it. The end had come at last. No man could do more for its defense, and the white flag was displayed and kept floating. There could be no doubt this time of the intention of the besieged.

A loud cheer went up from the insurgents at these signs of surrender, and the firing ceased as Lieut. Burd and the survivors of his little band of gallant defenders came forth, the soldiers with arms reversed. The militia rushed forward, and some surrounded the prisoners and hurried them away toward the grove. Others entered the house and began the work of plunder. The wine cellar was emptied, and its contents drunk in wild glee, while the flames were setting their teeth more firmly into the house.

Just then Luke Latimer appeared, authorized by the Directory to assume command. It was high time, indeed. Lacking their appointed head and without special organization and leadership, the insurgents were little better than an armed mob. That they did not cross the Chartiers and destroy the house of Col. Neville, and thence, arousing the country as they went, march to Pittsburg and seize that town and fort, was due to the self-restraint of men who were loath to go to extremes, and who had simply wished to strike a blow in defense of their supposed rights.

Luke Latimer at once gave directions that the prisoners should be protected, and having been disarmed, should be escorted well out of harm's way on the road to Pittsburg, and there released. Then he turned his attention to saving the burning mansion.

His efforts were in vain. The house was utterly destroyed, as were the numerous outbuildings, save only the meat-house under the wide-spreading oak, by the picket gate when John Latimer had met Blanche after their long separation, and where the group of mournful women gathered to go forth and return no more. This humble remnant of what was once the noblest edifice in the Western country, stood for nearly a century thereafter and was only torn down within the last few years.

Meanwhile, the insurgents were slowly leaving the ground. In groups and companies they returned to their homes, carrying with them the wounded and the bodies of the killed. Many had grave questionings as to the issue of that day's doings. What good had been wrought? Was the event a failure or a success? How would Washington's Government regard it and regard them? But underneath all was the feeling that the die had been cast, that there was now no honorable retreat, and therewith the stern purpose to abide by their cause and by one another to the uttermost.

The death of their commander cast a deep shadow over their spirits, and the saddest duty remaining was to bear his corpse to his desolate home. A stretcher was extemporized, and the dead captain laid thereon and carried by relays along the road over which they had come. Was it an accident, or by an equitable fatality which overrides human actions, that one of the halts for rest should have been beneath the great walnut tree on the summit, whose gnarled roots gave a pulpit to good Father Clark?

So again, for ill news flies quickly, when the new-made widow, hearing of her bereavement, rode forth to greet the bearers, she came upon them not far from the Mingo Creek Church, and hard by the spot where David Bradford with traitorous and illusive logic had wooed the unhappy man to his doom. Still the waterfall dashed over the limestone ledges, and fell with monotonous splash into the deep cool pool. Still the bright stream rippled over its bouldered bed, and the droning cadence mingled with the moans of

the widow as she cast herself upon her dead and bewailed her loss. There was no change in the note the waters gave forth. Neither higher nor lower, nor sadder nor slower, but with equal measure and unvarying tone they kept up their accompaniment to cries of grief, as they had done to the pleading of sophistry. So they have done, all the century since, to the laughter of romping children, the love speeches of wooing country swains, the barking of playful squirrels, the whistle and chirp and song of birds. Always the same, with infinite indifference or infinite sympathy, as one is able to hear it, for the joys or woes of mortals. So do waterfall and brook and Nature's multiform voices all, always speak to the sensitive hearts or the dull ears of men.

In the rural churchyard on the hill-slope beyond the falls, you will find a gray and lichen-covered slab of limestone above the grave wherein friends laid and neighbors laid the unfortunate leader of that fight on the day of his burial from the Mingo Creek Church, and the venerable pastor Clark to lead the last sad offices for the dead. Upon this "table tomb" you may read, if you be patient to trace the well-nigh illegible carving, the following epitaph:

"Here lies the body of Captain James McFarlane of Washington County, Pennsylvania. He departed this life the 17th day of July, 1794, aged forty-three years. He served through the war with undaunted courage in the defence of American independence, against the lawless and despotic encroachments of Great Britain. He fell at last by the hands of an unprincipled villain, in support of what he supposed to be the rights of his country, much lamented by a numerous and respectable circle of acquaintance."

It so befell that John Latimer, who had gone with Lieut. Burd and the soldiers to insure their safe departure, had no tidings of his father's hurt. As he returned from his kindly errand he met Andy Burbeck and a friend supporting the wounded man between them, and leading him away from the conflagration and out of the hot sun into the shade of the woods. He was pale and weak from loss of blood, and from pain and the severe strain of marshalling his faculties to duty when so grievously worsted. Grief at McFarlane's death, and the burden and anxiety of responsibility, and apprehension of what was to come

of it, added wounds of the spirit to bodily hurts. But when John's loving and hopeful words greeted him, and his strong arms were put around him, while Andy ran away for the surgeon, he cheered up a bit.

With face bathed, and a cool drink from the spring to quench his fevered thirst, and refreshed by the dressing of his wounds, he turned his thoughts toward home. Two balls had struck him, one shattering the forearm, and the other penetrating the bunch of muscles between the shoulder and the elbow. A severe and painful wound, the surgeon said, and likely to leave the arm stiff and mayhap unserviceable; but care and skillful attention would give him a good right arm after all. Scant comfort, Luke thought, but was thankful for such as it was. A quieter nag was found for him than his bay filly, which John took, and Andy mounting his own horse, the two, riding one on either side, set out with Luke towards home. His bridle arm was free, and he fretted against the offered support to keep in the saddle, which nevertheless was sometimes needed. When in the cool of the day the trio rode up to the Latimer cabin, it was with sore pain and difficulty that Luke could dismount.

All along the painful journey the thought had again and again reverted: "What will my wife have to say? How can I meet her after all her warnings and prophecies of evil?" There are few tendencies in human nature, whether of male or female, stronger than that which prompts to the triumphant-joyful, or triumphant-mournful, but whether joyful or mournful always triumphant "I told you so!" It takes more than a moiety of grace or charity or good sense to suppress that bit of self-righteousness within us, in the face of a just occasion for its exercise. Luke Latimer, stout-hearted as he was, shrunk from the anticipation of that more than he had done from the musket balls which wounded him. Thus he came to his home.

Mrs. Latimer had been on the lookout all the day. Many times had she gone to door or window to gaze down the road. As the day advanced, rumors of the battle began to fly here and there. Some were exaggerated, some minimized, all had that uncertainty which is the chief factor of torment to those whose loved ones are exposed to danger.

"At long last, thank God, there they come!"

She recognized the horses as they turned the bend in the road, and then just got a glimpse of the familiar forms of husband and son. Not waiting to take in the details, and so failing to note the true state of things, she hurried from the window and took up her preparations for the evening meal.

Thankful? Yes, she was truly so! All day long she had been hoping for and dreading that moment. Oh, how gladly would she welcome those beloved forms! How tenderly would she greet him! Could she do enough for them, be kind enough to them were they then to come?

Thus an hundred times had she communed with herself as the day ran on to its close. And now, no sooner had she seen them coming home all safe and well, as she judged, than her mind began to wax indignant. A burning sense of her wrongs came over her. That her husband should have gone off on his madcap doings, and left her there to fret and grieve and be miserable,—ah, could she bear it quietly? Would she? The jerky manner in which she swung her cooking utensils, and the emphatic thump with which the table ware dropped into place as she set the table, argued ill for her coming lord. For Mrs. Polly had a biting tongue when her feelings were well wrought up to set it agoing.

The horses have stopped at the gate. The men have alighted. It is but decent that she should go to the door now, and smother her indignation, too, for is not the boy there?—and he, at least, has done no harm.

“Ah, good Lord, what is this? They are liftin’ my Luke from the horse! See how pale he is! How tottery on his two legs!”

Thus, in a moment, as the housewife stood upon the doorsill, all her sense of ill usage and thoughts of resenting the same were swept into nonentity by the revulsion of wifely fear and love which that vision brought on.

“Oh, Luke, my dear love, have they hurted you? Oh, my husband, let me help you!”

That was all she said. Then she flew to him, and with kisses and tears thrust Andy aside, and put her strong arms about the hurt man and assisted him, O how tenderly, into the house. With gentlest and deftest touch, as she knew well to give, she helped to disrobe him, jealous almost of John’s aid, and laid him in the best bed, and brought

the softest pillows and snowiest linen, of her own hands' weaving, to cushion the poor hurt arm.

"God bless my soul, Polly!" quoth Luke, as he put his unwounded arm about her neck and kissed her; "it's well worth a shot or two to see you like this! Don't greet, dear lass, it's nothin' so sayrious, I hope!"

Now the neighbors began to drop in. Mrs. Peggy Burbeck came; and Fanny McCormack, whose skill in nursing lore and ways the whole village knew and trusted. Mrs. Latimer had sent for her, and thereafter suffered no one but Fanny to share with her the care of her husband while his wound kept him to his couch. Before these and other incomers the good wife poured forth her bitter reproaches of those who had wrought her husband such harm. To be sure, she believed, none more heartily, that their cause was righteous and their defense just and lawful. She knew—no one knew better—that Luke's part in the excise plot and insurrection was wrong and utterly inexcusable. Time and again had she denounced to him his principles, and condemned his practice. Yet, nevertheless, she could find in her heart none but angry feelings, in her thoughts only bitter condemnation, and on her lips nothing but censure, almost malediction of those who, having been assailed with deadly weapons by her husband and his friends, retorted upon them in kind. Had he come home with a whole skin it would have been a different matter. But with his poor wounded arm? Ah, that was quite another affair.

Inconsistent! you exclaim. But wherein, pray? And what is inconsistency? Loyalty to heart, or to intellect? to one's affections or to one's convictions? Give answer as you may, the world shows many examples of inconsistency like that of Mrs. Polly Latimer, and perhaps is none the worse therefor.

CHAPTER XXV.

OPEN WINDOWS INTO SUNDRY SOULS.

The day following, Fanny McCormack stood at Luke Latimer's bedside preparing to dress his wound. The sleeves of her frock were rolled up to leave the arms free for action. Well rounded arms they were, plump and pink, with shapely hands, though browned and perhaps somewhat broadened by the homely duties of a frontier maiden's life. It is good to note the satisfaction with which our end-of-the-century girls watch the deepening hues of tan that the wind and sun of a seaside resort paint upon their skins. Surely, they, at least, will count the nut brown of Fanny's hands a point in her praise. Or does the method of painting affect the values of the colors?

The gown was protected by a white linen apron that came high up the breast with shoulder straps, and folded quite around the skirts. A charming uniform this for a nurse, or for any of our women folk, the author thinks, who has early memories of a loved form thus arrayed. The trained nurses of to-day have learned how serviceable is such a garb, and how becoming. Is that, perhaps, the secret of the witchery which they sometimes cast upon the young medical internes of our hospitals? It may have been this snowy over garment that fixed John Latimer's eyes, as Fanny McCormack proceeded with her neighborly duty, and which set his mind upon a train of admiring meditations.

How deftly she raises the poor hurt arm, with steady nerves, and equal movement that starts no quivering pains! What a swift and dainty touch she brings to the unbinding of cords and wrappings, and snipping the same with the scissors hanging at the waist! How graceful the maiden's carriage as she stoops and turns and makes changes of arm in her merciful work! Surely, he never before saw quite such an expression as that on Fanny's face, so full of gentleness and pity, but withal bright with confidence as though to infuse comfort and hope.

Might he help her?

No, with thanks! She could do nicely without aid. But

—yes, if he would, he might hold the basin of hot water. There was a bare suggestion of a smile on the lips, and a bit of color in the cheeks, and a brightening of the eyes as the maiden cast a momentary glance upon the youth.

Consent thus had, John came to the service, happy if he could do that much to help or seem to help relieve his suffering parent. As the two stood together, John, while doing his part as need required, was conscious that imagination had set another womanly form into the group. She is slight of form and of medium stature, not tall and robust as Fanny is. A clear, bright brunette she, not blonde; with black hair, not soft chestnut brown. The eyes are dark, even black under the play of feeling, and reflecting light like a mirror, not blue as Fanny's,—are they light blue, or dark blue? Why, he had never thought to note that before! Springing and quick are the movements of this visional maid, full of nervous energy and verve; not with that quieter and self-poised, yes, but agile and graceful carriage which John has been noting this morning.

The one's mind is brilliant with poetical fancy and enthusiasm, abounding in sallies of wit, and with a laugh that rings out merrily with a tinkle like soft bells. The other maid is intelligent, thoughtful, practical, simple of speech, with quick response to humor and with quiet hearty laugh.

Blanche and Fanny!—the Field Lily and the Wild Rose,—so Featherfoot had aptly named them. Goodly maidens they, and pleasant to his thought. Strange that they should come thus into comparison as the work of unbinding and dressing and rebinding that wounded arm went on, with its oft repeated query: "Does that hurt?" and the uttered "Oh, it was awkward of me!" Or, "It was too bad, excuse me, pray!" when the hurt man winced at some sharper pain. Thus the voice went on soothingly, cooing as a mother over a sick child.

All his life John had known Fanny McCormack. The two had gone as children to the same log cabin school, and learned together the mysteries of the A, B, C, and spelled and read and ciphered together. They had stood up side by side to recite the Shorter Catechism, from the opening question "What is the chief end of man?" to the very last thereof. They had played together on the creek side, and gathered field lilies, and daisies, and black-eyed Susans,

and wild roses, and goldenrod. They had dug calamus and sweet myrrh in the spongy flats, and plucked blue flags by the water side. They had paddled about in the low run creek together, with brown bare feet; and had fished for "minnies" with their brown wee hands, and laughed and splashed as the fishlings slipped through their fingers, and shot away with a gleam from their silvery sides flashing through the water. He had caught the pretty water-snake,—what a bold lad he!—and feigned to scare therewith his little playfellow, who being a girl must shriek and shrink from it, although, in truth, when playing with her girl-fellows she could catch water-snakes in her own hands, and raise no to-do about it.

In the autumn they had gathered hazel nuts together, and black haws, and wild grapes and wild gooseberries. When hickory nuts and chestnuts were ripe, what a delight to climb the trees, and club down the tasty fruits, while Fanny picked them up and put them into piles, and stuffed the hulled seeds into the big linen poke. What fun to pound out the white or brown contents from the unopened hulls, and betimes pick out the prickles of the chestnut burr from Fanny's fingers.

Then walnuts and buttercups came, and the boys of his age could neither shame nor scare him from letting his little sister (he called her "little" though he was not much taller than she) go with them on the nutting parties. What a deep brown stained their fingers after the hulling of those nuts, and how merry the laugh as they compared hands with hands to see which might be the browner! How often in the winter time had he coasted with her in his home-made sled down the village hill,—“Sheep Hill,” do you remember it, alumni of old Jefferson?

So the days ran on, and they grew up together, and studied and played, and later wrought together. He called her his “Sister Fanny;” and truly he loved her as a sister, and often wished that indeed and truth it had been so. He had fancied his lost sister as some such girl as Fanny, whom he put in the lost child's place, and sometimes called her “Meg.” At the spelling match, the singing school, the corn shucking, the logging bee, he had been her companion, ah, how many times!—for he would not allow his “sister” to miss any of the frolics that were going. In good sooth, however, there was small need of fear on

that score, for most of the frontier swains would have been too happy to serve as her squire, and were happy to do so, when as the years advanced, John was often absent on the duties of his calling.

After such absences, next to the home welcome, and the picking up of the well-loved ways and things in which he delighted, and which make up the tale of home attractions for young spirits, the pleasantest greeting came from his sister Fanny. At times he would be seized with that strange unrest which comes to most youth, and which mayhap is Nature's method of distributing the species and preserving it, like the impulse that sets spiderlings afloat upon their gossamer balloons; or birdlings to twittering and assembling before migration; or bees to excited whirl and buzz within the scap just before the swarm. At such times the presence of his sister Fanny soothed and rested him as nothing else could do. Thus always it had been. Her loving sisterly words made him quiet and glad, and set him upon his highest aims and keenest mettle for better and more manly things.

But Blanche disturbed him. From the first she had set astir within his heart an eager unrest that he had never felt. She had awakened a longing for something, he knew not what, and had not known before, which even her presence did not satisfy, though certainly it was stronger when he was not near her. During her late long absence, many a time had he felt an almost uncontrollable desire to go where she was. Often when treading deep forests, or pushing his canoe on the river, he had found his heart leaping up at the thought of her return. Oftenest he thought of her as he had first seen her when guiding his keel boat down the Ohio River. Again and again the incidents and perils of that eventful week were recalled, and Blanche thenceforth was inseparably associated with his boat the "Fanny," and so gave to its rude carpentry a beauty that only himself discerned.

Thus insensibly his thoughts swung around to the scenes of the day before,—a dreadful memory! Of them all, what started the bitterest thoughts, and set the blood flaming on his cheeks, and knit his brows and kindled a fierce light in his eyes? Was it not, that henceforth he must stand attainted before Blanche Oldham and her kindred? Twenty long months had they been separated and

then—such a meeting! Would they, could they now ever meet again?

* * * * *

“There, that will do nicely,” said Fanny, in a voice very sweet the invalid thought, as she laid the arm freshly dressed back upon Mrs. Polly’s soft pillows.

“Yes, indeed, it *was* done nicely!” John said. “And who is there besides our Fanny in all the border, or elsewhere for that matter, could have done such a service so well?”

The pleased and grateful look, the reddened cheeks and pleasant “Oh, you flatter me!” as the basin was taken from his hands, almost soothed the passion and pride that had begun to foment within him. As he saw her retire from the room he inwardly resolved that nothing which a brother’s heart and hand could bring her should ever be wanting to make Fanny McCormack a happy woman. Brother? Yes; but just now it came to him,—it had not occurred before, and why should it now?—that for many and many a day he could not recall that she had called him “brother” as she had done in earlier and happier times.

Strange! and by no means agreeable to the young man’s thoughts. Could it be that another affection had broken the spell of childhood, and set him and his brotherly concern for her into the background? No doubt, no doubt! But who can the favored man be? Well, well, it is the way of the world. He might have known that it would come sooner or later. But, if he be not worthy of such a woman, or should anyone dare to trifle with Fanny’s love, ah!—let him look out!

“John,—John Latimer!” His father had spoken twice ere he awakened from his reverie and gave heed. “Sit ye down by me here, I have summat to say til you, my boy.” John got him a chair and sat close to the bed. He smoothed the covers with his hands, though they needed no such care, and looked down lovingly into his father’s face. “It is about the scoutin’ trip I wish to spake til ye, John, an’ my ingagement with Giner’l Wayne. I’m out of that now, more’s the pity—ay, an’—an’ out of all scoutin’ hereafter, I doubt, for that matter.” His voice choked a bit, and he looked at his swathed arm.

“No, no, don’t say that, father!” cried John. “You will .

be all right soon, and many's the bonny day we'll spend together in forest and on river."

"Ah, John lad, it cannot be. I shall niver bear rifle more with this good arm, forby a shot at a silly deer, or a squirrel. But that's as it may be. There's One aboon us all, and His will be done! It's not that I want to talk about. I've been a-thinkin' that the time's up for you to report at Pittsburg, an' carry the despatches back to Wayne."

"Well, father, I have been thinking of that too, and I have made up my mind that I shall go down to Pittsburg to-day, tell Panther how it is, and let him go alone with his message. He can well do it, and I must not leave you now. You never needed me more, and mother needs me, too. I dare not think of going away at such a time, taking the chances of a scout and you in these straits."

"Ah, my boy, it's good in you to say that, an' I'll not deny that it 'ud be pleasant to have you with us; but there's somethin' more important nor mere comfort. It's duty, my son, duty! I pledged my word to jine Cap'n Wells, an' I niver had tho't that I must break tryst. Lettle did I drame of this," touching his wounded arm, "though I ought to 'a thought, no doubt. But that's nayther here nor there, now. There's no use a-cryin' over spilt milk. Here I'm laid up for a good stent, an' you must go, John, an' make my pledge good. It had been my wush an' tho't to kape you out o' the scrimmage an' send you back to look after your mother. She has none but us, since poor Meg's gone, an' what need was there to resk a-losin' both of us at wanct? As Andy says—God bless his honest soul!—it's well not to put all one's eggs in one basket. But all that's revarsed now. I must stay here, lad, an' you must go, an' God bless an' presarve you. Don't say me nay; my heart's sot upon it, an' I'm sure it's only duty."

John yielded the point grudgingly. He was not greatly troubled about the hurt arm; that would get well in time. But he was much concerned for the consequences of the Bower Hill event. Legal processes, military occupation, arrests, and who could tell what, must follow. What then would befall his father, one of the leaders in the offending? Would he not need him there to fend for him, and to save him from the penalty of his deeds?

Therefore he would fain have stayed at home. But his father's will and decree were otherwise, and these had been law to him through all his life in most matters. Indeed, he had sympathy with the sentiment that had been uttered, for duty was the most sacred word in John's vocabulary.

"Thank you, son, thank you!" said Luke with a tenderness of voice that he did not often show, for he was not a demonstrative man. "I feel relaved to think that your sturdy arm will be a-doin' my duty to the country. I have no advice to give ye. Thank God, I can trust you wholly. Ye 've been a good lad, John; always so. I 've niver wanct had a heart-sore along o' you, all your days; though I fear I've often been a careless an' mayhap erring parent to you. But I niver meant to be so, John, God knows!"

"Do not say that, father. You have been a loving and indulgent parent and friend always. I owe everything to you, and would be most ungrateful were I not to study to love and serve you in every way."

"Well, well; it may be so. I hope it is so indade. Sartin, we 've not often disputed nor differed sayriously, savin' about the axcise. There, lad! Don't spake up. I'm not agoin' to open that subjec' nor to sansure you; quite the contrairy, indade. I've had a slapeless night, lad, an' manny troubled thoughts. I've seen some things different, as I lay here a-dozin', an' thinkin' of that burnin' house, an' them pale dead faces, an' poor McFarlane—ah! Well, I would willin'ly give up my life to bring him back, as God is my judge! An' me infloocin' him to take the lade of us! I don't disguise that I knowed 'at wounds an' death must come with sich interprises as our'n; but I didn't jist think o' that partic'lar way. Human affairs are like scenes on the river banks viewed from a boat amid-stream; they have mighty different faytures lookin' fora'd from the bow from what they havə a-lookin' back'ard from the starn. It was one thing while we were a-plannin' affairs, but quite another now they 're done an' can't be recalled. It was niver in our plans to burn the house, John, niver! Nor did we wush to shed blood. We thought Giner'l Neville would surely yield, an' that we could gain our p'int p'acefully. Ah! we trusted to an unknown horse, an' he tuk the bit in his teeth an' ran away with us.

"Ahbut, it's too late now to mand matters. We 've made our bed an' we must lie in it; an' I for wan won't

grumble if it proves a briery wan. Mayhap I was too fast, an' let my anger an' pride, ay, an' my principles, carry me too far. You know, John, that my whole heart an' conscience were in this business, an' are to-day for that matter; though mayhap I've gone too far. Leastways, John, I've naught to say agin' your principles, now. Perhaps there's more in 'em nor I iver allowed. But be that as it may, go you forth an' do your duty like a man, an' a Christian, an' a patriot, an' the good God of us all go with you, an' shield you from harem! Now, my son, good bye. I nade sleep sorely, an' may not be awake till you're off, for this is business that requires haste. God bless you. Good bye."

Having made his few needed preparations, John came next to bid his mother good bye. He dreaded the interview, for Mrs. Latimer had been much perturbed in spirit since the coming home of her wounded husband. She was a woman of cool head and good judgment, not given to tears or tantrums, meeting fortune fairly, whether good or bad, and thus taking the changes and chances of life with more than common self-control. But to all this there was one exception; any sickness or hurt that came to her husband, or serious threatening of ill to him upset her mental equipoise. Then she became flustered, and blundered strangely in her domestic duties, and had fits of crying, and talking to herself aloud with divers ejaculations and self-upbraidings. She seemed like one consumed with fear of an impending calamity, or as one racked with mental torture, or goaded by a troubled conscience. All morning had she been showing these symptoms, and John feared to approach her with the news that he was immediately to return to the Western forests.

Not finding her in living room or kitchen, he went up to his own room in the attic for something needed, and as he ascended the stair heard the sound of his mother's voice. He paused on the landing, and as the door was ajar, could see through the scant opening that his mother was kneeling in prayer before his bed. His Bible, the book rescued from the Ohio River flood, was spread open before her. In the few moments that he stood thus surprised and hesitant, some broken sentences of the prayer came to him.

"Oh, good Lord," she said, "spare him, and spare me!

I would * * * but I cannot now. * * * Give me courage, for my heart is weak to do my duty and yield to Thy will. O Lord, forgive and help me, and I * * * but not now, not now! I am a weak woman * * * yet a little longer thy handmaid will be true to Thee, true to * * * at last * * * O Lord, bless the lad! Keep him through evil report and good report. Presarve him from dangers seen and unseen, from temporal and spiritual foes, from sin and the second death. Keep him steadfast and true. O good Lord, save him from the deceivers' accursed way, from the crooked and thorny path of those whose lips utter falsehood and whose lives enact them * * *

John turned from the spot that seemed like hallowed ground, and tiptoed down the stair. And is it not hallowed ground, the place where mothers are wont to wrestle with God for their children? Leaving until later the duty of saying farewell to his mother, John walked up the street to Fanny McCormack's home. The house was midway of the hill, close by the log store which her father kept. And there you may see it to-day, its homely rudeness hidden beneath the entwining green of a climbing vine. Fanny was spinning flax in the front cabin room. The great wheel was set revolving rapidly with one hand, and as it sent out its musical whirl, the spinner retreated backward, keeping the coarse thread in one hand and guiding and twisting it with the other, holding it aloft, at times, as it faintly purred, and twisted itself into firmer proportions. Then, when it was twisted, forward went the spinner to the wheel, the thread gradually shortening as it wound itself around the spindle.

It is a right womanly exercise, yes, right queenly indeed, worthy of the fairest and daintiest daughters of these modern days, who might becomingly revive it along with some of the other ancient manners, or perhaps one would better say modes, that they affect. Colonial architecture, colonial furniture and colonial frocks would give a worthy setting to a colonial industry like the great spinning wheel at which Fanny McCormack wrought with a cunning hand. For a little while the conversation ran on without hindering the maiden's work. But when John came to say the last word, the rolls of yarn were hung upon the post, and the buzzing wheel stopped.

"We are loath to see you go, John," said Fanny, as she

followed him toward the door, "and shall sorely miss you, as we always do. But you have chosen rightly, for you could not go counter to your father's will. Good bye, and may Heaven keep you, and bring you back again soon and well."

John turned, ere he crossed the door sill, and took both of Fanny's hands in his own, and held them there while he spoke. Fanny listened, now with eyes looking with kind steadfastness into his, and again with face bent downward.

"My dear Fanny," he said, "you have been to me through all our lives all that a sister could have been. Will you not for my sake, as well as for theirs, watch over father and mother? You can do more with them than anyone else; and I shall go with a lighter heart if I know that you will try to cheer their loneliness. Ah, if Sister Meg had lived, they might have had someone like yourself, a daughter to love, and comfort and help them. I have made up my mind that this shall be my last campaign. If I return, I will never leave my parents again. If I should fall—then, Fanny, who could comfort them so well as you?"

"Come, come, John," said Fanny, "we'll not think of that! You'll be back again, I promise you, as full of life and hope as ever. You're a little doncie now on account of your father's hurt. But he will get on very well, I am sure; and you may depend on me to do all that I can to help on a speedy cure, and to cheer both him and your mother." She spoke with cheerful voice, but there was a quiver about her eyelids that betokened suppressed feeling. She had mastered her emotions that her friend's sadness might get no deeper tinge through her.

"Thank you, Fanny, with all my heart," said John. "And now one thing more before I go. I have sometimes fancied of late that the old sisterly feeling which you bore me may have changed. I can hardly remember when you have called me 'brother' as you used to do—as you have done since childhood. Is it all a fancy, or have I noted truly that you have been more constrained and reserved in your ways with me? It has made me think, sometimes, that some one else has come into your heart to hold a nearer place."

"Oh, John! How could you—" Fanny began. She spoke with quick, tense tones, and withdrew her hands from John who forthwith interrupted her.

"Do not think that I am jealous!" he said. "On the contrary, I shall always be happy in your happiness, and shall try to love and honor whomsoever you honor and love. But I have thought you might confide in me, and give me the privilege of a brother—" Here Fanny interrupted the speech, and this she did with emphatic utterance and a gesture of impatience.

"There, John, that will do!" she exclaimed. "No more of that if you have the least regard for me. You are quite wrong in both your conjectures. You are just the same to me that you have always been; and as to someone else—nonsense! I promise that you shall not be the last to know of such an event—when—it happens. But you have said enough, foolish boy! Be off with you, and Heaven keep you!"

She held out her hand and turned quickly from the door, setting her back toward it and hiding her face as she took up her spinning work. It was due time, indeed, for her cheeks were flushed, and there was an unwonted light in her eyes. The tears which had only been held back by the maiden's strong will flowed freely, and dropped upon the linen rolls that she clasped and fumbled and pulled apart with nervous twitching of her fingers.

Stupid John!

This duty done, not without some misgivings lest it had been overdone, John went to the Burbeck cabin to complete his mission of filial love by enlisting Andy in his father's service. Bounce came forth with jubilant barks of welcome and excited wags of the tail, and mayhap with vivid hopes of an outing after forest game so often enjoyed in John's leadership.

"Not to-day, Bounce. No hunting to-day, old fellow. Down, sir, down!" for the dog kept leaping upon him, after the fashion of his kind to utter their satisfaction. At these words Bounce sank to earth and followed at John's heels, but with eager whines that seemed to carry a note of disappointment and remonstrance.

Mrs. Peggy Burbeck met John with a cordial greeting, her own manner betokening sympathy; but a twinkle was in her black, snappy eyes, as she said: "An' aven you, Mr. John, were at the riot! Sure I wouldn't 'a tho't that a pair of black eyes could 'a run quite away with you. What, man, did you think to capture Miss Oldham with your

bow and spear, and take her to wife like the Benjamites in Israel of old, whether she would or no?"

"Come, come, Mrs. Burbeck, you must not think that everybody is like Andy, and bound to fall in love with black eyes and ruddy brown cheeks. But a truce to that matter, henceforth. There are some subjects—"

"Ay, ay," broke in Andy, "it's ill jokin' with the watch dog, Peggy, lass. Least said is soonest mended. Take a sate, Cap'n Jock. Down, Bounce! Out wi' ye, Betty. It's not your day the day, and dogs like children should be seen and not h'arrd."

"Thank you, Andy," said John, "I must away at once. I have just come to say good bye, and do a bit of business. We want you to take charge of the keel boat and attend to our ferrying and carrying until father's wound shall be healed, or until I return. I am anxious you should consent, for I know father will be content to leave the business in your hands, and I shall go away with a far easier mind if that matter is comfortably settled."

"Ahbut, Mr. John," said Peggy, ere her husband could give answer. "Have you bethought you well of what you 're a-doin'? Trust Andy Burbeck, when the whuskey boys are out an' riotin's a-fut? He'd be off at the sound of the first gun, an' away meanderin' with the military, an' a-house burnin', an' what not. If one can't take care of himself, how is he to be trusted to take care of another? I'd as soon trust skunk to buy my perfumery as set a man that don't mind his own business to take care of the business of another man. Indade, Mr. John, I'm greatly feared it would git us all intil trouble were Andy to take up with your freightin' business."

"Aisey there, Peggy, aisey now!" exclaimed Andy. "Touch the sore place lightly, lass. A'm no warse nor my neighbors; an' Cap'n John knows well what tuk me to Bower Hill, an' that A' only went to look after his father. Didn't A' promise him A'd do it, an' his mother, too? An' troth, isn't Luke Latimer my best fri'nd, an' would you have me desert him in a time o' nade?"

"Goodness-gracious-me!" exclaimed Peggy, lifting up her eyes heavenward, and clasping hands before her in an attitude of devotion. "Here's Andy Burbeck turned saint! An' oh, the vartues an' powers of him! Saint Andy pre-sarve us, says I. Well, well! You men are all alike, the

whole clamjamfrey of ye, an' it's small nade to argy with ye. There niver was a man, I do belave, who couldn't ray-son himself intil annything he has a mine-tuh. It's amazin' what nayteral gifts men have for bamboozlin' of themselves, to say nought of others. Now here's my Andy, if he could only be as succissful in convartin' sinners intil the way of righteousness as he is in convincin' himself that he's in the right way, Lord 'a marcy, what a powerful pr'acher he would be! An' so you wint intil the Bower Hill fight jist to look after Luke Latimer? U-hum! It's a poor way indade to convert a sinner, by goin' a-sinnin' with him. If the tree hadn't given a handle to the helve, the axe would niver 'a cut down the tree. Sure, sence ye've turned so pious like, ye might mind what Scriptur says about the blind ladein' the blind an' both a-fallin' intil the ditch. An' it 'ud 'a been a poor consolation to me if a bullet had 'a gone through ye, to think ye'd got it all along of fellowship for Luke Latimer."

"Whist, now, Peggy dear," said Andy in a soothing tone, for he saw that his wife's feelings were being wrought up into high fervor by her own heat. "All's well that inds well, lass; an' you should thank God for your marcies, an' not fly intil the face o' Providence by complainin'. Ivery bullet has its billet, ye ken, an' A' was not the billet for anny Bowerr Hill musket balls, an' am not like to be, A' promise you, in the future. An' it's bein' in charrge of the boat, an' havin' stiddy imp'ymment that 'll be like to kape me out of the rrisins an' rriots, for it's a rocky ship that nades ballast most, you know. So jist give o'er, and say no more, an' A'll accep' the offer Cap'n Jock brings, an' thanks for the same. An' you may depend on me, John, to do ma duty; an' there's my hand on it!"

"Thank you," said John, as he took the proffered palm. "I'm sure that you will do your best." This matter settled, he bade the worthy couple good bye, and turned to his father's cottage. He dreaded the meeting with his mother and was well pleased to find her busy about her household duties, in a subdued but not mournful temper. When he came to give his farewell kiss, the tears and pettishness and remonstrance which he had looked for were wanting. There was something more than a quiet resignation in her manner of parting with her son who was going forth to perilous service. Somewhat of encouragement

even. Did not her husband wish it? Had he not so bidden? Would not the fact of John's going greatly ease Luke's troubled mind, and by so doing much favor the healing? Who was she, then, to hinder or stay the youth, and thwart and cross her husband's will, and thus excite his poor distraught mind?

Distraught? Yes. Coming forth from her prayer in John's room, she had heard a sound as of men conversing in Luke's room. Who could have come in? Had not Luke given order not to be disturbed? Drawing near, she found the door ajar, and waiting a moment before entering, she heard her husband's voice, but how strangely altered! He was speaking with passionate fervor and in upbraiding tones. Dear heart! Could it be John that he was thus scolding? And what offense has the lad given? Surely Luke had never before so railed at him. "Idiot!" he cried, and then followed a deep groan. "Fool! fool! O-oh! What nade to go there an' mix yourself in with sich doin's! * * * A rioter * * * traitor. * * * Ay, a man-slayer!" Then followed a sharp sound as of a hand smiting upon a face.

"Good fathers!" muttered Polly, starting forward. "Has he struck the lad?" She stood with hands upon the latch, and looked into the room. There was no one therein save Luke, who sat up in his bed, and with flushed cheek and scowling brow and distraught manner thrust the fingers of his unharmed hand into his hair and pulled thereat. Then again came the sound that had startled her, and she saw him smite his cheek with his open palm, and heard him grind his teeth and give forth passionate mutterings that came to her in broken sentences.

"Lord, Lord!" he cried, falling back upon the supplications of Scripture. "Lord, remember David! * * * seize and despoil us of our property? * * * helpless paupers in our old age? Oh, my poor wife! * * * John! John? Ah, if his loyalty and troth might save us!"

Then he hurled down his arm until the bed shook, and threw his head back upon his pillow and groaned. Mrs. Polly stole away from the door noiselessly, and stood within the room with bowed face and folded arms, waiting, thinking, listening. All was still.

She smoothed down her apron to the corners and flung forth the imaginary lapful of troubles, and sat down.

Then in her heart she prayed (how fervently!) for her husband. The scene had come to her as a revelation. Most marvellous, that glance into her Luke's soul! Who would have thought such force and passion therein? How would that inward fighting end? Pride, duty, fear, self-interest, home loves, patriotism, hatred of tyranny, the sense of injustice and wrong, all were contending upon the field of thought before the high judicatory of Conscience.

Then the good wife bethought her of John, and of the words of hope her husband had linked with him. Yes, after all, the lad might deliver them from the paw of the lion and of the bear! Luke was right; John must go! For his own sake, to take him far from these disturbed parts; for Luke's sake, that the poor vexed heart might get easing. So she arose and went gently about her work, pausing ever and anon to hearken towards Luke's bedroom. All there was quiet. At last her husband slept. Then John arrived, and thus it came about that her subdued spirit gave him a calm farewell, and only quiet tears and trembling lips showed the deep concern that went forth with her maternal blessing.

CHAPTER XXVI.

JOHN LATIMER JOINS WAYNE'S SCOUTS.

The next day John Latimer received from Major Butler a packet for General Wayne, and set forth with Panther to deliver it. The scouts' course lay westward into the deep forest solitude, among hostile savages, to give the strength of their hands and hearts to the final blow that won the great central West to Anglo-Saxon civilization. It is not the purpose of this tale to follow John Latimer through the events of the next five days. If the curious reader would follow his route, let him trace upon the map the course of the Ohio River to the mouth of the Hocking, and thence up that stream a hundred miles or so to the northwest, as far as a canoe will run.

Here leaving their boat in hiding, the scouts travelled westward to the Scioto River. There under cover of night they captured a canoe from an Indian village, and pushed up the river sixty miles or more beyond what is now the

town of Kenton. Thence bearing west they struck the southern fork of the Auglaize, and readily fell in with Captain Wells' company of scouts whom they had come to join. These men continually circled around the wings of Wayne's advancing Legion, keeping the Commander advised of the movements of the savages. They held the Indian villages in terror by their daring adventures, thus diverting attacks from the flanks and rear of the army.

Gen. Wayne had kept his forces in winter quarters at Greenville on the western fork of the Little Miami, and late in July turned his face westward. He marched through the wilderness, pushing toward the northwest borders of the present State of Ohio. Panther was sent forward to Gen. Wayne with the despatches, and John at once fell into duty with the scouts. Among them was Robert McClellan and others once famous on the borders, but whose deeds and names have now passed into oblivion. One of these excursions had an issue which deeply concerned some of the characters of this story, and so must have place here. McClellan was sent out with John and Morton Sheldon to feel for the enemy along the right wing of the Legion. They crossed the Scioto, following the trail along which Panther and John had lately come, and so to the head waters of the Hocking, where they learned that war parties were gathering at an Indian town near the site of Lancaster, Ohio.

Setting forth, they cautiously threaded the forest, bending their course towards the hills overlooking the Hocking Valley, whose western termination is known as Mount Pleasant. This is a cliff several hundred feet high, which projects like a spur from the adjacent range, from which it is separated by a deep ravine. Towards the river the cliff descends sheer to the plain, forming an almost perpendicular fall. On this lofty point our scouts established themselves, for it commanded a wide view of the valley beneath. Moreover, it was a solitary place, not within the usual beat of the Indians, and being in a measure isolated, was comparatively safe and defensible.

It was a striking and beautiful scene that now opened up before the three men, and by one of them at least the natural beauties of the outlook were not unnoted. On one hand was the bold ridge capped by huge rocks that overhung the ravine and ribbed its side. The forest foliage

around the ridge was clad in the deep green of mature summer, and flashing with the high lights of the August sun. To the north and west stretched the river valley or prairie. Its margins were carpeted with lush prairie grass, and dotted with wild flowers whose coarse stalks got absolute, in one's thoughts, because of the sturdy vigor which enabled them to bear their parti-colored blooms above the stiff greening within which they grew.

Beyond this margin of untutored nature lay a circle of corn fields wherein the Indian maize grew tall and rank, the stalks drooping their broad leaves like ships' pennants in a calm, and holding up their husk-covered ears with browning tassels on the tips. Beyond the corn fields and nearer the river lay the village, laid out towards the centre with some show of regularity, but with wigwams scattered irregularly upon the outskirts. Now and again newly-arrived war parties would make their bivouac in groups upon the outer circle. Their coming would set in play the wild passions of the savage populace, and there followed great tumult and whooping, and leaping about over the plain.

There is nothing in material nature, however beautiful and strange, that can rival in attractiveness to man the life and behavior of his fellow men. Thus, John Latimer turned from the landscape before him with deeper interest in the panorama of human life hourly unrolled beneath him. Women were at work in the fields and about the wigwams. Young mother came and went with papooses strapped upon their backs; and motherly pride and individual taste showed in beaded ornaments wrought upon their tergal cradles precisely as in the outfits for infants of our own homes. Here children played with hearty laugh and frolic, the young lads mimicking the warlike scenes enacted around them. On another part of the field young braves were engaged in their favorite games of ball, throwing the tomahawk, and shooting with bow and arrow, with as much zest and lightheartedness, and clatter of tongue, and boisterousness as one sees at an intercollegiate football match, for Indians among themselves are not the taciturn folk that the white man sees them to be.

Elsewhere the more serious business of preparing for the warpath went on. Chiefs and braves went to and fro from the council house. Warriors practiced at throwing

the tomahawk and shooting the rifle. As evening came on fires were kindled and dusky forms circled around them in the wild war dance, their whirling figures sharply outlined against the blaze, which showed lurid and weird in the blackness of the surrounding night.

Thus a day passed in observation. Then the supply of water which the scouts had brought was exhausted. None could be had short of the river beyond the base of the hill, and it was needful that one should carry the canteens thither and refill them. McClellan went forth upon the duty and John came down to the edge of the prairie grass, and laid in waiting near by a bold spur of the cliff where it draws nearest to the stream. The canteens were safely filled, and McClellan about to return when he heard light foot-falls upon the prairie path, and turned about. There stood two squaws within a few feet of him, who had come also to the spring, or perhaps to the river to bathe! The peril of the situation flashed upon him. He sprang forward to smite the women into silence ere they could raise the alarm.

Too late! The elder of the two raised an Indian yell that rang over the prairie and echoed from the cliff. Thereat John ran forward out of hiding. McClellan, filled with the rage and despair of self-preservation, leaped upon both the squaws at once, and seizing them by the throat, one by each hand, dragged them down the bank into the river.

The elder, who had uttered the alarm cry, was thrust under the water, and having received the brunt of the shock of the scout's fierce leap, made little struggle. Her face lay beneath the surface, whence came forth gurgling sounds as of a drowning woman. Not so with the younger of the two. She was a fair athlete, and coped with the scout, handicapped as he was, on not unequal terms. Claspng his arms, though silent the while, she writhed and tugged and kept her face above the water.

Now John plunged into the stream, raising the spray before him in a mighty plash, and seized the maiden, whom McClellan released to him, giving full attention to the elder. John slipped one palm across the girl's mouth, and not finding it in his heart to kill a woman, even an Indian, and for self-protection, cried into her ear: "Be silent, and I will save you! If you cry, I must kill you."

The squaw ceased her struggles at these words, and darted into John's face a grateful look. From blue eyes, as I live! thought John, and the sight touched some chord of association, and strangely thrilled him as though with a vision of a well-known face. Where, in his going to and fro among Indians, had he seen this squaw? Surely, somewhere! It may be that these quick-passing thoughts had touched and relaxed the motor muscles of his hand, or that the maid had gathered strength by her momentary rest. She suddenly threw up her hands, and grasped his wrist, and tugged it downward with such force as to give her mouth release from his palm. Ere he could replace it, the woman spoke:

"Don't hurt me! I white girl! No squaw at all!"

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed John. "What is this I hear? Speak again, and quickly."

"I white woman, American girl! Indian captive, no squaw! Shawnees stole me when little child. I no want to stay with Indians. Take me with you!"

John was not so much surprised at this revelation, as agitated at the thought of how near they had come to taking the life of a countrywoman. Unhappily the capture of white children, and their adoption into Indian tribes, was only too familiar an occurrence. Every successful campaign uncovered such cases, and it was a usual stipulation in treaties, that white captives should be restored. Thus, border history abounds in touching and romantic instances of captive children given back to their parents or sent back, and sometimes most unwillingly. Remembering this, John at once gave credit to the young woman's tale, and releasing his grasp, though still holding one hand, led her from the river.

Meanwhile, the elder squaw had ceased to struggle, for she was quite dead, and her body released from McClellan's iron clutch slowly floated off. He had noticed what had passed with John, and as he hurried from the stream and got rifle and canteens, bade instant return to the mountain ere the whole village and camp should be down upon them. He shared his companion's perplexity as to what should be done with the rescued maiden. But she solved the difficulty by declaring that she would share their fate, and by following them in their retreat across the prairie.

They had not compassed half the distance of the hills

ere signs of alarm were noted in the Indian village. The lazy quietude that had sat upon the town and valley under the hot sun changed into wild whirr and excitement, as rapidly as does a quiescent ant hill when disturbed by a passerby. The dead squaw's cry had been heard, and her body had been seen as it drifted by. Out of the seemingly purposeless confusion and hurly-burly were presently seen shooting in all directions groups of armed warriors. A party of twenty or more bore towards the mountain.

Soon they struck the trail of the fleeing scouts, and gave signal in a fierce whoop of mingled joy and rage. Then they sank into silence, and set to the work of surrounding their unseen foes with the steady sleuth-hound ferocity and persistency of the American aborigines. Ere long they had circled the base of the mountain, except upon the west where the perpendicular cliff looks down upon the village and plain. Thus they had shut up the scouts as in a death trap. Swiftly they closed upon their victims. They glided from tree to tree and from rock to rock, pushing their way up the mountain until every avenue of escape was cut off. There was but one course left for the doomed whites,—to sell their lives as dearly as possible; and this they resolved to do.

But there is the young woman! What shall they do with her? It were wrong to involve her in their fate. So they bade her go back, and tell her Indian friends that she had been captured by the white men, and held by them until in the excitement she had escaped.

No, she would bide with them!

But that was madness, John assured her. Nothing but death awaited them. There was not the faintest hope of escape for them. If she stayed she too must die.

"Then I will die!" cried the maid passionately. "Death in company with my own people will be sweeter than captivity with red men. Esawelathohnew will not return to slavery. She will die here. She can fight as well as die. No, I leave not this place. If any of you escape, carry to my white kindred the news of my death."

"But who are your kindred?" asked John.

The maid cast down her eyes, and a sad thoughtfulness fell upon her face. It was a beautiful face, despite the swart complexion which sun and wind had wrought almost to the color of an Indian. Her hair of light brown hue,

verging almost upon auburn, passed smoothly over a high brow, and fell in a long double braid well nigh to the border of her richly beaded deer-skin tunic. With hands clasped behind her back and gently beating the turf with her moccasined foot in rhythmic taps, she began her story slowly and in broken sentences:

"Far up the Ohio—so I have heard,—my people lived. The Shawnees would not tell me more. But I remember something of my childhood. I tried to keep in my heart everything about my people. Yes, I will tell you,—Hist! But not now. To the trees! See!" She sank to the ground and pointed down the hill to a warrior who had stolen far in advance of his fellows, and was in the act of crawling from a rock to the shelter of a tree within gunshot.

McClellan's sharp eyes had already marked the brave savage, for he had not for a moment been diverted from his vigilant outlook, as the others had been, by the captive's tale. The crack of his unerring rifle answered like an echo to the maiden's warning. The warrior dropped upon his path and his earthly warfare there ended. Now the rocks and trees seemed alive with dusky forms. Rifle answered rifle in quick succession, and the hearty "huzza" of the scouts to the shrill whoop of the Indians. But the latter could not cope with the former in marksmanship, for they were but indifferent shooters and were pitted against three of the best rifles on the frontier. Their losses were severe. Every shot of the palefaces told; and they were not long in discovering that the far-famed Long Knife, Robert McClellan, was one of their foemen. It was no part of Indian tactics to risk life uselessly by a charge, and thus the conflict gradually abated.

The scouts knew that the relief was only temporary, but were thankful for so much respite, and the opportunity to refresh themselves with their simple fare. But where is the captive maid? She had been quite driven from their minds by the suddenness of the onset, and the fierce engagement of combat. Esawelathohnew (as she called herself) was nowhere to be seen. Had she been killed in the attack? Had she thought better of her resolution, and under cover of the conflict slipped away to the village in the plain? At all events she was gone.

The position of the scouts was a strong one as against an attack from the front. They held the narrow backbone

of the hill, and their enemies had to advance in single file and without cover for a moment or two as they passed from one shelter to another. This slight exposure was quite enough to satisfy unerring marksmen. With food and water they could have held the position as long as ammunition lasted. But there was one danger which already they had noted; their position could be flanked. It was dominated by a huge isolated rock on the southern hillside.

The dreaded danger at last befell. McClellan saw a swarthy figure crouching along a rocky ledge, preparing to spring from his covert, and so near now that a bound or two would reach the flanking rock. With the vigilant watchers in front, silent and unseen, but surely there, it would have been certain death to advance beyond cover to make sure aim at this daring brave.

"If I were only in the ravine!" muttered McClellan. "If that redskin gits footin' on yander rock our case is hopeless. But—well, I must try it."

He crept to the utmost range of his retreat. Only a slight portion of the crouching savage's body was exposed to view. He drew a careful bead, pulled the trigger, and the flint broke sparkless upon the pan! He hastened to fix a new flint, keeping his eyes upon the spot. He saw the savage gather his muscles for the leap, like a panther crouching to his prey. Quick, quick with that flint, good fingers! Too late! He is off with a mighty spring. Hah! An appalling yell pierced the air and startled gruesome echoes in the ravine, into whose depths the dead body of the warrior fell.

What unknown power had intervened to save the scouts? The warrior's death cry was answered from every quarter by scores of his comrades who had been awaiting the issue, and for a moment the mountain was vocal with their hideous yells. Then all was still once more.

"Will they try it again?" asked Sheldon.

"No doubt," said McClellan. "They'll not be so 'asily balked of their prey. The brave who reaches that rock will be as great a man among 'em as Giner'l Wayne with us. There'll be a-plenty to make at least wan more ventur. See! Thar goes wan now!"

A second warrior was seen stealthily advancing along the ledge. But now the scouts' eyes were diverted from him by the clamor of war-whoops in front of them, and a

fierce attack that engaged all their faculties. The assault had been made to guarantee the second venture from interference. So intense was the curiosity of the Indians to know the result, that a momentary lull followed the first fierce onset, in which all eyes were turned towards the fatal rock. Even as they looked, the gallant warrior was in the act of leaping. He made the spring, and in mid air, while the jubilant shouts of his tribesmen rang out the signal of his supposed success, his body whirled over and followed his brave comrade to the depths below.

What mysterious agent had wrought this second deliverance? Disappointed, perplexed, awe-stricken, the assailants withdrew. Even the guides felt a strange feeling creeping over them, as though some supernatural power had come to their aid, until they saw the captive maid emerging from the nearby rocks with a rifle in hand, and a beaming smile on her face. The mystery was solved!

She had noted where the savage fell who had been killed so far in advance of his fellows, and with dexterity which would have done credit to a trained warrior, crawled to the spot and got rifle and pouch. She knew well the danger threatening from that fatal rock, for she had often wandered to this mountain top to be alone and dream of her own kindred and home, and of liberty. Therefore, she stole away through the din and peril of the fight and set herself among the rocks, within good rifle range, as the armed guardian of the pass. From her secure position on the side of the ravine she watched the opportune moment, and having learned the use of the rifle in her Indian home, fired with fatal effect.

John, speaking for his fellows, expressed admiration and gratitude for this deed. She had saved their lives for the present, whatever the outcome might be, and they heartily praised her coolness, valor, and skill.

The swart face blushed red with pleasure at these words from such famed warriors of her own blood. Even to an Indian brave they would have been as precious as life. To a maiden trained among the red men and unconsciously having sympathy with their ideas of honor and fame, they were unspeakably sweet.

"My brother's words are sweeter than the song of birds," she said. "Esawelathohnew is proud to show the white warriors that she is worthy of her kin, and ready to

serve them or die for them,—and see!” She turned toward the ravine, and pointing downward beneath the rock whither the two braves had fallen, her face darkened with a frown. “The white maiden’s God is just! The last Indian who fell was Succohanos, the most bloodthirsty and valiant of the Shawnee chiefs. He led the war party that tore Esawelathohnew from her home. Is it not the hand of God? Esawelathohnew’s mind is well nigh as dark as an Indian girl’s. But she feels the Great Spirit in her heart, and seems to hear Him speak. He has avenged the captive maid, and will lead her and her brothers into safety. Look! The sun is setting. When shadows of night fall, Esawelathohnew will show the way of escape.”

CHAPTER XXVII.

A DISCOVERY AND A DELIVERANCE.

The plan which Esawelathohnew proposed for their deliverance seemed to the scouts rash in the extreme. Could she really pilot them safely through their foes? Yet there was no better way, no other way, indeed, than to trust themselves to her. She had already proved her courage and sagacity, and at all events they could but lose their lives in the venture, and death was inevitable if they remained upon Mount Pleasant until the morrow. Thus it was agreed to accept the maiden as their guide and trust to the good fortune which had heretofore favored them.

This settled, Esawelathohnew gathered together a heap of dry splints and struck thereon sparks from her gun flint until she kindled a fire. A few hours earlier that would have been a serious blunder, but what matter now? The Indians knew them to be there. Let the maid do what she would! She passed to the opposite side of the summit ridge, and kindled a second fire. Soon two parallel columns of blue smoke were ascending from the hilltop.

“That is good!” said the maid. “One smoke means something, may be; or nothing, may be. Two smokes on the mountain top mean something, sure! Shawnees see them and say: ‘What that? The palefaces make signal to their brothers. Ah-ha! some soldiers near, then! The

scouts will wait for them. They not thinking of escape! You not see that, hey? Their guard around the mountain not be so strict, and many braves go out, there and there,"—pointing to the eastward, and on either side to the south and north. "No one think to watch toward the setting sun, for the village is there. 'No scout ever think to pass that way,' they say. Ha, ha! we will see! What Shawnee chiefs think of self when poor captive girl outwit them?"

All this was clear to the scouts; but that this strange girl would overmatch the cunning and skill of trained Shawnee warriors, they were by no means confident. Nevertheless, they had hope. Whatever the chances, they had too often faced death to be much disturbed at its near prospect, and calmly ate their jerk and parched corn, with a handful of wild berries to give relish thereto, and drank their scant measure of spring water.

The sun was going down as their meal was finished; and John asked Esawelathohnew to take up and make an end of the story of her captivity. Sheldon and McClellan took post as sentinels, for they dare not relax their watchfulness with such enemies in front of them, even though they felt sure no attack would be made until the night was well advanced.

Bidding the maiden be seated on a rock near the edge of the cliff, John sat near her and awaited the coming narrative. The shadows had fallen upon the valley beneath, but the brief twilight of August still lingered, and roseate hues, refracted from the glowing clouds of the sunset, lay upon the hills. Low hung bands of striate clouds girdled the horizon, tinted with those rich and changing colors that make an American sunset.

In his recollections of that hour, John always recalled the vision of Esawelathohnew, as she stood upon the rocky cliff, looking over prairie and village and distant forest toward the sunset clouds; her face illumined with their reflected color; her eyes with that far-away expression which comes in moments of retrospection. The maid told her story in artless manner, speaking in low tones and with musical voice, in broken English, and with Indian idiom that need not here be reproduced.

"My home was on the banks of the upper Ohio. So much Succohanos told me, and would tell no more except that my family all perished. Alas! the streamlet is dried

up, and Esawelathohnew is as a lone pool in the empty channel. Yet, who knows? Some of my kin may live, for Shawnees are false as well as cruel. What do I remember? An old man,—he must have been my grandfather,—who often went with me to the woods, and took me in his canoe, and carried me in his arms along the shore. There was a great book from which he read,—and showed pictures which pleased me much. Then he kneeled down, as I have seen the white missionary do, and spoke to the Great Spirit. But, he could not have been a missionary?

“There were other pictures that he showed me. Ah, I remember! We could go into the great river bed, for the summer sun had licked up the waters, and there see pictures upon the rocks. Not like those in the Book, but such as Indians write on bark. That must be why it has stayed in my memory. I would dig the river mud from the cuttings with my little hands until they showed plain, and loved to see the strange figures come forth. And my mother—it must have been she,—came to the bank and called me home.

“There was a baby, too, a baby boy, and I loved to tend him; to rock him in his cradle. My mind is all confused here. I cannot explain. Something falls like the gray mists of Indian summer, and shuts out the vision. There was a great flood,—it must have been the spring freshet,—and the baby was out upon the river in a little boat. Then there was a great to-do in the cabin when they brought the baby in. But it was dead! Yet, it could not have been, for I still remember him, and how I loved and watched him, as mother did. Yes, I remember her with a baby in the cabin as well as at the river. It is all lost to me here;—the mist quite falls. I cannot blow it away.”

Esawelathohnew leaned her cheeks upon her palms, her elbows resting upon her knees, and paused and gazed away, with dreamy look, into the banks of lavender clouds fringed with pink and lake and rose madder, and stringing patches of orange and yellow and olive and green, and through openings here and there of burnished gold, into the clear ether beyond. John would not disturb her thoughts. His heart was aquiver with a hope that had grown almost into assurance. His pulse beat hotly, and his temples throbbed with eagerness and joy.

“There came a time at last,” the maid continued,

"when all these bright memories were swallowed up in black night. It is little that I remember, but I know now, from my life with the Indians, what must have been. I seem to see the cabin burning. Yes, I remember that! And there was an Indian in the house helping us. Yet, how could that be? It shows how dark is the poor captive's mind; she is in a forest and no trail and no guide. It is all as a dream, with all things mixed and dim. Then there was a great yell in the dark, outside. Oh, I know that too well now, though it chilled my soul then, and I put my baby hands to my ears to shut it out. Someone had me in his arms. It must have been my father. Then there were rifle shots, and screams, and black night and men fighting, my father among them with his tomahawk. I seem to remember that the baby was killed, and my mother too; but—it may be only the story of Succohanos that dwells in my memory. Then I slept, and when I awoke I was with the Shawnees. Ugh! Why should Esawelathohnew tell all that? It makes her shudder with fear and hate."

John had now arisen, and his emotion must have been expressed in his countenance; for what there showed arrested the maiden's attention. She seemed alarmed thereby, and casting upon him a glance eager with inquiry, rose and stood facing him.

"Tell me," said John, and his voice trembled as he spoke. "Do you remember your white name?"

"No. I have sometimes thought that I recalled love words,—'pet,' and 'lass,' yes,—'lass!' though I do not know what that means."

"Was your name Margaret?"

"Margaret? Margaret?" The maid shook her head and gazed upon the ground, her brows knit with the intensity of her effort to urge from memory its hidden secrets. "The Shawnees called me Sunny Hair—Esawelathohnew. But my white name? No, it could not have been Margaret!"

"Was it—M^EG?" asked John abruptly.

The maiden started as if suddenly struck. She lifted her eyes from the ground and turned them full upon John's face with eager search, as if reading there something that moved her soul to the depths. She clasped her brow with an open hand and stared before her a moment; then dropped her arms and clasped her palms before her.

"Meg—Meg?" she cried. "Yes, it was MEG! Oh, tell me more! You know more; surely you know more!" She threw herself on her knees at his feet, and with hands still clasped, lifted up her face radiant with expectation.

John with tears upon his cheeks reached down, and laying his hand upon the trembling maiden, exclaimed: "My sister! My long-lost sister Meg! I am that little baby boy, your own brother!"

"John—John! O, it comes to me now!" The maiden cried, and leaped to her feet and threw herself upon his bosom. "It is baby John, and I am Meg Latimer!"

"It is even so, my sister," said John. "The good God be praised!"

He put his arms about her and kissed her, and they wept and rejoiced together. The tints were now nearly faded from the sunset clouds; but from a narrow rift that suddenly opened therein a single beam of roseate hue shot forth and touched the rocky poll of Mount Pleasant. It enveloped with a halo of warm color the brother and sister standing there in embrace, and set the cliff and the ridge beyond aglow for a moment, and then vanished.

When the first sweet rapture was over, John called McClellan and Sheldon and told them all, and felt deeper joy in the sympathy and rude congratulations of his friends. The maiden's spirits, stirred with new yearnings after kindred and love, and soothed with the sweet satisfaction of recovered place and family and affection, longed for more than could be told. But that her parents still lived, and had mourned for her all these years and would welcome her with a wealth of love to a happy home, this at least the poor hungry heart greedily heard. She seemed transformed. Her face, comely enough before, grew beautiful under the deft moulding of a happy soul. She moved back and forth through the fast deepening gloom with a step so light, and a carriage so proudly erect, that she seemed the spirit of the mountain. It was a veritable mountain of transfiguration to the captive maid now redeemed from bondage.

This incident raised the spirits of the party. It was a good omen to McClellan. To John's better culture, it seemed that He whom he had been taught to believe "preserves and governs all His creatures, and all their actions," had given them a token of a kindly Providence which would lead them into deliverance.

The night fell dark and moonless, and a mist from the river filled the valley and hid the stars. Now Sunny Hair bade the scouts follow her as closely as might be, and at sound of danger to sink to the ground. Noiselessly they stole away from their fortress, and following their guide began to descend the mountain by a path that held close to the edge of the precipice. Half way down the descent the maid paused and uttered a soft "whist!" Leaving them crouching on the path, she glided away into the darkness.

Five, ten minutes passed. A quarter of an hour had gone by; and when one is waiting in sore anxiety or dire peril of body, the minutes are wretchedly slow of movement, and an hour's anxiety is condensed within a moment. The scouts did not doubt Meg's fidelity, but they did fear that she had again fallen into the hands of their treacherous and wary foes. John especially was troubled, and was filling his thoughts with all manner of reproaches for allowing this unarmed woman to go into the very jaws of death, when a softly-spoken "hist" gave token of her presence.

What had kept her? Where had she been?

She had gone forth to reconnoitre as they approached the picket lines, and found two sentinels directly in their path. She had stayed to remove them out of the way.

But how could she do that?

There was a low gurgle of laughter upon her lips as Meg whispered her explanation. "The sentinels are young braves. Indian youths love the maidens of their tribes. Their hearts are glad to meet pretty girls on lonely picket. It make time pass merrily to chat with them. Supposing no great danger, young warrior think it all right to meet a sweetheart. Eselawathohnew has many Indian lovers, though she not very proud for that, and she know these sentinels well. One wait for her—there; another wait—yonder! Sunny Hair go through—this way, with her white brothers, and leave young braves to wait until tired. Suppose they tell old warriors how they fooled? No, no! They too wise for that! Come, we must haste."

The scouts needed no urging, but hurried on, following their guide with stealthy tread as she glided before them through the mist. They passed the mountain in safety. They were soon moving through the valley, literally walking by faith and not by sight. They had compassed about half a mile when a dog barked close at hand. Ah! How

sounds are magnified in darkness and mist; above all when one is trying to move silently. The snap of a twig under the foot sounds to the tense nerves like a pistol shot. The brush of one's dress against stick or stone or leaves, is like a blow upon the body. The baying of that sorry dog seemed to John's excited nerves to roll and echo like thunder. It was answered by the quick clicking of the scouts' rifles as they cocked their pieces, a sound that alarmed Meg more than the dog's barking. She stepped back to them, and with whispered "hush" warned them that they were in the midst of an Indian camp, and their lives depended upon their silence.

A little further on a wigwam rose out of the mist, and an aged squaw showed her face at an opening. Meg drew near and answered her challenge in the Shawnee tongue, and with a pleasant word or two to engage her attention, passed on. Meanwhile the scouts bore well away from the wigwam, and covered by the darkness while Meg diverted the squaw's attention, stole softly by. It was their last serious alarm. Their guide had led them quite around the central village, through the straggling camps on the margin. Now, without fear of watching sentinels, or loitering lovers or restless old squaws, or barking dogs, they pushed on with steady and rapid pace, until they had left village and sentinels and mountain several miles behind them.

Then Meg took leave to pause, not for rest, she seemed to need none, but to consult what were best to be done. They had left a broad trail on the moist grass, for they could not hide it in the night. As they had come over ground marked by a multitude of footsteps for part of the way, it could less easily be traced. But daylight would reveal their escape and hundreds of pursuers would be on their track. Should they cross the river and trust to their speed, and the great lead which a whole night's travel would give them? She had feared to guide them to the canoes on the river bank. If they only had one, they could go swiftly up the Hocking and leave no trail. She was a maiden, ignorant of war, and now she left all to the white warriors. She had heard of the wisdom and valor of the great Long Knife (meaning Robert McClellan) and he could tell them what to do.

McClellan accepted the situation and at once addressed himself to getting the exact bearings. That settled, he

began to take counsel with his comrades as to what were best to be done. John reflected that they must be within a short distance of the place where he and Panther had hidden their canoe when they crossed the Hocking on their way to Wayne's army. It would be rare good fortune if the boat were unmolested. Mayhap Meg, who knew well the whole country thereabout, could help him locate the spot if he would tell her their landmarks. John described their halting place, and the local features by which they had marked it, which fortunately Meg recognized, and believed that she could pilot them to the place.

"Then let us be off," said McClellan, "and waste no time about it. If we find the canoe, well and good; if not, we will then decide what to do."

They crossed the river, which there was shallow and easily forded, and following along the opposite bank found John's landmarks, two great rocks and a lightning-blighted tree close by a short riffle in the stream. Going straight-way to the cache, the canoe was found snug and safe. With great joy and hearts thankful to God, they launched the frail birch vessel, and paddled up the Hocking until McClellan bade a halt.

"We are safe now," he said. "thanks to our gallant Meg, and may rest until morning. Then, ho, and away! The whole Shawnee tribe couldn't catch us."

John sought a bushy retreat, and gathering leaves made a soft bivouac bed for Meg, and giving her his blanket, which she would have refused to take had he not compelled acceptance, left her to sleep. These attentions from a man were new and sweet to Meg; and although she had small need of them, and her Indian training rather inclined her to render service to John than receive courtesies from him, yet she gratefully accepted them. There came a pleasant glow about her heart, and a new sense of dignity, and of the difference between the white man's treatment of woman and the red man's, which soothed her to sleep and gave her the lightest heart and the brightest dreams that had visited her pillow for many a year.

It was a light and easily-made breakfast the party had, but a merrier one was never served before, nor since has been, in the Valley of the Hock-hocking. Then away once more, as fast as paddles could urge, until the sun was an hour high. Thence, leaving their boat, they pushed

through the forest until the scouts knew that they had put so great distance between them and their pursuers that they might relax their speed. Moreover, it was high time to rest; for even though muscles be like whipcord and nerves like brass, Nature calls for repose. McClellan set forth in advance of the others to seek the desired halting place, for they were still in the midst of a hostile country. Ere long the scout came crouching back, trailing his piece and holding his hand aloft in token of caution. He had seen what appeared to be Indian "signs," the trail of a horse and two or three men, so fresh that the parties could not be far away. Now all were on the alert, and coming upon the trail, Latimer and Sheldon branched out on either side to scour the woods on parallel lines, while McClellan with Meg followed the well-marked footprints.

"Hist, there they are!" whispered Meg, gliding to the scout's side and pointing through an opening among the trees, down the sloping ridge on which they stood. Her keen eyes had noted a horse picketed in the chaparral on the brink of a run that girdled the foot of the hill.

McClellan, who had wormed himself through the grass to a point where the strangers were in view and was quietly making observation, felt a light touch on his arm. Meg was at his side. She pointed to a form seated by the stream, with back towards them, and whispered, "See! that a squaw. Indians no take squaws on the warpath. It's a hunting party, hey?"

The answer filled her with amazement and for a moment, it must be confessed, with doubt as to whether the Long Knife hunter had not lost his senses. He jumped to his feet, and dropped his rifle stock to the ground.

"Well, I'll be dawgoned!" he exclaimed; and seemingly regardless of all precaution, gave vent to a low, hearty laugh. "Come, lass, it's all right. Yon's no squaw, it's—well' dang it all! she is and she isn't. That's Mad Ann Trotter and her black hoss Liverpool. Ha, ha! and to think I've been a-trailin' her for Injuns!"

This was unintelligible to the maid, but she at least conjectured that friends, not enemies were near. McClellan now issued boldly from hiding, and standing in the open uttered a loud "hello!" Thereat Mad Ann with the instinctive caution of the woodsman, seized the rifle which had been upon her lap, turned and dropped to her knees and

drew a bead upon the hunter. But her act was rather defensive than aggressive, for she knew that the hail was friendly, as a hostile would have made no audible signal. She therefore withheld her shot, but kept the scout covered by her piece until he made himself known.

McClellan and Meg now advanced, and John and Sheldon, who had heard the cry, came running in, and merry greetings followed. The scouts knew Mrs. Trotter too well to need explanation of her sudden appearance within the lonely forest in the midst of a hostile country. The prospect of an Indian scrimmage was sure to attract her, as magnet the iron. She was at once interested in Meg for John's sake, and soon for her own. Meg, whose Indian life and training hindered her from remarking anything odd, unwomanly or particularly strange in Mad Ann's behavior, was strongly attracted to her new acquaintance. Was she not a white woman? the first of her own race met since her deliverance? So her heart warmed to her.

There is a species of fellowship which women have for those of their own sex, into which man cannot enter. It is with woman to woman as with child to child. No matter how loving and friendly and engaging adults may be, a child craves child fellowship, and will turn to it even from father and mother, and only thus have the actual yearnings of the heart satisfied. So, be their male friends as loving and congenial as they may, women find in the society of their own sex somewhat of satisfaction and fullness, and answer of spirit to spirit, and sympathy to sympathy, that they never get from male friends. Thus it easily befell that these two children of the forest were drawn strongly towards one another, and as the upshot of this meeting became at last the best of friends, despite the striking difference in age and disposition, and perhaps also because of that. John was happy to see this, and deemed it great good fortune that Meg had fallen upon one of her own sex with whom she might forgather, and have the comfort and protection which such society brings.

Greetings over, McClellan wished to know who and where were her companions, for surely he had seen the trail of two or three besides the horse.

Ay, it was even so. There were two of them; and if he chose to take up the trail again, he would find it some two hours old, leading off to the northwest and made by

Jack McDonald and Alex. Bailey, who went off to Wayne's army, with good prospects of a battle before many days. As for her, she preferred to travel alone, and when she had Liverpool there—nodding towards her black horse—she had no fear. As to society, wasn't the woods full of it? Ay, forsooth! A little too much just now, with the savages marshalling from all quarters.

"Besides, men are a great responsibility, you know, Robert," she continued, casting a sly glance upon McClellan. "They 're a h'awful charge, an' foriver a-gittin' into scrapes, out of w'ich h'us poor women 'as to 'elp 'em. Now there's no tellin', since I've come acrost you, but I'll 'ave to save yourself out of the 'ands of the h'Indians, h'as I did once on the Tuscarawas. Hey, Robin? You mind that, I warrant?"

Ay, that he did, and was not like to forget while her tongue could wag. Heaven help him, he didn't know but he'd better have let the savages lift his scalp than to have Mad Ann save it, and be forever nagged thereabout. But what brought Alex. Bailey into the woods? He had told him (McClellan) that he was not going out this campaign, and meant to stick to his plantation near Wheeling.

"Did 'e tell you that, h'indeed?" said Ann, with a quizical cast of her eye towards the scout. "Well, I suppose a man may sometimes take a woman's privilege, and change 'is mind,—if 'e 'as any." Ann clasped her hands over her knees, for she sat upon a mossy log, and looked into the brook meditatively, while a broad smile lit up her face. Something in the subject just broached greatly amused her. She began laughing, at first quietly, then heartily, until her frame shook with jollity.

"What does Alex. Bailey want in the woods? Ha, ha! That's a good 'un, sartin. Well, Robert, between you an' me an' the bedpost, 'e 's got a special arrant. O my fathers, jest think on't. Aleck wants to git married!"

"Married!" exclaimed McClellan. "Well, what if he does? Manny another blame fool has done that. But what's that got to do with his comin' intil the woods? He isn't a-goin' to marry a catamount is he? or a squaw?"

"That's jest h'it, Robin. Jest the h'idee." Mrs. Trotter gave vent to a fresh burst of glee. "I sent 'im a leetle funder into the woods, and bade 'im look sharp, for there 'ud be plenty of squaws 'ithout 'usbands after the battle

with Wayne, who 'd be glad of h'any kind of a rifle to bring game to their wigwams. Ha, ha! Aleck Bailey 'untin' a pardner! An' of all the world a-wantin' to marry—"

"Marry who?" exclaimed McClellan, noting how the woman paused at the last word.

"Ay, ay, Robby, that's the question!" answered Ann. "Now wouldn't you like for to know? Wall, wall, did you ever 'ear of sech doin's?" Thus saying, Mrs. Trotter rose and walked down to the run for a drink, uttering laughter and gleeful ejaculations as she went.

"So help me Davy!" exclaimed McClellan, a surprising thought striking him. "I jist begin to take scent! By crackies, Jack, I b'lieve Mad Ann thinks Aleck Bailey wants to marry *her!*"

John was struck with the novelty and seeming absurdity of this opinion, and joined McClellan in laughter. "Yet, after all, why should this amuse us? Bailey might go further and fare worse. Mad Ann is a good and true-hearted woman, and no doubt would be as thorough at housekeeping as she is at hunting, if she were once settled down to home life."

"If?" echoed McClellan. "Ay, *if* she'd settle down. But, land o' liberty! she'll niver settle until she's in her coffin, that's sartain. I'd as soon expec' a Shawnee to turn Quaker. Marry Mad Ann! Wall, women 're scarcer nor duck teeth on the border, an' Aleck's no puling milksop, I know; but he's a grittier chap nor I took him to be ef he choices to tackle that job. But ivery one to his taste, as the ole woman said when she kissed the cow. Now for my part, much as I think of Ann Trotter, I'd as lief think o' makin' a pet kitten out'en a panther as of puttin' fambly harness on sich a critter. But John, lad, we best say nothin' more about the matter to Mad Ann. She's mighty techy and flighty, you know; an' though she seems tickled enough jist now over the idee, thar's no tellin' how soon she'll double on her trail. Mad Ann Bailey! How'd that sound, Jack? Ha, ha! Well, Trotter or Bailey, whether the one or t'other, the gray mare 'll always be the better hoss."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A REVOLUTIONARY CONSPIRACY.

On Monday, July 21st, the day of Major McFarlane's funeral, a council assembled in the Mingo Meeting House. It met to consider the Bower Hill incident and the resulting situation. The passions of the people were highly inflamed, yet there was grave apprehension of the consequences to those who had participated in the riot, most of whom were present. With them were the leaders of the insurrection, resolved to cover themselves and associates with the mantle of popular approval.

There were also present some who had taken no part in and who disapproved the Bower Hill riot, and would gladly have found a way to remedy or escape from its consequences. Among these were two men of high standing, known friends of order and good government, Col. Edward Cook and Mr. Craig Ritchie. Fortunately, through the impulse of habit, these two were chosen officers of the meeting, the former President, the latter Secretary. Besides all these, was a small delegation from Pittsburg, that included one of the most remarkable men in the Western counties, one who played an important part in the agitations of the period. Mr. Hugh H. Brackenridge was the leader of the bar in all the section west of the Alleghenies. He had zealously supported the Federal Constitution against such well-known popular leaders as Gallatin, Findley and Smiley. He was a public-spirited citizen, active in affairs, and his decided views and temperament and somewhat eccentric manners arrayed against him some of the leading men of the section. He was a learned and thoughtful man, of philosophic bent of mind. Yet he was witty, and in a high degree possessed of the faculty of ready humor and a great fund of anecdote, traits which are especially developed among American public men, and of which Abraham Lincoln was an eminent example. His "Modern Chivalry" was a celebrated work in its time, and a pioneer of American fiction and humor.

He was now in the height of his reputation and the zenith of his intellectual power. He knew better than any

public man in the section the peculiar temperament of the Scotch-Irish majority, and by sympathy, knowledge and skill was qualified to lead them. But he was loyal to the Union, friendly to Washington, opposed with heart and conscience to the plans of the revolutionists. Yet, as a well-known friend of the people, he felt the force of their objections to the excise laws, and appreciated the sterling worth and sincerity of the bulk of the malcontents. He wished to stay them from further outbreaks, and save them from the consequences of the serious and criminal acts which had been wrought. He knew that by opposing and denouncing them he would only harden the people in their course, and lose all standing and influence with them. He therefore resolved to accomplish by secret and adroit manœuvres what could not be done by open opposition. He would flank the movements of the leaders. He would lighten up the sullen mood of the people by anecdote and humor; dally with proposals for serious opposition to the Government, and postpone action until reflection should bring about a reaction of sobriety and submission.

The proceedings were opened by Benjamin Parkinson, President of the Mingo Creek Democratic Association, who explained the situation and offered a resolution endorsing the action of the "patriots" at Bower Hill. Col. Marshall followed with a less exacting address, and then came the chief plotter and head of the conspiracy, David Bradford. He at once launched upon the audience an inflammatory harangue in support of Parkinson's motion. The revolution had begun; it must not go backward! The patriots of Bower Hill would live in history along with the heroes of Lexington and Bunker Hill, with the Covenanters of Scotland, the Puritans of England, and with the heroes of liberty everywhere. A second war of Independence had commenced. Let there be a second Declaration of Independence that day, and Mingo Creek Church would be as sacred a building to posterity as the State House in Philadelphia.

The Western Survey was unknown, and the vast resources of its hills and plains, its rivers and forests undervalued by the East. They were held to be a people of rude manners and of little consequence. Their interests were neglected, their rights trampled upon. Here was their opportunity to show themselves men.

Theirs was the cause of the People, the Common People. Who were arrayed against them? A little band of aristocrats who had entrenched themselves within the Government offices, and were growing rich and great upon the hard and scanty earnings of the sons of the soil. This was no land for aristocrats. There were too many of them in Philadelphia and the East. Let them have no foothold in the great West! They wanted no sham excise nobility, no Government favorites, nor Order of the Cincinnati with its aping of European jewels and ribbons and primogeniture, and its thin veneer of a titled military class.

"This then is the issue," he cried. "Let it not be avoided. Shall we disapprove the conduct of those engaged against Neville the excise officer, or approve? In other words shall we suffer them to fall a sacrifice to Federal persecution, or shall we support them? On the result of this business we have fully deliberated. Why pause longer? Let us determine with head, heart, hand and voice that we will support the opposition to the excise law. A crisis has now come. It is this—Submission or Opposition! Let us determine to act in the future agreeably to system; to form arrangements guided by reason, fortitude and spirited conduct. We must not be divided. The Western Survey must show an unbroken front to its enemies. By all the ties that the union of interests can suggest, we are urged to be steadfast, united, undismayed and to go forward!"

Bradford's well-known fondness for declamation had here abundant exercise, for his speech was perf rvid even to violence. His greed for popularity, and his craving for the exhilarating flattery of public approval of one's speech, had carried him beyond even his own platform. But what now? Would the assembly act? The people sat motionless on the church forms, and a prolonged silence ensued.

The Mingo settlement represented one of the most populous constituencies west of the mountains. It could have sent forth a regiment of six or seven hundred men, skilled riflemen, inured to hardship and seasoned thereby, many of them veteran soldiers of the Revolutionary War. Had they declared for active opposition, their example would have been contagious. The organized rebellion would have spread throughout the entire western mountains of Pennsylvania, Virginia and Maryland, and thence into Kentucky, and to all the settlements along the Ohio

River, whose inhabitants were in full sympathy with the opposition to excise laws.

The silence that overhung the meeting was almost oppressive. At last Mr. Brackenridge arose and addressed the Chair. All eyes turned upon him as he slowly advanced along the middle aisle toward the desk. He began in a deliberate manner, even hesitated in his speech as though struggling in spirit with a sense of responsibility upon him. He had need of all his address and forensic ability and skill as an advocate and pleader, and of his experience of men, and he well understood the situation.

His main effort was directed toward postponing action, chiefly on the ground that the passing of Parkinson's resolution would incriminate the entire community, and leave no "mediators" to plead the cause of the actual offenders. He thus adroitly divided the meeting into two classes, and that not on the ground of mutual hostility, but of common interest and helpfulness. He concluded by an appeal to the largest exercise of the principle of pure democracy, in calling a representative congress of all the counties of the Survey to take final action. He further advised the selection of a delegation to visit President Washington to explain the late outbreak. Whatever moral justification might be urged for that act, legally it was treason! Discuss it as they might, the Administration would declare that they had traitorously fired upon and fought with United States troops. Yet, the Bower Hill affair was not a premeditated one, so far as its worst features were concerned. The burning of Neville's property was an accident. It was not the intention of the leaders, and certainly was never contemplated by the majority of those present to do deeds of violence. This would undoubtedly be considered by President Washington and the actual intention of the public be favorably regarded by the President. Mr. Brackenridge closed by declaring that should it be so desired he would willingly undertake this commission of mediation himself as one of the delegates, however inconvenient and disagreeable it might be to undertake the journey at that time.

If oratory is to be judged by its effects, this impromptu address must be regarded as one of the most effective speeches ever made to an American audience. The entire current of feeling and purpose was turned. A deep silence

ensued as the speaker took his seat. No one rose to respond. No one seemed desirous of pushing the motion which Parkinson had made. Almost spontaneously the assembly broke up, and slowly retired from the sanctuary. Some went to the spring nearby to drink; others separated into knots and engaged in grave consultation. After a brief recess, the people reassembled in the meeting house. But nothing further was done than to act on Brackenridge's suggestion to call a Congress coextensive with the Survey. A resolution to that effect was passed, and the Secretary was ordered to publish it in the Pittsburg Gazette. Thus an assembly surcharged with anger and beligerent intent quietly dissolved, as a thunder cloud pregnant with electricity is sometimes harmlessly dissipated by the mountain peaks upon which it falls.

David Bradford left the meeting with an ill-contented mind. He had been foiled in his attempt to commit the Mingo Creek people to open revolution, but the matter was only postponed. He could wait. Meanwhile, he would see that the coming Congress at Parkinson's Ferry should do better work. He would try what could be done by the method known in modern political tactics as "packing the Convention," and thus get a decision favorable to his plans. He accordingly prepared and distributed a circular letter to the inhabitants of the Survey, inviting and urging those in sympathy with the anti-excise party to be present.

He would go yet further! The country must be even more thoroughly committed. The Mingo Conference had reached a conclusion that might be interpreted as favoring submission. The Government at Philadelphia must be led to see in it only a step toward more deliberate and organized revolution. No step backward!

On the way to the Mingo meeting, Bradford had proposed to some of the conspirators to intercept the mail from Washington to Pittsburg, and from Pittsburg to the East, and abstract all letters addressed to the National and State Governments. This would detain information of the late movements, and give the agitators more time to form their plans and secure their footing. Especially it would enable them to spot the spies and traitors in their midst.

This reckless enterprise was matured after the Mingo Creek meeting. An ignorant fellow by the name of John Mitchell, and a certain William Bradford, a cousin of

David's, were appointed to intercept the mail. These men accomplished the crime three days after the Mingo Conference. They stopped the post about ten miles from Greensburg on its way across the mountains to the East. They took out the packets from Washington and Pittsburg, and delivered them to Parkinson, who, accompanied by David Bradford and Marshall, carried them to Canonsburg. There, in the village tavern where the conspirators were wont to meet, the letters were opened and read.

Fortunately, none of the Washington folk were in a communicative mood. But some of the Pittsburg residents were less reticent. Col. Neville had written to Gen. Morgan; Gen. Gibson and Mr. Prothonotary Bison to the Governor of Pennsylvania; Edward Day to the Secretary of the Treasury, and Major Butler to the Secretary of War. These communications, most of them official, gave great offence. The familiar adage that eavesdroppers hear no good of themselves was in this case verified, and David Bradford read some wholesome observations upon his schemes and conduct. As usually happens, his anger was proportionate to the truthfulness of the criticism, and in high dudgeon he vowed to be avenged upon the writers. Moreover, these letters should serve to inflame the popular passions and bring his own plot to a head.

"Now, gentlemen," said he to the committee, "you have a fine view of what sort of news the United States Government is likely to get from these coasts. We have balked the spies this time, and blocked their game to bring both State and National powers down upon us. But we can't hope to intercept every communication. The tidings will be sure to get through the tightest cordon we can draw around the mountains. We've got these letters in hand; but there's Neville and Marshal Lenox! It's good riddance of bad rubbish to have them off the Survey. But they're bound for Philadelphia, and will be there soon enough."

"Well, what can they do with us," asked Col. Canon, "aven if Neville and Lenox do their worst?"

"Why, those engaged in the attack on Neville's house would be hung! At least, they could be hung if the President chose to exact the utmost penalty."

This was certainly a serious view of the affair, the conclave thought, and a new one, too, as far as their

leader was concerned. However, his reason for this change of base soon appeared. He began to urge that the only way to protect those directly implicated in the Bower Hill offending was to involve the whole Western country in the affair. Thus the very numbers concerned would prevent extreme measures on the part of the Government, by making them impossible.

"Ay, that may be well enough; but how shall we get the whole Survey involved?" asked Parkinson.

"Let us call out the militia to muster at Braddock's Field," answered Bradford. "There, with arms in our hands we can consider the situation."

That was astounding advice, indeed, thought Col. Marshall. How absurd! What authority had they to call out the militia, who would jeer at them, and stay at home.

"Not at all!" averred Bradford. "The public feeling is highly excited. So many of the militia have been committed by the attack upon and the burning of Inspector Neville's house, that they will influence the authorities to attend upon any call which may bear the signature of the general committee. Moreover, the whole country is ripe for such a movement, and for the most part there will be a willing response. This will go far to cover any lack of formality in the call. If the officers of the regiments are unwilling to answer, their men will be keen enough to put compulsion upon them. Besides, the members of the Democratic societies are mostly militiamen, and these will be certain to heed a summons signed by their officers.

"When such a throng shall rendezvous at a well-known point like Braddock's Field, Washington's Government will see that the Western people are in earnest in urging their complaints and demanding redress of grievances. Thus, too, the whole Survey will be committed to the act, and stand before the National Government as an unbroken sodality. Unwilling citizens will have to fall in and follow with the majority. The secret opposers of the movement will be compelled to be silent."

Such was Mr. David Bradford's plot, and he had little difficulty in bringing over all his associates to his view. Thus it came about that a self-created committee, all of whom were either directly or indirectly concerned in the felony of robbing the mail upon the public highway, sitting in a village tavern, without a shadow of either civil

or military warrant, ventured to order out the militia of the Western counties as if on a tour of military service! It would seem impossible that such an impudent deliverance should be received with the slightest respect. Nevertheless, it was accepted in good faith and promptly obeyed by large numbers of officers and men. The following is the letter which was drawn up and dispatched by messengers in all directions by this self-constituted revolutionary junta:

JULY 28, 1794.

SIR:—Having had suspicions that the Pittsburg post would carry with him the sentiments of some of the people in the country, respecting our present situation; and the letters by the post being now in our possession, *by which certain secrets are discovered* hostile to our interests, it is, therefore, now come to that crisis that every citizen must express his sentiments, not by his words, but by his actions.

You are then called upon as a citizen of the Western country, to render your personal service, with as many volunteers as you can raise, to rendezvous at your usual place of meeting, on Wednesday next, and thence you will march to the usual place of rendezvous at Braddock's Field, on the Monongahela, on Friday, the first day of August next, to be there at two o'clock in the afternoon, with arms and accoutrements, in good order. If any volunteers shall want arms and ammunition, bring them forward, and they shall be supplied as well as possible. Here, sir, is an expedition proposed, in which you will have an opportunity of displaying your military talents and of rendering service to your country. Four days' provisions will be wanted; let the men be thus supplied.

We are, (Signed)
 L. LOCKRY, D. BRADFORD,
 T. SPEARS, B. PARKINSON,
 A. FULTON, J. CANON,
 J. MARSHALL.

To Col. ———.

Far and near the message ran, and everywhere wrought the country into a fever of excitement. Some great military enterprise was afoot. Some surprising secret was to be revealed at the coming muster! Pittsburg was

to be attacked. The magazines stored within the garrison were to be seized, and the whole town laid under contribution. The obnoxious persons were to be arrested, and if their fellow citizens opposed their exile, the town would be destroyed as was ancient Sodom.

The most active centres of excitement were in the Mingo Creek settlement, and around the villages of Canonsburg and Washington. Here the rural population was in large excess. With rare exceptions the planters and farmers were men deeply injured by the excise law, and most determined in their opposition to it. Everywhere women and children might be seen engaged in running bullets, the round leaden balls in use for the long hunting rifle which was then the well-nigh universal shooting tool. Others were "necking" or clipping the necks from the balls after they have been run. Men were engaged in burnishing swords and cleaning and oiling rifles. Old muskets and weapons of all sorts were brought forth, which blacksmiths were busy day and night repairing. The country stores in the various villages, and even in Pittsburg were thronged with purchasers of flints, powder and lead. The rude uniforms of the militiamen were being put in order. Everywhere might be seen repeated, in the humble cabins of the frontier, the ancient idyl of Venus preparing the arms of Mars. Rations were being cooked and packed in haversacks.

On the first day of August the fevered condition of the people was drawn to a head. Every village and hamlet and countryside was astir. The passions of the people were as fervid as the heat of the midsummer day. Everywhere, squads, companies and battalions of militia were marching along the roads and trails, all with their columns directed towards Braddock's Ford. These men for the most part were uniformed in hunting shirts dyed with butternut yellow or dark blue. Many had handkerchiefs tied about their heads after a fashion then quite popular with hunters when on excursions against the Indians. In John Latimer's absence his company of young men was in charge of the lieutenant, who being a hot anti-excise man, called out the members, and compelled them into the ranks whether willing or unwilling. He even forced some of the students of the Log Cabin Academy, who were opposed to the expedition, to join the march.

Hottest among the enthusiasts was George McCormack. His store was thronged with buyers, but he dropped business and joined the marchers, leaving wife and daughter to look after the trade. Fanny was much perplexed. She liked not such tumult, and dreaded strife and bloodshed. Would John Latimer approve of these marchings and muster? That he would not! Yet her father was one of the chief promoters, and her eldest brother was off with the rest. Who was in the right? How could a maiden decide when the best and wisest men disagreed? At least, she could follow the bent of natural affection and see that her kin went off to the camp well-fitted and provided. Thus, she was busy among the other women preparing not only father and brother but neighbors for the mysterious expedition.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE MARCH TO BRADDOCK'S FORD.

Luke Latimer had announced his purpose to go to the muster at Braddock's Field. His wounded arm was yet unhealed and caused him great pain, and his surgeon declared his intention highly imprudent. His wife, with plainer and more vigorous language, alternately entreated and scolded. Fanny McCormack put in her remonstrance as the nurse. But Luke stoutly held out against the loving coalition. As long as strength remained he would be found in his place, and at least show by his presence his unity with the people in their effort to cast off oppressive laws.

Moreover, though he said naught of that to his friends, he had done a deal of thinking during his recent suffering. He saw now, what he had not discerned before, the danger that lay in assembling a mass of men with arms in their hands, in the inflamed condition of the public mind. His name had not been upon the call for the muster at Braddock's Field. He had not favored the movement; but all the same would he be held responsible for it, as one of the general committee. He would be present to use what influence he might to prevent Bradford, or any others, from executing extreme measures.

Andy Burbeck tried to show Luke the imprudence of his purpose; but the news which he brought from Pittsburg nullified his words of kindly caution. Thus his story ran: For two weeks he had been busy in his place at the ferry, carrying folk to and fro across the Monongahela. He had noted the anxiety of the citizens, and being a warm friend and follower of Mr. Brackenridge, and having a tender heart, he had willingly consorted with the Pittsburg people in measures to save the threatened town. The conversation of those who passed to and fro upon the boat showed him the spirit of anarchy that was agog. Their denunciation of the Pittsburg aristocrats, as they were pleased to call them, was intense and bitter.

Rumors came from divers quarters of the fury that raged in the country against the townfolk. Women were agitated with fear, and nervous and startled at every new alarm. For them, poor hearts! the "rumors of war" were almost as painful as war itself. Most people who had valuable and important papers took them out of the village bounds to be secreted in more secure places. Major Butler was busy strengthening the defences of Fort Pitt. It was a weak stronghold at the best; a picketed inclosure somewhat removed from the main part of the village, with an open common between the two. The bastions and walls were in ruins; the old brick block-house a paltry affair; the barracks and officers' quarters were log huts. The garrison at the time consisted of forty soldiers, a mere handful.

The leading citizens, aware of the hostility of the surrounding country, had already agreed upon measures to placate the coming army. Open defense they knew to be useless. The entire militia of the town numbered only two hundred and fifty men, some of whom were hardly to be relied on in an emergency. A public meeting was held, which determined that a painful but urgent necessity required that the obnoxious persons, against whom the popular fury was especially directed, should go or be sent into temporary banishment. Most of these gentlemen were quite ready to leave. They understood that this would be the only way to preserve themselves and save the town.

A Committee of Management was appointed, who printed an address in the Gazette office, and forwarded copies to Braddock's Field. This declared the sympathy of Pittsburgers with the people at large in their wish to

secure the repeal of obnoxious and oppressive laws. It was resolved that the Pittsburg militia should march out to the common rendezvous and there join the country troops, and give public proof that they were in unison with the common sentiment and united with the fortunes of the people. Thus Andy told his story, in his own piquant way, with free comments upon the same.

Now Luke was fairly mounted on his black gelding Marion, but had to use the ladies' upping block to get into the saddle. Andy rode his trained horse Rouse, over whose back hung a well-stuffed pair of saddle-bags, which showed that he had not forgotten the junta's hint to bring four days' rations. He carried a rifle, but Luke must be content with a pair of horse pistols at the saddle pommel. The two were quite ready to be off, and only waited to say good bye to Mrs. Latimer.

"Polly!" cried Luke, whom the strain of preparation in his weakened condition had made somewhat irritable. "Ho, Polly! We 're waitin' to say good bye til ye! Pol-lee!"

There was no response, and Luke muttered his impatience. But impatience yielded to surprise, and that to amazement and confusion when Mrs. Latimer issued from the cabin door, holding in one hand the gathered lengths of her riding skirt, and in the other one of John's rifles. At the same time the negro man Dungy led Snowball to the upping block. The pony was furnished for a journey, for behind the saddle were strapped saddle-bags pouched out to rotundity, and a pair of blankets.

"The Lord presarve us!" exclaimed Andy, as he saw the good woman mount into her place, and having got feet into stirrups, take the reins and rifle from the negro.

"Amen!" answered Mrs. Polly; and her voice had just a quaver of mirthfulness as she regarded the consternation of her husband and his friend. "I'm all ready, an it plase ye, an' we'll set off as soon as ye like."

During these proceedings the pallid hue on Luke's face, wrought by pain and confinement, gave way to burning crimson, and that again to the pallor of anger. He spurred his horse to his wife's side, and exclaimed: "In the name of the foul fiend, Polly, what does this mane? Have ye gone clane daft? Shorely ye don't intand goin'—"

"Whist!" interrupted Polly. "There's no call to invoke the foul fiend in this business, Luke; though I dar be

sworn he's more to do with it nor anny one else, barrin' Dave Bradford. It would be more becomin' to jine in Andy's prayer, an' ask the Lord to presarve us, for we'll have nade enough of His presarvin' hand afore we git out'n this scrape, more's the pity! Ye were astin' did I intind goin' with ye? Ay, that's jist it, Luke; an' why not? If the muster at Braddock's Field is a good place for men, it can't be sich a bad place for women. Sure, what's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, an' visy varsy, as the parson says. An' did ye think I'd let ye go on sich a trip wi' your poor hurted arem, an' no wan to care for it? Na, na, Luke dear, I promised to bide wi' ye for weal or for woe, for better or for warse. An' if iver there's been a warse affair in our life heretofore nor this randezvooin' I can't put my fingers ontill it.

"Do ye call it daft to march to Braddock's Field? Well, than, ye men must all be daft, from the highest to the lowest of ye; an' it 'ud take a Solomon to tell whether tane or tither of us be the wiser. When one's in Roome, I've been telled, one must do as the Roomans do. So I'll jist share an' share alike wi' ye, an' we 'll all be daft thegither, Luke, for it ill becomes a woman to be wiser nor her lord!"

"Good heavens, Polly, ye can't be in 'arnest!" cried Luke. "What 'll folk say to see me traipsin' untill camp with a wife at the tail o' me, to tind an' care for me? Ye've been a true wife til me, Polly, I 'll no gainsay that. But ye're minded the now to be like the kickin' coo that knocks over the good bucket o' milk she's jist let down. Do ye think I'm to suffer this? Polly, I command you—"

"Jist stop right there, Luke Latimer," interrupted Polly, speaking in a quiet and determined voice that her husband well knew. "It's not for you to threap nor to command in a case of conscience; an' I've got a conscience about this affair as well as yourself. I've been a loyal an' biddable wife to ye all these years; but I'll not regard your biddin' now. There's jist one way for ye to kape me from goin' on this march, an' that's to stay at home yourself."

At the height of the altercation a company of militia came up the road. They had not heard the hot words passing from husband to wife. Judging the situation only by its outward seeming they jumped to the conclusion that Mr. and Mrs. Latimer were going forth to the muster with like spirit. They set up a great cheer for Luke, and then

more rousing huzzas for his wife. It was to their minds a picturesque and thoroughly patriotic incident, that showed the determined purpose of the people, men and women alike, to oppose the excise laws. Andy Burbeck was quick to note this blunder, and to see in it a happy deliverance from an embarrassing domestic situation.

"Come, come, Luke," said he. "Don't ye see how the cat is like to jump, mon? Things are not so bad as they look. The people are not like to sansure Mrs. Latimer's march, but to cheer it; an' it's not humiliation ye'll git thereby, but honor, don't ye see? So e'en make the best of a bad bargain, an' come on thegither, the two of ye. An' besides, A' doubt your wife 'll not go funder nor's comely; an' mayhap she 'll be keen enough to turn back afore she gits to the journey's ind."

So it was settled. Luke accepted the door of escape opened to him, and putting spurs to his horse sullenly galloped up the road. Mrs. Latimer cared nothing for the cheers of the people, and indeed took them in ill part, but she was too politic to show her feelings at the time. She was content to have the matter so easily settled; and accompanied by Andy, followed at more leisurely pace. She knew well that Luke's wrath would soon burn itself out, and before the Ford could be reached he would be reconciled to the situation.

It was a strange cavalcade that thronged the road leading to Braddock's Ford. The militia of Washington County, being among the most determined and inflammable of the revolutionists, were in high spirits. With the exception of those who secretly disapproved or went under compulsion of their comrades, they made the march merry with shouting and laughter, with cheers and chaffing, and all manner of hilarious outbursts. The woods and fields along the rough road echoed with fusilades, for they could not resist the natural male tendency to make a noise, and fired blank shot into the air.

Most of them had some kind of uniform, chiefly hunting shirts of various colors. Intermingled with these were divers sorts of uniforms held over from the War of Independence, which gave the marching bands a motley look. Many had no uniform, but plodded on in citizens' dress with hunting rifle, and bullet pouch and powder horn thrown over one shoulder, and a well-filled haversack on the other.

Some of the bands were mounted, and these clattered along the road and joined the infantry in the general jubilee. As they reached the banks of the Monongahela at the Ford where Braddock and his ill-fated army had crossed, they dashed into the waters, and the river being low at that mid-summer time, easily reached the opposite bank.

As our Canonsburg party issued from the river and ascended the ferry road, they came upon David Bradford passing in review a large battalion of militiamen. The arch conspirator had assumed the degree of a Major-General. He was mounted on a superb horse in splendid trappings, was arrayed in full martial uniform, with plumes floating from his chapcau, and sword drawn. He rode up and down the long military line, and then halting before the centre, removed his hat and harangued the militiamen in the style of a demagogue politician. He was at the height of popularity. Every person in the camp waited upon his bidding. Everything depended upon his will. The soldiers paid him the most servile homage, some, no doubt, out of true regard. Many hoped to secure commissions and favorable positions in that Arcadia which their dreams had depicted, and which they believed to be near at hand. Others acted from politic motives, with a patriotic wish thus to better control and manage Bradford.

His oration ended, he was about galloping off the field, when he saw Luke and his party. Thereupon, with several of his mounted aids clattering at his heels, he rode straight up to them, greeted Luke warmly, and removing his hat, made a profound bow to Mrs. Latimer.

"Most welcome, madam, to the camp!" he exclaimed, bending low over his saddle pommel, and fluttering his plumed chapeau towards Mrs. Latimer. "I had heard of your coming; for some of my runners reported to me your patriotic zeal in accompanying your husband to the field. I greet you, madam, as a modern Joan of Arc; I hail you as the Deborah, the martial prophetess of this noble rising to assert the rights of our western Israel."

Mrs. Latimer gently bowed, and coolly surveyed the military chieftain with a searching glance that seemed to inquire whether he was paying a sincere homage, or simply making her the butt of a poor jest. Then she gave answer: "Ay, Mr. Bradford, is it you indade? I would n't 'a knowed ye in all your bravery. I give ye due return for your cour-

tesy, as far as it is intanded for sich; but it's small favor I owe ye, an' I want none o' your fine spaches."

Bradford was taken aback by this response to his flattering greeting. He cast a furtive glance to one side and another to note how his aids were affected; and darted an angry glance at Luke as if protesting against this treatment and asking him to interfere. Luke was keenly sensitive that his wife should not figure in any turmoil, and was much vexed by the incident that thus fixed the attention of the camp upon her. He touched her arm and spoke a whispered word of soothing and entreaty.

"Not now, Luke dear, not now!" said Mrs. Latimer. "I must have my say, ef I die for't! Jist you ride away an' l'ave me to aise my mind."

Luke, seeing that the torrent of speech could not be stayed, and knowing that he could not bide quietly by and hearken, bade Andy keep fast by his wife, and rode off into camp. Bradford was half inclined to follow Luke's example, and afterwards cursed his folly for not doing so. But a flush of shame arose with the thought of camp gossip, and ridicule for running away from a woman, and kept him for the moment. Meanwhile Mrs. Polly took up her "burden" and held him to the spot.

"It's not a Deborah that I am, David Bradford," she began, "an' God forgive ye for the irriverance of sayin' it. But I'm a-thinkin' ye 'll be none the warse of a woman's counsel, an' like Barak of old, ye'd be more likely to git the victory for the same. But an Deborah herself were here she'd be likelier to turn ye back nor urge ye forad in this campaign. Ay, it's anither sort of a femal●altogither ye'll be like to meet. I misdoubt it's a Jael ye'll find, like another Sisera, if ye don't mand your ways."

So speaking she swung her rifle upward with a quick gesture, not intending a threatening movement, but from pure nervousness and excitement of the moment. But David Bradford eyed the action with a startled look, as if the fear of assassination was not unfamiliar to his mind, and gathering up his bridle reins, drew his horse back.

"Na, na, Mr. Bradford, ye naden't be afear'd o' me. Leastways, I'll gie ye fair warnin' if there's anny intintion of usin' this weep on agin ye. But the women are no frin's of your'n, an' I tell it til your teeth. We were p'aceable and prosperous enough, wi' all our poverty an' hard wark,

till ye came wi' your axcesins an' your dimycratic societies, an' your saycret consortin's, an' your house burnin's, an' riotin' an' killin'. An' whatever is this all to and in? What if the times were hard with the ravenue laws, an' all that? They 'll be warse afore they 're better, an' all along of ye, David Bradford. It's better to sup wi' a cutty nor to want a spoon; an' a half loaf's better nor no bread. But ye'll tak the bread out of the mouths of widders an' childer, with your carryin's on. An' what care ye, if your own pride an' vanity be fostered? Who agged on poor McFarlane to his doom but yourself; an' his poor dead face lyin' there aneath the sod? An' disn't it ha'nt your memory? Who tempted my Luke to rush intil the thick o' the fight, an' come home to me wi' his arm wounded an' hurted, an' disabled for life, mebbe, an' you all the time safe enough at your own fine home in Washin'ton?

"An' is it you that think ye've got the grit to lade your grand army of militiamen agin Fort Pitt with its hundred men? Ay, I fancy I see ye a-chargin' acrost the common on your horse, with it's jinglin' trappin's, an' you the mark for ivery musket an' cannon ahint the pickets. Ah no, David Bradford, not you, indade! Ye'll be settin' my Luke, or some other brave man in the front of the battle, as David did Uriah, an' as ye did McFarlane at Bower Hill."

During this speech, Bradford shifted uneasily in his saddle, fumbled with the reins, grew red and pale by turns, gazed upon the ground, then glanced furtively to the right and to the left to see the effect of this outburst upon his attendants. Finally, with his glowing face turned downward, he sat quite still, nervously stroking his horse's mane, and hoping that the end was near. Seeing no cessation of the torrent, he here interrupted, in a soothing tone.

"Tut, tut, Mrs. Latimer!" he exclaimed. "You are carried away by your anxiety for your husband. You are takin' too gloomy a view of matters. There is no fear of our going too far. Do you not see how this great army is under my control? This vast camp of the sons of Mars will halt or move forward at my mere bidding. I need only say to them, 'Hitherto shalt thou go and no further.'"

"The Lord ha' mercy on your soul, David Bradford," exclaimed Mrs. Polly, "for takin' the power of the Almighty intil your own hand. But who'd axpec' annything

better? It's an ower true sayin', Set a beggar on horseback an' he 'll ride to the deil! You turn back the people? Ay, if ye but once dar' to oppose them, ye 'll see how brief is your authority. You 're lanein' on a broken reed, indade, whan ye trust to the favor of the mob; for they're no better nor they were whan they shouted hosannas over our Blessed Lord the one day, and cried Crucify him! the next.

"General Bradford, forsooth! I'll not call ye General. Ye have no commission to sich an office as that but your own impydenance an' presumption. Ye're no chicken for all your cheepin'. It's a brief day your'n 'll be. Your bravery will all be stripped from ye, an' your rod of the commander broke in your hand. I'm no prophetess, though ye called me a Deborah, but I see plain enough what 'll come of all this. David Bradford a-suin' for marcy from the Government! Fleein' from the angry face of Prisdint Washington! A tomtit agin an eagle! Heaven presarve us from sich folly! Is the warld gone mad, that the likes o' you can turn men agin the Father of his Country an' agin their country itself? Ay, but it cannot last long. Surely it's a pompous time ye're havin' the now; but your glory 'll be as the fadin' flower; the wind 'll pass over it an' it 'll be gone. They are soundin' your praises now loud enough, but they 'll soon have lost the tongue o' the trump, or changed their praises intil curses."

Bradford, during this last outbreak, had shown more signs of angry impatience than before. He had affected to be busy with his mettlesome horse, and fretted for a good chance to escape. He here was happily relieved by an orderly who rode up with a message. With a sigh of relief, and assuming a calmness which he did not feel, he bowed with mock courtesy towards Mrs. Latimer, and said:

"I never quarrel with women. It would be beneath my dignity to regard a word of your tirade. I consider the source, and will not stop to bandy words with a public scold. There's one trump that's not likely to lose its tongue, at least as long as Mrs. Polly Latimer lives." With which parting shot, he made another mocking salutation, and galloped away followed by his aids and orderlies.

Andy was scarcely able to restrain himself. He doffed his hat, and pushed his fingers back and forth through his

shocky hair. At one time he was aghast at the lady's boldness, and fearful of the consequences. At another he buried his face in his hat as though to hide his shame, but really to conceal the secret laughter that convulsed him. When Bradford had galloped out of sight he muttered:

"God be praised, it's fairly done with! Ye 'll surely feel better now that ye've relaved your mind, Mrs. Latimer; an' it's a bould woman ye are to baird the lion in his dan like this. But ye might have saved your breath to cool your broth. The man's crookeder nor a ram's horn, an' naythur you nor me 'll iver straighten him out."

Polly gave no heed to these words; for her overstrained nerves had been wrought to such tension that the reaction brought forth a flood of tears, which greatly relieved her spirit. "It's no shame for a woman to weep," she exclaimed, as she wiped her eyes; "nay, nor for a man, nayther, for that matter. But I'd ruther lose an eye nor let David Bradford see me a-greetin' so. But, indade an' troth, it 'ud make a stone greet to see the folly of these men, an' how the whole land's gone daft after this feather-headed plotter. Ay, ay, they 're sittin' beneath his shadow with delight, like Jonah inunder his goourd! But the goourd cam' up in a night, an' in a night the worm cut it down. But I had meh say, an' to the very teeth of him, an' that's one comfort, ef I ne'er git another. So let us e'en go away an' find a quiet spot to ate our piece in comfort, an' then look up some dacent shelter for the night."

CHAPTER XXX.

THE MUSTER AT BRADDOCK'S FIELD.

Bradford as he galloped away was hot with chagrin and anger, which he tried to hide from his attendants under a masque of indifference. Indeed, he took the high ground of a chivalrous gentleman who would not hold controversy with a woman. Thus he soothed his ruffled pride, and talked himself into his normal self-esteem, a result much favored by the hearty greetings given him as he moved through the camp. Huzzas followed his course over the

field. He was held as a hero of the New Era, the Washington of the West. During one of his halts to inspect a new come battalion, he spoke of being thirsty. Thereupon, a soldier rushed into the river waist deep, and filling his coon-skin cap with cool water from the lowest current, ran up to the chief and proffered him a drink. It was a novel chalice, indeed; and for one over dainty not an inviting one. But the draught was sweetened by the sincere homage of the act, such as a subject might pay to a king; so Bradford graciously smiled, and drank, and returned the strange vessel with thanks. Acts like these, continually occurring, nourished Bradford's ambition to be the idol of the people. Presently he came across Luke Latimer in the midst of a group of soldiers belonging to "The Bloody Battalion," as the Mingo Creek regiment was popularly called, because most of them had been in the Bower Hill fight. Bradford dismounted and signified his wish for a private conference. The two leaders walked apart, and sheltered under a wide-spreading oak, considered the situation.

"You see," said Bradford with jubilant voice, sweeping his arm toward the camp, "that I was right. The people have responded nobly, and here is a grand army of eight thousand men of war. You were a doubting Thomas. But lo! they come at my call, flocking like doves to their windows, full of enthusiasm and ready to follow wherever I bid them."

"Ay," said Luke, "there's no doubt of it, Mr. Bradford. It's a great honor, sir, and a great responsibility. But now you have your grand army here, what are you goin' to do with it? What are your plans, Mr. Bradford?"

"To-morrow we shall meet in a military conference, to settle that point."

"That's well enough. But what have you settled upon yourself? That's what I'm concerned to know."

"Well, in the first place, I shall decree the banishment of the Nevilles and those obnoxious parties who have opposed the people's movement against the excise law."

"But that's done a'ready, and the Pittsburgers say the men are gone."

"But I'll not trust the Pittsburgers!" said Bradford with warmth. "Besides, the people have come here to do something, and something they must do, or they'll be ill

satisfied. We'll decree the banishment of spies and aristocrats with the authority of the people of the Survey."

"Be it so then; we'll all agree to that!" said Luke, "though I misdoubt it 'll do more harem nor good. We 'll make heroes of 'em, and ceevil martyrs for conscience sake, and their axile 'll be sure to pave the way to goverment favors. What next?"

"Well, there's been a good deal of talk against the Pittsburgers, and some are eager to destroy the houses of the proscribed citizens."

"But *you 're* not encouragin' that, I trust?" Luke said, speaking up hastily. "We 've had aplenty of burnin's. You must put your foot on that schame at wanct."

"Must?" exclaimed Bradford. "That's not exactly the word to speak to a man in my commanding position. But let it pass. I'm quite satisfied with the Pittsburg folk now, and am content that they should be protected. But there's the principal scheme we had in view, to seize Fort Pitt, and procure its military stores. The camp, I find, is full of that plan."

"It's a manlier business that," Luke answered, "nor assaultin' an' burnin' citizens' houses. That's true war, an' worthy of ginuwine soldiers. Ye 'll git high name, indade, Mr. Bradford, if ye captur' Fort Pitt."

"Yes," said Bradford impatiently; "but you've dodged the point. What say you, shall we attack or not?"

"Well, now, Mr. Bradford," Luke answered, "I may have dodged the p'int, as ye say; but I'm not the kind of mon to dodge the danger after aggin' others onto it, like some folk I could name. Ye are the Giner'l here, I belave; Giner'l Bradford, at your sarvice!—an' nobody doubts that. It's for a true Giner'l to command, an' for his soldiers to obey. Now, all I'll say is, that if ye 'll lade the assault on Fort Pitt, I'll ride by your side! But ye 'll not put the anterprise onto some one else an' ye take the credit, as ye did with my poor fri'nd, McFarlane. Ye 're not in Washin'ton County the now, an' ye 'll not be able to flee from danger on the plea of bein' prosecutin' attorney. If Fort Pitt's to be attacked, I'll insist on you headin' the assault. It 'ud be onhealthy business for anny of us l'aders to flee from the front in the day of battle."

"By heavens, sir!" cried Bradford, waxing wroth and flushing red. "Do you dare insult and threaten me?"

He laid his hand on his sword, perhaps unconsciously and in a mere declamatory spirit.

Luke, with unruffled temper, looked the leader in the face. "My good right arm is useless," he said, "as ye see, David Bradford. But,"—and he slipped his left hand to the butt of the pistol at his belt, "I am well fit to defend myself still, if nade be, an' ye may jist as well quiet your bluster. Ye know bravely I'm not afeared of ye, an' have no cause to be. I'm not in favor of attackin' Fort Pitt, mind ye. All I'm a-sayin' is that if it's done, Giner'l Bradford 'll lade the column. An' yonder's the boys," pointing to the camp of the Mingo Creek regiment, "that 'll stan' by me in that resolve."

Thus the two men stood, eyeing one another for a moment. What were their reflections? Bradford had already begun to experience some of the burdens of prominence. Underneath all the acclamations of the people, he could dimly note difficulties that threatened the ruin of his schemes. He seemed to feel the power slipping from his grasp. The warning of Mrs. Latimer, the resolute challenge of Gen. Wilkins, who led the Pittsburg contingent, the present attitude of his associate Luke Latimer, were they not straws upon the current's surface?

What should he do⁵ Was he willing to throw his life away in a mad charge on Fort Pitt? No, but he would not have the people even suspect that he shrank from such a sacrifice. Whom could he inspire or trust to do that act? And if done by another, would not the honor be transferred to him, and all his own pomp be truly a faded flower? It wouldn't do! That scheme must be given up. But then?— There was indeed the rub! The people must have something to do that would satisfy their sense of importance. He must throw some tub to the whale. This howling Cerberus of a mob around him must have some sop to fill and still its mouth. Would the militia be satisfied with the mere banishment of the proscribed Pittsburgers? It was the best he could offer, however; and he couldn't afford to part with Luke Latimer's help in relieving the straitened situation. Yet—

As for Luke, his thoughts were bitter with disappointment. There had been a time when in spite of his wife's prejudices he had confided in David Bradford. Do women have a sort of sixth sense in reading men's characters? He

had thought him the fit leader for the hour and exigency. He had learned better. Recent events had uncovered the man's littleness and utter unfitness for the leadership of such an enterprise as now on foot. Discerning this, Luke's mind had run up and down the Western counties for some one of due proportions to fill the position. The natural leaders of the people were nearly all opposed to the insurrection.

There was nothing left for them to do but make a peaceful though vigorous remonstrance and petition to General Washington and the Congress, to repeal the excise laws. Even this, he feared, would be made null by this senseless rendezvous of armed men. Do folk gather for peaceful petitions with weapons in their hands? Confound Bradford, with his vanity and folly! He had been a will-o'-the-wisp, and led them all into the bogs, and there they were floundering now, and he not able to crook a finger toward lifting them out! What could he, Luke, do now but try to undo all mischief done, and thwart every project of violence that might be hatched at Braddock's Field, or elsewhere? That he would do, come what may. Yet—

Those who know what a vast compass of thought can be gathered within a few seconds of time, will not think it strange that all these reflections flashed before the minds of these two men within the brief space wherein they stood eyeing one another, each with hand upon weapon and a frown upon his brow. Bradford was the first to speak.

"Come," he said, "we cannot afford to quarrel now and here. If the leaders fall out, what will the people do? We must adjourn our differences to a suitable time; and be you sure, Luke Latimer, I'll not be wanting you then!"

"I am quite agreed," answered Luke. "I seek no warfare with you, Mr. Bradford, nor with anny mon. We understand another, I believe. I'll support ye jist so far an' no farder. I'll stan' by the cause as long as there's anny cause to stan' by. But I'm free to say til ye that my chief concern is to kape this armed mob (for it's little better nor that, though ye call it a grand army), from sich dades of violence as 'ud bring upon us the judgment of the country. I trust ye to aid me in that, sir; an' I doubt not ye wull. I wush ye good avenin'!"

Thus they parted. Bradford resumed his itineracy of the camp, and got soothing from the acclamations of the

enthusiastic soldiery, though with a shadow of trouble deepening upon his spirit. Luke returned to his friends, and soon found his wife, who easily persuaded him to go with her to a nearby farmhouse where she had arranged to spend the night. In truth, Luke's arm sorely pained him and the fatigue of the journey and the excitement of the day had left him no choice but to lie down and rest, and gather vitality for the trying scenes of the morrow.

He did not tell his wife of his interview with Bradford. Indeed, he had not confided to her his changed opinion of that man's character, and his real purpose in coming to camp, or his plans to stay further violence and bloodshed. As to the last-named matter, he had that curious diffidence which some men possess over the mention of kindly and noble deeds, and the perverseness which leads them to hide worthy motives beneath an affected indifference, or even a sympathy with evil wholly foreign to their nature.

There is nothing harder for a man than to confess to his wife that he was mistaken in matters wherein he had radically differed from her. It would have been a great satisfaction to Mrs. Polly had Luke plumply admitted that her view of David Bradford had been right and his own wrong. But somehow he could not bring his tongue to the telling. Mrs. Latimer inwardly suspected the fact, but was too wise and too loving to triumph over it, or even to disclose her suspicions. She tended and soothed him, and spoke no word to cross his will, or ruffle his temper, or evoke an outbreak from his nerves overstrained and irritated by pain and weakness and trouble.

Nothing passed between the two as to Polly's colloquy with Gen. Bradford, for each feared that it might lead to angry words and so avoided the subject. But Andy Burbeck sought an opportunity to tell Luke how the affair had issued, and soon saw that he was not vexed at his story. He gave full vent to his humor, and dished out the whole interview with fine flavor of wit and ridicule.

Luke grew more complaisant as the story proceeded. At last as Andy pictured Bradford's perplexity and wounded pride, and humbled vanity, and suppressed anger, he gave way to silent laughter. "Did she say that indade?" he would mutter now and then. "Ay, ay, I think I see her! God bless the lass!" Once more, he would exclaim, "My certie! What a woman it is, Andy! She'd face Sattan

himself without wincin', I do belave!" And again: "Well, she hit the nail squarely on the head there, sure enough." Once more he broke forth: "The consated boobbly-jock! Ay, she cut his comb for him fine. Heaven's blessin's on her! I'm prouder of her nor iver."

"But, whist, Andy," he added, when the story was done, "not a word of all this to Polly, mind ye! I wouldn't have her know that I've h'ard how she carried on; an' above all, that I applauded. It wouldn't do, Andy. It might break my infloence with the woman altogither, an' destroy the authority that a husband should presarve."

But Andy made no promise; and took the first opportunity to tell Mrs. Latimer all about the interview, and thereby gave a warmth to the good woman's heart, and set her blood tingling with a secret joy she had not felt for many a day.

"But, whist, Mrs. Polly," Andy added; "not a word of all this to Luke, mind ye! I'd niver git forgiveness ef he knowed I had betrayed him, an' telt ye this tale."

Polly kept her promise then made; and both husband and wife blundered on to the end, and neither ever knew what went on in the other's mind. Ah, the masquerades that pride draws over love! How much domestic happiness do they smother and conceal!

CHAPTER XXXI.

NIGHT SCENES IN CAMP AND THE MARCH TO PITTSBURG.

As the day closed, the field presented an animated appearance. Here and there groups of militia were seated upon grassy bits beneath great white oaks, chatting as they ate together their home-cooked rations. Others were firing at mark, a favorite and never-failing amusement to borderers. Yet others, in pure wantonness of spirit, fired fusilades of blank shot. As evening advanced, quiet fell upon the vast irregular camp, which now began to lighten with bivouac fires that stretched in a long line along the river bank, and were reflected in the running waters.

There was little effort to establish camp discipline. A few companies and regiments had made some show of

posting sentinels. But for the most part the men looked out for themselves, and came and went at pleasure.

By ten o'clock at night the shouting and shooting had ceased, but there was little sleep. Everywhere men were gathered in groups discussing the events of the day, guessing at and canvassing the leader's plans, and speculating upon the end of it all. Andy Burbeck, not being inclined to sleep, sallied forth to pick up such news as might be agog. His hap was to fall upon a knot of countrymen who were seated about Mr. Hugh Brackenridge, at the foot of a huge oak, discussing the taking of the garrison.

"Are we to take the fort?"

"We are indeed," said Mr. Brackenridge.

"Ay, but can we do it?"

"No doubt of that! They are not a hundred men, and we are five or six thousand."

"But then, they are behind breastworks, and have cannon. It will be risky work, will it not, and the loss great?"

"Yes, there are cannon; four six-pounders mounted on ship carriages, and four hundred shot made at Turnbull and Marmie's Furnace. But the loss will not be above one thousand killed, and five hundred mortally wounded."

"What? Merciful Heaven! That is a serious affair, indeed! One thousand killed! What a sacrifice of life! Is the game worth the candle? What will be gained by the capture of the fort to pay for such slaughter?"

Andy caught the drift of the Pittsburg lawyer's scheme, to prevent an act of war upon the United States by exaggerating the difficulties and dangers. With hearty goodwill to aid in this he joined the conversation.

"What is there to gain? Why, ye 'll make Giner'l David Bradford wan of the greatest men in the nation. What's a thousand lives to the glory that 'll come til him? Isn't he the Washington of the Wist, the Darlin' of the Wistern Survey, the Idol of the Camp? An' think of the honor that 'll come to all of us,—that Providence shall spare,—for a-capturin' the fort? Ay, the gover'ment 'll see then that we 're in 'arnest, and that this is a genuwine rebellion, an' no mistake; an' that they 'll have to sind a mighty army intil the Wist if they axpic' to put it down."

"But how are we going to take the fort?"

"Isn't the boldest way the best way? What's more soldierly nor to take Fort Pitt by storm, as Mad Anthony

Wayne did Stony Point. There's no more nor a half mile of open space for our troops to rush over. An' we're in sich overwhelmin' numbers, that enough 'll be sure to reach the fort to fairly swarm over the pickets and swamp all afore 'em. Sure, that's as aisy as kissin'."

Now the conversation changed from methods of attack to the battle at Bower Hill. Major Kirkpatrick was bitterly assailed as the real cause of the burning of the Neville mansion, and of the death of McFarlane, because of his refusal to let the house be searched. Major Butler, commander of the fort, shared the condemnation for sending troops to garrison the place. Marshal Lenox also came in for hearty denunciation, as did young Ormsby, who accompanied him and Col. Neville to Bower Hill after the fire. The insurgents disarmed him of pistol and hanger, mounted him on a barebacked colt and turned him adrift. This young man had continued to give great offense not only by his zealous championship of the excise faction, but by his bravado and gasconnade.

"Ay, and the pert young chap is here on the grounds, we l'arn," one of the group remarked. "Was there iver such brazen-faced impidence. But he had better look out; for a party of fifteen young fellows have disguised their faces with black coals, and gone forth with a good rope to seize him. If they get hold of him, he is like to take a higher spring than he ever yet made in his liveliest dance."

Andy, who knew Ormsby's father as a worthy man, was grieved at this news. But he concealed his feelings with merry quip and jest, and took occasion of the laughter raised thereby to retire to do duty as a sentinel. He strolled leisurely toward the quarter where the Pittsburg battalion was encamped. He came to the pathway leading up to it, along which he was sure the maskers would pass in their search for the youth. Then he shouldered his rifle and began to pace to and fro. He had not mounted guard long ere Zedick Wright of Peter's Creek came by. Knowing him to be well affected toward the Ormsbys, Andy bade him hasten to give the youth warning of his danger. Meanwhile, he would wait to detain and divert the lynchers. Soon he descried, through the dim light within the woods, a party of fifteen men approaching. Their faces and hands were blackened, and other rude attempts at disguise were made by change of garments.

"Halt!" cried Andy. "Who goes there?" The party stopped, and one who seemed to be the leader advanced and demanded what he meant by stopping them.

"What do A' mane?" answered Andy. "A purty lot of soldiers ye must be to ask that quistion of a santinel. By the powers, if ye try to run the gyard, A'll have to t'ach ye a lesson. Oh! A'see!" He suddenly assumed a dignified and paternal tone. "A' took ye for a party of mileetiemen, an' didn't persave ye were a gang o' negro sarvants. But what are ye at, men, a-wanderin' off in this way; at this hour of the night? Git back to your masters, at wanct! It's not safe for the like of ye to be abroad in these times. What! ye don't heed me? Mebbe it's runnin' away ye are? Disperse, ye black rascals, or A'll call out the gyard, and you 'll be arristed, and get a taste o' the cat for breakfast."

The leader, who had several times tried to interrupt this tirade, at last broke forth. "Come, Andy, drop that chaff, won't ye? Don't be a dawgoned Teague! Can't you see, you natchel antic, that we 're—"

"Ye bloody nayger!" shouted Andy, with well assumed rage. "Do you dar insult a white man, an' a soldier an' santinel on duty? By the sword of the valiant Giner'l Bradford A'll put a hole through your black hide, ye impident blackamoor!" Thereat, he lowered his rifle with a sharp spat into his palm, as though to shoot.

"Halt, there!" cried the leader. "Don't shoot, you dratted old fool! I'm Dave Dandruff. We're white men."

"What?" said Andy, with well-feigned surprise. "Can that be you, Davvy? An' are you quite sure of it? If you 're not—it's sayrious wark a-triffin' with a santinel, A' can tell ye, ma lad! But ye know that well enough, though you 're not overweighted with kenspeckle; for, the las' time we met you were a santinel yourself."

"Jist let that fly stick to the wall, will you?" answered Dandruff. "Jack Latimer 'll find it no laughin' matter agin I've settled my grudge,—"

"Hoot! Davvy mon," Andy interrupted. "A grudge is the last debt one ought to settle. Drop it, lad! It's good business to be a long debtor when a grudge is owin'. Let bygones be bygones, an' prove yourself a good Christian as well as a wise man. For, Davvy dear, Cap'n Jock Latimer is oncommon canny with his two fists, an' has a wonderful grip with his fingers, an' a

quare trick with his heels, as ye may remimber, hey? Best let sleepin' dogs lie, Davvy!"

"Dod-rot Jack Latimer, I say!" exclaimed the irate leader. "An' drat you for an aggravatin' tease. You 're worse nor the skeeters, the tarnal plagues!" He brushed a cloud of the irritating insects from his face by way of emphasizing these words. "The woods is full of 'em, dang their pesky picters! But, we 've no time now for pow-wowin'. Jist l'ave us go. We've got better business in hand nor gossipin' here with you."

"All right!" said Andy. "A' crave your pardon, if you're on military business. But whatever can it be that compels this sort o' maskin'? A' jealous it's no respecttable business that takes ye out in this blackamoor rig. But mebbe this is some new device of Giner'l Bradford's fine wit? He's a knowledgeable man in military affairs, he is! A company of black-guards, mebbe, he is after formin'? Well, indade, he's not lackin' in his selection; an' A'd racommind him to tak' you for his own bodygyard. But jist show me your orders, Cap'n Dandruff; merely for form's sake, ye know, an' A'll raise no farder objection."

"Orders be hanged!" cried Davy, on whom much of Andy's fine raillery was lost. "The only orders we 've got is this quile of good hemp and a hick'ry limb for Bill Ormsby to swing til, when we once nab him."

"Aha! the cat jumps that way, does it? Now A' take your trail," said Andy. "An' so it's a meelitary axecution that Giner'l Bradford's Black-guard Battalion is bent upon? Ay, that indade! Well, A' dar say Bill Ormsby desarves a-hangin'; but, Davvy dear, childer shouldn't meddle with aided tools, ye know. A quile of rope, like a two-aidged sword, cuts both ways. The party at the one ind is likely to be the party at t'other ind afore the hurly-burly 's done. Disn't it seem rather suggistive, for rebels an' ansurractionists like oursilves to be goin' intil the hangin' business? There's two can play at that game, ye know! An' for my part, A'd rayther not remind the United States Gover'ment of rope's inds, jist now!"

That seemed to be an entirely new view of the matter to the troop of lynchers, who had now gathered around the speaker. But they would not be put off by such intangible perils as Andy suggested. They meant to teach the impudent rascal a lesson, and all the Pittsburg aristocrats,

to boot! High times indeed, quoth they, when such folk came into camp, and cut their contraptions inunder their very noses! Bill Ormsby had got to hang, if they should hang for it themselves.

"Ah, well! You an' the Gover'ment for it then," said Andy. "It 'll be dog eat dog, A' reckon. Who will to Coupar, must be Coupar. But my counsel is, lads, that ye let Ormsby alone. Ye 'll jist be spilein' a few yards of good hemp, an' git no credit for yourselves or the cause. You're not likely to reform a man's manners by a-hangin' him. But annyhow, you 'll hardly hang the man afore you ketch him. Do you know where he is?"

"Ay! he's up in the Pittsburg camp; an' we know where to lay hands on 'im."

"Well, yon is the Pittsburg camp, where you see the fires on the knoll. You and them for it, now! But see you git the right man, Davvy. It 'ud be a rare blunder an you were to string up the wrong chap. Ye know ye 've a born genius for blunderin', Davvy dear."

"Kape your advice for them as axes it!" answered Dandruff. "We know him as well as you do."

"Then you are not likely to pass for Solomons; for A'm not acquent with the lad. What sort of a man is he?"

"Well, he's rather tallish; about my height, mebbe. Trim lookin' and nately dressed; with short hair."

"What!" Andy exclaimed, starting, and speaking up quickly. "A' seen that fellow within the hour! Is he fair complected, with blue eyes an' reddish-yellow hair; a pernickety sort of chap?"

"Yes!"

"Rayther thin, an' wiry build; about your height?"

"That must be the very feller! An' ef you've seen him, as you say, jest set us on his trail!" The troop crowded closer about Andy with eager faces.

"Well then, jist sich a man went down that way," pointing to the Monongahela road, "a little while ago. He was makin' for Pittsburg as if old Nick was after him."

"That's him! Hurrah lads, we 've got him now! After him!" cried Davy, starting forward.

"Hold on!" shouted Andy, "you 'll niver overtake him. He's got too big a start. You had as well turn back." But this remonstrance was unheeded. The troop was already in full cry after the quarry, leaving the sentinel leaning on

his rifle, looking after them as they disappeared down the river road, and well contented with his success in delaying them so long. He resumed his watch-round, for he knew that the lynching party would be back that way.

A half hour or more elapsed ere he saw their forms showing against the gray of the road, and brought into clearer outline by the red glow of Anschutz's Shadyside furnace, whose flames showed above the treetops. They approached slowly. They had not caught their game, and were crestfallen thereat.

"What's the news, gintilmin?" asked Andy, bent upon soothing their disappointment with deference of speech. "Have ye finished your wark to your satisfaction?"

"Satisfaction be blowed!" answered Dandruff, in a surly tone. "It wasn't the right man, after all; an' I belave you knowed it, too, Andy Burbeck! Deil take you for a sorry jester; though I guess you 're more knave nor fool. It was an ornary trick to set us on the wrong trail. If I were sure you meant to fool us, by jiminy-king, I'd—"

"Not quite so brash, Davvy, my b'y!" Andy interrupted. "If ye open your mouth a mite wider, ye'll put your foot intil it, and the butt ind of my rifle along with it. You 're no great shucks as a bully whin your betters are about. What for would A' want to befool ye? Jist be reasonable an' tell me if ye didn't find things precisely as A' telled ye?"

"Well—yes!" Davy grudgingly consented. "We caught our man, sure enough, though we had a hard run for it, as he's a raygular land louter. But it wasn't Bill Ormsby, drat him, though enough like him to be his twin brother til ye got clost til him? By jiminy! it's no wonder you mistuck him, 'athout you'd been jist anigh him. I consated that we had the right man, till we nabbed him. He waited to show fight, but I hit him a slap, an' we scrouged around him, and he jist gave in quietly. But I reckon we've made a bad boggle of it, for the chap was a messenger from Giner'l Bradford. Leastways, he showed us a letter signed to Major Butler at Fort Pitt, which he said was from Giner'l Bradford."

"What!" exclaimed Andy, his curiosity keenly excited; "an' didn't ye open the letter to make sure?"

"No; we had a min' teh; but he threaped us if we inter-fared with Giner'l Bradford, it 'ud be a short shrift an' hot

shot for breakfast. So as he was n't our man annyhow, we e'en let him go agin."

"Well, Davvy, ye're one glocked dunderhead, to be sure! A' misdoubt ye missed the chanct to git greater glory nor the spies who captured Major André. Ay, what's Bradford a-doin' correspondin' with Major Butler? There's some treechery afoot, lads, ye may depind on 't; an' that ye'll find out the morrow. It's a thousand pities ye didn't kape the letter! Well, what can't be cured must be endured. Good-night, lads, or rother good-mornin'."

"What a gawk A' was," he exclaimed, continuing his monologue, "not to go along with them lads! My certiel A'd 'a seen the inside o' that letter whether Major Butler did or no. But, A' consate well enough what's in it. It takes no prophet to foretell Squire Bradford's projicks. Oh, indade, my bonny giner'l! Ye've charged Luke Latimer an' maself with a-tryin' to snake intil cover an' save our hides, whin we honestly argied not to assault Fort Pitt. An' now you've sant away a sacet promise of the same to curry favor with an' cotton to the Gover'ment! Ye were jist r'adin' our lessons out'n your own copybook! Eh! but it's a true sayin', ivery fox smells his own hole first. Well, Ormsby must be safe by now, annyhow, an' that's one good dade, if A' niver do another. So A'll e'en away til my bivouac."

He had scarcely left his post ere Zedick Wright came up and assured him that he had warmed Ormsby, who had set out with an escort, and was making his way to Pittsburg by round-about trails.

Andy told his friend how he had detained the crowd of would-be assassins, and sent them on a wild-goose chase after Tom Hayes, one of Bradford's runners. "The two men are mortal alike," quoth Andy. "An' if iver Providence had a hand in Bill Ormsby's affairs, it was in sendin' Tom along that way jist when he did. A' saw him a-passin' a spell afore Dandruff's gang come up, but niver consated what he was up teh. It was a lucky thought that came til me! Good bye, Zedick; ye've done one good day's wark the night, an ye niver do anither." As he marched away to his camp, he looked around on the smouldering fires, and then up into the quiet stars twinkling through openings in the forest.

"Ay," he muttered, falling into a philosophic mood,

“tis aven so! The fires of human passion and ambition soon burn low and go out in ashes. But the Lord holds on steadfast an’ glorious, like the stars. Yet, they don’t seem to be troublin’ about our little affairs up there, judgin’ by the calm in yon skies. Ay, ay, Dawvid, ye might well say, ‘what is man that Thou art mindful of him?’ It looks mighty like He didn’t mind much, whan sich Philistines as Bradford are raised to the throne. But wait a wee! We may come to a turn of the road, by an’ by, and there’ll be a good reddin’ up then! The Lord reigneth, though the deil’s own do seem to hold the sceptre bewhiles. Dave Bradford is on the top of the ladder, the now;—cock o’ the walk, forsooth, the biggest toad in the puddle! A’ll no call that the Goodman’s doin’, but quite the contrary, for the deil is iyer good til his own. Leastways, till he’s got ’em fairly hooked, and then—kerflop! out they come an’ Sattan has ’em fine. An’ Sattan may keep Bradford for all me, an’ welcome! No good comes o’ meddlin’ in sich cases, annyhow. So it’s hands off, says I, an’ the deil and Davie Bradford for it.”

Thus soliloquizing, and quite unconscious of any confusion in his views of Providence, Andy wrapped himself in his blanket, and slept quietly until dawn.

The next morning by order of Gen. Bradford, representatives from the military organizations assembled in grand council to determine the proper course to pursue. On the outside of the meeting, which was held in the open forest, was a broad circular fringe of uninvited militiamen. These gentlemen, while they neither voted nor participated in the debates, freely expressed their opinions on the matters proposed, and that with an emphasis which was intended to influence the action of the councillors.

However, the zeal for aggressive measures had nearly died away. There was little talk of burning “Sodom,” the uncomplimentary name applied to Pittsburg. The plan to attack Fort Pitt had vanished like the dreams of the night. Surly murmurs, and passionate outbreaks of turbulent spirits, and muttered threats and discontent might still be heard. But there was no organized centre of violence anywhere among the thousands of men on Braddock’s Field. The deliberations of the council were limited to a formal act of banishment of the obnoxious parties, most of whom were already self-exiled from the Survey, and to a resolve to march through Pittsburg.

In the meanwhile, Andy Burbeck and several others had been sent to inform the citizens that the army was determined to march into town, but that they were coming in peace. All stores and taverns were required to be shut, and no liquors sold. If the inhabitants proffered refreshments they must carry them to the place where the troops would halt on the Commons, in order to prevent the disorganization of the army and the dispersal of the men. This news did not wholly dissipate but greatly relieved the panic into which the citizens had fallen. During the preceding evening they had been burying or hiding their household treasures, books, official papers, money, and such other properties as could thus be disposed of. Lights were glancing to and fro in the village streets, and shining from the windows of the houses late into the night. The women were in tears, and the children excited by terror.

The good news brought by the couriers diverted attention to the entertaining of the coming guests. Food was hastily cooked, and barrels of whiskey were rolled to the Commons to serve out to the men. Andy Burbeck, aided by an active committee of watermen, busied himself in gathering all the river craft available, at a convenient place upon the river bank, ready to transfer the coming troops to the opposite side of the Monongahela. These preparations had scarcely been finished when the head of the column appeared led by Major-General Bradford and his staff. The files marched in good order, with a space between the battalions, and formed a column about two and a half miles long. Many of the troops had left Braddock's Field for home, declining to march into Pittsburg, among whom were Luke Latimer and his wife; but five or six thousand joined in the entrance. They moved through town, and halted at the large open space opposite the Maine House.

After receiving refreshments from the citizens, the infantry embarked in the boats, while the mounted men forded the river. It was about noon when they entered Pittsburg, and by sundown the whole body had crossed the river. Strict order was maintained by the officers, and as the evening shadows of the surrounding hills fell upon fort and town, the citizens retired to their homes, greatly relieved and deeply thankful.

Thus ended the famous gathering of the Western Insurgents at Braddock's Field, and the threatened assault upon

Fort Pitt and the town of Pittsburg. The high-sounding boasts and threats in which a few of the excited militia had indulged, were harmlessly dissipated by the simple diversions of a night or two in camp, and by contact with the great mass of their fellow citizens whose sober regard for order and law, and fixed hostility to violence, restrained the heat of those who were disposed to riot. The whole army peacefully marched through the village streets, quietly forded the Monongahela, and in the closing hours of that August Saturday wended their ways to their homes.

When the Sabbath morning dawned they were found, with few exceptions, seated within the calm precincts of their own houses, or solemnly joining in the service of God within their rude log sanctuaries. That an armed host of such proportions, having the opportunity to enforce its will with scarcely a show of successful resistance, should have thus dispersed to the peaceful vocations of life without violence or even disorder, is a proof not easily set aside of the good citizenship of the men who composed it.

CHAPTER XXXII.

MORT SHELDON MAKES A PRESENT.

John Latimer and his friends held a council as to future movements. It was decided that Meg and Mad Ann should stay with John at their present camp, until the next day at noon, when Mort Sheldon should set forth westward to strike the trail of Wayne's army. That found, he should send report of their whereabouts to headquarters, and await the others at the head waters of the Scioto River. Finally, that McClellan should swing around the camp to determine the location of the enemy, and report as to the most secure route to the appointed rendezvous.

This settled, a rude bower of leafy bushes was quickly put together by the scouts for the women. The ground beneath was spread thickly with fallen leaves, upon which a blanket was laid. Another blanket served for covering. Both the women deemed these delicacies superfluous. Indeed, they were quite as able to "rough it" in the woods as their male companions, and for that matter were as well

used thereto. But they accepted the attentions in a kindly spirit; for though they might not need them, they perceived that the scouts needed to give them as due to females, and to preserve their own self-respect.

But there was one service which both red and white men willingly resigned to women, when present with them,—the preparation of meals. This Meg undertook with loving eagerness, although the wilderness gave little scope for skillful hands. To begin with, however, there was a bed of live coals, for the scouts thought it safe to make a fire of dry wood that issued little smoke. Then, from the stores which Mad Ann bore within her saddle bags, Meg found material for a tasty meal. That strange creature, with all her mannish characteristics, retained so much of womanly habits as to carry with her, on her good horse Liverpool, provisions for a somewhat more homelike cuisine than scouts were wont to enjoy when on the trail. There was a small sack of Indian meal, and a batch taken therefrom, and mixed with water and a little salt, and baked upon clean flat stones heated in the glowing coals, was a tempting morsel for a hungry man, known in those parts as “Johnny-cake.”

“We shall have some cup-o-tea,” quoth Meg, in her pretty broken English. What! in that wilderness, guiltless of pot or kettle or the fragrant plant of far Cathay? Yes, indeed; for Mrs. Trotter had brought a goodly-sized gourd; and though that vessel may not stand the touch of fire, yet water can be boiled in it. That you may see, if you watch Meg as she drops hot pebbles, one after another, into the gourd full of pure brook water, until it steams and sizzles.

And has Mad Ann, with her English fondness for tea, brought that herb into the woods?

No; but there is a sassafras tree near by, whose root yields an aromatic bark, which put into boiling water makes a pleasant drink when sweetened well. Is there sweetening here in the forest? Yes; Mad Ann has brought with her a pouch of maple sugar within its water-tight case of deer’s bladder; for so she keeps dry both salt and sugar.

The scouts gave forth from their haversacks chunks of jerked beef, slices from which are bettered much by warming on hot stones, or by toasting over hot coals by Meg’s cunning fingers. And is there not parched corn? What more could one ask for a feast in the wilderness than fare

like this? With hunger the best sauce, and merry hearts and good consciences, the best of appetizers and sweet aids to digestion, it was a rare meal the little company made at that noon hour under the wild-wood trees.

The forest banquet done, and brief adieus spoken, Mort Sheldon set forth. Before he went, he begged Meg to favor him by fastening upon his hat the rosette of red, white and blue which he always wore there, but which in the melée of the last few days had been dislodged. There was a softened look in his black eyes, and a rosier tinge on his tawny cheeks as he bowed his thanks, and, placing his hat on his shapely head, turned his comely face towards the wilderness.

"Good bye, Old Tricolor!" called John, as he swung away with his long lope. "Good bye, and good luck!"

"What that?" asked Meg. "You told Meg white brave is called Mort—Mort—"

"Mort Sheldon," said John carelessly. "Or to be exact, Morton Sheldon."

"Mor-to-shel-john? Yes; that it! So you tell Meg." She repeated the name to fix it in her memory. "That very good name; better'n my bad Indian father's, Succohanos; or my Indian brother, Mach-a-chach. I like sound of Mor-to-shel-john, for my brother is John, too! Ah, dear John!" She laid her hands within his, and looked into his face with smiling eyes. "But what for you call him Oletri-col-or? Is that a new war name?"

John found it no light task to explain, simple as the affair appeared to his own mind. But Meg at last seemed satisfied, and began to find something pleasant in the thought that the scout had asked her to mount his cockade. Yet she shook her head doubtfully, and said:

"Meg see now! But she not quite understand why warrior wear that? Too pretty for brave! Good for squaw! Mor-to-shel-john better give that feather to Meg or Mad Ann!" Then she gave forth a musical, merry laugh and added, "Well, it better nor scalplock, anyhow!"

She turned in the direction that Sheldon had gone, and her keen eyes, trained in Indian woodcraft, noticed something that made them open wide with wonder. On the crest of a distant hill, through an opening in the woods, she saw in the sunlight the tall, thin form of the scout. He stood bareheaded, with rifle muzzle leaning within

one bent elbow, and hat in his hands. His face was bent downward. He was gazing intently upon his rosette!

"Can it be his totem?" was the maiden's first thought. "Does he worship it?"

Then she saw the hat raised—to his lips, and not to the head! He kissed it, then turned his face toward the camp and gazed steadfastly through the woods for a few moments. Did his eyes meet Meg's through all that distance? Impossible, of course! But just then the maiden's face dropped, and her eyes bent towards the earth, which she softly patted with her moccasined foot.

"What can the man mean? He is a goodly youth. But, may the Manitou be merciful!—can it be that?" She tapped her forehead significantly, and, with a sad countenance, turned away. She would ask Mad Ann about it! But the maiden thought better of that, and walked down to the brookside and sat upon a boulder near the brink. She looked at her image reflected from the surface; smoothed back her hair; gave a touch here and there to her beaded deerskin frock. Then she sat long and quietly gazing into the stream as it glided by, and idly plashed the while with one hand in the water.

McClellan returned before sundown with the report that no sign of an enemy was visible near them to the northeast. As Sheldon did not return, the coast was clear towards the northwest. Therefore, a peaceful night's rest was before them, and on the morrow they might set forth confidently. Early next day they started, and pushed forward rapidly. Mrs. Trotter divided with Meg the use of Liverpool, or sometimes the two rode together on the horse's broad back. On the second day, they struck the trail of the army, and knew that now they had naught to do but push northward until they overtook the troops.

Their next evening camp was disturbed by a stirring incident. McClellan, who had taken a wide circle around the camp to reconnoitre, came in bringing a prisoner! It was Mort Sheldon, mounted on a fine sorrel gelding and leading a chestnut-bay mare. The latter was bridled, and backed with a side-saddle for lady's riding. The scout nodded kindly to the group, who were supping in the cool twilight; then, having fed and cared for his horses, and hobbled them with hickory withes, he sat down to eat as coolly as if he had been gone only an hour.

Meg was too well disciplined to show the surprise which she felt, but she cast many furtive glances at the scout as she served him with the simple evening fare. The query kept coming to her mind: "What could the man have meant?" That question still puzzled her. "And what does he mean now by coming thus? That seems strange (her thoughts ran on), but otherwise he shows no mark of one whose mind the Great Spirit has touched. At least, he still wears the rosette upon his hat! But,—two horses to ride therewith! And that odd-looking saddle which the bay mare wore!" Her eyes wandered toward the group of picketed animals. Just then the mare turned her head and looked at Meg, and gently whinnied.

"O you beauty!" the maiden cried in her heart, and longed to run and put her arms around the beast.

"Hist!" said John. "Some one is coming!" He put his ear to the ground and listened. "It is horsemen! They are coming on quickly. To shelter!" In a moment all were treed, and with rifles in hands waited anxiously the issue. Only Mort Sheldon kept his seat, quite unmoved.

"Strange!" muttered Meg. "It must indeed be so!" Quite unconsciously she touched her forehead. McClellan, at the first alarm, had glided like a shadow into the woods, and soon his cheerful halloo came to them, a sign that friends not foes drew near. Presently in high glee he galloped into the camp astride his own favorite horse. John and Mad Ann greeted him with cries of wonder, and guesses which he would not answer. Even Meg, though she did not quite understand, uttered surprise. Mort Sheldon sat munching his Johnny-cake, taking no heed at all.

Another surprise awaited them. In a few moments, a horseman was seen approaching. "An Indian!" cried Meg, and sprung to the tree where her rifle stood. It was even so; and John Latimer pushed into the woods, which had now grown obscure in the nightfall, and presently returned riding the troop horse which had been assigned him when he joined the scouts, and followed by Panther.

Now Mort Sheldon, having finished his supper, deigned to clear up the mysteries. Captain Wells, through an Indian runner, had got an inkling of the danger into which his scouts had fallen, and sent a squad to relieve them, leading their mounts to insure quick return. The relief detail fell in with Mort Sheldon; and finding that all was well,

hurried back to rejoin their company, but sent the Mingo with Sheldon in charge of the led horses. Sheldon made bold to claim a captured horse for the use of John Latimer's sister, and set forth with Panther. He had hurried forward to choose a place for bivouac, leaving the Indian to follow his trail. But one of the horses had got loose, and Panther was delayed, and so separated, and thus the two came to be so far apart when McClellan fell in with Mort. In a wagon train of supplies slowly dragging after the army, whose trail he had crossed, Sheldon found a sutler or camp trader, who had somewhere picked up a lady's saddle—a rare bit of luck indeed. This he bought and placing it upon his own mare, mounted the extra horse.

Next morning the camp was early astir, for all were eager to be off. Now that all had mounts, they would soon overtake the army. The sniff of battle was in the air, and the scouts were seized by that restlessness which mightily draws men toward centres of combat. Mad Ann shared the feeling, indeed was the most restless of all. She shifted from place to place without apparent reason, now sitting, now standing, now walking to and fro; now chattering to her horse, now uneasily handling her rifle and pouch, now prodding the company to make haste. The hearty cheerfulness which was her usual mood was overclouded. Her face gathered into a frown. The spirit of vengeance which possessed her, seethed within her, and would have no rest until the battle was over. The men knew her mood, and said naught to cross or fret her. Meg, though perplexed thereat, went quietly about her self-imposed task of preparing the morning meal.

A pleasant surprise awaited her. Mort Sheldon, who had been busy caring for his horses, approached the camp, leading the bay mare, whose bright hide fairly shone with the loving grooming he had given her. She was bridled and saddled, and carried saddle bags, with a blanket strapped behind, and holsters at the pommel with horse pistols therein. Mort led the mare to where Meg stood, and greeted her with a pleasant "Good morning, Miss Latimer!"

Meg started. She knew what "Latimer" meant; but "*Miss*" Latimer! That was a vagary beyond her ken. Poor Mor-to-shel-john! She must not mind such things from him.

Sheldon noted the perplexed look, and changed his

mode of address. "Sunny Hair must have a horse to march with us, and reach her home beyond the Ohio. The Long Loup has brought her his own. Sunny Hair saved the lives of the scouts. They will not forget while the grass grows and water runs. But they want to give some proof of their gratitude. See, this is yours!" He placed the bridle in her hands, and stood fondling her mane.

"I have raised her from a colt, and know her well. No one has ever ridden her but myself and my farmer who helped to train her. She is as gentle as a fawn and as swift. Yet she is strong, and holds to her own course like the sun without flagging from dawn till twilight. You will love her and she will love you,—won't you, Ladybird?" He stroked the mare's face fondly, then laid her nose in Meg's palm, which had been outstretched to pat the noble creature. "There, Sunny Hair, the mare is yours. And Ladybird, see you serve your mistress well!"

Meg all this while stood struggling with the emotions which the scout's words and gift had evoked. Her thoughts ran somewhat in this order: "Ah! he does not speak like one whose mind the Manitou has touched. His words are very straight and sweet to the ear. * * * But does he mean to give me the beautiful mare? Could anyone of sound mind be so generous? * * * Unless, indeed, he were a great and rich chief? * * * He is surely in earnest; he means this for me, all for my own. * * * Ladybird! What a pretty name for the beautiful mare! Ah! Ladybird, are you, indeed, my own?"

For a moment she could not speak, but leaned her face and arms against the mare's shoulders, who bent her graceful neck and rubbed her nose against the maiden's arm, and softly whinnied. Such kindly speech as Sheldon's, and such tokens of respect and appreciation were so new to Meg, that her emotion got the better of her. She wept silent, joy-born tears that welled up gently from a heart full of untroubled gladness. Then she lifted her face and looked into the bright countenance of the scout, and said:

"Sunny Hair thanks you! Her heart is full of the song of birds; but her lips are dumb. She cannot speak; but while stars shine and flowers bloom she will remember Tri-col-or's words. Her brother John will speak for her. See!" she cried, turning to John, who at this moment approached. "See what Mor-to-shel-john has given me! The beautiful mare is for me! May I keep her?"

"I don't quite take it in," said John, glancing inquiringly at Sheldon. "What is this, Mort? Surely Meg hasn't understood you. You don't mean to give her Ladybird, of course; only to loan her for a while?"

Meg dropped her hand from Ladybird's head, and turned a disappointed face towards John.

"Wall, I reckon it's all right!" Sheldon answered, in the New England drawl that characterized his usual utterance. It seemed the speech of another man, so different was it from that which he had used to Meg. "The damsel has made no mistake, Johnny. The mare is her'n; that is, ef she's a mind to take it, and you hain't no objection. Ladybird's jest the nag for your sister, and there's nary another besides on the hull frontier that'll suit her as well, I calkilate. To be sure, I care a heap for the mare, and she for me. But yon sorrel geldin' that I brought in for Meg is no shucks of a horse, and I calkilate 'll answer my pu'pose till I get to hum.

"It's jest this way, John. I've been thinkin' a right smart of how your sister saved our lives, and that we oughter do suthin' to show it. I've talked to McClellan about it. He hain't much of an overplus of this world's goods, you know, and I've a good farm, well stocked, and nary a one to care for, or to care for me, for that matter, nuther kith nor kin, chick nor child. So we agreed that I might do the proper thing, and present my chestnut mare to Sunny Hair. Don't say another word about it, neow. Let the gial have her, an' welcome. She'll need sech a critter to get her safely eout this dratted Injun kentry."

So saying, he walked away, tarrying neither for assent nor refusal, and thinking only to avoid their thanks.

John looked earnestly at Meg. Meg looked inquiringly at John. John thoughtfully stroked Ladybird's flank. Meg gently patted her cheek.

"What does my sister say?" asked John.

"What say brother John?" asked Meg.

"Would you like to keep Ladybird?" John asked.

"Sunny Hair is troubled," replied Meg. "Would it be right to take this gift from Tri-col-or?"

"Well, why not?" asked John, looking keenly at Meg, who had paused and had cast down her eyes.

She looked up quickly, and tapped her forehead with her forefinger. "What make Mor-to-shel-john do such

heap queer things? He no right here; hey?" Her eyes shot keen inquiry into her brother's face, as she again touched her forehead. "He seem to Meg some not-right here. The Great Spirit care for him much, and be angry with Meg if she let Tri-col-or rob himself. That no good! That no fair! Is Meg right? No?"—

John's hearty laugh interrupted her speech. As he got the situation more fully before him, its grotesqueness grew upon him, and he laughed so heartily that he leaned against Ladybird's flanks for support.

Meg, the while, gazed at him, with a face like an April sky over which sunshine and clouds chase one another. Wonder, inquiry, anger, gladness, mortification, quickly flitted across her burning cheeks, and showed in her eyes, which seemed equally on the verge of smiles and tears. At last John controlled his mirth.

"Forgive me, sister dear!" he said. "I know I have offended you; but really I could not help it. It seems so odd that you should take Old Tricolor for a simpleton. Why, lass, his is one of the soundest heads in all the border. Yet, I ought not to wonder that you who never knew him should be puzzled; for he has some queer streaks. But what started you on that trail? Oh, the hat, was it? To be sure! It is an odd fancy. But so is the coon tail that McClellan wears. Ha, ha! What would the boys say if they knew this? And what would Old Tricolor say?"

"Oh, John! John!" cried Meg, running to him and putting her arms around him. "You no tell Mor-to-shel-john? You no tell anybody how foolish Meg has been! That break Meg's heart. She die for shame. She never look Tri-col-or in the face again. An' he so kind to poor Meg! You be good brother John! You no tell,—never!"

"No, indeed, sweet maid!" said John, as he drew her to his heart, and kissed her. "I would lose my tongue ere it should wag to your shame or sorrow. Indeed, I could not help laughing. Do you forgive your naughty brother? But about Ladybird? Will you keep her, now?"

"May I keep her, now?"

"Yes, you have my consent. But can you ride?"

"Ha, ha! That a good joke. Can the swallow fly? Can the mocking-bird sing? Can the fish swim?" While she was speaking, she unbuckled the girth, and lifting off the saddle with all its fixtures, laid it on the ground. Then

she spoke some caressing words to Ladybird, who seemed quite to understand, and flinging the reins on her neck, vaulted upon her bare back. Then—dare we tell it?—sitting straddle-wise like a man, she darted away through an opening in the woods at full gallop. A quarter mile dash and back again to camp! Then she flung herself from the mare's back and covered her face with caresses.

"What say brother John now? Can Meg ride?" Her tinkling laugh gave token of how she enjoyed having turned the joke, as she innocently thought, upon John.

The scouts looked on with admiration; and Mad Ann, well pleased, bade all hasten the march. As the party prepared to move off, a grave question presented itself. Could Meg ride side-saddle? And would she? Mad Ann rode man-wise, why not Meg? Yet John, and in his own quiet way Mort Sheldon also, expressed the wish that Meg should follow the custom of white women.

Meg shrugged her shoulders prettily, and shook her bright brown locks. She had never seen a side-saddle before; but when its use was explained she laughingly bade them help her into it, which John did. It seemed a merry play to the maiden, and when her feet were adjusted to the stirrups, she set off gingerly, not being certain of her seat. But, like the thorough horsewoman that she was, she was soon at home, and starting Ladybird on a gallop, raced away in advance of the party, followed by John.

"How do you like it?" he asked.

"It a little clumsy, now," she answered. "By-'n-by all right, maybe! It very good for Meg's little legs, 'tanyrate; they too short for straddle, like man."

"Well done!" said John laughing, "and well said. You are quite a philosopher, sister mine; though I daresay you don't know what that means."

"Oh no, Meg don't understand. But she know it's nothing bad. She heard brother John call Mor-to-shel-john 'fosopher, too. 'Fosopher some one who has beautiful bay mare, I 'spect?"

"Ay," said John, "and gives her away!"

"Then Sunny Hair no 'fosopher!" was the quick reply. Meg put her cheek to the mare's neck. "She never give Ladybird away! No!—not even to brother John. But—he no need her, hey? He got very good horse?"

"Yes, indeed, Meg; you are quite right there. And a far better one when we get home. And another for yourself too, if you like."

"Home, home! That very sweet word!" said Sunny Hair with softened tone of voice. "Shawnees have no word like that. Meg's heart is eager to see father and mother. Oh, it seem to her she can't wait till battle over. Tell her all about them. 'Tis sweet music to Sunny Hair's ears. Sweeter than sound of running brook, or soft wind in the summer leaves, or meadow lark in the mellow evening. Tell me the tale of home, dear John, of dearest home."

And then, and often afterwards till the end came, John must tell his sister the story of which she never wearied, the story of dearest home.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE BATTLE OF FALLEN TIMBERS.

We follow John Latimer and his party into the camp of Wayne's Legion. During the winter, Gen. Wayne had remained at Greenville, a fort built by him on the Little Miami, whence he raided the country between him and the Miami villages. He regained the ground of St. Clair's unfortunate defeat, and built there a fort, which he called Fort Recovery. He opened negotiations with the Indians, who scanned his troops and equipments, made flrid promises, but dodged his overtures for treaties. In February (1794) they suddenly threw off the mask, attacked Wayne's outposts at Fort Recovery and were foiled. Then began a rallying of the tribes, with the purpose to abide the brunt of battle. They well knew that on the issue hung their destiny; and two thousand warriors assembled in the neighborhood of the British fort at the rapids of the Miami.

Wayne had been reinforced by the Governor of Kentucky with a division of fifteen hundred mountain riflemen, in two brigades under Generals Todd and Barbee, commanded by Major-General Scott. Most of these men had experience in Indian warfare. United to the Legion, which comprised two thousand regular troops, infantry, cavalry and artillery, they felt confident of victory. Late in July,

Wayne left Greenville and moved slowly westward. He kept his scouts continually circling around his front and flanks. To the intelligence, courage and unswerving devotion of these trained frontiersmen, he was largely indebted for his success. It was they who won for him the Indian title of "General All-eyes." It replaced that of "General Chebang," meaning "General To-morrow," given because the wily chieftain was ever deferring his promised gifts and threatened punishments, until his unready to-morrow should become the to-day of thorough readiness.

On August 19th the army was within a day's march of the enemy's position. A reclaimed Indian captive, named Miller, one of Captain Wells's scouts, was sent forward with the last offer of peace and friendship. As Miller approached the Indian camp, the warriors beset him with fierce yells, and cries of "kill the runaway!"

"Ten chiefs and warriors," said Miller in their own tongue, "are held as hostages by Gen. Wayne for my safety. Kill me and they will hang to the nearest tree!"

This speech calmed the tumult and stayed the threatened death strokes, and the messenger delivered his offer of friendship and peace. A long conference followed. Miller was detained until the next day, and then sent back to Wayne with an evasive message, intended to amuse him until they could plot some way to rescue the ten hostages. The scout hastened to rejoin the army; but Gen. Wayne had not waited for his return. Annoyed at the delay, he moved upon the enemy.

Major Price, with a select battalion of mounted volunteers and scouts, was advanced about five miles in front of Wayne's line, with orders to feel the enemy's position, and when ascertained fall back upon the main body. McClellan, Mort Sheldon, John Latimer and Panther were assigned to duty with these skirmishers. It was with ill grace that Mad Ann Trotter found herself left out. But the orders were inexorable, and she sulkily withdrew with Meg to the left, where the Kentucky troops were stationed.

The skirmishers cautiously advanced, keeping videttes well to the flanks and front, until noon. Should they dismount to bait the horses and take their lunch? No! they were too near the enemy. The commandant would not allow his men to risk being taken even at that disadvantage. "But (said he) let the column be halted for a few

moments at this runlet." The troops had just begun to explore the contents of their pouches, when McClellan dashed into their midst and announced Indians at hand.

"Attention!" shouted the commandant. The volunteers wheeled into line, and awaited the order to advance.

From a thickly-wooded knoll on the right a sharp command in the Indian tongue rang out, followed by a heavy volley of rifles. Then the air was rent with war-whoops; and from behind every shrub and tree issued painted savages, until the forest seemed alive with them. With trailed rifles and swinging tomahawks the Indian vanguard swept down upon the skirmishers.

Command was given to fall back slowly; to bring with them the wounded and killed, if practicable; to skirmish in open order and inflict as much damage as possible; but not to risk battle, as the enemy was evidently in force before them. The volunteers obeyed, but their rifles gave quick and fatal answer to the enemy's volley. Doggedly contending every step, they slowly retired.

"Call in the videttes!" ordered Major Price. Those on the flanks had returned. "What of those in the front?"

McClellan shook his head; and clutching his rifle, shook it savagely at the howling foes. "Darn their red hides! The foxy varmints let 'em all pass 'ithout a shot, knowin' them to be sure enough game for 'em, and held their fire till the troops came up. It was jist blind luck that I got through to report. I fear it's all up with 'em, Major. An' a likelier lot nor those nine men never fell into savage hands. Hark! Do you hear over thar to the left, ayont their line, jist ahint yon bluff, that patch o' snappin' shots? That's them! I know the bark of their rifles. The painted divils are on 'em like ants on a sugar lump. Oh, if I could only git through! But I fear it's no use a-tryin'; the odds is too big. Curse the luck! Good Lord deliver 'em, seein' thar's nothin' else to look to."

"Fall back!" called Major Price. "I'm sorry enough to leave the boys to their fate. But the interests of the army demand the sacrifice. Better that a few perish than all be lost. My orders are imperative."

McClellan hung to the rear of the column, and somewhat eased his mind by silencing forever the war-cry of a gallant but venturesome brave. He retreated grudgingly, and straggled far back, eager for but hopeless of a dash to

rescue his comrades. Suddenly a hearty cheer arose from the retiring column, which opened to give way to a powerful black horse and a fiery bay mare, whose smoking flanks gave sign of fast riding. The riders were Mad Ann and Meg Latimer! They drew up before Major Price, and ere speech could be made to him, Meg's eyes caught sight of McClellan. Urging Ladybird to his side, she asked: "Where's John?"

McClellan briefly told the sad story.

"Who with him? Panther there? Tri-col-or, too?"

The questions fairly snapped in sharp staccato from the maiden's pale lips.

McClellan nodded. "Yes, and six good men besides."

"Your chief goin' to save them, hey? Make grand rush?—drive warriors back?—bring off brave scouts?"

McClellan shook his head sorrowfully. "No, no, poor girl. The Major won't give the order. He thinks it wouldn't do anny good, and all our lives 'ud be lost. See! There are hundreds of them red fiends afore us,—"

"What say?" interrupted Meg. Her face was livid with passion, and her blue eyes burned with pain and wonder. "The chief no try to save John? Shame! Cowards! Then Meg go alone, and die with him."

She laid her rifle across her arm (she was riding no side-saddle now), shook the rein, and rode at full gallop straight upon the advancing savages.

"Here's with you, then!" shouted McClellan, and spurred to her side.

"Hurrah! Charge boys, charge!" cried Mad Ann. She rose in her saddle, and twirling her rifle, gave black Liverpool rein, and followed McClellan.

"Charge! charge! Save the scouts!" The cry ran along the column. Carried away by one of those impulses that often move armed men, and which have been especially noted among American soldiers, the whole battalion turned and without orders and with ringing cheers charged at full gallop upon their foes. Major Price, seeing it impossible to arrest the rushing tide of frantic valor, joined therein, with high mettle resolved to die with his men.

This sudden charge took the Indians by surprise. They had but one way to account for it; the whites had been reinforced! The irregular line in which they had been advancing halted, then began to fall back. Some one

raised the cry: "Wayne! Wayne is coming!" That name wrought like magic. With scarcely an attempt at resistance, the whole assaulting column broke, fled, and melted into the surrounding forest. There was not one chance in ten thousand that such a result would have followed. But that one chance, under a favoring Providence, prevailed that day.

"To the left!" cried McClellan, keeping his place close by Meg, Mad Ann, the Millers and one or two others.

He led his little squad around a swelling bluff on the brookside. A scene that chilled them with horror and fired them with wrath lay before them. Along the narrow tongue of bottom land on the opposite side of the stream, lay a straggling windrow of dead men, whites and Indians intermingled, lying where they fell. Close against the overhanging front of the rocky bluff which they had just turned, stood one white man, a tall scout, fighting single-handed with three braves. It was John Latimer. His face and clothes were covered with blood from a wound that furrowed his cheek. His hands were black with powder grime. The dead body of Panther lay at his side. Just before him, indeed, the combat was wrought above his prostrate form, lay Mort Sheldon. The combatants were so filled with the high rage of battle, and so intent on their work of destruction, that they had noted neither the fleeing savages nor the charging soldiers.

Even as the party gazed, one warrior fell under John's clubbed rifle. As he sank, he seized the piece with the rigor of death, and wrested it from John's hands, leaving him standing there before his foes weaponless. The foremost of the two survivors heaved aloft his tomahawk, and John stood with uplifted hand to arrest the stroke, crouching to spring forward in death grapple.

McClellan's rifle was empty; Meg's had just been discharged. Oh, for one charge of powder and shot! Just one! Life, life, a most precious life hangs thereon!

Crack! It is Mad Ann's rifle that speaks sharply forth, now, and her rich English voice that cries: "Tally one, John Latimer, for the shootin' match at Legionville!"

The upraised tomahawk descended, but in wavering curve; and as the warrior doubled forward and fell at John's feet, the metal rang against the rock beside his head.

This sight, and the outbreak of frantic yells that now burst from the advancing whites, startled the remaining warrior. He cast one look upon the unexpected vision of rushing horses and wild shouting foes plunging across the brook. He paused, with axe poised in act of striking, then discharged his weapon with a defiant cry, and wheeled and fled. John caught the whirling tomahawk and recovering from the backset of the blow, returned it, but vainly, after the fleeing Indian, and fell across Sheldon's body.

It was Meg's sharp cry of pain that rose above the beat of horses' hoofs on the gravelly turf, for the cries of the rescuers had ceased. It was Meg who first reached the scene of conflict, and flinging herself from Ladybird's back, bent above her brother, and lifted him from the body on which he lay, and kissed his grimy bloody face, and moaned with the pain of a heart well nigh breaking.

"But he is not dead!" she cried. "Quick, water! And the Tri-col-or, he is not dead, too? O God of the white man, spare them!"

Other hands were helping, now. John was laid in an easier position; his shirt front opened, his belt unloosed, and his face bathed with water and spirits. Sheldon was lifted up, and laid gently down upon the grass. Mad Ann, bending her ear to his bosom, listened intently.

How could Meg spare even one moment, one glance from her loving ministry to her brother, to note this, and ask in low, eager, trembling tones: "He alive, too?"

"Yes!" answered Mad Ann. Her gruff voice grew mellow with the heartiness of her joy, as she spoke. Meg had already bent her face to John's, but the reply sent a warmer tinge to her cheek, and gave a glance of added brightness to her eyes, as she muttered, "Thank God!"

Well, indeed, might the maid thank God. But if ever these two fighting men live, and give heed to the matter at all, they will no doubt feel bound in some measure also to thank the brave, good maid who pricked forward to their rescue, and carried with her the column that had left them to die. Nor had the soldiers any scruples to admit the same. Their gallant ride into the jaws of seeming death was known among them as "Meg's Mad Charge," a title which acknowledged who was their true leader in that affair. Yet Meg loyally held to it that the chief credit of the matter was due to Mad Ann, who, though

banished from the corps of skirmishers, had swung loose from the left flank of the army, and pressing through the woods, hovered about the flank of Price's battalion in expectation of a fight.

But will the scouts live? John, certainly. His swoon was brief, and the result of weakness through blood-letting and high fever and fierce strain of heart, and mighty exertion, and hopelessness thereof, in the short but terrific battle against such odds. He was thrice wounded, though he knew it not, for in contests of men the rapt mind rises superior to fleshly pain. He had bullet wounds in the fleshy part of his left arm and thigh, and one upon his cheek. His hurts were not serious, and under the crude but not unskillful surgery of Meg and Mad Ann, he was ere long able to mount an empty saddle (for his own horse was slain), and ride away.

With Mort Sheldon it fared worse. He had got several body wounds, but his serious hurt was a blow upon the head, which brought a stupor from which he was slow to arouse. Mad Ann bathed his pallid face with spirits, and chafed his hands with the same, and drop by drop forced the cordial into his lips. But he would not revive. Once, indeed, his lips moved.

"'Ark!" said Mad Ann; "he seems to speak. 'E 's comin' around!" She bent her ear to his lips.

"What says he?" asked McClellan.

Ann made no answer; but her face turned involuntarily towards Meg, who, at the words spoken, had raised her face and looked that way. As the two pairs of eyes met, there was something passed from Mrs. Trotter's soul to the querying spirit beyond her, that, explain it how you may, gave a signal of the truth, and raised a tell-tale flush upon the maiden's cheek, and caused the eyes to droop with a not unkindly light in them. The single word that Sheldon whispered was "Sunny Hair." Then he relapsed into unconsciousness. A swinging stretcher was made out of a pair of strong blankets, on which he was placed, and carried by four horsemen as the column fell back toward the van of the army. This was soon met, and the wounded man placed in the surgeon's care.

John, when he heard that Wayne's Legion was in sight, refused to go to the rear until his friend and Indian father, Panther, was fitly buried. His rifle, the coveted prize of

Legionville, and his pouch, knife and tomahawk, and other little belongings were gathered together to carry away to Featherfoot. Then at the foot of the bluff where he fell they dug for him a grave, and John held it no shame to drop tears of true mourning, as he was silently committed to the ground. Out of respect to the religious feelings of the Indian, a rifle recovered from the enemy and other weapons were placed in the grave, that the gallant warrior might not lack suitable equipment when his spirit reached the Happy Hunting Grounds.

"May God have mercy on his soul!" said John, as the clay fell upon the green boughs of hemlock which, with reverent sentiment, they had laid upon Panther's face and form, to soften the rude contact of the clods. "A braver man, a nobler, truer soul, a firmer friend never slept on or under forest mould. Thrice to-day his rifle saved my life. He might have saved his own life by flight, but chose to die for his friends and at their side, in the path of duty. He knew little of the Redeemer of men, though he revered and never profaned His sacred name, as white men do. Pagan or not, he walked according to his light more honestly than many Christians I have known. Farewell, beloved and honored teacher and friend! Farewell, companion and friend of my father! In the Happy Hunting Ground with the good of thy people, or in the white men's Heaven, we shall meet again. Farewell!"

Like offices of burial, kindly, sincere, ay, and reverent, though of necessity they must be brief, were given the fallen white scouts. Then the two women and the burial detail, led by McClellan, slowly withdrew. That evening John jotted down the day's events in his journal, and once more wrote, as on the evening that Meg was found, the text—"Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed out of the hand of the enemy."

Now befell the wonted preliminaries of impending battle. For awhile there was great noise and bustle, and seeming confusion of marching men and wheeling squadrons; and trampling and snorting of horses; and rumble of artillery as batteries were dragged to their places; and shoutings of the captains' orders, and blare of trumpets, and roll of drums. Then there fell a great silence, as with the elements of Heaven when a yeasting storm is about to break with thunder crash, and beat and rattle of rainfall, and swish of rushing wind.

Now all was set in order as the commander-in-chief had planned. The hush in the waiting ranks was broken by the artillery feeling the enemy, preparatory to the bayonet charge which Gen. Wayne had ordered. The Indians had chosen their position with much military judgment. The ground for many miles around was covered with a heavy forest growth, which greatly impeded the movements of the cavalry and artillery. Their troops were drawn up in three parallel lines, having the river directly on their left. In front was a thick wood in which an immense number of trees had been blown down by one of those western cyclones with whose ravages, in these days, we are unhappily familiar. These prostrate trees were piled one upon another, and their branches interlocked, forming a natural and formidable breastwork, or "slashing" to use a word in vogue during the war of the sixties. It was this which gave to the battlefield the name of "Fallen Timbers." Along this broad windrow of overthrown trees the Indians' battle line stretched for more than two miles.

Wayne had formed his Legion of regulars in the centre of his line. His right was covered by the river, on which rested the enemy's left. General Scott's division of mounted volunteers occupied the left. The regular cavalry was formed in the rear and on the right. Now the Kentuckians were ordered to swing around and attack the Indians' right flank, while the regular cavalry moved up under cover to attack the left flank. The Legion of regular infantry, facing the fallen timbers, had orders to wait until the above movements were completed. Then, at a signal, they would charge at double quick without firing a shot; arouse their enemy from their covert at the point of the bayonet, deliver their fire, and press upon the foe so closely as to prevent reloading of rifles.

When the allotted time had passed for the forces threatening the flanks to get to their posts; and the centre of the Indian line, disturbed and weakened thereby, invited a successful assault, Wayne gave the order to charge. The perilous movement was made under his own eye. The Legion sprang to their work with hearty cheers. Undisturbed by the terrific volleys poured upon them from the trunks and branches of the fallen trees, they overleaped the barriers, and closed in a hand-to-hand combat with the savages.

The Indians were startled up from their breastworks. As they fell back, the regulars delivered their reserve fire. The retreat became a flight. For two miles the Legion pursued; and so rapid was the advance, and so precipitate the retreat, that only a part of the flanking columns had an active share in the battle. The routed Indians were pursued under the guns of the British Fort Campbell, which the enraged Kentucky troops could hardly be kept back from storming. The surrounding Indian villages and camps were destroyed, and stores consumed.

This done, in order to hold the Indians in check, Wayne built a fort, at the junction of the Auglaize and Maumee Rivers in the very heart of the Indian country, which he happily named Fort Defiance. This was connected with Fort Washington at Cincinnati by a chain of fortified posts, and the defeated tribes thus threatened soon sued for peace. The northern and southern tribes, who had already prepared for hostilities, abandoned their warlike plans and renewed their friendly attitude. The treaty of Greenville that followed brought a peace that was never afterwards seriously disturbed.

The battle of Fallen Timbers, though little more than a heavy skirmish, as estimated by the loss on both sides, was one of the most decisive battles of America. It settled the destiny of the great middle-western range of States, which, thus opened to peaceful occupation, soon became the Eldorado of thousands of white settlers, who made their wilderness places blossom as the rose.

Upon the interests and destiny of those with whom this story is especially concerned, the victory had an important bearing. With Wayne's successful Legion on the West, and Washington's army of suppression advancing from the East, the insurrectionists of Western Pennsylvania were placed between an upper and nether millstone, and the friends of law were proportionately strengthened.

The victory won, John Latimer was eager to hasten home with Meg, and readily got released from duty. Indeed, the special work of the scouts was finished, and most of them were discharged. Mad Ann, McClellan and several others, including Aleck Bailey and McDonald, formed with John a caravan or travelling party, and set out for Pennsylvania across the Ohio territory. Wayne's name had so terrorized the Indian tribes through whose bounda-

ries they passed, that the journey was made securely, and therefore rapidly. Mort Sheldon, though now recovering, was still in the surgeon's hands, and was left behind, to follow as soon as his wounds would permit.

At the close of a sultry day in the first week of September, John and Meg Latimer, riding side by side, halted on the summit overlooking the little village of Canonsburg.

"Yonder is home!" said John, pointing to the Latimer cabin embowered in its grove of sugar maples. "See! the smoke is curling above the clapboard roof, and you may know that mother is preparing the evening meal."

"Do you think she expects us?" asked Meg.

"I do not know, though I have written several letters. I am sure I hope so. But on the border, and especially in war times, messages come slowly, and often don't come at all. All my letters may have miscarried, and may come in a bunch, as I have known them to do, after I get home myself. I have not heard a word from father since I left, and you know how anxious I have been about him. Ah! look there, Meg! Note that man walking towards the house. Do you make him out? His arm is in a sling. That is father! Thank God! he is about once more!"

Meg leaned forward from the saddle (she was riding lady-wise now), and shielding her eyes with her hand, gazed across Ladybird's neck until Luke Latimer disappeared from view within the cabin door. Then she sighed deeply. Tears welled in droplets from beneath her long dark eye lashes, and twinkled there a moment in the setting sun. Her cheeks were flushed from the rapid coursing of her blood, driven by a heart that throbbed and throbbed till it seemed to her that John must hear it beat.

"Come!" she cried. "Come away, John dear! Meg cannot wait any longer." She touched Ladybird, and the spirited mare, her high mettle unquenched even by her long march, started into a gallop. John following, the two were soon riding at full speed down the hill.

Now, Luke Latimer coming into the house, had paused beside the cabin door; and, as it so happened, looked across toward the Washington road whence often travellers came. He descried the two riders on the hilltop just as they plunged down the slope. Wondering thereat, he watched the clouds of dust that rolled up behind the fast flying horses, and which, as there was a following wind, partly concealed them.

"See yon, Polly!" said Luke. "Someone is in a mighty hurry. It's some messenger, I'll be bound, on the way til Fort Pitt. Nobody would push horseflesh that a-way on sich a sultry day as this, onless important business urged."

Polly came to the door, and, standing by her husband, watched the coming dust cloud. "Can it be som'mat about the axcise trouble?" she said. "Good Lord forefend! Maybe it's news from the army. Heaven send it be so! Niver a ward have we h'ard since the lad left; and it's not like John to neglec' us."

"Ay, lass, you may be sure of that. John has sartainly written. But there are no posts throughout that wilderness; an' private messengers are aye tardy an' unsartain, as in the days of Solomon. But I reckon you've guessed aright. The riders look like army folk. One of 'em is surely a soldier. The other—I can't make out, but—"

Just then a turn in the road brought the wind quartering, which sweeping the dust away left the figures in full view.

"Yes, my crackies! One of 'em is a woman!"

"So it is!" exclaimed Polly. "An' see how she rides! But, can it be news from John?"

"Well!" answered Luke, "we 'll soon know now, if they kape that rattlin' pace very long."

Thus the couple stood together at the picket gate in the yard, whither their curiosity and anxiety had urged them, and awaited the approaching strangers. Now the riders are lost to sight, and only the gray cap of dust cloud shows above the treetops. Now they sweep into view again. See! They have come to the opening of Luke's lane, which leads into the main road. They turn into it!

"My heart!" cried Mrs. Latimer, putting her hand to her heart to quiet the spasms of fear. "They are comin' here. Oh! Luke, can aught have happened John?"

Silently husband and wife stood together and looked. The thud of beating horse hoofs sounded dully on the grassy pathway of the lane. The dust cloud blew on up the road and faded away.

"Polly!" cried Luke, leaping forward. "It is John!"

In a moment the riders had halted at the gate; John had flung himself from his horse, and was clasped in the arms of his parents.

Poor Meg! She sat upon her smoking steed, her cheeks

flushed with exertion showing circlets of bright red set in the midst of pallor which deep emotion had drawn around lips and eyes. Was this the welcome home which she had so longed for, so eagerly dreamed of? Not one word, not one look for her! All for John!

But Mrs. Polly, at least, had given one thought to her. In the few moments that had elapsed after recognizing John, her eyes had taken in the form of his companion. Like a flash, a thought had come to her,—nor was it so strange as you may think,—concerning this female companion who rode at his side with such familiar comradery. Lifting her weeping face from the young man's shoulder, she uttered her thought in a whisper.

"John," she asked, "is she—your—wife?"

"Mother!" exclaimed John, holding her from him with both hands; "have you not heard?"

"Not a ward, John!—not one wared since you left."

A cry from Luke Latimer startled both. With a strong instinct of courtesy, he had turned from John toward the stranger maid, to give greeting and welcome. Something in her appearance arrested him. He made one step toward her, and then paused, and gazed intently upon the maiden, who in turn looked into his face with eager anticipation.

"Polly!" cried Luke, pointing towards Meg, "Look! It's yourself! It's yourself, as you were three an' thirty years agone!"

The man was trembling with the intensity of his emotions. This vision of his early love, materialized before him in the form of the stranger maid, had sent a thrill into his soul, whose keenness came from a hope, almost a certainty of the truth. Could it be his long lost child?

The look, the cry so moved Meg that she could forbear no longer. Leaping from the saddle with one glad word—"Father!" she flung herself upon Luke's breast, who put his unwounded arm around her, and the two wept together.

Mrs. Latimer stood gazing into John's face to read the truth therein. She had not taken close heed to Meg's appearance. Even the glance she sent in answer to Luke's cry gave her little clue; for she could not discern the striking likeness of her former self which had impressed and persuaded her husband, for we are dull to note our children's resemblance to ourselves, though others see it

plainly. Moreover, that first thought hobbled her judgment with withes of prejudice as yet unbroken. So there she stood trembling, and searching John's face. That look needed no verbal interpretation. John understood.

"Yes, mother, it is Meg!"

"Oh, my child! my child!" One glad cry, and then with upthrown hands, the strong woman sank, and would have fallen to the ground had not John supported her.

"Mother!" It is the sweetest word that human lips speak. With unspeakable joy Meg uttered it, as she flew from her father's bosom. But it fell on unheeding ears.

Meg's first filial act was to help John carry her mother's unconscious form into the cabin. Then when the brief swoon had overpassed, mother and daughter wept together tears of peace and joy, in sweetest exercise of love whose strength was all the greater because for so many years it had been ungratified. Like the bud of the century plant, long held in abeyance, it had blossomed in a night. But it never lost its beauty and fragrance. Thenceforward, mother and daughter were bound together in a companionship that no cloud overshadowed, until the Great Last Shadow of the Valley of Shadows fell between them.

Let us close that cabin home, and leave its happy inmates with their new found joy. For that night, alone, the badge of frontier hospitality shall be withdrawn, and the latch string shall not hang out. To-morrow the village and countryside shall ring with the glad tidings of the lost which was found.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

FROM THE CREST OF THE WAVE TO THE TROUGH OF
THE SEA.

The public passions throughout the Western Survey had moved forward with a rapidity which seemed startling to John Latimer. His absence had hindered him from following their daily progress, and thus keeping even step with the changes wrought around him. Some of these we shall need to note. The muster at Braddock's Field had been followed by outbreaks of violence in various parts of the country. Huzzas for "Tom the Tinker" formed the shibboleth of the party of violence. It was taken for granted that the excise laws had been abolished by the direct act of the people, whose sovereignty was deemed complete. Whatever looked to the contrary was held as a defiance of the public authority.

Nevertheless, the more reflecting and intelligent were quietly thinking themselves away from the platform of the leaders of the anti-excise movement. They observed in all these affairs a strong tendency to anarchy, against which their law-abiding instincts and convictions were at once arrayed. These inward protests at last took the form of a quiet organization in opposition. This had tangible expression in the election held for township delegates to the Western Counties' Convention, which had been called by the Mingo Creek meeting to convene at Parkinson's Ferry, August 14, 1794.

Meanwhile, news of the fight at Bower Hill and the muster at Braddock's Field had reached Philadelphia, then the seat of government of the United States, and of the State of Pennsylvania. President Washington summoned his Cabinet, and it was resolved: First: To call out the militia under the constitutional authority to suppress armed combinations to defeat the revenue laws too powerful to be controlled by civil officers. Second: To send Commissioners to the disturbed districts, to represent both the Federal and State Government, and endeavor to bring about a pacific submission to the laws. August 17th the President issued his proclamation, announcing his pur-

pose to call out the militia and citing the offenses that led thereto. He commanded all the insurgents and opposers of the law to disperse, and retire peaceably to their respective abodes, and warned all persons whatsoever against aiding, abetting and comforting the perpetrators of the aforesaid treasonable acts. On the same day, he made requisition upon the Governors of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland and Virginia for twelve thousand men, afterwards increased to fifteen thousand, to be organized and held in readiness to march at a moment's warning.

News of these affairs came westward by post, by private express, and by travelling merchant, pack horsemen and wagoners, then the current venders of public news. The people of the Western Survey were thus brought face to face with the decision—"submission or civil war." The seriousness of their position was forced upon all who were capable of serious reflection. The silent reserve of steady, law-abiding citizens, who in our republic are usually an inactive majority, drew closer to one another, shook off their civil lethargy and prepared to take control of affairs. A few of the better conditioned who felt that they were committed beyond recall, together with those who had no interest in communal stability, and such as, like sea foam, ride only on the crest of tumults, clung to Bradford, Marshall and the other leaders of the revolt. Yet even those men were profoundly shaken in their confidence of success and almost persuaded to abandon the struggle.

In this state of affairs the Convention of the Western Counties assembled at Parkinson's Ferry, now Monongahela City. Two delegates from every township had been elected, amounting in all to two hundred and twenty-six, representing Allegheny, Washington, Fayette, Westmoreland and Bedford Counties, and Ohio County in Virginia.

The Convention was held in an open field on the banks of the river, just above the old ferry. It was, indeed, a primitive hall of congress, but the interests and in a measure the destiny of a nation were determined therein. Fallen timber and stumps of trees served for seats, while a few shade trees which the forester's axe had spared, spread their canopy above. Surrounding the Convention and forming a "gallery," as it was quaintly called, were many spectators. They were drawn largely from the near neigh-

borhood, which as Mingo Creek Meeting-house was but a few miles away, were nearly all participants in the late disturbances. Nevertheless, the proceedings were fully controlled by Messrs. Brackenridge and Edgar and other friends of order, who on this occasion were supported by the exertions of Albert Gallatin.

Bradford and Marshall had come provided with resolutions that looked towards a formal organization to call forth the resources of the country, and "to repel any hostile attempt against the rights of the citizens or the body of the people." These frontier agitators knew well, as did also their opponents, that life invariably expresses itself in organisms, and that no permanent and effective life, in any sphere, can be supported without organization. Chaos has in it the potentiality of life or death. Chaos continued ends in death. Chaos, touched by a vital factor that has force within it to attract and organize its elements, has at least promise of endurance. Along this line, in that open court of the people on the banks of the Monongahela, the friends of the armed insurgents fought and lost their contention. The upshot of the Convention was, that a Standing Committee of sixty was raised from the township delegates. These again were asked to appoint a Committee of Twelve, taken from the several counties, to meet and confer with the Government Commissioners, and report to the Standing Committee. Thus the purpose and propositions for organized and armed insurrection were, by a deft and almost unobserved evolution, transformed into a harmless provision for conference with a committee sent to settle the troubles and tender terms of amnesty. Moreover, the weight of responsibility was shifted from a large body, sensitive and responsive to the popular passions, to a small committee in which the counties least disturbed had equal representation with those most infected. Further, the final decision was deferred to a later day, when the heat of passion should be cooled, and the friends of order should have regained confidence.

The Government Commissioners reached Western Pennsylvania while the County Convention was in session at Parkinson's Ferry. They were instructed to communicate at once with this body, but deemed it safe or at least judicious, on account of the inflamed state of the country

which infected many of the deputies, not to present themselves. They repaired to Pittsburg, and there met the Committee of Twelve on the 20th and 21st of August. The United States Commissioners were Wm. Bradford, Attorney General during Washington's administration; James Ross, United States Senator from Pennsylvania, and Joseph Yates, Associate Judge of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania State Commissioners were Chief Justice Thomas McKean and Wm. Irvine, a Representative in the United States Congress.

This Conference Committee proposed substantially that the Standing Committee of the Counties' Convention should, on or before September 1st, declare their determination to submit to the laws of the United States, including the revenue laws; that they recommend to their constituents acquiescence in the same; and finally that the Convention take measures to poll the people on or before September 14th, and thus secure a public assurance as above. In the above case, the Commissioners, on their part, would pledge the Government of the United States that all prosecutions for treason and other indictable offenses should be deferred until July 16, 1795. Further, that if on that date there should be a general and sincere acquiescence in the execution of the laws, a general pardon and oblivion of all offenses would be granted, except to those who, in the interval, should attempt to obstruct the execution of the laws.

These terms were approved by the conferrees of the people, and the United States' Commissioners gave assurance that the movements of the army would be suspended until further information. The report of this action was drafted by Mr. Brackenridge. It was submitted to the Standing Committee at a meeting held on the 28th and 29th of August, in Brownsville, then known as Redstone Old Fort, a small village in Fayette County on the Monongahela River. Here was fought the last battle of the Western insurrectionists. Messrs. Gallatin and Brackenridge supported the report looking to submission with great force and eloquence.

On the other hand, David Bradford, contrary to his engagement when before the United States' Commissioners, vehemently opposed the report. With violent declamation he declared in favor of war, and in boasting

harangue raised the standard of insurrection. He sought by his own heat to rekindle the flame of the violent. But it was only the last flickering glow of an expiring fire.

A secret ballot was ordered, and the vote was thirty-four yeas and twenty-three nays! The voice of reason had prevailed. This result was plainly unexpected by the insurgent party. Bradford was appalled. He knew better than any other man that his rod of leadership was broken. He left the place immediately upon the announcement of the vote, overwhelmed with mortification, wounded pride, and disappointed ambition. Pressed with anxiety as to the future he returned to his fine new Washington house, and was one of the first to take the benefit of the amnesty by subscribing the form of submission.

Had the Standing Committee here ceased its work, the Western Insurrection would then and there have ended, suppressed by the power of the people themselves, by mere force of wise and patriotic self-control, unaided either by civil or military process. But unhappily the proposition was made to choose a new Committee of Conference to meet the Government Commissioners. It was hoped that some modification of the terms, or prolongation of the time prescribed for formal submission might be obtained by a little further negotiation.

The former conferrees (the Committee of Twelve) felt themselves foreclosed by a sense of propriety from opposing this motion, and no doubt wearied of their thankless post, were pleased to withdraw honorably. Never was there a more unfortunate illustration of the proverb attributed to Abraham Lincoln, "it is unwise to swap horses when crossing a stream." The change of the Committee of Conference, and the blundering efforts of their successors, were taken by the United States' Commissioners as a proof of the want of unanimity, of a leaning toward rebellion, and of unwillingness to yield to the just and temperate conditions offered by them. They accordingly reported to Washington recommending that the army cross the mountains and give support by its presence to the friends of law and order.

This view was strengthened by the result of the primary election held early in September. The test proposed by the Commissioners was to be subscribed within six days by every elector in the presence of two members of the

Standing Committee or of a Justice of the Peace. Of the votes cast, five hundred and eighty were for submission and two hundred and eighty against. The Commissioners instead of counting the absentees with the majority, regarded the scant vote and the considerable number of recusants as additional proof that a sullen temper pervaded the Survey, which only the presence of the military could effectually curb. In point of fact, however, the strength of the insurrection was already quelled. Public opposition to the excise laws had ceased, and the Border was freer from disorder than any of our modern frontier settlements.

On the 17th of September a call was issued to the original delegates to the Western Counties' Convention, that had met at Parkinson's Ferry on August 14th, to meet again at the same place on October 2d, to consider the situation. This body, without any opposition, gave assurance of submission in the very words required by the United States' Commission. They unanimously expressed the opinion that the withholding of signatures was not owing to any existing disposition to oppose the laws, but to lack of time and information on the part of some, and, with the greater number, a consciousness of having had no concern in any outbreak, and the idea that their signature would imply a sense of guilt. In addition, Wm. Findley, a Representative of Congress, and David Reddick were appointed Deputies to the President, to give assurance of submission, and to explain circumstantially the state of the country, that he might judge therefrom whether an armed force would be necessary to support civil authority in the Western counties.

At this meeting David Bradford was present. But who would have recognized in this crestfallen suppliant for peace, the bedecked and pompous hero, the inflated and boastful dictator of Braddock's Field? In six weeks the rapid revolution of events had brought him from the crest of the wave to the trough of the sea.

No spark of opposition glowed in glade or hill in all the Western Survey. Yet, the Federal Commissioners thought it necessary to march an army into these scattered mountain settlements to help enforce the laws. To enforce the laws! Though the District Court was peacefully issuing bills of indictment, and Sheriff Hamilton had offered with twenty men to arrest any man or set of men in any or all of the Western counties on legal process.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE TESTING OF THE PEOPLE.

The week of John Latimer's arrival from Wayne's army was one of stirring interest and excitement. Canonsburg and the surrounding country, indeed the whole Western Survey, were in a state of ferment over the pending election. To submit or not to submit, was the question which agitated every voter. As Washington County had been the tidal centre of the insurrectionary movement, John found himself in the midst of a boiling surf of varied passions.

Luke Latimer's wounds had healed but slowly. This was owing partly to their serious character; largely to the exposure and physical strain of the Braddock's Field excursion, but much also to mental agitation. His soul was the arena of a conflict of emotions to which he had heretofore been a stranger. His passions had always been direct and simple; quickly rising and quickly falling, like a spring freshet; and like it, also, clearing away all rubbish in the channel, leaving the stream to flow more peacefully.

These complex and contending feelings that now stirred within him, whence had they come? He had heard of such, but had not suspected himself to be subject to them. He was not used to such tug and strain, such rushing and fury of the inward man; and his strong frame shook thereunder. The conflict stayed Nature's kindly offices in knitting and healing the wounded parts, and burned up his vital energies. His strength waned, although he kept going about the house and grounds. His cheeks grew thin, his eyes sunken, until his wife became anxious as to the outcome of it all.

Yet she forbore remark or question. Even her pity was given no vent in words, for she knew that comment and uttered sympathy would only fret him more. He must fight the battle alone. He would have it so; in such struggles of spirit and to the wounds thereof, silence is the unguent that best can lay the tossing passions, and the kindest balm that friendly hands can apply.

The wounded pride of a deplumed leader; disappointment over cherished plans; mortification at failures that

might have been foreseen; the sense of folly forced upon him for unwise methods; anger and shame at the thought that he had been gulled and made a tool of by David Bradford,—these almost maddened him. Even more than this was the thought that would rush upon him ever and anon, that if he had done thus and so the issue might have been, ay, surely would have been different!

Moreover, Luke Latimer was thoroughly honest in his opposition to the excise laws and their execution. From the bottom of his heart he believed he was right; that he stood for a just and humane cause; for the rights and liberties of the people. It was bitter, indeed, to give up such a contention. He had persuaded friends to his views, and his just and kind nature was concerned for the consequences to them. Then,—how the thought nipped him!—what would the issue be in his own case? He was one of the leaders. Could he hope to escape punishment? He cared little for that personally; but his family? And the disgrace thereof? And the loss of his property!

The offer of amnesty by the Federal Commissioners seemed to open a door to his friends. Should he advise them to accept? Would he himself sign the submission papers and make his peace? Would it be honorable to do so? Could he as a leader hope to go scot-free? There he paused, and the struggle began anew, working around the same circle of disappointment, wounded pride, perplexity of mind and heart, conflict between political convictions and natural affections and the demands of honorable friendship.

The coming of Meg for a time diverted his thoughts from public affairs. For a few days he went about so full of joy and peace, that he seemed to be walking upon the clouds. His eye grew brighter; his step was lighter. Mrs. Polly noted with gladness that his appetite was better, and his cheeks began to fill up. But as the 11th of September approached, and the public excitement arose to a high pitch, Luke was again caught in the swirl and fury raging around him. He must decide. He must act. And now, here was Meg to think about,—poor helpless child, his lost Sunny Hair, whom God had given back to him! Who would fend for her? For her sake—yes, for her sake—

He walked up the hill to George McCormack's store. In many parts of America the village store is now, as it

then was, the daily rendezvous of all the masculine gossips in the country-side, the rural paradise of both chronic and occasional loafers. There they perch upon the counter, and straddle over the stools, and sit along the single wall-bench like fowls upon a roost, and with strident voices asseverate and dogmatize on questions political, theological, financial and social.

Luke Latimer found a little knot of neighbors gathered to discuss current events. He was welcomed to the circle, and out of respect to his wound, honored with one of the two chairs which the log edifice boasted. He was not a frequent visitor to this conclave of village Solons for which he had neither taste nor time; but he had a purpose in coming now, and would await his opportunity.

"We were jist discussin' the Commissioners' test," said McCormack, by way of explanation. He spoke from that country merchant's throne, the stool behind the rude desk which rested on the end of the counter next the window.

"Are you goin' fer til sign?" asked Luke calmly.

"Na!" was the positive and emphatic response.

There was silence. Luke who had lit his pipe slowly puffed out a column of smoke and again inquired: "I reckon you'd advise the rest of us to sign, wouldn't you?"

"*Na-a!*" The answer was the same, but a little more explosive and prolonged.

Another lull, another puff of smoke, another question: "Don't you tlink the Government Commissioners have made things purty aisy for us, considerin' all things?"

"*NA-A-AA!*" The increased volume of sound and prolongation of the vowel, in the thrice-repeated monosyllable, was the merchant's only method of expressing the positive, comparative and superlative degree of his dissent. But it needed neither addition nor interpretation.

"A've had ma full of sich doin's in the auld country," he cried. "What led to all the risin's in Ireland? What brought out the Whiteboys, the Oakboys, the Steelboys and the United Irishmen, but the tie-rannical and ineequitous test oath, and sich like, that the English crown imposed upon us? A' thought A' was a-comin' til a land of liberty; but it looks mighty like we'd jumped out of the fryin' pan intil the fire. What's all thim papers, now," pointing to one of the blank forms of submission posted against the store door, "but jist a test? Test! A test of

loyalty they calls it. Na-a! A've had enough of tests, and sorry a one 'ill A' iver sign agin."

"Hear! hear! That's the talk!" cried the village Solons.

"Ah?" said Luke Latimer interrogatively.

"There you go, neighbor!" said Andy Burbeck. "Comin' out the same hole you wint in at! A tist? Humph! give a dog a bad name an' hang him. Anything with the name of tist 'll have a bitter taste to our folk. They say a rose by anny other name 'uld smell as swate. That's r'asonable, but contrairy to axperi'nce. We 're victims of eemagination in half the affairs of life, A'm a-thinkin'. For example: Suppose you 'd call a rose a skunk cabbage, who 'd want to give a nosegay til his lady-love? Now, if astead o' callin' that paper by sich an ornary name as 'test' they 'd 'a christened it 'covenant,' it 'ud 'a gone down aisier nor a glass o' grog. For we Scotch-Irish Presbyterians have a likin' to that name, in kindly memory of old Scotland's League an' Covenant."

"Come, come, Andy!" said McCormack. "That's jist a bit of your balderdash, and well you know it."

"Well, let's read the paper, and see how it goes." Thereupon Andy walked up to the door, which served as a general bulletin board for public notices, and read: "I do promise to submit to the laws of the United States; that I will not directly or indirectly oppose the execution of acts for raising revenue on distilled spirits and stills, and that I will support as far as the law requires, the civil authority in affording protection due to all officers and other citizens."

"There it is, gintlemin! It's a harmless sort of affair, you see. Only a kind o' ceevil note of hand; a promise to pay one's lawful debts of duty and obedience to the United States. Now, A' take it that's a good dale more of a covenant nor a tist."

"Ay! but it's meant for a test," McCormack insisted. "They knowed well that most of us that's been in the risin' won't sign. An' they mane for to sift us out, an' mark us for vingeance. It's the intintion you've got to go by. Whatever the letter of the paper be, it's spirit is to crush out all opposition to the axcise, and to crush out all opposers. Jist look at it! 'I will not direckly nor indireckly oppose.' That's the pledge. Why, accordin' to that, a man couldn't aven sign a petition to annul the excise laws, intolerable as they are."

"Hold on, neighbor!" said Luke. "It's not the laws, but their execution you promise not to oppose."

"Well, what's the differ?"

"A dale of differ. A law's a law, and ought to be executed as long as it stands. If it's a good law, good! If it's a bad law, the stricter it's enforced, the likelier you are to git rid of it. To oppose the passage of a law is one thing, an' that's lawful. To oppose the law itself by a-tryin' to repale it is another thing, an' that's always lawful whin lawfully an' pa'cefully done. But to oppose the execution of the law is jist what we've been doin' or tryin' to do. An' that's what the Gover'ment wants us to promise not to do. If I were to go to the len'th of subscribin' that pledge or promise, or test, call it what you pl'ase, I'd not have the l'aste scruple agin workin', spakin' an' votin' for the repale or modification of the prisent revenue laws. Axcuse me, Andy, for the anterruption."

The faces of the crowd were turned upon Luke, blank with wonder. What next? Is Luke Latimer also weakening?

"No axcuse required, Luke," said Andy. "We're all lookin' for light, I take it; an' nobody 'ud sign that paper 'athout at l'aste tryin' to onderstand it, but a plumb fool."

"Or a coward!" interrupted McCormack.

"Yes, or a coward," Andy assented. "Though, I reckon it'll take a dale more courage to sign nor to refuse. The bravest thing an honest man iver does, is to go back on his own record in the face of public disapproval."

Luke Latimer nodded assent.

"But what A'm a-gittin' at," continued Andy, "is what the Gover'ment promises. Ther's al'ays two sides to a bargain. Now what does the United States agree to do? The Commissioners promise and engage 'not to prosecute for any treasonable or other indictable offenses against the United States, committed within the Fourth Survey of Pennsylvania before the 22d day of August last—'"

"That takes in Bower Hill?" said Luke interrogatively.

"Ay, Bower Hill, an' all back of it, an' all afront of it, up til a fortnight ago," answered Andy. He continued to read: "Shall be commenced or prosecuted before the 10th day of July next, against any person who shall within the time limited subscribe such assurance and engagement as aforesaid, and perform the same. On the said tenth day of July next,—"

"That's a year from now?" Luke interrupted.

"Ay, the 10th day of July next it is,—July, 1795," said Andy, and read on—"There shall be granted a general pardon and oblivion of all said offenses, excluding therefrom, nevertheless, all who shall refuse or neglect to subscribe such assurance or engagement in the manner aforesaid, or shall after such subscription violate the same, or wilfully obstruct the execution of said acts, or by aiding or abetting the same."

"There it is, fr'inds!" said Andy, resuming his perch on a nest of inverted buckets. "It looks like a clane dale. Now, A'm one of those chaps as put a halter around his neck at the Bower Hill affair; an' A' must confess A've felt as though A' 'd like to slip out of it, if the Gover'ment 'll gi'me a chanct. An' there's the chanct! All we've got to do is to kape quiet for a year, an' the Gover'ment 'll reward us with pardon an' oblivion of all the past."

"Oh, yes, indade!" ejaculated Davy Dandruff. He sat upon the counter with legs dangling down, and kicking his heels against the front. "Let the people be quiet and they'll be rewarded, says you. Wait a year, an' the Gover'ment 'll provide for those who've stood true to the laws! But what's poor fellows like me to do in the manetime? Wait, indeed! It's aisy waitin' dinner with a full stomach. Live horse an' you shall have grass, says you. But the trick is that the horse 'll die, and the hostler 'll save his grass. But what good 'll that be to the hoss? I wouldn't give a fip for a wagon load of sich promises."

"Well spoken, Davy!" said McCormack. "That's jist where the shoe pinches. We've been strikin' a blow for better times. This has been a bread-and-butter war. The axcise laws have ruined us. Yonder paper don't improve, nor promise to improve 'em. It siraply means that they'll be inforced more rigorously than iver; an' we bind ourselves to stand by like a bound boy at a huskin', and niver cry boo! You dassent say a word. You've pledged yourselves agin it, an' a pledge is a hedge. The man that signs that paper jist puts a stick intil the Gover'ment's hands to bate himself with. An' that you'll find out to your sorrow, Andy Burbeck, if you're daft enough to sign. To be sure, the Gover'ment makes some high-soundin' promises. Ay; promises are aisy enough in the givin', but hard in the redeemin'; an' A've l'arnt long ago that soft words butter

no parsnips. Aven if A' did take the test,—an' A' don't mean to—A'd take my rifle, and off til the Ohio country till all had blown over."

"Ah, well, Mr. McCormack," said Andy, "you're a livin' proof that the best proverbs sometimes go wide of the mark. Now, A've often h'ard that a burnt bairn shuns the fire. But here you are, an axile fleein' from auld Ireland along of mixin' up in risin's agin the Gover'ment, an' the keenest one among us all for holdin' out in the prisint insurrection. But you musn't jedge the government of Washington by that of King George."

"Well, Andy, time will tell. The proof of the puddin' is in the atein'. A'd wager a sovereign agin a leather ninepence, that ye'll rue your bargain come July nixt, ay, an' long afore that."

"Ah lads!" said Elder John Lowe, "if ye'd 'a listened to Dr. McMillan, an' kep' out'n sich troubles, ye'd 'a had no nade to be rackin' your brains over gittin' out. I've kep' out, an' I don't nade to stay awake nights a-worryin' over the comin' of the army. All my worry is about my neighbors. I'm afeard that it'll go hard with you; an' my advice is to make your peace while ye can."

"Don't you intand to sign, elder?" asked Luke quietly.

"What? Me?" exclaimed the elder, with some heat. "I take that unkindly, Mr. Latimer. What for should I sign, pray? I've been forninst your doin's from the first."

"All the same, you've got to sign," said Luke, "or you'll be in the same boat with the rest of us."

"Impossible! Who said it?"

"Squire Brackenridge said it. So did Senator Ross. So did Judge Yates. It's in the proclamation. All citizens of the Western Survey of Pennsylvania, of eighteen years or upwards, are compelled to be polled, yea or nay."

"It's rank injustice!" cried the elder, rising from his bench and speaking with great indignation. "What? treat the innocent and guilty alike? I'll niver sign that paper! It 'ud be a confission of guilt."

"Go slow, elder!" Andy remarked. "I don't wonder you're a bit riled. But as you 've got to take the back track, you beeta not git too far intil the burrow." The swift transition of the good man's temper from the self-satisfied and pitying complaisance with which he had addressed his neighbors, to the present state of amazed and

indignant protest, had excited Andy's mirthfulness. "The Commissioners' tist, ye see," he continued, "is like the Gospel net; it takes in the good an' bad fishes thegither. You musn't git glum and grumpy over it. Jist do what you've advised the rist of us, jouk and let the wave go by! It's your axample that the Gover'ment wants, that's all! An' it would be a jubous proceedin' altogether to see an elder of the Kirk jerked up jist for not signin' a bit of paper! Ay, elder, the doctor has telled us manny and manny a time, there's sins of omission as well as sins of commission. Don't let's anny of us be a-fallin' intil sich negatyve transgressions of the law, elder."

The fellow delivered his exhortation with a solemn face, and with seeming deep concern. But he inwardly chuckled over the opportunity to give back some of the chidings he had received from the good man.

"Besides that," he continued, "do you mind what the Doctor did an' said las' Sawbath? It was an awful proceedin', that, to put off the Communion after it had been duly app'inted, an' to solemnly declare from his poolpit that he would deny the Sayeramint to all his people as refused to sign. Ye'd beeta reconseeder, elder! Ye're plowin' in stumpy ground, A'd misdoubt, as ye've often telled me, an' A' well desarved it, A' trow. It would grieve us all sorely, an' be a swate morsel til the inemy, were an elder of the Kirk to be shut out from the Sayeramint."

"Andy Burbeck," said the elder, turning his ire upon him, "you're a railin' Rabshakeh! There's nought sacred agin your tongue; nayther the elder nor the meenister, nor the Holy Sayeramint itself!"

"Come, come, elder!" interrupted McCormack. "You musn't be too hard on Andy. You know well that his bark is iver worse nor his bite. Ye've no better fr'ind nor him, an' ye must 'een l'arn to give and take, like the rest of us."

"A' crave your pardon', Elder Lowe," said Andy, humbly rising and doffing his hat. "Indade, A' meant no offinse. A'm jist as loth to sign the Tist as yourself; but A'm a-gawin' to put my pride in my pocket, and sign, as you advise. An' if you'll permit me, A'll give my r'asons. In the first place, Dave Bradford's bubble is bust. There's not enough left of it to make a dacent vandoo. The Whiskey Insurrection is deader nor a door nail. It's burnt out, back log an' fore stick, an' nothin' left to show but the

black coals, an' not aven a doted log to set it agoin' agin. Now, A' don't see no call to throw our lives an' property away, an' bring trouble an' shame upon our fam'lies for sich a l'ader an' sich a cause. We're all sorry it's so; but so it is, an' there's no use cryin' over spilled milk, much less tryin' to gather up the milk after it's spilled. Some folks think Andy Burbeck's a fool, A' know; an' he may'nt be overly wise; but he isn't daft enough to throw away all hope for the future on a chanct like that. The jig is up. The fiddle is broke. There's nought to do but go home and git inunder cover. That's what Andy Burbeck 'll do, neighbors, do ye as ye wull."

The silence which followed Andy's deliverance was broken by the drumming of Davy Dandruff's heels against the counter on which he sat. "Hugh!" exclaimed Davy, at last. "It's aisy enough seen 'at Andy's been gittin' a wiggin' from his wife. Thank fortun' I'm not inunder petticoat gover'ment, an' for wan I'll stan' out agin the tist to the last horn blows."

"Wiser men nor you or me, Davvy," Andy rejoined, "have taken good counsel from a good woman. A'd have no cause for shame aven if A' am infloenced by a woman like Peggy Burbeck. A good wife's a sort of second conscience, annyhow, an' no man's the warse for hearkenin' to the same."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

LUKE LATIMER'S DECISION AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

Luke Latimer rose, and knocked the ashes out of his pipe into a small box filled with sand which did duty for a cuspidor. He leaned his unhurt arm against the counter, and looked gravely around the circle.

"Well, neighbors, I've hearkened carefully to what has been sayed; an' as you may well judge from your own feelin's, I've been doin' a dale of thinkin', these days, on all the matters yo've discussed. Like the rist of you, I've been perplexed as to what I ought to do. I reckon no one 'll doubt my honest purpose to sarve the people, an' my willin'ness to wark an' suffer for the cause. I've given a pretty good pledge of this,"—pointing to his wounded

arm,—“which I’m likely to carry to my grave, an’ that—sometimes I think,”—his voice trembled slightly, and he paused a moment and looked down sadly. “An’ that, I sometimes think, may be nearer nor I like.”

“Good Lord forefend!” cried Andy fervently.

“Thank ye kindly, Andy, for your good wush. Pl’ase God, I would like to live a lettles longer, if only for Meg’s sake. Howsomiver, we’ll not die til our time comes, an’ there’s nought ’ll stay us when the hour is struck. I’ve faced death a-manny a time, an’ won’t show the white feather afore it, I hope, come it soon or late. But that’s nayther her nor there. I’ve been tryin’, God knows, not til think of myself at all, in ponderin’ the prisent duty; an’ a harder task nor that no man iver set himself; as most of you know, I dar say. I owe a duty to my neighbors whom I’ve infloenced, an’ to the country whose welfar’ I sought. An’ as far as I know my duty, I mane for til do it.

“I went intil this axcise fight with high hopes of succiss. I felt sure we were right; an’ I belaved we had the man who’d lade us til victory. I’m free to say that I wanted to see Western Pennsylvania an independent State in the Union. By times, no doubt, I was tempted to go furdur nor that in my thoughts. God forgive me! for I see now it was wrong. But that the Western Survey ought to be a separate State, I belaved, an’ still belave. We’d have a better chanct to git our rights, an’ develop our resources, an’ protect our interests, if we could cut loose from the eastern section. The State is sort o’ lop-sided; an’ the heftiest part is on ’tother side the mountains. The onfairness an’ inequality niver showed clearder nor in the operation of the axcise laws. Things got til sich a pass that we couldn’t abear it longer. We had to kick agin the goads, an’ that’s no aisy wark; though it seems needful, for in ceevil affairs, the favors aye go to the hardest kickers.

“Well, neighbors, we tried it, an’ we’ve failed. Andy Burbeck’s right. Our cause is lost! As a political l’ader David Bradford has proved lettles better nor a bag o’ wind. Aven if we had a mind to war, which we never had, he has no more military ability nor a cow. He has boggled our good an’ righteous cause ontill it is eenamost beneath contempt. His bad management has frittered away all chanct we had to right our grievous wrongs. Like a brag-gart school boy a-pickin’ quarrels with a man, he’s shuck

his fist in under the Government's nose an' then run away. He is all fuss an' feathers. It's not in him to lade a great cause to victory."

"Well, then," interrupted McCormack angrily, seeing how matters were driving, "why didn't you cut loose from him, an' choose another l'ader?"

"That's aisier said nor done, Mr. McCormack. Some of us was willin' enough; but who else was there to choose? Besides, Bradford was in the saddle, an' not likely to dismount at anny man's bid an' beck. Good or bad, it was the best we could do. Better not throw out the dirty water til you can get clane, said we. But nayther foul nor fair, good nor bad would have aught to do with the matter after Bradford had botched the job. An' now Bradford and Marshall have both given in their submission, an' 'll sign the test to-morrow among the first."

A groan of indignation burst from the little company.

"Infarnal traitors!" cried Davy Dandruff.

"White-livered cowards!" exclaimed McCormack. "A' can hardly belave it. You must be mistaken, Luke."

"I had it from their own mouths."

"An' ye'll be after follerin' their example, A' darsay!" remarked McCormack, with a surly snap in his speech.

"Their axample disn't tell a feather weight with me," answered Luke with quiet dignity. "You'll soon l'arn what I'm a-goin' to do. We're not only 'athout a l'ader, but we're 'athout organization an' inflooeence of ivery sort. With Wayne's victorious Legion on the west, an' Washington's armed corps of fifteen thousand men on the east, many of 'em Revolutionary veterans, we are griddled round about with a wall o' doom. The only thing afore us is to hunt the wilderness, as McCormack threeps to do, or accep' the honorable tarms which the Goverment offers.

"As for myself, an' the other l'aders too, I've little hope of amnesty, sign or no sign. It's only fair an' right that we should stand the brunt of the Goverment's anger, an' my sinsare hope is that it may fall on us alone. But I've a duty til my neighbors an' fellow citizens, an' I mane to sign the pledge of loyalty. I'm not denyin' that it's a nauseous dose; but I've made up my mind to take it. A pill is only the bitterer to take for chawin' on it. If one must take it, the better way is to swallow it outright an' be done with it. An' God sparin' me til to-morrow, that's what I'll do!

"There's no use argyin' the case now; it's decided a'ready, an' decided agin us. Our cause is lost, neighbors; an' the laste said now the soonest manded hereafter, if so be it can be manded at all. We've run chuck up agin a blind wall, an' there's no way to go for'ard. There's nought to do but turn right about and take the back track. Let's be thankful that the Gover'ment has left a way open for an honorable retrate. I've not changed my mind about the axcise laws, nor the rights of the people, nor the conduc' of the Treasury Department an' it's Secretary an' agents, especcially the latter. But I can promise in good faith all that's in the Commissioners' test. Wanct my name is sot to it, I'll kape my word. I bid you good mornin', neighbors!"

Few were inclined to discuss the matter longer or commit themselves further one way or another. The seriousness of the position had been forced into every man's mind, and silently and slowly the village conclave dispersed.

During the morning of Thursday, September 11th, throughout the entire Western Survey, voters were wending their way along country roads and trails to the usual voting places. The polls would open at noon, and so continue until seven o'clock in the evening. Before the hour appointed, a great crowd had gathered around the tavern at Canonsburg. Dr. McMillan and other friends of order were circulating among their fellow citizens trying to persuade them to accept the Government's terms. There was little open opposition; but surly looks on many faces, and obstinate withholding of approval, promised ill for success.

Twelve o'clock! The committeemen were seated behind a table, over which were spread a number of blank forms of submission. A record book was before them. The tangled ball of humanity before the tavern door began slowly to unravel, and a line of voters wound into the room.

"Do you vote Yea or Nay?"

The question was put to every man, and a due minute made of the answer. Those who voted "yea," delayed long enough to sign their names to the printed form. Those who voted "nay" walked out without further ceremony, usually with a defiant air, and often to be received with cheers by the crowd outside.

"Here comes Col. John Canon! How has he voted?"

"Yea!" Hoots from the crowd.

Now Luke Latimer, leaning on John's arm, and escorted by Andy Burbeck, walked feebly up the street. A sleepless and painful night had left him haggard and weak. The crowd silently gave way. They had learned already how Luke's vote would be cast, for it was early bruited about the town. But the spell of respect for his character, and sympathy with him for the wounds he bore, was still too strong upon them to permit open expression of disapproval. Perhaps, also, they had some regard for the strong arm of the stalwart youth at his side, and the ready wrath of Andy Burbeck, who was almost equally loved and feared. But as the party withdrew, scowling faces looked upon them, and low mutterings of discontent were heard.

An hour passed, and still another. Luke lay resting upon a rude couch softened with bear skins. A sound of cheering men floated in through the open door. He leaned upon his elbow and listened.

"Those are not hearty cheers," he said, speaking to his wife. "It sounds like the yells of wrathful men. Hark! was that a rifle shot? Look out, Polly; look out and see if there's trouble afoot."

Mrs. Latimer gazed down the street. "There's some tumult around the tavern," she said. "It looks for all the world like an angry swarm of hornets a-buzzin' about their paper nest. I can see Dr. McMillan's tall form in the midst of the hurly-burly. Goodness gracious! They are hustlin' him about as though he were a common plowman. Oh! ye sacreleegious Shimeis! Have ye no respect for the Lord's anointed? Whatever would they be at? They've made a rush upon the tavern door, an' are crowded an' jammed therein, like a passel of school children when the master raps them intil their books. Good land! they're rushin' out agin! The whole air is full of bits of paper that the're tossin' up, an' the wind is blowin' to an' fro like forest leaves in autumn gusts."

"Ay," muttered Luke. "Thim's the test papers. I misdoubt they've broken up the polls. That 'il be no jokin' matter. Idle fellows! Do they think they 'll save a lost cause by addin' folly til crime? It's a great pity!"

"Hark til them!" continued Mrs. Polly. "Did ye iver hear sich yowls? What are the looneys about, now? They're bringing a table out of the door. They've h'isted some man on top of it. My fathers! What can they mane?"

They've got inunder the table, an' have raised it up on their shoulders, an' are marchin' up an' down—"

"With the man on it?"

"Ay, with the man on it; an' he bobbin' up an' down like a puddin' ball in a pot of roup, an' holdin' on til the side, while the crowd yells an' hurls up their hats."

"It's a mob! They must be a-fightin' one another!" exclaimed Luke, hastily rising as several rifle shots rang through the cheers.

"No, no! Not so bad as that," said Mrs. Latimer. "They 're only a-shootin' blanks above the man's head, an' firin' at their own hats as they fling 'em intil the air, like a lot of loons as they are. They 've let the man down now; an' I should fancy he'd got his fill of that sort of axerceese. There, Luke dear, jist you lie down agin. I'll tell ye all that's a-goin' on. You're too wake to worry about it."

Luke was loath to confess that this was even so. He would not recline, but sat down again upon the couch. His limbs were trembling beneath him. His hurt arm twitched and burned and smarted until he was faint.

"What now, Polly, what now?" he asked, for the cries seemed to wax louder.

Mrs. Latimer, who for the moment had turned to look after her husband, went back to her post and took up her report. "They're musterin' in the street now. They 've broken up the table, an' parted the pieces among 'em, an' are shoulderin' of 'em like guns. The man whom they h'isted is marchin' in front. What? It's Davy Dandruff, as I live! The blatherin' lunkhead! There'll be wise doins' where he lades, I jealous! There are two men ahint him, with a big rail on their shoulders. Now they have started. They are marchin' up the road."

"Which way?" asked Luke.

"This way; right towards us, a-shoutin' like mad men. It's fearsome to hear 'em. My fathers!—"

She suddenly broke off her report, seized the door, shut it hastily, and turned a pallid face upon her husband. Too late! She could not shut out that dreadful cry. Luke had heard it.

"Rail ride him! Let's ride the traitor on a rail!"

Luke Latimer leaned over, sick, sick at heart, and buried his face within his hands. O for an hour of his old strength and fire! But they were gone.

Polly shot one glance of pitying love upon that bowed form, and then sprung to the buckhorn bracket above the fireplace, and seized one of the rifles resting on it. Behind her a woman's form glided across the cabin floor. It was Meg. A rifle was in one hand, and a tomahawk in the other. She had been listening from her room, gathering little of the meaning of what she heard, but seeing that in some way the noise outside threatened ill to her father. Her mother's movement towards the rifle-rack gave at once interpretation and cue. Snatching up the weapons, which she had brought with her from her Indian home, and which hung in her room as trophies and reminders of the past, she stole swiftly and noiselessly past her father, who never lifted his face. She had reached the door ere her mother turned from the gun bracket.

"My child! Come back!" cried Polly. Luke raised his head at the call, and looked, wondering, at the maid, and re-echoing Polly's cry, rose and staggered toward the door.

Too late! Meg was already in the yard, and half-way to the fence, before which the mob had now halted. A rugged borderer held up a long oak rail, one end of which rested on the ground while the other towered aloft like a standard. A grim banner that, indeed! As Dave Dandruff entered the gate he saw Meg's agile form moving toward him swift and silent as a cloud shadow, with trailed rifle in left hand and tomahawk uplifted in the right.

"You man!" she cried. "What you want here? What for you come makin' war-cries 'round our house? You better go home! You come furdur, Sunny Hair strike!"

"Whew—ew!" exclaimed Davy, checking his march up the path before this unexpected vision. "This is mighty fine, indade! Jist you git out'n the way, my lass. We're after no women folks. It's a man we're goin' to dale with, an' this sort of foolin' won't go."

"A man, hey!" interrupted Meg. "What man you want? Luke Latimer?"

"Ay, that's jist it!" said Davy, advancing a step.

"You no get him, then. Take that!"

At the word, the tomahawk sped through the air, and had not the doughty David dodged the blow, his course then and there would have ended. As it was, the blade grazed his hat, shearing the brim from one side, and whirling on over the gate buried itself within the upright rail, which it fairly cleft asunder.

"You dawgoned squaw!" shouted Davy, staggered for a moment, but recovering and rushing forward. He was brought up, even more quickly than he had started, before the gaping barrels of two rifles. Mrs. Latimer was at her daughter's side with weapon upraised. There stood the two women side by side, fair Amazons, one the very counterpart of the other, save in the marks of riper age, and both with faces grim and determined. No wonder the braggart started back, and gazed upon them with appalled face and uplifted hands.

Now from the back part of the house a shout was raised, and the clatter of men climbing the kitchen garden fence was heard, and a rush of footsteps over the ground. A crowd of Luke Latimer's friends, headed by John and Andy Burbeck, had come to the rescue.

The moment of silence and intense excitement that fell, was startled by a rifle shot. Then came the dull thud of a falling body on the gravelly path before the cabin door. A voice from the mob, with a note of horror therein cried: "Luke Latimer is shot!"

Mrs. Latimer turned about, dropped her weapon and with a shriek of agony flew to her husband, who lay prone upon his face, his feet resting upon the threshold of his home. Another rifle shot followed, and the whistle of a harmless bullet over Davy Dandruff's head, as John Latimer's hand struck up Meg's piece, and wrenched it from her grasp. A swift and measureless transformation from disappointed fury to surprised affection passed over the maid's face, as she saw who had thus disarmed her.

"Go to father, Meg! This is no work for women!" said John.

With a quick glance and one sharp cry, Meg sprang to her mother's aid. John, endowed with that strength which seizes the human frame in moments of loftiest rage, laid hands on Davy and hurled him over the fence into the midst of the mob; a feat which for years thereafter was the talk and wonder of the countryside.

"Away!" he shouted, "or we will open fire upon you!"

But there was a power at work among the rioters mightier than John's strength, greater than fear of the armed and angry friends around him,—the force of conscience. They had heard the cry, "Luke Latimer is killed!" They had seen the prostrate form, and although

no one knew what hand among them had fired the shot, every man knew that the responsibility might fall upon himself. They had meant violence, but not murder. The indignity of a few moment's ride upon a rail was their utmost intention; and few of them, if they had been wholly sober, would have gone that far with one so widely honored as Luke. A panic seized them, and before the force of their own disquieted consciences they turned and fled, leaving their half-stunned leader lying in the dust of the road, and the oaken rail, with Meg's tomahawk still cleaving to it, leaning against the picket fence where its bearer had dropped it.

Luke was tenderly carried into the house and laid upon the couch, while a neighbor hurried away for the surgeon.

"Where was he hit? I cannot find the wound!" exclaimed Mrs. Latimer. With Meg's aid, she had stripped the wammus from off the unconscious man, and unbuttoned his shirt. "There's not a drop of blood annywheres, axcep' a little oozin' here from the bandages 'round his poor hurted arm."

A crowd of anxious friends had hurried into the cabin, as folks will do in like cases, craning their necks and gaping curiously to see and hear and mayhap also to help, but only succeeding in shutting off what is commonly most needed by the sufferer—fresh air. Meg, noting her mother's remark, pushed her way through this crowd to the door. She picked up Luke's rifle, which lay unnoticed near the doorstep. She threw back the trigger; the priming can was powderless. She blew into the muzzle; the piece was empty, and the touch of her lips showed it to be still warm with a late discharge. She returned to the house, carrying the rifle.

"See!" she said, "father no shot at all! He came to help mother and Meg, but too much sick to stand that! His gun go off himself afore ready,—zizz!—away into the air!"

Meg was right. Forgetting his wounds in his eagerness to protect his wife and daughter, Luke had taken his rifle from the bracket, and had run to the door. But in the very act of going forth his strength had failed, and he sank in a swoon. His piece was discharged by the fall, and the bullet flew harmless.

Yet, still the tidings ran through the village and among the voters: "Luke Latimer is killed!" Those concerned

in the riot had already taken horse and left the tavern. They took with them Davy Dandruff, who by this time had recovered, and though bruised and sore from his rough handling, was able to mount.

"Dawgon John Latimer!" he muttered, as he rode off, supported by his comrade. "He downed me at Bower Hill, an' I swore I'd pay him back the nex' time we met. I hain't done it, rot his ornary hide! But lemme meet him agin jist wanct more! The third time's the charm. The stuck-up hullion! Oh! Jiminy! Ouch! Don't trot the horse so hard, boys! Drat him! I'll—"

"Shut up, Dave!" exclaimed his supporter. "Talk's cheap! You hurry up now, or you'll git your dratted neck stretched for Luke Latimer. An' our'n, too. Come along!" And the doughty David came along.

The riot was ended. The vigor went out of it with the exit of the roughs who followed Dandruff or rather had urged him on. Even when the truth was learned as to Luke Latimer's accident, the sobering effects of the first report remained, and the Testing of the People was resumed, and went on in peace.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE TAMING OF MEG LATIMER.

Our history of these children of the frontier has anticipated, by a few days, the incidents following Meg Latimer's return home. It was a strange life to which the untamed child of nature was introduced, and which she must assimilate. It had much of freedom and gladness and peace; but there were checks and fetters which sorely fretted at times. And puzzles? They met her everywhere. Some she mastered. Some she could not solve. All kept her poor untutored brain in a whirl, and sent her to bed at night wearier from wrestling therewith than she had ever been after the longest march with Shawnee hunting bands.

After all, love and friendship are the chief factors in civilizing our race. These masterful emotions wrought most strongly toward the remaking of Meg Latimer. Her love of her parents and of John, though a new-born pas-

sion, was full orb'd from its birth. To be like those loved ones, to please them and win their approval, were the strongest incentives to abandon the old ways. Friendship, too, came in and wrought with its gentle but potent force. It happened in this wise.

Almost the first act of John Latimer when the transports of Meg's welcome were over, was to run up to the McCormack house to tell Fanny the good news. He would not be satisfied until Fanny had promised to come early the next morning, before any one else had arrived, and be the first to meet his sister Meg. So she did, and as drops of dew within a lily corol run together when the wind shakes the flower, these two spirits at once blended in mutual sympathy. It was beautiful to see how Meg's soul was knit with Fanny's. "Sister Fanny!" so John had called her. So she would be, and so she was, with a love that was never broken; for such friendship outlives time's changes not only, but time itself. The quality of that companionship which Meg found in Fanny was such as not John, nor Luke, nor Polly could give. It was not superior but different. It was something apart, and of its own kind, and influenced her as did nothing else, and helped to shape her after that new mode of womanhood toward which she strove. Thus friendship became ally with love to deliver the paganized maid from the trammels of her past life.

Her mother was often perplexed, and indeed vexed, though she never showed it, over Meg's preferences among the womanly handicrafts which she at once began to learn. For example, Mrs. Polly was the pink of tidiness in her household arrangements. Against dust and disorder she waged ceaseless warfare. The one thing that most fretted her in Luke and John, was their incurable habit of musing and tumbling things. It was a great blow to her housewifely pride, when she saw that her daughter took rather after father and brother than after her own dainty ways. Gracious Heavens! would this dear child be a slatternly housekeeper? O the accursed savages, who had wrought this ill!

Patience, good mother! The habits of the wigwam will not wash off from a human soul as readily as dust-marks from your cabin floor. In sooth, it was natural that Meg should like to see things in a state of nature. Nature is a tidy housekeeper, and forever busy cleansing herself, and

removing from her demesne the waste and litter and filth of living creatures, and of man the greatest offender of them all. Yet her methods are not so artificial, and are more leisurely than the model housewife would approve. Let this be our apology for Meg, whose taming was never quite complete in these matters.

She did not take kindly to broom and whisk, to mop and brush. To sweep and dust, to scrub and scour, to slosh and slop about with bucket and mop she did not like. Nay, decidedly she disliked it, rather. Hugh! the dust got into nostrils and eyes and offended them, so that she sniffed and ran out into the fresh air. The water, too, dabbled her skirts and wet her moccasins. It was all so nasty! To toss up the house, to put things into chaos, and make much clutter and mess, and be so clarty, that one might be clean,—that puzzled Meg.

So also did her mother's insistence on a certain order prescribed for the household furniture. "You must do it thus and so!" bade Mrs. Polly, setting the chairs primly against the wall, and the table squarely in the centre of the room, and the couch here, and so on with the other articles. "Don't you see how much better it looks? how trig, and tidy and Christian-like."

But Meg did not see. Alas! she could not; for her taste had been hopelessly perverted and her vision set awry by her long and close familiarity with Nature's careless way of setting things about. No doubt, no doubt! Nature is a geometer in other fields than crystal making. But after all, one has to be taught to see the beauty of aligning things in rectangles and triangles. Patience, good mother. Nature is sure in the end to yield to art!

Another of Meg's dislikes was the spinning wheel. She saw her mother sit there, keeping the treadle going,—tramp! tramp! She loved to listen to the droning hum-m-mmm of the flyers, which reminded her of the lazy buzzing of insects as in her captive days she loitered on the tussocks of soft grass beside some gurgling brook, and spun and spun day dreams of her white kindred and home. But though she tried the task, and longed to please her mother by learning, she could not bring herself to it.

Tramp, tramp! Tush! She could not abear it! And she put the wash-tub work in the same category. Slavish toil! Far, far harder than hoeing the green, growing

maize in Indian cornfields! Perhaps, there are other women who, even in our day, may look at the matter in the same light, only substituting sewing machines and the like for spinning wheels; and thereby they doubtless prove their lack of perfect civilization. But one day Meg visited Fanny McCormack when she happened to be working with the big spinning wheel. Aha! that was quite another affair. The erect attitude, the motion to and fro, the graceful and continuous action all caught her fancy, and she begged to be taught the use of this instrument.

"A strange whimsey, indeed!" her mother thought, who did not see the fine points of difference in the methods of the two machines. Was not spinning, spinning? Yet she lost no time in providing a great wheel, and this Meg had carried to Fanny McCormack's house. There the two maidens were often seen working together, accompanying the buzzing of the wheels and whirr of the spools with sound of their voices and merry laughter. In this pleasant school Meg had many a lesson from Fanny, quickly and thoroughly learned.

Here too came John Latimer and sat loitering on the steps of the open cabin door, watching the graceful workers, and spinning yarns of another sort to amuse them. He gossiped and laughed, and listened with full content, and added his own tutoring to Fanny's. He never had happier days, often and often he said in after years.

Meg took to sewing not unkindly, but wrought at it only indifferently well. Rough needlework she could do, and had done often enough for Indian wear, but with coarser tools and material than her mother bought for her outfit. A complete outfit it must be, for the mystery of underwear was foreign to her child. What had Indians to do with that? Truth to tell it cost Meg some pain to discipline her body to it; for like children, and races which live most closely to Nature, the extra garments irked her. But once learned, she wondered how she could have borne their absence in those old Indian days.

With embroidery it was otherwise. There were few Indian maids in her tribe who had as deft a hand as she for beadwork. Mind and fingers, taste and touch were thus trained for the gentle art of broidery. In a little while, she had exhausted all her mother's simple skill therein. Then she passed into Fanny's hands, and soon

had mastered all she knew; although Fanny had learned dainty stitches and patterns brought from Philadelphia by her friend Blanche Oldham. However, it was hard for Meg to see why Fanny did not practice her art more for her own adornment. Meg had planned a dress for herself, bright with beadwork, and covered with broidery. Fanny tried to show her that it was not in good taste.

"What for you learn all this, then?" cried Meg, impatiently. "What for you teach Meg? That foolish, if you no use it! I think Indian maidens wiser than white women for loving painted skins, as they call them. Sister Fanny very beautiful. Why not dress beautiful? The Great Spirit has made her with bright blue eyes, and bright red in her lips, and pink on her cheeks, yes, and red, too, when she blush so when John come sometimes. What for Good Spirit do that? Mebbe that bad taste? Now, if Manitou make Fanny's face pretty, why not Fanny make dress pretty for herself with blue and red and pink? Meg no see why. Fanny like flowers, Meg like flowers, Great Spirit like flowers, too. He put them everywhere. He make beautiful green dress for prairies and hills, and He put flowers on them, too. Mebbe that not good taste? Fanny better tell Great Spirit so! She no like to do that, hey? Then what for Meg not put flowers and pretty things on her dress; all over it if she like, as the Great Spirit does the meadows and hills?"

No doubt you will say that her logic was as heathenish as her taste. But she held to it until appeal was made to John. Would one have believed it? John sided with Fanny! Yet not exactly for Fanny's reason. With that justice which is said to be the natural endowment of the male temperament, he soothed Meg with at least a show of assent to her argument. But he told her that the custom was otherwise with white men, who liked to see their women dressed plainly, though prettily. If she put on beads and embroidery, and gauds and trinkets, folk might think her an Indian.

Thereat, Meg abandoned her plan (for was not John her oracle?), and cherished it only in her dreams. But it took a hard tug of her will to get the fancy out of her Indianized brain. It was perhaps well for the force of John's reasoning that she could get no glimpse of a civilized lady dressed for a ball, or, for that matter, of a party of full-dressed civilized gentlemen of the period.

One thing gave Meg and her family unalloyed satisfaction,—the household cooking. From childhood, cooking was Meg's chief delight. The Shawnees had counted her the best cook in the tribe, and had given her a name, which, like a brave's war name, expressed their high sense of her merits. It is musical enough in the Indian tongue, though the best English equivalent one can find for it, is "Queen of the Kettle." Meg was proud of it until she was quite tame, when she ceased to boast of it, for her white friends seemed to think that it had an uncivilized savor. It is true, certain noble ladies of England, who are close to the Queen's person, bear somewhat similar titles, as "Mistress of the Robes," and "Lady of the Bed Chamber." But these, perhaps, are relics of the semi-barbarous days of Merry England.

However, no matter for the name; the fact remained, and of that she was never ashamed, and had no cause to be. It had served her well in her Indian home. Succohanos, her Shawnee father, was a glutton; and Winnecheoh, the old hag his wife, was almost as hearty in her love of the cookery as in her dislike of cooking. Therefore, when the braves sought Meg in marriage, for there were few young bucks who did not covet her skill, to say nothing of her comely person, her plea to be spared this horror, which she had resolved never to submit to, found support in the most sensitive part of the Indian's conscience, his stomach. Succohanos could not reconcile himself again to commit that tender organ to his old squaw's culinary bungling. Therefore he shook his head, and said (the astute diplomat! he knew that much of civilization)—"All right! Succohanos is willing. He will speak to the Queen of the Kettle. But he is afraid she will not mate just now. You must sing very softly and very long in her ear. She loves her own wigwam too well."

When the disappointed suitor came back to unburden his chagrin, Succohanos looked solemn, though fairly chuckling with inward satisfaction, and said: "Wait awhile!" But Shawnee braves are philosophers; they had neither learned to labor nor to wait and betook themselves to other maids more complaisant of their addresses. As to Winnecheoh, she could not endure the thought of going back to the pots in her old age, and at the same time submitting her dainty tooth to her own cookery. Therefore

she encouraged no bucks to come a-courting at her wigwam.

Mack-a-chach, the oldest son, would yield to no warrior of his tribe in valiant deeds as a trencherman, when Meg served as chef. Besides, he had hopes that some day he would install this fair cook in a wigwam of his own. Hence his influence was also on the side of Meg's celibacy. As to Wappatomica, the second son, a youth of eighteen or so, he was Meg's most devoted squire and champion. Not only because he was a good-natured fellow with many good points (for a savage), but because Meg knew so thoroughly how to cater to his robustious boyish appetite that he would fairly have tomahawked the brave who would have dared to deprive the wigwam of her presence and service. Thus the family was unanimous in letting Meg have her way in matrimonial affairs. With the mighty weapons of the kettle, calabash and horn spoon, she had conquered her freedom from the odious yoke of an Indian marriage. Truly, as has been said "the pen is mightier than the sword;" but as truly might it be said, if one dared to say it, the pot is mightier than the pen!

There was one accessory of the art culinary, however, that Meg heartily detested—washing dishes. Give her the materials and the tools, and she would cook the day long with unflagging delight. Only, let someone clear away for her! Her mother liked that kind of work (at least so she said), and Meg, with true filial affection, would not cross her liking.

Not the least novel feature of Meg's new experience was the great change in her relations to the males of her household and the community. In the presence of white men, Meg long kept the feelings of an Indian woman. To the white man, woman was a companion, an object of tender care; as far as frontier exigencies would allow, always to be protected and honored. To the red man, woman was a servant, to plant and cook, to make and mend, to bear children to her warrior and hunter husband. Frontier life gave scant space for formal courtesy; but it kept at least that atmosphere of deference for woman which belongs to civilization.

It was pretty to watch the conflict which the maiden now must wage between the old life of savagery, unconsciously swaying her actions, and the new, nobler life

which began to open before her. Self-suppression, service of, even servility to the male were enthroned with all the force and authority of long habit. How could these at once be dropped from look and speech and manner? How could she learn to take on her the new yoke of subjection to a caretaker? After all, her mind was at times so confused, that she seemed to see in the treatment of the men of the two races the same sense of superiority and sovereignty, only expressed by different methods. Before she was done with it all, she was not quite sure which method was the least agreeable to her, at times.

This was only one of the social problems with which the untutored mind had to grapple. For example, that was a rude experience which came to her on the day for the Testing of the People, not a week after her return home. A drunken quarrel and fight were no novelties to her; and there was nothing complex in her method of dealing with the rioters before her father's house. The whole affair was a simple one from her Indian standpoint; and so continued until her friends began to explain matters from their civilized coign of vantage. To Meg's thoughts the riot was merely a matter of natural male pugnacity plus firewater! How shall one explain the muddle that befell her intellect when her mother tried to make things plain?

"Taxes?" She had not the faintest idea of such matters. "Revenue to support the government?" The phrase had no meaning to her. In vain did friends explain that this meant to pay the officers of the government. What! Meg indignantly exclaimed: Pay your chiefs and warriors? Ha! ha! That was indeed strange, that white warriors must be paid for doing their duty to their tribe! And that any warrior would want wampum and gifts for the honor of being chief and ruler of his nation? Most wonderful! Incomprehensible, that, to a savage mind. And did white men pay their chiefs, medicine men, sages and head warriors for making palaver in the great Council House at Philadelphia? That was the most amusing and amazing of all that she learned as to the uses of revenue. Did not the wisdom of every sage and warrior belong to his tribe? Was not the young brave proud when the day came that his opinion was asked in the Council of his people? Take money for this duty? Hugh! you would find no Shawnee quite so low as that!

But the most puzzling thing about it all was that the trouble came of making fire-water. Meg had decided views on that point, which her Indian experience had taught her. Bless you! she had no more idea of "prohibition" than anybody else a century ago. But if the key of the bottomless pit had been in her keeping, and all the white men's fire-water under her hand, there would have been a swift decanting of it adown that "easy way" to Avernus, over which so many of its victims unhappily have gone. Poor pagan child! She would not have earned a seat in Parliament, or a baronetcy or earldom in Great Britain; or a mayoralty or aldermanship or police captaincy or such matter, in America, had she lived in these enlightened times. To Meg these and many other things were indeed a muddle! Her head ached, and she would give up the puzzle. Would she ever learn the crooked ways of white men? She began to perceive that, in many cases, she must (as the minister had informed her) walk by faith and not by sight.

Walk by faith? So comes into view Meg's religious training. On the Sabbath following her arrival, she went with the family "to church." It did not occur to anyone that her mind was an utter blank concerning public worship. So she walked into the "Great Council House," quite unconscious of the many curious eyes that were turned upon her; a civilized act which her Indian reverence for sacred things would not permit her to indulge or even imagine. Her first great surprise came at the opening psalm. The minister announced the one hundredth Psalm beginning:—

All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;
Him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell,
Come ye before Him and rejoice.

The precentor arose in his little desk before the pulpit, and intoned the first line, Meg following all with absorbed attention. Then a strange thing happened. The profound silence was broken by a mighty shout, which burst at once from the throats of all the people:

"A-aw-ll Pee-cep!—"

Meg sprang to her feet like a startled fawn, and gazed around upon the shouting throng. Her face betrayed the mingled wonder and fear that agitated her. Why should the people raise a war-whoop? A vague terror seized her, and she was tempted to fly, until she saw that all was peaceful around her, and that her own family shouted with the rest. She sank to her feet with burning cheeks; and her mother, seeing that she had made some strange mistake, put her arm around her and whispered: "They are only singing, dear, singing the psalm."

Then Meg was pacified, but little wiser as yet. Few had noticed the maiden's act, except those quite near her seat; some of whom, having had civilized and not Indian training, could not control their faces, and showed signs of merriment. But this first experience gave Meg a disrelish for psalm singing which was long in wearing away.

The remainder of the service passed without incident and almost without interest, as far as Meg was concerned. No word, at least no thought of the sermon, did she comprehend. Yet those who from time to time glanced at the maid were much moved at the signs of rapt attention in her steadfast and reverent attitude. The preacher, too, noted it, drawn by that mysterious fascination which attracts public speakers toward an attentive hearer. She did not shift uneasily in her pew, or glance here and there, or yawn, or play with the pages of Bible or Psalm Book, as many civilized Christians are wont to do. Like an Indian auditor, she gave respectful hearing until the speaker ended his sermon, which passed the hour, that day.

The one morsel of light that reached Meg's mind, came from the Scripture reading. The Gospel lesson was the XVth of St. Luke. The parable of the lost sheep and the parable of the woman's lost coin, and that "pearl of the parables," the Prodigal Son, held her mind enchained to the reader's lips until the story ended. Unconsciously, she threw her own personality into the characters; and especially saw, in the despoiled lad in the far country, her own wretched state when prisoner among the Shawnees. Then came the return home—the good father's welcome—the merry-making—the new clothes—the feasting. Imagination eliminated all the facts foreign to her case, and transfused the incidents with her own happenings, so that no matter what the clergyman read, it was Meg, once lost, now found, that moved through the scenes.

And that good father!—was he not here by her side? Ay, and surely the good mother, too; for Meg supplied that seeming omission in the story. But there was no grudging and grumbling brother, ah no! She dismissed that fellow with scorn; for her brother was dear John, so brave, so generous, so kind!

Behind the imagery, too, although the Image was not clearly limned, moved another and a higher form, even the Great Spirit whom she had learned in her mother's first bedside prayer to know as the Good Father in Heaven. It needed no ministerial finger to point out this Gracious Presence; but the Doctor seemed to bring Him more closely to her mind's eye by the words of explanation that he dropped, here and there, as he read on. She saw, and worshipped with a heart brim full of gratitude for her restoration to a home so sweet, to friends so true, to happiness so great, to a hope which in the dark days of captivity had well nigh been quenched. Perhaps, in the eye of Heaven, there was no more acceptable worship in the Hill Sanctuary, that day, than this simple homage of the untaught maid.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

EN ROUTE TO THE CAMP AT CARLISLE.

The Western Counties' Convention that had met at Parkinson's Ferry, reassembled October 2d at the same place. It was composed of delegates from the various townships of the six counties involved in the anti-excise disorders. The meeting was temperate, loyal and conciliatory. Mr. Findley, a Representative in Congress, and David Reddick were appointed special Deputies to wait upon President Washington, either at Philadelphia, the seat of government, or at Carlisle camp, to assure him of the willing submission of the people, and dissuade him from sending an armed force west of the mountains.

The "Army of the Western Expedition," as it was officially called, was already encamped in several divisions on the eastern foothills of the Alleghenies. The Maryland Brigade, under General Smith, was at Williamsport. The Virginia troops, commanded by General Morgan, the

famous Revolutionary hero of Cowpens, was at Fort Cumberland, on the banks of the Potomac. The brigades of New Jersey, under General Howell, and of Pennsylvania, under Generals Irvine and Chambers, were encamped at Carlisle where Washington had his headquarters.

To Carlisle, therefore, Messrs. Findley and Reddick prepared to go to lay the people's commission before his Excellency. John Latimer had ridden over to the Parkinson's Ferry meeting with a message from his father, and was invited and urged to accompany the Deputies as secretary. John felt it his duty to accept, conditioned upon his father's approval. Luke, who had now so far recovered from the effect of the Testing riot as to be able to go about the house, not only approved, but insisted upon his accepting, and John prepared to set out.

The Deputies had asked him to engage some suitable person to attend the party as guide and general factotum, a post which was forthwith offered to Mr. Andy Burbeck and accepted. The season was the halycon time of the American year. The air was balmy, the trees aflame with autumn colors, and the haze of October hung its veil above hills and valleys.

The beauty of nature may temper human fears and soothe a mind disturbed, but it cannot remove the irritating causes of trouble. The Deputies were weighed down with a sense of their responsibility, a feeling which John fully shared, and to which Andy was not indifferent. Their anxiety was increased by the rumors which met them as they advanced. They heard that the army was in an ungovernable rage against the people of the Western Counties. The soldiers denounced them one and all as guilty, and made mighty threats what they would do when they once got to the rank land of traitors.

One evening the delegation chanced to be belated in reaching Hartley's, a wayside inn beyond Bedford, at which they had meant to put up for the night. The curling smoke of a fire amidst a clump of oaks, marked where a party was bivouaced on the banks of Raystown Branch.

"Why not take pot luck with the campers for the night?" suggested John.

"Will we be welcome?"

"Surely!" was the reply. "Backwoods hospitality is boundless. You will find no true forester so churlish as

to chase the belated traveller or hunter from his camp. But these folks are probably emigrants, and therefore eager to greet strangers who can tell them somewhat about the new land to which they are bound."

"Well, then," said Deputy Findley, "go forward with the guide and reconnoitre."

"Ay," quoth Andy. "It is iver better to look afore you lape." The two galloped to a low rise in the road, whence they got a nearer view of the bivouac.

"They are soldiers!" exclaimed John.

"It's soldiers they are!" echoed Andy. "Baā ccess til it! The army's got intil the mountains a' ready, an' here's the vanguard. Our honorable Deputies may as well turn tail an' get them back to their deputes. A' misdoubt they'll have their labor for their pains. The rubicund is crossed!—as the toper said, when the rim of his drinking cup touched the bridge of his red nose. We're in for a campaign, and Heaven only knows what trouble and losses."

"No, no, Andy; you must be wrong. The army is still safe enough in Carlisle. Our advices make that beyond a doubt. But I can't guess who these fellows are; so we shall take no risk, and wait till the Deputies come up."

These gentlemen concluded to ride boldly forward and take their chances. Coming into the camp, and being halted by the sentinel, they called for the commanding officer. Thereupon who should appear but Lieutenant now Captain Ruel Burd, who greeted John cordially, and gave hearty welcome to the Deputies.

The presence of soldiers west of the mountains was soon explained. Capt. Burd had been sent to Philadelphia on recruiting service for the Army of the Frontier, and had got thus far on his return journey with a battalion of recruits for Wayne's Legion. While Andy looked after the horses, the Deputies were shown to the tent in which they had been assigned quarters, and John fell into conversation with Capt. Burd. He learned that both officers and men lamented the hard luck that had detained them from the excitement and honors of the Indian campaign. Capt. Burd was especially chagrined that such an opportunity for duty and distinction had escaped him.

Perhaps, John suggested, with a smile, there was some compensation in Miss Oldham's presence in the capital city? For his part, there was more than one occasion on

which he would have gladly exchanged his share of the honors of the day for a far less valuable price than a glance of her bright eyes. No doubt, Capt. Burd had seen Miss Oldham, and he ventured to hope had found her well?

Yes, he had seen her often, as she had gone back to Philadelphia shortly after the Bower Hill affair. She was well, and as charming as ever, and had often talked of her exciting western experiences.

John longed to push his queries further, and find out, if he might do so, whether he had any place in these conversations? And if so, what impression Blanche had got as to his unlucky part in the riot? But he would not ask outright, and scorned to seek information by finesse and indirection. Nay, he would not have Capt. Burd suspect that he was thus exercised, though indeed there seemed no reason for that feeling. Should not every true man be concerned to stand well with those whom he esteems? So he reflected, and inwardly chafed; but kept silent upon that point, and changing the subject asked if Gen. Neville was with the army.

Capt. Burd believed that he was, or at least would join it at Bedford and accompany it to Pittsburg. He was naturally highly inflamed against those who had destroyed his home, and caused the banishment of himself and friends. He would not rebuild at his old Bower Hill seat, but had bought on Montour's Island below Pittsburg, and intended to make a home there for his closing years.

The Deputies now joined them, and asked: "What is the feeling in the army toward the Western people?"

"Most unfriendly," was the answer; "especially among the volunteers and substitutes. The militia who responded to the call for their services, have greater sympathy with the people. But even they are in bad humor over the loss involved by absence from farms and business, and are vexed with those who have compelled this sacrifice."

"Do they not understand that only a part of the people have been concerned in the riots and disorders?"

"They are quite ignorant of the details. They count all the population of the Western Survey as insurgents. The Bower Hill fight and Braddock's Field muster have been painted in high colors by orators who stumped the States for volunteers. I think most of the soldiers have an idea that they are to meet a large army of frontier riflemen:

They count on serious work, and many young men have great ambition to distinguish themselves as their fathers did in the war for Independence."

"Can't the officers control their troops?" asked Deputy Findley. "They are men of experience for the most part, and ought to restrain their men from violence."

"No doubt; and they are trying to do it. The majority of the troops consist of men of good character and position; but there is no denying that there is a lot of riff-raff among them, hired substitutes from Philadelphia and vicinity, who are in for the pay and bounty and hope of plunder. They are the chaps who usually start the trouble, and you know how it is in all organized bodies. There is a bond of sympathy and a clannish spirit that leads one to stand by his comrade, even if he is wrong.

"Besides, it always takes some time to get large numbers of men, coming from various sections and conditions, especially when they are out for a short expedition, wrought into homogeneous shape, so that all will respond quickly and freely to one will. I have heard that, at one time, some of the regiments at Carlisle were in such a mutinous temper, that other troops had to be called out to overawe them, and for a time it looked as if they would expend their military ardor upon one another. However, President Washington's arrival put matters to rights, and the firm action of Generals Chambers and Irvine convinced the disorderly that discipline would be enforced."

"What kind of a reception would the Deputies be likely to get?" asked John.

Capt. Burd hesitated. "That will depend upon yourselves," he said, turning to the Deputies. "At all events, gentlemen, you have only to do your duty, as you understand it; and in all times of civil disorder such conduct has its perils as well as its rewards." In that sentiment the Deputies heartily agreed, and resolved to go forward upon their patriotic and merciful errand.

When the drums beat tattoo, the Deputies retired to the tent assigned them as guests of distinction. Andy was led off by the sergeants, and Capt. Burd shared his tent with John. Long after taps had sounded for lights to be quenched, and silence had fallen on the camp, the two young men lay side by side discussing, in low tones, the threatening affairs that overhung the new Republic, with

that happy blending of sympathy and divergence of temper and opinion which gives both interest and satisfaction to conversation. From national events and men they passed to reminiscence; to the lighter news and gossip of army and society; to the charms of forest life; to the bayonet as an effective arm, and Mad Anthony Wayne's use of it against the Indians at Fallen Timbers; to the superiority of the long American rifle for both infantry and cavalry; to the shooting match at Legionville; to—well, to a dozen matters that just bordered upon the one subject that was uppermost in both minds, but which neither cared to touch upon—Blanche Oldham.

Is it not commonly believed that men cannot be generous rivals for the affection of a woman? Is it not held that sexual love is a selfish passion which consumes friendship and all kindly sentiments, and kindles the basilar passions against opposition, and converts human beings, whether male or female, into ravening beasts? "All things are fair in love or war," is a motto so commonly approved, that one expects but halting courtesy to the statement that two men of normal masculinity, and more than average vigor of mind and body, and by habit and profession warriors, could love the same woman, yet cherish towards one another feelings free from malice and prejudice and hostility, and over which no shadow of a dishonorable thought had fallen or could fall.

Here lay two men, sharing the same rude couch, each of whom believed the other to be the only one who could mar his hopes of winning a noble lady's affection. Yet neither one of them would have been guilty of a dishonorable act toward the other, though thereby he could have won the coveted prize. As Capt. Burd and John Latimer talked, that night, and opened up mutual glimpses of character, each saw qualities that seemed to make his rival more formidable. And the two hearts were drawn closer rather than repelled by the revelation. Their common affection seemed to unite them, instead of separating; as kindred bits of steel are joined to one another by the magnet which attracts them both. The interchanges of that evening sealed a friendship that, although severely strained by unexpected events swiftly rushing upon them, was never broken.

It was midnight ere they said good-night, and each

wrapped in his own blanket turned to sleep, lulled by the splash and gurgle of the mountain brook on whose banks their tent was pitched. At last John slept; yet, a new experience for him, his sleep was troubled by dreams. One dream was so vivid that it awoke him. He was sitting up with hands outstretched, and his heart throbbing rapidly. A brand had just fallen from the camp fire with a sharp thud upon the coals and ashes beneath, and kindling by its fall, shot a lurid streak across the tent door. Thereat a night owl darted from a neighboring tree, with a mournful hoo-to-hoo! These sounds made more gruesome and intense the vision that had startled him; it may be they had given bent or even suggestion to it.

It seemed to him, in his dream, that he was walking with his father along the edge of a mountain cliff. Suddenly the ground crumbled beneath their feet, carrying his father with it towards the chasm. He threw himself flat down, and reached forth in frantic effort to save him. In vain! Both men were sinking into the deep gorge. John saw the black depth, and far down the rocks and roaring waters. The horror of death seized upon him. Then a woman's form appeared upon the scene, mysteriously as such things happen in dreams, and laying hands upon him as he was gliding over the brink, pulled him back, and he, clinging to his father, drew him also from peril. He turned to look at his rescuer. It was Blanche Oldham! He tried to utter his thanks, but speech failed him. He held out his arms in an impulse of grateful love. The figure, as by the touch of magic, was transformed into a cloud; and from a cloud again into a human shape; and as he gazed, lo! it was Fanny McCormack that he held in his grasp! He could not sleep again. He cast one glance at Capt. Burd who, with his shapely head resting on one arm and a smile upon his handsome face, slept soundly, and then noiselessly left the tent.

"He is dreaming of love, or honor, or home!" muttered John, as he walked toward the brook. "Brighter dreams than mine, at least! Dreaming? Is there anything in dreams? No! Something in the mess last night didn't agree with me. Yet—hugh!" He shuddered as he thought of the horror of the situation, so real had it all seemed, from which he had been rescued. "Curious, too! I could have sworn that it was Blanche Oldham that saved

us. Yet, when I awoke, it seemed to be Fanny. I wonder if all is well at home?"

The first streakings of dawn were tinging the east. The autumn birds were beginning their matins. John bathed his face and neck and chest in the cool waters of the creek, and swung his naked arms in the air until they were dried. Thus refreshed he sat down upon a mossy boulder and watched the awakening of day until the camp began to stir. The crisp air of the October morning was cool enough to rob the rude camp couch of some of its comfort, and the reveille found few stragglers among officers and men. Soon the work of striking tents, and clearing away for the march filled the air with the pleasant din of breaking camp. Ere it was done the Deputies' party had prepared for their journey, and with thanks, and good words, and warm wishes for mutual welfare the chance companions of the night exchanged farewells.

As they passed the crest of the Blue Ridge, and entered the beautiful and fertile Cumberland Valley, they came upon numerous traces of the army. The wide road was dotted with herds of cattle which Bullock-Master Davis Scarlett was forwarding towards Bedford for the use of the troops. Here and there lines of wagons, freighted with flour and whiskey, soap and salt, and other commissary supplies, plodded along westward over the heavy roadway.

Herdsmen halloed at their charges, and thwacked and prodded them with their goads, and with screams and curses followed them up the trails and byroads into which they were constantly diverging. The wagoners thrashed their teams, and fired at them those volleys of oaths which from time immemorial have been held an essential motor in advancing army trains. Herders and teamsters curiously eyed our travellers, and now and then a question was asked. But for the most part they passed unnoticed.

To their left the South Mountain skirted the valley with its ridge of hazy blue. On the right the North Mountain showed in clearer outline, with McClure's Notch sharply cut against the sky. The road ran almost straight through the Walnut Bottom, which now gives its name to the Great Road as it nears Carlisle. On either side were stately growths of walnut and hickory, and long strips of oak woods straggled across the valley, whose foliage glowed in various shades of yellow and russet red.

The travellers stopped for inquiry and refreshment at a tavern, long ago destroyed by fire, and whose site still bears the name of "Burnt House." But as the capacious stableyard was filled with wagons, and the taproom and premises crowded with teamsters and herders, they pushed on a mile further, and took quarters for the night at a capacious limestone house, in the midst of a grove of silver maple and walnut trees that skirted the roadside. It still stands in good condition, though long since transformed from a tavern to a farmhouse.

No incident of special interest marked the journey until they halted at the tavern. During the last day's travel the air had been thick with rumors of the hostile spirit of the army, part of which had already begun to move westward toward Bedford. Without revealing their official errand the Deputies passed for travellers going to Philadelphia. When the landlord learned that they were from the Western counties, he expressed great alarm, and pressed them to abandon the thought of going to Carlisle.

After consideration, it was agreed that John and Andy should enter the town with a letter from the Deputies to President Washington, explaining the situation, and asking him if they should advance. John was to appear in his uniform and character as one of Wayne's scouts, coming with a message to Gen. Washington, which, it was supposed, would at once disarm suspicion. Andy also assumed the role of a scout and frontier boatman connected with the Western army, and hoped to get on easily enough, as he had done occasional service in both relations.

"Heaven presarve us from fallin' in with Giner'l Niville!" said Andy, as they set forth. "If the old man claps eyes on us, we 'll hardly git out of this scrape with whole skins. Pl'ase God, A' hope he hasn't yit got to Carlisle."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

JOHN LATIMER MEETS WASHINGTON AND HAMILTON.

Carlisle was at that period an important point in the central line of traffic and emigration between the East and the far border. It had all the appearance of a military station. The troops of Pennsylvania and New Jersey were encamped in the Commons or open spaces along the north bank of Le Tort Creek. As John and Andy entered the town, regiments were being mustered for evening dress parade. It was a gay and animated scene; but it had a sad echo within the hearts of the two scouts, who thought of the purpose of this martial display.

The horses were put up at the Black Bear Tavern, a two-story limestone house on Hanover Street, not far from the President's headquarters. John learned that Gen. Washington could not be seen until the evening, and after supper mixed with the crowd of officers who frequented the tavern. Andy had taken pains to make known John's part in the battle of Fallen Timbers, and that he bore a message to the President, discreetly omitting further details. John therefore found himself an object of much interest and no suspicion, and freely satisfied curiosity as to Wayne's army and the Indians. Inquiries about the insurgents which followed, he answered guardedly; and, as far as he could without awakening opposition, tried to soften the officers' feelings toward their fellow citizens of the Western counties. But mindful of his instructions to find out the army sentiment, he rather encouraged others to talk, which they were free enough to do.

"See here!" said Capt. Cuttan Swing, entering the circle in a highly excited state of mind. "Here's a pretty how-de-do! I've just got a Carlisle paper which reports the coming of the rebel Deputies, and their errand to the President. They want, forsooth, to prevent the march of the army to the Monongahela. A pretty pass that would be! After our hard marching and rough fare, our loss of time and business, our sufferings and sacrifices, to lose the satisfaction of meeting the enemy! We won't stand such fooling; not we! Could we once get our hands upon these

Deputies, and all other intriguers and rebel leaders, they should be shot or hung to the first tree!"

"Ay; let us once come face to face with the insurgents!" cried Ensign McKillen, a sallow-cheeked youth with pimples and bow legs. Thereupon he clapped hand to his sword which plainly he had not been used to wear. "By all that's good and bad, I swear there 'd be no need of judges and jury. Let 's only see the men, and we'll skewer 'em!"

Gen. Ledger Bloodson, a little way from this circle of juniors, was venting his displeasure at the President for encouraging, as he had understood he had done, the advances of the Deputies. He walked back and forth before the tavern window, and railed at Washington for his misjudged clemency. "No treaty with traitors!" he cried. "No confabs and no compromises! Powder and ball, sword and bayonet, prison and confiscation,—that's the remedy for insurrection! The President has gone too far in countenancing the insurgents; and he will never recover the popularity he has lost by doing so."

"I say!" exclaimed Lieut. Meneter, turning rather sharply to John. "Mr. ah—Mr. Scout, did you happen to meet these fellows on your way from Fort Pitt?"

"Yes," John answered quietly. "I saw them at a tavern on the road some distance back. I dare say they will soon arrive in town."

"Did you ever hear of such impudence! They oughtn't to be allowed to come into camp. They ought to have their infernal rebel nocks twisted from the nearest tree."

"Well, sir," said John, quietly looking down upon the swaggering blusterer, "you and Gen. Washington for it, then. I understand that these Deputies from the Western Counties are under the special protection of the President. I wouldn't think it wholesome, for my part, to meddle with them, until I had first settled matters with him. Moreover, from what I learn, they come to sue for peace, and make peaceful submission, and therefore have all the privileges of a flag of truce."

It was hard for John to hold his peace, and harder still to disguise his feelings at hearing these babblings of ill-informed men, whose hearts were full of pride and ignorance; and the mouthings of blustering blades who talked of worthy men and women as though they were rats. He longed to prick their inflated braggadocio, and

lest his temper should wax too hot, hastened to withdraw. Throwing over his hunting shirt a long military cloak, he sauntered forth. He walked the streets, and wandered around the camps until the evening dusk admonished him that the time drew near for his interview with the President. Then he turned towards headquarters.

An officer passed him and saluted. "Good evening, Major!" he exclaimed, and checking his pace, added: "Does your regiment move to-morrow?"

John paused, and dropped his cloak, with which he had muffled his face. "Excuse me, sir, did you speak to me?"

The officer stopped, hesitated a moment, and replied: "Certainly I spoke, old fellow! What the deuce's the matter with you? Oh!—I crave your pardon!—I see I was mistaken. I took you for— (John did not catch the name). I ask your pardon." Again saluting, the officer walked on.

John slowly approached Washington's headquarters. His emotions were highly wrought up with the thought of meeting this great man. Since he had been able to think for himself, he had venerated the very name of the Father of his Country. His stainless honor, his blameless character, the quenchless ardor of his patriotism, his dauntless courage, his patience in adversity, his fertility in expedients, his self-sacrifice for his country, his ardent love of liberty,—of these the young man knew, as did all the nation and all the world. To the force and dignity of this noble personality; to the equipoise of all his faculties which gave a fullness of manhood that enabled him to meet all situations with ability, and many with success; to the majesty and purity and immovability of his convictions and purposes,—the colonies owed their independence and the Republic its autonomy.

With all the strength and fervor of his youth, and fine enthusiasm of his nature, John honored and loved this exalted character, the Chief of the American Republic, the worthiest citizen of the world. No wonder that, as he approached the headquarters of the Commander-in-chief, his feet moved more slowly, his heart beat more quickly, and his mind was overawed at the thought that he was soon to stand face to face with Washington.

The headquarters of the President had been fixed in a house adjacent to the residence of Col. Ephraim Blaine, which stood at the northeast angle of the Town Square and

Hanover Street. In the corner house the President and his staff were served with their meals. As Mrs. Blaine was an invalid, Miss Susan Blaine presided at the table, every morning riding in along Green Lane for that hospitable duty from her house on Conodoquinet Creek. The offices of the army headquarters were in the adjacent house, which also was the property of Col. Blaine, and which like its neighbor was a two-story limestone building. Its mahogany stairway and panelled walls gave token that the taste and luxury of the older settlements were already pressing hard upon the borders of civilization.

As John drew near, the sentinel before the door instead of halting him, as he had expected, came to a present arms, and stood as if expecting him to pass on unchallenged. "Strange!" he muttered. "How does this sentinel know me, and that I have liberty to call on his Excellency?" He passed the guard, but with lagging pace as fully expecting to be recalled, and moved on toward the open door, at which a captain in full uniform was in attendance.

Ere John had time to explain his mission, and while fumbling for his letter from the Deputies, the officer spoke. "Good evening, Major! Pass right in. I think Secretary Hamilton is expecting you." So saying, he stepped to one side, and waved John to enter. Then turning to a sentinel who stood before the door to the left of the hall, he bade him admit the gentleman at once.

John seemed as in a dream. What could all this mean? And that title again! What strange mistake was here? Or, was it all a sort of masking to disguise his office as messenger, and conceal the fact of Washington's communication with the Deputies of the Insurgents? A nonsensical thought, that! He must explain,—

But the captain in attendance was already engaged in conversation with some newcomer. The guard before the Secretary's door had thrown it open, and by an impulse that he seemed unable to resist, John was borne on and into the room. At a desk which was lighted by two candles sat a man much below the average height. He was writing, as the door opened, and not looking up at once, John was able to note his appearance.

Though small, he was well made, of light and active build. His head was massive and finely shaped, its symmetry and

poise showing a balanced and forceful mind. His skin had an olive tinge, was almost swart; the eyes were deep set, large, black and full of fire, his nose long and rather sharp; the mouth well shaped, the lips closely set, the jaws strong and firm; the spare, clean-cut features showed penetration and force. Even in repose, as the face was bent down in writing, there was a penetrating aspect that fairly signalled the vigorous and incisive mind within. This was Washington's Secretary of the Treasury, Col. Alexander Hamilton, "The Little Lion," as his friends loved to call him.

John had never seen him before, but he knew him to be one of the most remarkable men of his era, to whom common belief assigned the chief agency in marshalling the Army of the Western Expedition against the insurgents. Even with the President in camp he was believed to be the real motor of the expedition. Next to Washington, John held him to be the greatest man in America. But, although in full sympathy with him and his general political views, he strongly felt that he had given undue prominence to the excise riots, and in pursuit of a favorite theory had welcomed and eagerly embraced, perhaps had even fostered the opportunity to test the civil solidarity and military power of the new Republic.

All this had passed swiftly before John's mind. In a moment the Secretary's face, illumined by the candle light on either side, was lifted up, and the beaming eyes turned upon him. "Oh, it is you, Major. You are on time, as usual. I have just made out an order for—"

Major! There it was again! John's mind was in a whirl of wonder and embarrassment. He would no longer walk in this vain show. With deprecatory movement, he advanced and held forth his letter. He must break the spell! He began to speak, but Secretary Hamilton had already perceived his error.

"Ah, I see I have made a mistake. The room is dimly lighted, and—really—but, the resemblance is striking. You are not—"

"No, Mr. Secretary," John began, as Hamilton paused in his speech. "I am Captain John Latimer, recently serving as a scout with Gen. Wayne, and am here with a letter to his Excellency President Washington, from the honorable Deputies of the people of the Western counties."

"Ah, yes. We have been looking for them, and had

learned that they were close at hand." Hamilton took the offered letter and lifted a small bell to ring for a messenger; but still eyeing John curiously, he repeated, as if speaking to himself: "A striking likeness! Only, this is quite a young man."

He laid the bell down, and with a quick change of expression, said: "You are the Secretary of the Western Deputies, you say. They are in town, I suppose?"

"No, Mr. Secretary; they did not venture to come, on account of the threatening rumors that met them. They are lodged several miles beyond the village, and my errand is to inform the President and ask for suitable protection."

"Hem! the shoe begins to pinch already, does it? One of the Deputies is Mr. Findley, I believe."

John bowed.

"A representative in Congress from the Western countries, is he not?"

"The same."

"Well, the people might have selected a more acceptable representative, at least!" the Secretary remarked, speaking rather pettishly, John thought, for so great a man. "He has a grudge against myself, and has vented his ill will in public letters and otherwise. I dare say, now, he has not spared me to his travelling companions?"

John met Hamilton's penetrating glance with a look in which his surprise at the question was not wholly concealed, but answered steadily. "Not a word, sir, has been spoken in my hearing that you might not have heard with entire content."

"Ah? That is well! Perhaps I am unreasonable to complain. One could hardly expect the Western people to select a friendly delegate."

"Certainly, your Honor," John ventured to remark, "they have every reason to do so; for they send a most friendly message, and have everything at stake upon the answer."

"A friendly message?" the Secretary responded. "Haven't they taken a strange way to show their friendliness? No doubt they begin to see the gulf into which they have been plunging. Well, we shall see! They will have a good opportunity to show their friendliness by helping us bring the chief offenders to justice. But enough of this! No doubt, the President will see you at once, and I

will go with you and present you myself." He rang his little bell, and an orderly appeared.

"Say to his Excellency that, with his consent, Secretary Hamilton will wait upon him at once."

In a few minutes the orderly announced that the President would see the Secretary at his own convenience.

"Come, then!" said Hamilton; and followed by John Latimer, he crossed the broad hallway. The guard threw open the door and John stood in the presence of Washington. The President rose as John was presented, and received him with a gracious manner that dispelled his embarrassment. He carefully read the Deputies' letter, which the Secretary had given him, and a brief consultation followed between the two men. Then the President turned to John. He spoke deliberately, almost slowly. His voice was low but strong and his tones carefully modulated.

"I have asked Col. Hamilton to write a formal answer. But you will say to the Deputies, from me, that they need have no fear of either injury or insult. They will be protected to the utmost extent of my authority; and if any officer or soldier should so far forget himself as to do violence to those who come as commissioners of peace, it will go hard with him. When will you return?"

"I am to await your Excellency's pleasure."

"Then your letter shall be written at once; and, if you please, you may deliver it to-night. I will meet the Deputies to-morrow at ten o'clock. I observe," he continued turning to the note in his hand, "that you were with the army at Fallen Timbers. Were you in the battle?"

"I had that honor, your Excellency."

"To be sure! I observe now that Mr. Findley says (again reading from the note) that you bear honorable testimonials of service upon your person. Ah, I see!" He glanced at the scar which furrowed the young man's face.

"I had the misfortune to receive several slight wounds," said John; and his face glowed with honest pride until his scar looked pale in the contrast. Never, thought he, was war wound so magnificently recompensed as mine!

"When did you leave Wayne's army?"

"I left the last week in August."

"Soon after the battle, then? Your wounds, I suppose, disabled you from duty."

"No, your Excellency; I had another reason, a personal

one. My only sister was stolen by the Indians when a young child, and by a happy Providence I found and recovered her while scouting near a Shawnee village a few days before the battle. As there was little further need of scouts, Gen. Wayne sympathized with my anxiety to restore my sister to her parents, and released me from duty."

The greatest are commonly the most kindly of men, and most keenly alive to the sentiments of common human nature. It was, therefore, not strange that President Washington and Secretary Hamilton should have been touched by this story (though at the time, John thought it an unwonted condescension), and delayed the young man until he had briefly and modestly told how Meg was discovered and reclaimed. By the time the tale was told, a clerk had written the letter to the Deputies, which the President signed and sealed, and dismissed John with a politeness and cordiality which warmed his inmost soul with gratitude, and wrought for that interview a place in his memory as the most honored event of his life.

"Heaven never granted me," said Washington, "the pleasure of feeling a parent's love and anxiety for a child. But I can have some measure of sympathy with your parents, both in their sorrow and their joy. Say to them, from me, that I congratulate them, and share their gratitude to God for His mercy in restoring their daughter."

John bowed low in acknowledgment of these gracious words, then, deeply blushing and halting at first in his speech, he replied: "Sir, these blessings would not have come to us had it not been for the vigorous and successful manner in which your administration planned and supported Gen. Wayne's campaign against the Indians. To the military honor which that campaign has brought, and the blessings of peace which have won the gratitude of the settlers on the far frontier, I beg to add, for my parents and myself, grateful thanks for your high share in bringing to us the greatest joy that has ever come into our lives. May God bless your Excellency, and prosper your administration!"

It seemed a bold thing to do. John often wondered afterward that he had had the hardihood to do it. But his heart was so full that the words would not be stayed.

Washington looked kindly into the young man's face, as he bowed his farewell. "A promising fellow that!" he

said, turning to his Secretary. "I was just such a sturdy youth when his age,—we are nearly the same height, I think,— and knocking about in that Western wilderness. Well, well! There have been great changes since then. It was a rough life, but not unpleasant, and crowded with adventures. But I doubt if I would relish it now!" He looked down upon his portly figure and smiled. Then with a sigh, he murmured: "How heartily I wish this wretched business were done!" He picked a lump of maple sugar candy from a box upon his desk, put it into his mouth, and returned to the routine duties that had occupied him when interrupted.

While John was thus engaged, Andy Burbeck was busy after his own fashion in sounding the sentiment of the camp. He had fallen in with the group of junior officers whose belligerent and braggart words had so vexed John's soul, and having attached himself to them, was soon thoroughly ingratiated in their confidence and good opinion.

On their way from the Commons, they passed an inn whose swinging sign announced that the "Three Jolly Irishmen" had entertainment for man and beast. "By ma faith!" quoth Andy, "a temptin' sign, that! A've a mind to converse a bit with them same jolly countrymen of mine. Come, gintlemin, join me in a health to all jolly good fellows." Just off the room which served as office, taproom and common lounging place, was a smaller room set apart for serving guests in a more retired way. Here Andy gathered his new-found friends, and summoned the barkeeper.

"Call for what ye like, gintlemin, an' no doubt ye 'll like what ye 'll call for. As for maself, whan A'm travellin' abroad, A' usually choice the wines of the country, which in the prisent instance is good Monongahela whuskey. A'll do maself the honor to plidge your aminent valors in a glass of that biverage. An' A'd racommind the same to yourselves. For, as you're a-marchin' to Monongahela to axtarminate rebels and the like, you'll nade for to git acquaint with the chief produc's of the land. Whan a man's engaged in a contravarsey with his neighbor, A've found that there's nothin' like a parsonal knowledge of the subjec' onder dispute. So, gintlemin, here's a glorious andin' to the war in the glorious cause of the same."

The officers had already learned, by a somewhat extended experience, that Andy's advice was good, and that

for the present region, at least, the most wholesome and tasty tippie was the one commended. They therefore all joined Andy's pledge in bumpers of Monongahela whiskey.

"You are Capt. Latimer's guide, I believe you said," remarked Lieut. Allison Meneter, setting down his mug. "And if you please"—this side remark was to the bartender—"I'll take another of the same with a little hot water and sugar. I'd have thought, by Jove!" turning again to Andy, "that one of Wayne's scouts could have gone almost anywhere without a guide."

"True for you, Major," Andy responded. He was careful in addressing his guests to pitch their titles a grade or two above their rank.

"Not major, if you please!" said Lieut. Meneter, but with a mildly deprecatory manner, as one who knows what he would be if he had his rights. "Not major, only lieutenant,—as yet!"

"Well, than, as the Captain says,—for he's a mighty l'arned man, is Capt. John Latimer,—Major *in futuro!* What matters a few months more or less? For major it sartainly will be, in good time. An' here's pledgin' you til a rapid step upward! But, as to Capt. Latimer. That's no place in the whole land, barrin' the s y, it may be, that he wouldn't find the trail til, give him time enough. But, A' h'ard your honor remarkin' a spell back that you were somewhat of a sailor?"

"Yes, yes," said the Lieutenant, stirring his toddy. "A little that way; not much; so-so, only. Now, I never did manage a frigate, but, I daresay—"

"Axactly! That's jist it!" interrupted Andy. "Now, A' dar be sworn, there's not a harbor in the whole say coast that you couldn't manage for to steer intil, give ye time. But an ye were in a hurry to git intil port, you wouldn't fool away a day or two b'atin' about to find the channel, would ye now, Major?"

"To be sure not! I would signal a pilot. Of course, that's the proper thing to do."

"Of coorse!" echoed Andy. "That's jist it. A' see your honor has a highly judgmatical an' nautical mind. Now, a scout's nothin' more nor less nor a land pilot. Turn Capt. John Latimer loose in the Ohio forests, and he would follow his trail an' niver ask a raison why. A'd be nowhar aside o' him. But you see, A've been siveral times along

the trail from Fort Pitt til Carlisle, an' he has niver been wanct. As he was in a thumpin' big hurry to see Prisent Washington, he ast me to go along as guide an' companion; tho' troth, it's more companion nor guide. An' here A' am, gintlemin. Isn't that satisfactory?"

"Quite so!" said Lieut. Meneter.

"Did you meet any insurgents along the way?" asked Ensign Samson McKillen.

"Anny insargents, did ye say, Captain? Lots an' gobs of 'em. That is, folks that they uset fer to call insargents. But—ha! ha! You don't think they's anny left thar now, do ye? Bless my soul, they've h'ard that you'ns is a comin', an'—well, ye'll find ginoowine insargents as sceerce as duck's teeth agin you cross the mountains."

"Cowards!" cried Ensign McKillen, with a tone of a much abused man. "Why don't they stand up and meet us, like men? Here I've just been spoiling for a fight ever since we left the Jersey shore; and d'ye mean to tell me I'm to be disappointed? Not a gun fired, not a sword drawn? Don't tell me so, sir, don't!" And he thumped the table with his mug.

"Well, Captain, it diz seem hard, disn't it?" said Andy in a soothing tone. "But it's jist as A' was a-sayin'. If it's a fight ye're after, ye're barkin' up the wrong tree. If ye can't git up a bit of a row this side the mountains, ye 'll have to go home as demure as a Quaker meetin'."

"That's very odd indeed, sir," said Capt. Cuttan Swing. "Do you mean to say that Gen. Washington and Secretary Hamilton, and all the rest of them, didn't know what they were about when they called out the militia? Would you have us believe that there are no insurgents in the Monongahela country? What has become of them, sir?"

"That A' wull, Colonel, most hearty. It's the honest truth, now, jist betwixt ourselves, you know, that there niver were many of 'em. There were a few of 'em, no doubt, an' some purty rantankerous ones, too. There's Squire Dave Bradford, who's the Beelzebub of the whole affair! The devil's in him bigger no a bull-calf, an' no mistake. But bless my soul, gintlemin, one swallow disn't make a summer, though he can kape up a dale of a twitter. Gim'me a dozen gallant gintlemin like yourselves, an' A'll covenant to clar out ivery armed band in all the Western Survey."

"But what's become of 'em, I say? That's what I want to know," Captain Swing persisted.

"Well, as A' was a-tellin' you, ther' wasn't many of 'em to start with; an' what ther' was, jist picked up their rifles an' have bolted to the Northwest Territory. Yis, gintlemin, jist incontinently sloped! A' darsay, now, if you gintlemin wanted to follow this business up til the bitter ind, ye 'll find some of them bolters willin' to meet you out thar in the Injun country. But unless you'e mighty sure shots, A'd racommind ye to practize a bit, or you 'll likely to come home dead men. But what's the good of rushin' intil disagreeable an' dangerous affairs? For my part I hold til the old sayin' that it's a mighty sight better to be in at the heel of the feast than at the head of the fray. This now suits me better nor bein' knocked over by a rebel's rifle. Jist pass the toddy this way, Major. Thank you. Fill up, gintlemin. Here's confusion to Benedict Arnold, an' all tories and traitors! If ye don't mind, A'll tell ye a bit of a story.

"One of my neighbors is a half-breed German, named Haw—Doteny Haw, the boys call him, because when he's in his cups, an' he's that way more frequent nor he ought to be, he's inclined to drivell an' be overfond of his cup-fellows. It's a bad habit that, Captain. No true gintlemin should iver take more nor's good for him. Pl'ase pass the toddy back to the Major, Captain; it's drougthy wark listenin' to yarns! Well, as A' was a-sayin', one avenin' old Doteny was a-goin' home from the village tavern with jist a weeny bit more nor he could carry stiddy, an' he concluded to cut acrost a patch of corn A'd lately planted. He clumb the fence, an' started cat-a-corner towards my cabin to hit the main road, an' had got half way over the field, when he sees a ghost."

"A ghost?" exclaimed Sergt. Hector Borem. "Ah, that's an uncanny subject!" and he looked uneasily behind him. "I don't fancy ghost stories; but—go on!"

"Fiddlesticks!" cried Ensign McKillen contemptuously. "No sensible man believes in ghosts. I'd just like to see one once!"

"Well, old Doteny saw one that night, for sartin'; as good a ghost as is a-goin' too," Andy continued. "An' he was so scairt that he broke acrost the corn patch like a blooded racer, an' fairly butted in my cabin door athout

stoppin' to lift the latch string. 'Save me, save me!' he cried, an' rushin' in, threw his arms around the first one he came to, which happened to be my wife."

"Ah!" interrupted Lieut. Meneter. "There was method in his madness."

"Well, he got it out then," continued Andy; "an' the most approved method, too; for Peggy started up with a scream, mad as a hornet, an' give him a side-swipe on the head an' shuck him off."

"'Ugh! you old toper!' siz she, a-blowin' her hand; for it smarted with the force of the clout she'd a-givin' him. 'It's a shame to hit an old man like you,' siz she, 'but I was surprised intil it. Old age is honorable, but goodness gracious me! it is sometimes abominable!'"

"But Doteny was too scart to mind the lick, an' ran to me an' caught me round the neck, still cryin, 'Save me! save me! I've seen a ghost!' Not to make the story too long we peacified the old man, at last, an' got his story out'n him."

"'As I was a-comin' through the field,' siz he, 'I h'ard somebody a-callin' my name in a deep, solemn voice that made me shiver all over.'"

"'Did he call you Doteny?' asked Peggy, rather sharply, 'an' did it sober you? An' if it did, I'd racommind you to kape that ghost around handy. An' mebbe you'd loan him out wanct in a while to the neighbors,' siz she, lookin' towards me. For you see, gintlemin, Peggy Burbeck is the best woman in the warld, b-u-t—a leetle spicy with her tongue, at times, when she's het up a bit."

"'No, madam,' siz Doteny, speaking up offended like. 'I'm not drunk. I'm as sober as a jedge, madam!' An' A'm bound to say, gintlemin, that at that partic'lar moment he was, as he oughter be. But rax me the toddy pippin, Mr. McKillen. Thank ye kindly. Ghost stories is droughty wark a-tellin."

"'More nor that,' said Doteny, 'the ghost called me by my own name. *Haw! Haw!* siz he, as plain as could be; an' his voice sounded like it came from the tombs. I turned and saw,—O my!—I saw a great—white—figure a-standin' in the field, spreadin' out its arms toward me. There's a bit of mist a-hangin' low in the field, but the moon is in the first quarter, an' I could see as plain as day.'"

"'How high was the ghost?' asked Peggy."

“Ten feet high if it was an inch,” said Doteny, ‘ay, fifteen feet!’ siz he. ‘It had on a long white fleecy robe, that hung to the ground. It wore a tall crown atop of its head. Its arms waved aloft in the air, an’ in one hand it held an uplifted sword. As I stood there lookin’ an’ tremblin’,’ siz Doteny, ‘an’ sayin’ my prayers as I could best command,—for ‘Good Lord forgive me!’ siz he, ‘I’m a leetle rusty, I confess. But Oh, I’ll do better, I will indade!’ siz he. ‘Jist then, there riz out’n the top of the ghost’s head, an—awful—form like an avil speerit, an’ stretched its black wings aloft.’

“How did you know it was an avil speerit?” asks Peggy.

“Why, plain enough,” siz Doteny. ‘It was jet black; black as Sattan. Good Lord presarve me from ‘im! The avil speerit riz out’n the ghost’s head, an’ grew, an’ grew until it was as big as a barn door. An’ then it flew—right at me—a-callin’ my name in that awful graveyard voice.

“*Haw! Haw!*” siz the speerit.

“At the same time, the ghost turned and waved its sword, which began to burn like the flamin’ sword at the gate of Eden, an’ out of its side poured flashes of fire. Then it, too, started to move towards me an’—”

“An’ you ran!” siz Peggy.

“Ran? Who wouldn’t ‘a run with a ghost and the divil himself after him at onct? You’d ‘a run yourself, Peggy Burbeck, though I bel’ave you’re more’n half a witch—”

“As he was a sp’akin’ this, rather peppery like, there was a noise as of someone a-pullin’ the bobbin’ and rattlin’ the latch, as if to come until the door.

“There they are!” screamed Doteny, clingin’ to me want more. ‘O good Lord! O good Mrs. Burbeck, forgive me, I didn’t mean,—Save me, Andy! Oh, do!’

“Shet up! you blame fool!” siz I. ‘It’s only Elder McK’ag!’ An’ so it was. An’ to tell ye the plain truth, gintlemin, I was mighty glad it was him. For betwixt me an’ you, I began to feel a leetle creepy like, the old fellow was so tarnation ‘arnest. Elder McK’ag,—he’s my father-in-law, gintlemin,—he came in a-laughin’ fit to split.

“What’s the matter, elder?” siz I.

“Why Andy,’ siz he, ‘it ‘ud ‘a made a gravestone laugh to ‘ve seen old Doteny there a-runnin’ away from your

scarecrow down thar in the corn patch, a-makin' the gravel fly, a-hollerin' at ivery jump, as though old Nick was after him.'"

The officers had listened to the story with rapt attention, and if they had confessed the truth, with divers and sundry shivers of body and curdling of blood. So that when the denouement came, there was a sigh of relief vented quite around the circle.

"It was only a scarecrow then?" Sergt. Borem asked in a dubious tone, as though there might be something more gruesome lurking in ambush.

"Jist that, gintlemin!" said Andy. "A worn-out gray shirt of mine stuck on a pole, with its arms stretched out sidewise, an' an ole white hat atop."

"But the evil spirit that came out of the head? What was that?" asked the Sergeant.

"A wise old soldier of a crow, who was a reg'lar veteran in corn stealin'. Havin' found out what a fraud the image was, an' got over the effec' on his imagination, he perched himself on the pole, quite at his aise, until Doteny Haw came along an' scairt him up. Then he flew away with a cuss word or two in the crow language. Now you see Doteny bein' a lettle through other, couldn't quite tell the difference atween 'caw-caw' and his own name, Haw-Haw!"

"And the flaming sword and the flashes of fire?" asked Capt. Cuttan Swing.

"Ha, ha! gintlemin. That's the best of it! I had wrapped tags of tin around the stock that stuck far out'n one arm; and sewed to the sides of the image bits of broken glass an' chainy. So that when the image moved about in the wind, the sun or moon a-shinin' on 'em would flash out and shoo off the birds. That's the whole story, and that's how Ole Doteny Haw saw a ghost out on the Monongahela."

"Well, Mr. Guide," said Lieut. Moneter, "I daresay that's a good ghost story, as ghost stories go. But I'm somewhat puzzled to know where and why it got into our conversation? Somehow I fail to get the point and connection."

"Jist so, Major, jist so!" said Andy. "Thank you for the suggistion. Somehow, as you were a-talkin', a while back, I couldn't help a-thinkin' that this blame whuskey insur-

raction is a good dale like Doteny Haw's ghost. I reckon the Goverment folks out thar in old Philadelphia have seen a heap more nor there iver was to see or will be. Some of 'em appear to have had a mighty bad scare over what you 'll find out, when you come to look at it face to face, is a tarnation big fraud; in fact a kind of insurrectionary scarecrow.

"But, gintlemin, your valor and patriotism are all the same whether or no. So here's to the happy layin' of all onquiet ghosts and avil speerits, rale or fanciful, ceevil or military. An' long life to Giner'l Washington! An', here's Capt. Latimer, jist in time to do the honors til the greatest and the best of livin' rulers. Walk in, Captain!"

John freshly come from his interview with the President, entered the room. Not finding Andy at the "Black Bear," he had easily traced him and his convivial friends to the "Three Jolly Irishmen." He came forward, took the offered cup and with an emotion which thrilled and almost sobered the half-tipsy circle, exclaimed:

"Rise, gentlemen, rise! In the colonial days our fathers always pledged the king while standing. He whom we are now to pledge, is more truly royal, man and ruler, soldier and citizen, than all the crowned heads of Europe.

"WASHINGTON, the Father of his Country!

"Come, Mr. Burbeck, it is time for us to be off. Gentlemen, I have the honor to bid you good-night."

CHAPTER XL.

HOW THE PEOPLES' DEPUTIES FARED WITH THE PRESIDENT.

Before the kitchen window of the Latimer house stood a little table on which Meg was preparing divers mixtures for the evening meal. It was a favorite spot with her, for it not only admitted the fresh air in plenty, which she must have, but gave an outlook upon the yard and lane, thus commanding all approaches to the house. The soft October haze filled the air through which the sun slanted its setting rays, laying patches of mellow color upon the sward as the light twinkled through the yellow and russet maple leaves.

"Here's brother John!" cried Meg. Not even waiting to wipe the flour dust from her brown hands and pink arms, she ran out to give and get the first kiss of welcome.

John, as was his custom, was about to follow his horse to the stable to see him cared for before refreshing himself. "No, no! Dungy do that very well, this evening," said Meg. "You must be weary, poor John! And the cakes are just ready for the griddle. Come away! There, Dungy, you take Marion!"

"As you will, sweetheart. Who could deny such a petitioner? Especially when she pleads on the side of a tired body, vexed mind and ravenous appetite. Ah! if the people had only made you a special deputy, we might have fared better with President Washington. Rub him well, Dungy; and don't feed too soon, for he's hot with fast riding." So saying, John gave over the reins to the negro, who waited with radiant face to greet his young master.

"How are you, uncle? And how are Ladybird and all the rest of your family?"

"De fambly's all hearty, Massa John, t'ank goodness!" Dungy answered. "An' Ladybird she's special peart dese days, kase you know—" He glanced slyly at Meg, whose face was gathering a most becoming redness in the rosy sunset.

"But I don't know," said John, laughing, "not having the gift of second sight. I didn't think Ladybird could be improved. But I daresay Meg has been teaching her some Shawnee tricks. Hey, sister?"

"No, no! No Shawnee for Ladybird! White man's horse good enough for Meg. Ladybird's all the same! But Dungy think she pleased—because—her old master has got back home."

"Oh, I see! And I'm heartily pleased, too!" said John. "I heard in Pittsburg of his safe return with a detachment from Wayne's army. But he is not going to rue the bargain, and take Ladybird back?"

"No, no!" Meg answered quickly. "Brother John know very better nor that. Mor-to-shel-john no Indian giver! He give Ladybird for good an' all."

"Then, maybe it is Ladybird that rues the bargain, and wants to go back to her first love? Fickle jade! I thought the handsome hussy was as much in love with Meg as —"

Further teasing was here stopped by the greetings of mother and father. Then came supper, and more serious matters banished Ladybird and her experiences for the time. John grieved to note that Luke had gained nothing during his absence, but seemed rather to have got thinner and weaker and paler. He flushed up with pleasure at John's arrival, but his buoyancy of spirit was short-lived. His indomitable will seemed broken; although subsequent events proved that it was still capable of vigorous rebound. He had grown gentler and more patient. Never selfish nor inconsiderate in home affairs, he now showed a softness of manner that was rare with him. Although affectionate, and with strong attachments to home, he had never been a demonstrative man. As his wife was lacking in that quality even more than himself, whatever tendency he may have had in early life to display his feelings, was suppressed, and disciplined into a degree of passivity that might have been mistaken for indifference. Now, in her advancing age, Mrs. Polly saw and regretted her error in freezing out by her lack of responsiveness the nature that might have been warmed into greater cordiality. Too late for her; too late for him! Life's habits had hardened around the lines of early days, and the same old barriers of reserve must bide till the end.

Just now she noted that Luke's sorrows and heart conflicts had fretted the barrier thinner than it had ever been before. How gentle and tender his every word, as with a sad smile upon his face he went about, bracing to his duties, but finding them tasks! Still, for her soul's sake, Mrs. Polly could not yield. Only when some breath of passionate grief or anxiety burned like fire in her veins, did the reserve relax, as do ribs of steel before the furnace heat, and the woman's love and unselfish devotion shine forth.

"Now, John, for your story!" said Luke, when the supper was cleared away. The shortening autumn days had shut in the night, and made pleasant a bit of hickory blaze upon the hearth, which Polly thought Luke's wounds required. He lit his pipe and sat in his easy chair, which his wife had placed for him, and got for her reward something more than her accustomed nod, even a "thank you, dear!" with a glance and smile worth a thousand words.

"Andy got home a few days ago," continued Luke, "and has told us somethin' of how you fared. But I'm eager to

know more. An' indade, here's Andy now, jist come in to hear ye, an' help in the tellin'. Good avenin', Mrs. Burbeck! There's a cheer for ye. An' do ye sit down, Andy, an' light your pipe, if ye will, an' kape quiet a bit or as long as ye can, at laste, till the lad spins his yarn."

"Ay, ay, Luke," said Andy. "Thank ye kindly! My pipe's often sarved me for two duties,—smoke; an' fire whan A've had a stumpy one in ma teeth an' the bowl tilted agin my nose to warm it. But here's another duty you give it,—to put a stopper on my gab! Well, my father uset to say, 'childer, let your victuals stop your mouths!' An' baccy's a sort of victuals, A' reckon. Ay, its both mate an' drink at times, an' a good stint of comfort atop of that. There, A'll e'en hold my p'ace, excaptions only excepted. Pole along, Jock, an' A'll sit on deck an' take it aisy."

"I daresay Andy has told you," John began, "that he left me busy helping the Deputies get up the report of their interview with the President. But I've had other duties that kept me occupied. It has been concluded to call the county delegates and other representative citizens to a meeting at Parkinson's Ferry, on the 24th of October, to hear the Deputies' report and take action thereon. We got a scant notice in the Pittsburg Gazette, but they thought it best to send out written circulars and notices, as the population is so scattered. That has kept me working day and night. But we have got word pretty thoroughly distributed, and look for a large attendance. And we hope for a meeting that will satisfy an even more exacting man than President Washington."

"Ay, that is good," said Luke, nodding his warm approval. "Nothin' could be better. An' pl'ase God to spare me, I'll be there to give my word an' vote for obeydiance an' p'ace. Now for your interview with the President. How I would like for til see him agin! Ahbut—it may not be now! Go on, lad!"

John first related his own personal experience, which need not be here repeated. When he told how he had been thrice taken for some one else, apparently some officer in the army well known about headquarters, Luke withdrew his pipe and ejaculated: "Odd enough that, John, especially as you're not an ordinary lookin' chap. Not many six-foot-oners in that army, I take it. Although many of my old Revolutionary Ginerals, like Washington

himself, were pretty sizable men. Did ye git anny track of that Major whom ye favored so?"

"Never heard a word more about him, and saw nobody that in the least seemed to suggest myself. But I was kept too busy to allow much leisure to look for doubles. Why, mother—what's the matter?"

Mrs. Latimer had leaned forward upon her chair with hands clasped to her side, and eyes fixed upon John with almost painful eagerness. "Nothin', my boy, nothin'!" she answered, after a moment's pause. "Jist a little turn that I sometimes have, a kind of sudden stitch in the side like. It's all right now. It comes and goes jist so. P'lase don't mind me, an' go on with your story, lad."

Luke at John's exclamation looked anxiously towards his wife, and though relieved by her reply, said: "Ah, mother, I don't like thim sudden turns. I misdoubt ye've been overwrought lately with care and anxiety about this miserable wound of mine. Cheer up, lass! Don't worrit so much about your old man; he's not worth it."

"Luke Latimer, man, don't spake it! Ye don't know what ye're sayin'. Ye're worth a thousand of your Polly! An' were she a hundred Pollies in one, she'd joyfully give 'em all to win ye back to health and soundness. But this all goes wide of the mark at prisint. We're jist a-kapin' John from his story."

Thus urged, John returned to his narrative. "Deputies Findley and Reddick entered Carlisle, and at the appointed hour met President Washington and were received most graciously. They assured the President that the riotous demonstrations had subsided as rapidly as they had arisen; that the courts of justice were in full operation; that civil functions were entirely undisturbed; that not a single individual could be found in opposition to the execution of the laws. They showed and explained and emphasized the resolutions of the peoples' representatives, expressing allegiance and submission.

"They therefore asked him to countermand the march of the army into the Western counties. Or if it must needs go on, they pressed him to go with it, as the people had serious apprehensions that without his restraining presence the troops would commit excesses."

"Right enough there!" exclaimed Luke. "There niver was an unruly soldier that could hold out afore Washing-

ton. There's a power an' dignity in his prisence that overawes and subdues the warst. One look from Washington would be worth a score of Provost-marshals an' their coorts in soothin' military irritation an' settlin' our ceevil disorders."

"So the Deputies thought," said John, "and urged the point so strongly that the President promised that if he found, after he reached Bedford, that the army required his personal presence, he would accompany it. He spoke freely, was more talkative than I had fancied he would be, for I always thought him a reticent man. He seemed much moved about Western affairs, and sorely grieved and pressed with responsibility. He gave his reasons for calling out the militia, and especially pointed to the injury done, and likely to be done to the cause of liberty and free government throughout the world. Notwithstanding the Deputies' representations, he thought that the resolutions presented by them were not sufficiently unequivocal to justify him in dismissing the army, now that it was assembled, and the expense of organization incurred, and the sacrifices of the farmer and merchant already made by engaging in the expedition. In this judgment (he said) he was supported by some prominent and well-informed citizens of the Western Survey, with whom he had consulted freely. These assured him that the presence of the troops was still required to overawe the outrageous, and stamp out the smouldering embers of insurrection.

"The objects to be attained by the army, said Washington, were the unequivocal assurance of submission to the laws and protection to the revenue officers in the future. The good disposition of the Government, as explained by the United States Commissioners, having been rejected, the march of the troops was necessary, and some atonements would be required for infractions of the law."

"Atonement? What could he mane by that?" said Luke. "It has a bad sound for us. Perhaps, it's right enough that some axamples should be made; but I misdoubt the Prisdent 'll find it a little hard to square that policy with his proclamation of amnesty. I blame the United States Commissioners, I do indade! Their report to the Government was far from the truth. They were misled by Neville an' his clan. Their fears axaggerated

the facts sadly. But it was jist as I feared, an' as I telled our folk. The great majority of 'em who didn't vote at all, thinkin' they had no occasion, were set down as sulky an' rebellious, an' counted with the 'nays.' It was unfair, unfair!—but, perhaps, it was natural."

"Nachel!" Andy vociferated. "Ay, in the auld country sance. It was pure idiocy! Along of sich shallow-pated clods as Dave Dandruff on one hand, and sich pious old impracticables as Elder Lowe on t'other, we've been cast 'tween the divil and the deep say. One class niver seems to understand that curses like chickens 'll come home to roost; and t'other are most everlastin' sure to cut off their nose to spite their face."

"But, Andy love," remarked Peggy, "don't ye think, now," and a roguish twinkle lit up her black eyes, "that your screed is jist a little bit like Sattan rebukin' sin? The pot can't say black to the kittle, Andy dear, ye know?"

"Ay, Peggy darlint, but it can! As A've often had occasion to obsarve in listenin' til your swate discourse of an avenin', whan we're all our lones. But go on, Capt'n Jock; A' belave she's r'ally got the better of me this time; the warse luck for us both!"

"The lateness of the season (the President declared) made it impossible to delay the march for further negotiations. Should the army now pause, he feared that the flame of insurrection would spread to other points. He admitted that there were some disorderly companies in the army, and that some disorders had been committed on the march to Carlisle. But he had given up the offenders to the civil power of Pennsylvania, and this would continue to be his policy. Judge Peters of the United States Court, Marshal Lenox and Prosecutor Rawle accompanied the army, and would go with them to the West to try all cases according to the forms of civil law.

"He assured the Deputies that he would provide, by dispersing disorderly companies among better troops, or otherwise, that they should be kept under strict subordination, and that in every instance where infractions of the law were made by soldiers, they should be subjected to punishment. He further declared that the army should not consider itself as judge or executioner of the laws, but as employed to support the proper authorities in the execution of them."

"Ay, ay! That's the true doctrine!" exclaimed Luke. "If they'll only abide by that faithfully, an' let the ceevil laws do their wark, we'll be safe enough."

"There's nothin' the matter with the doctrine," remarked Andy, "but the pinch 'ill come in the practice. The proof of the puddin' is iver in the atein'; an' there'll be manny a wry face afore we lick the platter, A'm a-thinkin'. A' mind wanct, Luke, whan A' had steered your keel boat onto a sand bar in the Ohio River, that A' argyed with you that A'd steered her all right an' accordin' to instructions."

"Trust ye for that, my dear!" interrupted Mrs. Peggy. "The king can do no wrong, the king an'—Andy Burbeck!"

"That's quite right!" Andy retorted. "Faith, what's the use o' kapein' sich good company, said the knife to the steel, if one can't git sharpened up now an' thin. It 'ud be a shame til your pious axample, if A' didn't appropriate some of your vartues, Peggy darlint. But you anter-rup'ed at a dilicate p'int. As A' was a-sayin', Luke, A' tried to threep ye down that A'd steered the boat all right and by the most correc' principles.

"'Ay, Andy,' siz you, 'the principle is correc' enough. Theoretically, we're all right, but practically we're on a sand bar!"

"That's my opeenion of the sitooation in the Western counties if the soldiers git in here 'ithout the Prisident to control 'em. Theoretically, Judge Peters and Marshal Lenox and Prosecuting Attorney Rawle will represent the ceevil powers. Practically, Secretary Hamilton an' the army giner'ls 'll manage an' infloouce the whole business. A ceevil coort supported by bayonets 'll be a coort martial, call it by what name ye wull. An' the Lord save us from dragoon law! A' sampled a lot of them folk down at Carlisle, and if the authority goes to sich as thim, it'll fare ill with the people. Put a beggar on horseback an' he'll ride—wull, he won't ride to Heaven, annyhow."

"Ay, man!" said Luke, sadly; and John went on with his story.

"The President regretted that he could not accompany the army west, as his presence was necessary in Philadelphia to prepare for the approaching meeting of Congress. He had tried to impress the officers with a proper sense of

the importance of submitting to the laws; and that unless they did so, the last resort of a Republican government would be defeated. The expedition had been a costly one, and he hoped some good might grow out of it to console if not to compensate them. We have made a Republican form of government and enacted laws under it, yet we have heretofore given no testimony to the world of being able or willing to support our government and laws. This is the first instance of the kind since the commencement of the government, and he had thought it his duty, as President, to bring out such a force as would not only be sufficient to subdue the insurgents, if they made resistance, but to crush to atoms any opposition that might arise in another corner.

"This, said the President, would operate in favor of humanity by effectively discouraging any that might be otherwise disposed, from provoking bloodshed. In the final result, it might teach the citizens of the Republic to be more cautious of writing and speaking in such a manner of the measures of the Government as might tend to inflame the people. It would also convince other nations that we could defend ourselves."

"There it is, John; jist as I axpected!" Luke exclaimed; "an' hav said manny a time. Giner'l Washington is badly advised in all this matter. Secretary Hamilton has put that bee in the Prisident's bonnet, I'll lay a pretty penny. It's a favoryte crotchet with him, that a new gover'ment can't be regarded as stable till it has proved its unity an' force by a war of some sort. Unfort'nately we've furnished the opportunity, an' he manes to experiment on us. But, it's absurd! Surely Giner'l Washington's too good a soldier not to know that there's not a single armed man, let alone an organized force, to oppose his army. It's a military farce, an' nothin' short of it, to march fifteen thousand soldiers over the mountains on sich an expedition. Nothin' but some sich idea of the ceevil importance of the movement would justify it. It's jist a gran' demonstration to t'ach the world an' oursilves that we're a nation an' not a rope of sand. It may be good statesmanship; the Lord only knows that! But I'm sartin it's a costly kind of polemical school t'achin', an' mighty poor soldierin'. However, we've made our bed, an' I reckon we've got to lie in it. Go on, lad; let's hear all the story."

“Secretary Hamilton was present during the interview, and took part in the conversation. The Deputies not being able to get better terms, must perforce be content. But they were especially grateful that the President at all their interviews authorized them to assure their fellow citizens who had sheltered themselves under the faith of the Government by duly accepting the amnesty, that not a hair of their heads should be injured, let their crimes have been ever so great.”

The evening had well advanced ere John’s report of the Carlisle interview had ended; that is, it was nine o’clock. The art of turning night into day flourishes ill in the glimmer of tallow candles. It needs high artificial lights for its development. Our pioneers were therefore quite ready for bed when John had finished his tale and the others their comments upon it. Luke especially found that the recollections, emotions and anxieties stirred up by the narration had wrought like physical labor to weary him. Mrs. Polly noticed this, and dismissed her guests as hastily as comported with hospitality.

“It’s a new experience for Luke, poor dear!” she confided to Mrs. Burbeck. “He’s jist l’arnin’ what it is to be dreened dry of body power through the narves. I niver dr’amed afore, said he, that one’s legs an’ arems could git w’aker and wearier by jist thinkin’ an’ feelin’ an’ frettin’ nor by drudgin’ in the field or trampin’ in the forest. So jist say good night, Peggy, an’ git Andy off with ye, an’ thank ye kindly.”

“Good night, fr’inds, good night!” said Luke. “It’s some comfort at laste to know the warst an’ prepare for it. Better a finger off than aye a-waggin’. The long an’ short of our case is, that the army is comin’ intil the West an’ Washington is not. The army brings with it judicial machinery to hale an’ harry the people an’ drag them from their vicinage to Philadelphia for trial. An’ Secretary Hamilton comes for til operate the machine, with Giner’l Neville as chief accuser an’ armed soldiers to axecute policy an’ process. It looks black for us, an’ that’s the plain truth. But there’s a silver linin’ to the cloud. There niver was a night so dark that the sunrise didn’t follow it. Let us hope for the best, and trust in Him who’s aboon us all! Good night!

“Now, lad,” he added, turning to John, as Mr. and Mrs.

Burbeck retired, "tak' the Buk, an' gie us a morsel o' comfort out of the ninety-first Psalm, an' then we 'll put ourselves intil the hands of Him 'ithout Whom no sparrow can fall."

CHAPTER XLI.

MEG LATIMER MAKES FURTHER PROGRESS IN CIVILIZATION.

The one sad feature in the home-coming of John and Meg Latimer was their visit to Indian Rocks. The few changes wrought since Meg's capture had not altered the bold outlines of the scenery. She looked up the beetling side of the overtowering hill. She saw the great walnut with its gnarled root jutting over the bank. She saw the rushing river, the island, the riffled rapids, the lush bottom land beyond. One thing after another, one thing with another came thronging up from the caverns of memory, thrown open by the mysterious power of association, until her infant days seemed to live again. But John's stopping at this place on his homeward march was not to get further proofs of Meg's identity, nor to satisfy her longing to revisit the scenes of childhood, but to perform one of the saddest offices of friendship. As far as Panther and Featherfoot had a permanent place of abode, one could scarcely call it home, it was on the little island, known among the Mingoos as "Pictured Rock Island." Luke Latimer and his father had called it "Featherfoot's Island" since the day they had rescued the young Indian squaw from the flooded river just off its foot. There, in their wigwam, a snug and secluded retreat, Featherfoot now awaited the return from the war of him, who, alas, should come no more.

Standing upon the bank, John called across the narrow space of swift-running water between the island and the shore. Soon Featherfoot appeared, having noted the friendly hail, and leaping into her canoe, came to where John stood. There was a look in her eyes of keen and painful quest, which told that already she had anticipated evil tidings. Had not the Young Oak come without Panther? Ere the canoe touched the bank, had she not recognized her husband's rifle and pouch and belt in John's hands? Well she knew that had her Panther been alive,

his hand alone would have borne them. She sprang forth with a cry and stood trembling, heedless of the boat, which would have drifted away had not Meg jumped quickly to the rescue, and brought it back.

John silently laid the warrior's trophies within the widow's hands; then with as few words as might be, he told the story, the hardest, saddest duty that his young life had known. Ere it was ended, Meg came softly to Featherfoot's side, and put her arms around her. The matron sank down upon the rock,—a great slanting rock it was, which thereafter was known as "Featherfoot's Woe,"—and with knees doubled to body began her wail for the dead. With no spoken word, Meg crouched at her side, and rocking back and forth in cadence with the swaying of her mourning sister, joined in the lament. John silently moved away and left the two women together, knowing that in grief like this, next to Heaven's Comforter, there is no consoler like a tender hearted woman.

By and by he came back and gently led Meg away. She had made herself known to the mourner, John never could understand just how, although pleased that it was done. But ere going, he bade Featherfoot remember that his father's home would always be hers, whenever and as long as she chose to claim it. A month thereafter Featherfoot entered the kitchen door of Luke Latimer's cabin, and quietly sat down in the corner of the great fireplace where Mrs. Polly and Meg were preparing the evening meal. Few words passed until the keen edge of her grief, whetted anew by the sight of her white friends, had somewhat worn away. Then the Indian woman spoke.

She had left her wigwam on Featherfoot's Island, she said. She could no longer bear its loneliness now that the hope of her love's coming had gone out forever. The birds, whether in their day songs or their night calls, gave forth only mournful notes that saddened her. For what whistle or trill, or twitter or cackle, or caw or hoot, or other note among them all, had not Panther or his Featherfoot deftly mimicked, and used as signals wherewith to talk with one another? This one was for greeting, that for good-bye. One was for warning, another for safety. There was a call for fishing; for hunting; to bring boat, rifle or bow; to tell of good luck or bad; to give notice that venison was coming to the wigwam from the forest, or wild

turkey or woodcock from the brush, or fish from the river; or to tell that her brave came back victorious from the warpath. Oh, what was there in all their long life together, that two hearts needed to tell, that they had not taught one another to tell in the well-feigned language of birds, beasts and insects? Ay, and some notes were for love, only for love; sweet signals to cheer and comfort, and say to each other that they waited and longed for love's meeting.

Alas! she could not bear it! The woods and waters now gave forth no sounds of joy. Everything told of loss, of sorrow, of utter loneliness. Children the Great Spirit had never given them. Panther was her all; and Panther was gone from her forever. She would never hear the dip of his paddle in the river, nor the sound of his footfall on the grass, nor the crack of his rifle in the woods. They would never walk the forest in the moonlight, nor sit by the camp-fire in the autumn evening. She could never cook his game, while he sat on the rocks hardby and rounded his arrow shafts. She could never spread his couch of soft skins; never hoe the little patch of green corn, with her heart singing gladly, the while, over the thought that her brave would relish the tender green roasting ears, or the savory succotash, or yellow ash cake. Lonely, lonely!

Then she thought of her white friends, the friends of her dead, and resolved to come away. Her wigwam and some of her things she had sold to neighboring settlers, who would also bring to her what she wished to save. She had come. She knew she would be welcome. She would stay until her heart was healed, or until she might join her lost warrior in the Happy Hunting Grounds. Luke gave her a hearty welcome. Whilst he had a cabin, Featherfoot should have a home. Mrs. Polly, apart from her sympathy with her husband, had reasons of her own for welcoming her Indian friend, although there was scant room in the house since Meg had come. But Featherfoot settled that matter to the content of all, by bidding Luke pitch a tent in the yard, and let her dwell therein. This was done, and Featherfoot's lodge was made in a quiet nook beneath a sugar maple.

Here Meg Latimer often came, and among all her new-found friends none helped her more, in mastering the mys-

teries of her new life, than Featherfoot. With her wider experience of white men's ways, and her full knowledge of Indian use and wont, she was an apt mediator for Meg, and interpreted for her many things that had sorely vexed her mind. It was wonderful how much simpler perplexing matters seemed when viewed through the mediatorial atmosphere of this common sympathy. There were matters that she wanted cleared up, even after all explanation, and which she felt ashamed to ask her family about and expose her ignorance. But she had no such feeling with Featherfoot, to whom she could go as freely as one child goes to another in like case.

With all the fullness of Meg's joy in the new life, there were times when old habits drew her away with almost resistless force. The freedom of the forest, the unfettered liberty of savage life, have a charm to most healthy organisms. Civilized man easily reverts to the nomad. His natural Eden is not a walled town but a garden. At his highest point of culture he keeps within him traces of his original estate, and when opportunity serves throws off the trammels of conventional society, and gladly becomes for a season, at least, a dweller in tents, and runs wild in some mountain or seaside camp. One can therefore easily understand Meg's recurring moods and intense longing for escape from the galling and checks of civilized life. At such times, she would mount Ladybird and ride away into the wildest tracts surrounding the settlements.

The spirited mare seemed to catch her mistress's mood, and as though in sympathy with the inward ferment, would dash along at full speed. Many a farmer would pause in the field, and many a woman would gaze from the cabin door, as rider and steed swept by like the wind, and wonder what and who it could be? Sometimes Meg fairly wore off her mood by the exhilaration of this motion. But again she would halt in the virgin forest, and picketing Ladybird, would sit for hours in solitude, and loll about, and run and climb, or dose upon a mossy hummock, until the tumult was quieted, and then gallop home pacified.

On one of these excursions, while rapidly passing a large cleared field, Ladybird slackened her speed and uttered a kindly whinny. Meg, though surprised, thought the greeting for herself, and rousing from her moody silence, patted the creature's neck and spoke pet words, cooing at her as

a mother to her child. But Ladybird turned her face towards the clearing and whinnied again, whereat an answering neigh came from the field, in which, as Meg looked, she saw five or six horses standing with their fine heads erect, and their eyes upon the road. A moment's look, and off they pranced with switching tails and tossing manes, until stopped by the Virginia rail fence. There they halted and gave forth their greetings; and thence, as Meg urged on her steed, followed along the zig-zag line to the corner, where they stood in a bunch and craned their necks across the upper rail, and snorted and whinnied vigorously.

"Foolish Ladybird!" said Meg, shaking the reins and lovingly chiding the mare, who was trembling with excitement. "Are you so lonely, then? Maybe, like your mistress, you too sometimes yearn for the freedom of open fields and woods. Would you like to run wild awhile, dear? Ah, no doubt, it would be nice! But we must get on now; we cannot stop here. Get up, Ladybird!"

But the mare instead of getting on, dropped into a walk and began to limp.

"Ah, poor Ladybird!" cried the maid; "is it that? Foolish, bad Meg! to think she was lonely, and would stop for a lot of whinnying horses in a field! What could have hurt my pet?" She leaned over the saddle, the horse still limping along, to see where the lameness was. Then thinking that a small stone had got into her shoe, she dismounted and began to examine the foot.

Now a chorus of equine farewells, vibrating with intense longing, came from the field into the wooded clump where Meg had halted. Ladybird could contain herself no longer, but withdrew her foot, yet gently, from Meg's hands, and turning sharply about, cantered back to the fence corner, and was soon rubbing noses with her friendly congeners. But now, to Meg's amazement, she moved without a trace of limping! Her lameness was gone! Meg was so taken aback by this unexpected act, that she stood gazing after her runaway with a blank countenance, until the truth dawned upon her.

"O wicked Ladybird!" she exclaimed. "Who would think you play possum that way, and run away from your Meg? Hah! that not do at all!"

She darted down the road, and overtaking the fugitive, snatched at the bridle, assailing her the while with re-

proaches. But Ladybird had not yet finished her romp, and jerked back her head, and sidling away from her mistress, turned and trotted along the fence, keeping neck-and-crop with the bunch of field horses within, who startled by Meg's approach, had fled from their corner. But the maiden's blood was now up, and resolved to regain her mare, and have no more shilly-shallying, she started after her in full run.

She did not rely upon her nimbleness, though so fleet of foot that she could hold by Ladybird's bridle and keep up with her at a quick gallop. She had noted, with her keen eye for all natural features, that the fence made an elbow against a thick clump of underbrush that skirted the road, and that Ladybird, following her escort, would run into the pocket formed by the outside of the fence and the inner edge of the chaparral. Down this pocket Meg ran, knowing that she would soon have her fugitive caged and headed off.

But here again she had reckoned without her host. The mare seeing the trap into which she had run, deliberately chose the lowest panel, and thrusting her neck beneath the rider rail, lifted it from the cross stakes on which it rested, and jumped the fence into the field. Then began a gay frolic, with much interchange of horse sympathy and how-de-dos, and, who knows? perhaps of news as well. Meg not disheartened, though discouraged and vexed, climbed the fence and paused to consider the situation.

Just then, a man appeared running along the lane that issued into the opposite end of the field. He let down the bars, and gave a peculiar halloo, followed by a long inflected whistle. Meg was startled, for it was the very quest-call that Mort Sheldon had taught her with which to summon Ladybird, and never until that day had it failed to bring the faithful animal to her side. However the man came to know the call, it acted like a charm. The whole bunch of horses stopped their romping and trotted up to the signalist. Even Ladybird, although she hesitated, and turned her face towards Meg, and seemed to feel some compunction and relenting, at last slowly followed, and in a few moments was securely held in the man's grasp. She was greeted with vociferous chiding:

"You jade, how dare you treat your mistress so? You've disgraced yourself, and put shame upon your trainin'.

"You're a treacherous and frisky piece!" So saying, he cuffed her ears soundly, and laid his palm with a thumping whack upon her flank. "Now go back and tell her how shamed you be!" So saying, he turned her loose with another smart whack upon her wethers.

Meg who heard and saw this, as she ran toward the mare, expected to see the creature frantic with rage; for she would not bear the touch of spur or stick or whip from anyone, but was made fairly wild thereby. Yet, here she came, marvel of marvels! with head bowed as in genuine contrition, walking slowly and demurely to meet her mistress. Staying not for further question of these wonders, Meg threw her arms around her neck.

"Oh, Ladybird, Ladybird!" she cried, "how could you treat Meg so? What for you do it? You bad beauty! You like prodigal boy the Bible tell about that run away from home. You get beating too, hey? Ah! you no like that pretty well! But you come back, and be no more bad, and Meg 'll forgive all. Oh, you bad beauty!"

The farmer now came up and touched his hat. "Good mornin', Miss Latimer," he said. "I'm sorry for your trouble with the mare, and mortal shamed of the way she sarved you."

"You know Ladybird pretty well!" interrupted Meg, venting her surprise at once. "How come that?"

"Wall, yis, ruther so. I reckon I oughter 't any rate, seein's I raised her from a colt, Mr. Sheldon an' me. An' I calk'late that's what give rise to the trouble jest neow. She's not been hyer sence the boss went off to the war with her. An' them's her mother and sisters, all on 'em," nodding to the horses who had now come up, and stood in a bunch with eager eyes and switching tails, seeming to follow the conversation. "An' a likelier lot of brood mares isn't to be found this side the mountings. I reckon we'd oughter allow some for that. It was a big temptation for a young thing like her, to come back hum and not git a chance to say howdy? Hey, Ladybird, you jade!" He patted the mare kindly, who rubbed her nose gratefully against his palm.

"But she hadn't oughter done it, no way; an' in truth I didn't think she would 'a done it. But, shucks! Miss, horses is a heap like folks, anyway you fix it. I've raised a power of 'em in my time, an' for all the world a

frisky young mare is jes' like a frisky young maid. You can't al'ays tell what's workin' inside their noddles. Take 'em by and large, they're pritty stiddy, if so be they're trained right. But the fust thing you know, they fly off the handle, and there you are! An' they ain't thar!"

By this time Meg had mounted Ladybird, and jogged along beside the farmer, who led the way through the open bars adown the lane. It was bordered on either side by thrifty young fruit trees. Ladybird's friends followed a few yards behind, and Meg laughed heartily to see the procession coming, walking solemnly one after another as at a funeral. She felt her heart warm towards Nathan Lane, for so the man was called, who had come to her help so effectively.

He was a Yankee, as New Englanders were commonly called in that section, a son of a Cape Ann sea captain. He was of medium size; not lanky as the typical downeaster is supposed to be, though lithe and sinewy; with broad chest and slightly stooping shoulders. He had a large head, and a keen and kindly face flanked by side whiskers, and shaded by a yellow rye straw hat with a broad flap. He had drifted West with the emigrants to the Connecticut Reserve in Ohio, and "found port" as he said, with Mr. Sheldon, whom he had served for several years as farmer, or foreman and man of all work.

He had developed strong points as a stock breeder, and was almost as apt in training horses as Sheldon himself. Among the settlers he went by the name of Passon,— "Passon Nathan." Some said because of his fondness for moralizing on all subjects, and all sorts and conditions of men; others, because of his supposed clerical appearance when dressed in the Sunday suit of black which he affected. Others maintained, with a better show of reason, that his nickname was due to the fact that he was continually arguing against parsons!

That he had got Meg out of her trouble, was much to her. That he was the trainer of Ladybird was more. That he was Mort Sheldon's man was most of all. Over and above all this, she was thoroughly pleased with his way of speaking of horses as though they were human. She had imbibed the Indian belief that the warrior's favorite horse and dog would share with him the Happy Hunting Ground. She had been in high dudgeon one

day at Dr. McMillan, for doubting that Ladybird had a soul. The Doctor had begun the duty of teaching her religion, and his text-book, of course, was the Shorter Catechism, of which we shall have more to say presently. He had got as far as "God's works of Providence," the answer to which Meg well understood, in a general way, and cordially assented to. She was especially pleased with the thought that God's Providence includes "the preserving and governing all his creatures and all their actions."

"That means big creatures?" she asked, "deer and bear, and horses, and cows?"

"Yes, no doubt!" the Doctor replied, but with some hesitation.

"That mean little creatures, too?"

"Certainly! That is to say—hem! yes,—I expect so!"

"That mean ants, and spiders, and bees and—"

"Oh, yes!" exclaimed the Doctor, whose rather stately intellect hardly kept pace with Meg's rapid questions. "Beasts and birds and creeping things were created for man's use; and as far as they serve that end of their creation, they are under God's government. Yes, yes; no doubt!" But the manner in which the good minister repeated these closing words, indicated that such an inference from the familiar answer was wholly new to him.

To this Meg demurred, and put in a plea for all manner of living things, wild and tame, as having rights and privileges of their own in creation. She thought they shared the Great Spirit's concern quite independently of man and his affairs. In her broken English she tried to hold her own with the Doctor, and argued that if all living creatures and all their actions, no matter how trivial, shared with man the Providence of God, they might well have part with him in the future life.

"Paganism, my child, rank paganism!" the Doctor averred with more warmth than the occasion seemed to require. "Would you put brute beasts on a level with a child of God, bought with the blood of the Covenant? The Scriptures have naught to say of horses and dogs being elected to eternal life, to say nothing of such base creatures as ants and spiders and flies, and such like."

"Oh, that nothing!" Meg responded with a confidence whose childlike simplicity alone protected her from the sturdy theologian's grave displeasure. No man or woman

in all the parish would have dared to flout so airily his judgment on such a matter. "That nothing at all! You suppose Great Spirit tell all He knows? He has kept many things from the red man; mebbe He keep something from the white man, too! Indian chief has his secrets. What for he blab everything he mean to do? That spoil all! Indian maiden have her secrets, too; and she keep them in her heart very close till time comes to tell. Mebbe Doctor-preacher have his secrets, too. He very wise chief; and his people sometimes very foolish, like poor Meg. Suppose he tell all he know? They no understand! Better keep back a little. By 'n by they get a little more! Now, Meg think mebbe Great Spirit have his secrets, too. He tell some to red man; some to black man. He tell great many to white man in the Good Book. But mebbe He tell some more after while. Mebbe He no tell at all! Mebbe He leave us to find that out in Heaven. P'raps that great surprise. We come to Heaven. There are pretty houses, and trees, and flowers, and birds, and butterflies, and horses, and cows. And Meg find Ladybird! Ah! that great surprise, and great happy, too! What you suppose?"

The Doctor did not have to wait for Heaven to get a great surprise; he had it there and then. He was acute enough to see the sweet reasonableness of Meg's argument, but oh, the innovation of it! He smiled as he thought what his old Princeton professors and the Eastern presbyters would say to such theology?

"My child," he replied, "we must not suppose in such matters, nor be wise above what is written." His warm heart went out kindly and pityingly towards the maid whose mind was still in the shackles of paganism. "Don't think of it, dear child! It is degrading to our ideas of Heaven and immortality."

Meg yielded the argument, but held to her opinion. She saw no reason why, if this world was so much happier to her because of Ladybird, the spirit world might not also be happier because of a spirit Ladybird. Therefore, encouraged by the reply of Mr. Nathan Lane, she laid the case before that gentleman. Nathan was in his element when dealing with such questions, and plunged with zest into the subject.

"Neow, Miss Latimer, I quite agree with you. The Doctor is a most worthy man, an' 'parnt in Scriptur', an' all

that. He's a powerful theologian, and has the five p'int of Calvinism at his finger's eends, an' several p'int of over-plus, I allow. But, bless your pretty face, when it comes to human natur', an' specially to brute natur', shucks! he has a heap to l'arn. My mother, God bless her! use tuh say that religion was mixed a deal like her receipt for cup cake—one of butter, two of sugar, three of flour and four aigs. One of theology, says she, two of human natur', three of downright honesty, and four of charity. Beat 'em up well with sound common sense, says she, an' there's a religion good enough for a Christian or anybody else. Neow, you see Miss, the Doctor hes the theology in good heft, an' maybe some of the other ingrejents, too. But he's powerful short on human natur'.

"But hyur we be at the barn. Jes' you dismount, and rest yourself a spell. These girths need a bit tightenin' an' I reckon Ladybird 'ud be none the worse of hevin' a leetle call with her old cronies. That's womanlike, you know. We'll jes' let 'em drink together out of the barnyard trough, and rub noses and gossip friendly while they drink, w'ich is hoss natur' as well as human natur'. Especially in females, who love to drink tea and gossip together. An' men's jes' the same, only changin' bitters for tea. An' hosses bein' more sensible than either, an' nigher the heart of natur', 'll grow sociable over a draught of pure spring water, or a lush nip of juicy grass or meadow hay."

CHAPTER XLII.

DR. MCMILLAN HAS A LESSON IN FOREIGN MISSIONS.

Meg dismounted as requested. She doubted if Ladybird needed refreshment or further social satisfaction; and was sure that she needed no help to right her riding outfit. But then, as she said, she would like to hear Nathan Lane's opinion on the subject of animal immortality. Besides, as she did not say, she longed to hear some word about Mort Sheldon, which she hoped Nathan might drop.

Moreover, she had not yet finished her quiet survey of the farm buildings. She noted the large barn with one gable banked against a hillslope and a raised roadway

through the double doors into the barn floor, with deep mows on either side bursting with fragrant hay. Beneath were a number of roomy stalls for horses and cattle, all as clean and sweet as fresh clover. These and the hay ricks in the stable yard, and even the barn fences, showed white with a wash of slaked lime. Just beyond the corner of the barn, among its embowering trees of black walnut, she caught a glimpse of a capacious cabin of hewn logs, white-washed like the barn, and shining bright among the green foliage. Beyond this, as her eye wandered, were wide reaches of cleared land, and the rounded tops of a young orchard, and other tokens of a thrifty plantation.

"And this is where Mor-to-shel-john lives?" the maiden mused. "Ah! The Tri-col-or must be a great chief among white men, even like my father."

"Neow then, as I was sayin', Miss Latimer," Nathan Lane began, and his nasal voice recalled Meg's wandering thoughts. "The trouble with some of these passons is, that they havn't a bit of human natur' about 'em; leastways, the stream runs pretty shallow. They pitch the'r tune too tarnation high most times, and nothin' short of catgut can key up to it. Shucks! 'taint no good, that! Suppose neow, I'd leave the hay up ther' in the mows? Both mows bustin' full, an' not a wisp in the ricks! Of course, the critters 'ud starve. That's the way with many of the passons. Angel food is mebbe relishin' provender for the Prophet Elijah, an' sech like, but common folks has got to have bacon an' hoe-cake an' hominy.

"Of course, says you, Passon McMillan wants Heaven to be so drefful spirit'al an' ee-thereal an' angel-like, an' all that, that ther's no room for critters. But it 'pears to me that hosses, cows, sheep an' sech, would make a right wholesome featur' in any sort of Heaven. In p'int of fac' a deal wholesomer than lots of folks; for they 're cleaner and decenter in their manners, and soberer in their meat and drink, by a nation sight, than many men folks I know. Why, bless your heart, there's a plenty of people never know when to stop eatin' and drinkin'; an' with lots more their eye is bigger'n their appetite. But my horses ain't a bit that way; enough's enough with them. 'Let your moderation be known to all men,' says the passon. Ay, says I, there's the hosses for you, Mr. Passon! If you want to exemplify that tex', don't a hoss do it better'n a man? says I. It does, indeed, an' no mistake!

“Neow, Miss Latimer, th’re ain’t any doubt that Heaven’s a han’some place. It’s a kinder double decked affair, as I read my Bible. One deck’s for city folks, an’ t’other for countrymen. One Scriptur calls it the heavenly Jerusalem, an’ t’other a heavenly country. Neow, I’d choose the heavenly country, all the time! But here’s suthin’ cur’ous that I onct axed Passon McMillan to explain for me. What sort of a country would it be without critters? What ’ud a farmin’ land in Heaven amecount to without hosses an’ cows an’ sheep? Passon, says I, you approve them hymns that sing of ‘Sweet fields arrayed in livin’ green,’ an’ ‘Sweet fields beyond the swellin’ floods Stand dressed in livin’ green,’ an’ all that? Hey, Passon?

“‘Sartin,’ says he; ‘they’re based on Scriptur.’

“Wall, says I, who’s goin’ to graze them green medders? I reckon it won’t be angels! Nor saints! Onless, we should all be turned into a sort of heavenly Nebuchadnezzars an’ eat grass like an ox. Neow, it don’t ’pear to me, Passon, says I, that the Lord ’ud make all them miles an’ miles an’ millions of miles of pastur’ land, an’ not a critter to use ’em for grazin’! Shucks! there’s no sech waste in Providence, as I ever seed.

“‘It’s all contrary to Scriptur’, Nathan Lane,’ says Passon McMillan. Then he trots out his everlastin’ election doctrine, and wants to know how dumb critters could git into Heaven without atonement and the covenant of grace, an’ all that?

“Wall, Passon, says I, what’s to hender elect beasts as well as elect men? An’ as for atonement, shucks! you don’t meanter say that horses is sinners, same as we be? What need of atonement for them anyhow, more’n for angels? As for the Covenants, an’ the like, what ye goin’ to du with the Covenant of Noah? Didn’t the Good Lord take the beasts into that Covenant same as the human bein’s? Neow, mebbe that is not pre-cisely what ye call the Covenant of Grace; but it’s powerful like it, I alloaw, says I; an’ a pretty good type an’ shadder of things to come, says I; as tho’ the Good Lord had ’a tuk men and beasts into the same sort of destiny under the same Covenant of Mercy. Neow, you say it’s contrary to Scriptur’, Passon?

“‘So ’tis!’ says he, dogmatic like.

“No ’t ain’t! says I. There’s beasts in Heaven, an’ pretty high up, too! says I. Jest you turn to Revelation

IV: 6. What do you make eout about them four beasts that rest not day nor night, sayin' Holy! holy! holy, Lord God A'mighty?"

"Oh, them's not brute beasts,' says the Passon, 'like our critters. Them's jest symbols,' says he.

"Symbols! says I! Wall, I reckon if beasts are good enough for symbols of high angels and sich, they're good enough to git into Heaven, if the Lord so please. Besides, the Scriptur' says partic'lar that one beast was like a lion, one like a calf, and another like an eagle. That's what it says. An' I says, Passon, a dog is as good as a lion, which is only a kind of cat anyhow. An' a hoss is as good as an ox; an' pigeons and song-birds is jest as good as eagles. What's to hinder them, too, from gittin' into Heaven?"

Much of this was lost on Meg, who followed dimly the details, but got the drift of the meaning, and was highly content. She was encouraged to ask further questions as to brute intelligence. Thereupon Nathan took up his parable with unflagging zest.

"Do I think Ladybird knows things, an' understands us? says you. Sartin, Miss Latimer, sartin sure! Neow there's that trick of her'n that she played off'n you a spell ago. Ha, ha! One hadn't oughter laugh at the han'some little hypocrite. But that's her own trick. I never knowed another hoss to play make-believe like that. An' why did she play it off'n you? Becaze she has human feelin's, and wanted to say howdy to her kin, and felt fretted when you wouldn't let her stop. An' so she set her wits to work and jest tricked you into givin' her what she wanted. Ha, ha! That, an' takin' down the riders from a rail fence, are her only two bad tricks, and she rarely uses 'em, and nobody's ever the worse for 'em. But that's reasonin'! What else? Of course, hosses knows things! When we want to compliment a man for wisdom, don't we say he has good hoss sense? That's as much as to say that it takes an extrordinary good man to size up to a hoss in common sense. An' the bulk of 'em is several p'int to win'ard of that!

"Do I think they have human feelin's? Ay, Miss, that I do; or leastways feelin's that would do honor to human bein's. If 't ain't logic to call their natur' human natur', then hoss natur' is n't far behind human.

"Yes, they're silent, is dumb beasts. Leastways they can't talk very well with us. But, shucks! they understand

one another; an' they understand us. Don't Ladybird understand you neow when you talk to her and pet her? Who knows? If they can't talk like us, they may think and reason and feel jest as we do. They look it, most times, I'm sure. Neow, if men were deprived of speech, and had néver l'arnt how to talk, would they hev any better way of showin' what they want than hosses like Ladybird, or dogs like Andy Burbeck's Bounce, or his old hoss Rouse?

"Yis, yis, that's it! If men and women had huffs and claws on their feet an' hands, says you. Ha, ha! that's good! I never jest thought of that, neow. I daresay it's so, and that accounts for a good deal of it. If a man couldn't talk and didn't have hands, he'd be about as dumb a beast as a hoss. An' would he have a soul then? says you, Miss Latimer. Why not? A human soul's not a mere matter of huffs an' claws and horns, I reckon. Shucks! No, Miss Latimer, it hain't no way proved that animals don't have a soul, after all, even though it may be a dumb sort of one.

"That's heow I argy with Mr. Sheldon, 't any rate; but he ain't quite convinced that I be right. But bless my soul, I wisht he could hear you talk, I do! I reckon that 'ud fetch 'im. I've hearn that he give you Ladybird, out thar in the Injun kentry. Oh yis, of course I knew 'bout it; heerd it from lots of folks areound Canonsburg; an' have seed you thar more'n onct, an' over to the meetin' house. He's gittin' along fine, Mr. Sheldon is, an' I'm lookin' for him back to hum afore long. Shucks! I'd jest like him to hear you talk about this matter; he'd come areound to our side, sure. Sartin, animals is immortal; leastways there's immortal animals, I do believe. You're bent on goin' neow, be ye? Wall, good day to you, Miss Latimer! An' better luck with Ladybird, nex' time you ride out our way.

"A nation fine young woman that!" he muttered to himself, as Meg rode out of the white yard gate and so toward home. "Call *her* an Injun pagan? Shucks! she knows more'n half the dough-faced, dumplin'-cheeked geirls areound here. Smart as a Yankee school marm too, she is! Ef there were many young women like her in these dig-gins', by hookey, I wouldn't mind makin' up to one on 'em myself. Talks amazin' well too, considerin' her advan-tages!" As Nathan had done nearly all the talking himself, only following the lead of Meg's few questions and sugges-tions, his conclusion helps to confirm the opinion that the best talker is commonly the closest hearer.

Meg, too, had her inward communings as she rode homeward. They were pleasant ones, considering the trying experiences of the outward ride. Ladybird had behaved sadly, and greatly disappointed and distressed her mistress. But never was erring creature, whether horse or man, more thoroughly absolved or more completely restored to favor. Surely it is an ill wind that blows no good; and Ladybird's "strike," though ill of promise, had brought her mistress a pleasure she would else have missed.

Let us see! She would not have heard Nathan Lane prove so beautifully that there will be horses in Heaven, and that even Dr. McMillan couldn't keep them out. She would not have seen that fair plantation, with its white cabin among the trees, and its white barn, and white fences, and green meadows. She would not have learned who lived there, and what a great man he is among his people, in sheep and kine, and above all in horses. Then, last and best, though it came in like a postscript to a love letter, she would not have heard that the scout who had aided in delivering her from captivity, and had given her Ladybird, and had fought so gallantly by John's side at Fallen Timbers, and had been hurt so grievously, was doing well and would soon be home, and—maybe?—

Ah! faster, Ladybird, faster! Gallop, gallop and beat time with your pattering hoofs to the maiden's beating heart. Faster, Ladybird! The woods rush by, and the hills, and the cottages with their gazing matrons, and the fields with their gaping ploughmen. All are rushing by, back along the road to Mort Sheldon's white cabin among the walnut trees. What a glow swift riding a-horseback sends through one's frame! But never did wild gallop or wilder run set aflame in maiden's heart that glow which Meg Latimer now felt within her bosom. Do you know what it is? Meg did not know, and was there ever maid who did know, when the first sweet kindling of new-born love shed its gentle warmth through her veins?

Nor did Meg's mother suspect, when she welcomed her daughter home with her face all aflame with gladness, and remembered the gloom that darkened it when she rode thence. And so she said within her heart: "There's nought like horseback ridin' to chase away the vapors!"

Welladay! While maids are maids, and men are men, the vestal fire of true love will not go out in this mad

world of ours. And that world will be nearest to Paradise when every Jack shall have his Jill, and every maid her man. So mote it be! A thriving land is aye a wiving land!

The next day, Dr. McMillan had a smiling, tractable pupil. Though armed with all the theological artillery of Nathan Lane, Meg had thought better of her purpose to use it. Perhaps, because she was not polemically inclined. Perhaps, because—well, what would the great, wise man care that she had found out where Ladybird was born? But Featherfoot knew it all; and seeing the rising flame in the unconscious maiden's breast, and knowing well the signs, smiled through her tears, and remembered her first and only love, but gave no hint of her discovery.

All went well with the lesson, which dwelt chiefly upon the question, "What is God?" Meg grasped as much of the contents of the noble definition of the Eternal contained in the Westminster Catechism, as folks are apt to do. Did she not already believe that "God is a Spirit?" Every Shawnee knew that! If she did not fully understand, yet she could adore that Spirit who, she then learnt, was "infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth."

Wisdom? Yes! Look at the stars, and the flowers, and the trees and—Ladybird. Justice? Yes! Had she not seen how the Great Spirit slew Succahanos by her own hand, and avenged the murder of Bended Knee, and the wrongs of her life? Power? Yes! She had seen Niagara! She had seen the tornado that smote the forest at Fallen Timbers. She had seen the lightnings rive the oak into flinders; and had heard the thunders echoing among the hills. She had seen the Ohio rushing at full flood, and the sun melt the winter snows, and bring forth the grass and leaves in the springtime. Goodness? Oh yes, yes! Her blue eyes grew dim, and the long lashes glistened with tear-dew, as she thought of her home and its loves, and her deliverance from the Shawnees. Surely God is good!

The Doctor would have been highly content with his fair catechumen, and she as well pleased with him, had matters stopped there. But alas! into every Eden of ours obtrudes the irritating visage of sin. And discord comes with sin. In an evil moment for the concord of the day's lesson, the Doctor introduced the story of man's fall. Now, it was well enough when the story held to Adam and

Eve, and the serpent, and the tree. For tragedy is ever entertaining, especially to children and untutored minds. We shiver at the tale of ghost or bloody deed, but say—"go on!"

However, when the Doctor descended from the general to the particular, from narration to application, he was confounded to find his congregation, for once at least, in rebellion. Having done with Adam's first transgression, and how man sinned and fell therein, the good minister came, unluckily for his peace of mind, to "What is sin?" and "What doth every sin deserve?" His theology was not equivocal on these points. None could state "total depravity" in more uncompromising terms than he. Unless, indeed, it were Andy Burbeck, who, as his wife averred with grim humor, not only believed it and preached it, but practiced it, too!

The Doctor's theory was that unless one felt himself to be thoroughly sinful and lost, he had slim prospects for a goodlier life here and a heritage hereafter. Meg seemed to take it all in smilingly, for she nodded approval as the Doctor went on. But he soon found that she was thinking all the while of the Shawnees. Thereupon the Doctor labored to set Meg's special sins before her.

"That all gone now!" the maid asserted. "Meg very good now she white girl, and at home. Her heart was bad, bad in the Indian country; but she all right now!"

"Ah, but no one is all right," the Doctor affirmed with solemn air and mournful tone. "We have all sinned and come short. There is none that doeth good, my child, not one! All mankind have sinned and fallen in Adam; and that includes us and all others. We are all sinners."

"What!" cried Meg, "my brother John a sinner?"

"Yes, John too."

"No, no! Not John. Meg not have that! John good man. He no bad, wicked sinner! An' mother sinner? an' father sinner? an' sister Fanny sinner? You no say that, Mr. Doctor? Hey?"

"Yes, my child; your father, and mother, and Fanny, and you, and myself as well,—we are all sinners in God's sight, and need to repent and trust in our Saviour or we shall be lost sinners."

"What lost sinners?" asked Meg sharply.

"Hear what the Catechism says: 'Every sin deserves

the wrath of God and the pains of death forever.' Let me explain that, my child." And he did explain, without mincing words, as Dr. John McMillan could well do.

But Meg never winced, and followed the Doctor with unflinching gaze through all the details of a Tophet of material fires, as he heartily believed the same, though loath and sad enough to do so. But he was hardly prepared for the reception his novitiate gave his teaching.

"That all right!" said Meg, nodding her approval. "That good enough—for Succohanos! He kill Bended Knee. He steal Meg. He torture white captive. Aha! He find out now how it goes!"

"No, no, my poor child!" interrupted the Doctor, quite shocked at such a corollary from his instructions. "You must not speak so. Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord."

'Meg understand. She no want to burn Succohanos. No, no! Great Spirit do that. And Winnecheoh too, the old hag! She treat Meg very bad. She more cruel to prisoners nor all the Shawnee braves and squaws. Ah yes; bad place too good for her!"

Now the Doctor felt bound to interpose and explain to his pupil that not only Succohanos and Winnecheoh, but herself and all her friends, who would not repent and believe, must bear the wrath of God and pains of death forever. Thereat Meg could not restrain herself. She leaped to her feet with wonder and anger flaming from her face, flung her Catechism to the floor and put her foot upon it.

"No, no! Meg not have that! That good 'nough religion for Succohanos! What you do with that good Father who take back Prodigal son an' kiss him, an' give him ring and clothes, an' make him great tum-tum an' pow-wow an' feast? He never put Meg's father and mother in hell,—never! He never put brother John, nor sister Fanny, nor Meg, nor Mor-to-shel-john! He too just, too good. He can't do that. He shan't!"

The untamed maid, her breast torn with a tempest of passionate indignation, flung herself out of the room, leaving the Doctor sitting with uplifted hands, and horror and amazement mingled on his pallid face. But the lesson was not to close so. As Meg fled the room, she found herself in the arms of her mother, who had heard the interview and came to the rescue of the clergyman, as woman has ever done since the days of Priscilla and Apollos.

"O my darling!" she exclaimed, folding the heaving bosom against her own, and kissing the hot cheeks. "You don't understand. You are a woman grown in stature, but a child in these things. You must listen and learn with a meek and humble heart. You don't understand, darling! Come back, come back, and let the Doctor teach you. Don't fly off this way, dear; it grieves your mother sorely."

"Ahbut, mother," Meg answered, soothed, but still unreconciled; "what for the Doctor say such things? He told me you and father and brother John and Meg, mebbe go to bad place!"

"My dear, that's too true, if—if we don't believe in the Saviour."

"Oh, that it? Does my dear mother believe?" asked Meg, speaking softly, and patting her mother's cheeks.

"Yes, dear, indeed I do!"

"And father, and John and Fanny and—"

"Yes, yes, they all believe."

"Well then, Meg believe too! She believe very much, then! She no want to go to Succohanos! An' she go tell the Doctor so!" Turning toward the clergyman, who had now risen, she presented to him a face as gracious as an April sky out of which a thunder storm has blown.

"Meg very sorry!" she said with downcast eyes. "She pretty bad, mebbe, and not understand at all. She believe very much, now! She make big mistake. She know better now. No one go to bad place but Succohanos, an' Winnecheoh, an' bad Shawnees. Mebbe some wicked white men, too,—sometimes! Meg very sorry. She believe all the Doctor want her to. She believe all the little Ask-book now. Mother say that's all right!" Thus saying, she stooped to the floor, picked up the cast-away Catechism, and with a penitent face handed it to Dr. McMillan.

The Doctor was well content to give up the duty of instruction for that day, and rode away to his manse, some three miles distant, with more new thoughts buzzing within his brain, and emotions more novel than he had entertained for years. As he entered his study, and threw himself into his big rocking chair, his wife, seeing him to be wearied out, saluted him soothingly.

"My dear, how got you on with your catechumen?"

"Ah, mother, don't mention it!" the Doctor answered, with a sigh of discouragement. "It is the old story, only

a thousand times worse. I have had many a tussle in my time with callow fledglings of theologues, who thought they could teach their grandmother how to milk ducks, as our folks say. But Meg Latimer beats them all! It was really shocking to hear that half-baked daughter of Ephraim fly up at the evangelical doctrines."

"Tut, John, dear, why should ye fret?" said the mistress of the manse. "It's just a little outbreak of natural depravity."

"Natural depravity! I should think so!" the Doctor exclaimed. "Good Lord help the missionaries! I never knew before what a task it must be to teach the heathen. I have sometimes thought that I had a hard lot here on the frontier; but I'll never think so again. The lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places, compared with the lot of missionaries to the heathen savages."

"Now, for supper!" said Meg with a light heart. The exhilaration of preparing a meal, next to a horseback ride, soothed Meg's spirit. The animation with which she turned to this service as the Doctor rode away, fairly gauged the measure of her perturbation. Is any woman possessed with a demon of unrest, anger, despondency? Fly to kitchen and cook book, or, better still, to the well-remembered "mother's receipts!" That mood is, indeed, incorrigible, which will not melt before the process of cooking a good meal, especially if there are loved ones to partake of it.

With snowy apron in front, and sleeves tucked up, displaying shapely arms with the Indian brown showing still through the pink skin, Meg stood at the window, beating whites of eggs into snowy foam for the griddle cakes of Indian meal that her father loved so well.

A horseman rode up the lane. Meg heard the thud of the hoofs, and peeped out of the window. The trunks of the trees concealed the man's face; but where had she seen that horse? She would go to the kitchen door for better vision. That sorrel horse? Look again, Meg! Who rode him side by side with you into the battle line at Fallen Timbers? Who caught him, grazing near the field of that first skirmish, escaped as by a miracle when his master had fallen under his wounds?

Yourself, Meg Latimer!

That is Mort Sheldon's sorrel gelding. And that is

the master himself, riding down the cherry lane into the maple-shaded yard. One glimpse, ere you fly back to the kitchen fire. He is thinner and paler than when you saw him first. But he has ridden the sorrel horse home through the Ohio country. And he has changed its name. He calls it "Latimer," and not after his friend John!

Now mix the spongy corn-cake with deft touch, though hands tremble a little. Bend over the glowing coals, for their heat will excuse the burning red of the cheeks, by and by, when Mor-to-shel-john comes, and takes your hands, and greets you with grave salute (though his fingers tremble like yours), and eyes that burn and flash with a light that almost tells their tale of love into your own.

It was a fervent prayer that Dr. McMillan offered, that night, in his study, ere he lay down to sleep, for his fair young charge "wandering in the dark mountains of ignorance and misbelief." Rise from your knees with good heart and hope, good man of God! One has come to your aid who will not fail of his task, a mightier teacher than thou. His name is Love.

CHAPTER XLIII.

A SHADOW OF COMING EVENTS.

General Lee, commander-in-chief of the Army of the Western Expedition, had his headquarters at Bedford, Pennsylvania. On the 20th of October, 1794, he received official instructions from President Washington for the conduct of the campaign beyond the mountains. The troops were set in motion and the march across the Allegheny Mountains began. To most of the soldiers the country was new, for Western Pennsylvania was then a far Western frontier.

The roads were few and rude, and softened by the heavy rain, and kneaded into mud by the feet of marching men and hoofs of horses and cattle, made slavish going. The mountain frosts nipped keenly, and gave a lively relish to bivouac fires at night. These were small matters to veterans, but to the new recruits and volunteers the experience seemed hard enough. Their letters

home compared the march to that of Hannibal over the Alps, and their hardships to those of Washington's Continentals at Valley Forge. In fancy they saw themselves returning as conquering heroes, crowned with the laurels of military victors.

Following the rule prevailing during the Revolutionary war, as the movement was toward the north the northern troops took the right, and crossed the mountains by the northern or Pennsylvania route. The left wing moved from Fort Cumberland, crossed the mountains by Braddock's road, thirty miles to the westward, and on October 30th was at Bonnet's Camp in the southern corner of Westmoreland County. On Halloweve, October 31st, the headquarters were at Uniontown, Fayette County, and the main body of the left wing arrived the same day. The two wings having united, the corps advanced, and the close of the first week in November found the main army encamped along the Monongahela River, between Parkinson's Ferry and the mouth of Mingo Creek.

Gen. Lee thereupon issued a proclamation, confirming the amnesty to those who had entitled themselves to it, and called upon all the inhabitants to take the oath of allegiance to the United States. A detachment under Gen. Morgan entered Pittsburg, and escorted Gen. Neville to his own house with military pomp and parade. Thenceforth, while the army remained, he was in a position of almost unlimited influence over the fate of his fellow-citizens, and his representations before Judge Peters' tribunal had great weight. In many cases he used this fortuitous advantage on the side of mercy; in some, it is to be regretted, prejudice seemed to rule his conduct.

Rumors of the army's march flew far and wide throughout the Western counties. As the troops came nearer and nearer, and at last crossed the border of the Survey, the anxiety and excitement became intense. Many were partly assured by the Deputies' report of Washington's spirit and words, and of the character and temper of the commanders. Many who had signed the amnesty reposed in confidence, although in trembling, under the faith of the Government. Many rested secure in the consciousness of their innocence. Others, deeming discretion the better part of wisdom as well as of valor, and resolved to take no chances, shouldered

their rifles and crossed the borders of the State into Kentucky and the Ohio territory. At least two thousand riflemen, it has been estimated, thus fled the Survey to remain until the troops had gone back East, or to make permanent settlement in the newer West.

Underneath all the outward appearance of confidence was profound anxiety. The vaunts and vituperation of some of the troops had been circulated everywhere. The threats of indiscriminate punishment made by the Captain Cuttan Swings, Lieutenant Meneters and Ensign McKillens of the army corps, had been repeated in every house and cabin, and as usual with rumors of war, grew as they flew. An attempt by a mob of militiamen to lynch Mr. Brackenridge in Pittsburg increased public apprehension.

As to resistance, there was none. The "armed combinations" against which the troops were to operate did not appear. Not a hand was raised against the army. Absolute peace and good order sat upon the entire Survey. Men could not but wonder; for what was this armed host sent hither? What will it do now that it is here? It made no hostile demonstration. The soldiers rested quietly in their temporary quarters, and their only relations with the inhabitants seemed to be friendly inquiries about the land, or purchases of needed supplies.

After a week of inaction, many began to hope that the clouds had blown over and their fears had been imaginary. Among these was Luke Latimer. He had not heretofore ventured to expect entire exemption; his part had been too prominent for that. But now he cherished a faint hope that, having taken the amnesty he would not be seriously molested. At least, he soothed his wife with this view, and enlarged upon the inviolable word and honor of Washington, which had been pledged to all who complied with the Government's conditions, and which Gen. Lee had reaffirmed in his proclamation.

The delusion was suddenly dispelled. On the morning of November 11th, a squad of soldiers halted before the Latimer cabin, and without warrant or other form of law arrested Luke and bore him away to Pittsburg. Brief time was allowed for parting with wife and daughter. John was in Pittsburg with Andy Burbeck looking after the pressure of business in freighting and ferrying caused by the presence of the troops.

"Now, Polly," said Luke, when the first shock was over, "if you have anny love or respect for me, I beg ye to kape a stiff upper lip afore these soldiers. Bear the stroke with dignity and patience, and urge Meg to the same, as my particular wish and requist. I hope to be rel'ased on bail; but if things come to the warst, they can do little more nor put me in prison. We'll ask the Captain to let Dungy go with me to see me safe to Pittsburg, an' bring you word agin, and there John 'll soon find me. So good bye, dear old swateheart! Sure the darkest day is jist afore the dawn. Cheer up, love! The dawn is sure for til come, an' then—p'ace an' happiness in the better day. Good bye, an' God bless ye, darlin'!"

Dungy was permitted to attend his master, and the cavalcade set forth, Luke mounted on his favorite Marion, and the negro on one of the farm horses. No sooner had the party disappeared, than Mrs. Polly completely broke down. Her imagination was powerfully affected by the idea of her husband being a prisoner in the hands of hostile soldiers. She could not draw a distinction between the traditional notion of a criminal, with jail and jailer and maybe gallows at the end and a man in bonds for political offending. There was a sense as of deep disgrace that had befallen them; a sullyng of their family honor.

Beyond that, and far more serious, was her concern for Luke's welfare. How could he, in his weakness and suffering, stand the strain of trial and imprisonment? Even if he escaped the severest judgment from the Government tribunal, the excitement would put an end to him. A presentiment of coming evil possessed her.

Meanwhile, Luke having ended his journey, was at once ushered into the presence of Secretary Hamilton. The United States Court was sitting, with Judge Peters presiding. The Secretary, apparently acting as a representative of the President, assumed the role of examining suspects, prisoners and witnesses.

"Mr. Latimer," he began, turning one of his piercing looks upon the prisoner, "your name appears on the list of those who are within the amnesty. And yet you are reported as one of the leaders of the insurrection."

"Both facts are true, Mr. Secretary," Luke answered.

"You were present at the mustering of the insurgents at Braddock's Field?" the Secretary asked.

"I was at Braddock's Field muster, your Honor; but not as an insurgent."

"Ah? In what capacity were you present?"

"I went, as many others did, to do my best endeavor to prevent violence an' bloodshed."

"It's a marvel," exclaimed Hamilton, "how many men went out on that affair with purely philanthropic motives! What a patriotic picnic it must have been, by all accounts! Pray, sir, were you privy to any scheme to use that muster of armed men to organize warfare against the United States and its officers?"

Luke quietly replied: "No such scheme was there discussed; at last none of which I had any knowledge."

"What then was the purpose of the meeting?"

"The Lord alone knows, sir; unless it may be David Bradford! An' I sore misdoubt Bradford knowed as little as any one else. It was a feckless affair; a wild and witless scheme, the upshot of which was an absurd decree to banish several gentlemen as had left the country aready, an' a harmless march intil Pittsburg an' out agin."

"Do you know Mr. John Hamilton?" the Secretary asked, with a swift change of the subject.

"Ay, he is Sheriff of our County, an' Colonel of the Mingo Creek regiment of militia."

"How is he affected towards the Government?"

"He is an honorable an' faithful officer, an' a fri'nd of the Government an' of good order."

"Ah? Another innocent!" said the Secretary rather sharply. "He was at Braddock's Field with his regiment, was he not?"

"He was; but as I personally know, he went solely an' simply to kape his regiment out of trouble."

"I beg you to reflect, Mr. Latimer," the Secretary said, pausing and glancing sternly at Luke; "that you are under oath. It is important to the Government to know the truth as to the part taken by the active leaders in the late insurrection. We are disposed to look favorably on your case, provided your testimony be satisfactory. I warn you, however, that your safety and immunity are in your own hands and depend upon your course."

Luke returned the Secretary's look with one of equal sternness, and answered firmly: "Sir, I think I know the natur' of an oath; an' Luke Latimer's neighbors will tell

you that his word has iver been as good as his bond. I'm not onsinsible of the power of the Government; but no axercise of that power, or intimation thereof, shall swerve me from the plain truth. I repate, sir, what I said about Col. John Hamilton. I know who were the chief fomenters of these troubles; an' I declare that he had nayther part nor lot therein."

Here Inspector Neville leaned over and whispered to the Secretary, who thereupon asked: "I observe that you have a wounded arm, Mr. Latimer; how was it hurt?"

"I was shot at Bower Hill by one of the Government soldiers within Giner'l Neville's house." He turned his blue eyes, now beginning to kindle with inward fire, upon the Inspector. "I was runnin' to the spring for water to refresh the dyin' lips of Major McFarlane, who was killed while tryin' to stop the firin' in answer to a flag of truce waved from the house. On the way back I recaved a volley an' was struck twice."

"Ah! an unfortunate affair, that!" said the Secretary; "unfortunate all around, indeed. But there's an old saying, Mr. Latimer, which you doubtless have heard, They that take the sword shall perish by the sword."

"It's true enough, Mr. Secretary," Luke replied. "An' I'm not complainin' of my share of the sufferin's an' loss. I took my chances; an' I'll try to stand the consequences as becomes a man an' a veteran of the Revolution."

"You were in the war for Independence, then?"

"For sivin years, sir; an' was thrice wounded."

"Isn't it a strange policy to seek to destroy the Government you fought to erect?" asked the Secretary.

"Isn't it a strange policy," Luke retorted, "for a Government, which we fought to erect, to trate her pauperized veterans as they have been trated in these Western Counties?"

"What was your object in assaulting Gen. Neville's house?" asked the Secretary, hastening to change the subject.

"The speecial objec' was to indooce the Inspector to give up sartain papers in order to prevant the draggin' of our citizens beyant the vicinage to be tried at Philadelphia. That meant financial ruin to them, nought less. We also wished to persuade, or aven compel the Inspector for to give up his commission, and promise not to axercise his

office within the Survey. No doubt, some were also stirred with passion at the killin' and maimin' of several of their neighbors, who had gone to Bower Hill the day afore an' were fired on by Neville and his negroes."

"They came with hostile intent, did they not?"

"They say they did not come to do bodily harm; though, no doubt, their conduct was disorderly."

"But they were armed with rifles?"

"I axpec' so, indade; but that is the custom of the country, an' has no sich significance as a like fac' would have in the East."

"You say a man was killed on that occasion?"

"Yes, Mr. Secretary, an' siveral badly hurted. An', sir, it's worth your Honor's notice that the only lives lost in all these troubles that 've brought the army down upon us, have been those of the so-called insurgents. If we'd 'a been the murderous lot that we're miscalled to be, that could hardly have happened. In this partic'lar at laste, we've been more sinned agin nor sinnin'."

"To return to the Bower Hill rising, Mr. Latimer. Col. John Hamilton's regiment was there?"

"A large part of it was, sir. They live in the viceenity, an' had randyvoused at Mingo Church for inolment as ordered by Congress, whan the news of the killin' and woundin' at Neville's came til them. It was under an impulse of passion stirred up by that affair that they acted. It was a sudden outbreak, at laste as far as most of the militiamen were concerned."

"But Col. Hamilton—Col. John Hamilton?" the Secretary persisted, waving aside Luke's plea; "he led his men to the attack, did he not?"

"No, sir! He was not prisent at all. He did not approve sich violence; an' if he had been in sympathy with us, his office as Sheriff would 'a handered him."

"That will do for the present, Mr. Latimer," said the Secretary. He spoke sharply, and leaning back in his chair eyed Luke with evident dissatisfaction. "It seems impossible for the Government to obtain correct information of these rebellious transactions from those who were prominent in them. I would advise you, sir, to retire for an hour or two, to refresh your memory in order to be re-examined." He spoke to an officer present, who conducted Luke into another chamber.

There he was interviewed alternately by Judge Peters and the District Attorney. Thence he was turned over to the Inspector and an officer of the Philadelphia Light-horse, who treated him with great indecorum. He was urged to testify that Sheriff Hamilton had notified his regiment to assist at the riot. When he indignantly repelled such assaults upon his honor and such inducements to perjury, he was insulted.

"You have equivocated!" his examiner declared. "You have evaded swearing the truth. Your conduct has forfeited the benefit of the amnesty to which you were otherwise entitled. Your life and property are endangered by your stubborn refusal and prevarication. Be assured they can only be saved by giving the testimony desired."

Luke was ushered into a room among a number of prisoners and confined under military guard. At the time appointed, he was again taken before the Secretary. "Have you recollected yourself, Mr. Latimer," he was asked, "so far as to give more satisfactory testimony concerning Sheriff Hamilton's part in the insurrection?"

"Mr. Secretary," was the reply, "if the truth will not satisfy, it's not in my power to give you satisfaction. I've telled ye the truth, and have related all I know."

"Sir," exclaimed the Secretary, assuming a terrifying aspect, "I am surprised at you! You have the character of an honest man, and yet you will not tell the truth. You claim to be now a friend of the Government, anxious to restore your country to good order. Yet you withhold evidence against men whom we wish to make examples that thereby we may enforce good order. We have abundant proof of what you refuse to tell, and to which you could testify if you would. Sir, look out for yourself! Guard, remove the prisoner."

"Mr. Secretary," said Luke, speaking with quiet dignity, but with an earnestness and solemnity that impressed his hearers. "I sheltered myself in under the public pledge an' proclamation of Giner'l Washington. I trusted in his honorable name and unstained faith, an' I will add in your own, as well. If this is an axample of the manner in which plighted faith and public word are to be disregarded an' dishonored afore all the world, the damage done to the Government will be manifold greater nor anny which the deeds or misdeeds of the Western people have wrought.

For myself, I care little. My days, I fear, are nigh spent. The sacred Word you quoted a while back is like to prove a true prophecy in my case. That grieves me little. But, sir, it wounds me with a bitterer hurt nor that which is surely undoin' me,"—he lifted up his swathed right arm—"that the honor and truth of my old Commander and our new Republic are to be trampled into the mire. Sir, I appeal my case to President Washington. Ay, an' til a higher Court, even that of Him who says, a righteous man sweareth to his hurt and changeth not!"

While Luke Latimer was speaking, Gen. Neville, accompanied by John Latimer and Morton Sheldon entered the room. The General approached the Secretary, who after a brief whispered conference, turned to Luke. "Mr. Latimer," he said, "at the request of Gen. Neville, I have referred your case to the consideration of Judge Peters." Then he arose and retired. Judge Peters at once admitted Luke to bail on the joint recognizance of Gen. Neville and Morton Sheldon, and when the due formalities were arranged the four men left the court room together.

"Mr. Latimer," said the General, when he had come outside, "you served me a kind turn when I was sore bestead at the hands of the rioters at Wheeling. I cannot forget that you have been my enemy, and have aided to inflict bitter loss and trouble upon me. However, we are now at quits. Henceforth, look out for yourself! I have a few words to speak in private to your son, and crave his presence aside." Not waiting speech from Luke, he bowed stiffly and turned from him. It was well enough perhaps, for hot words were rising to Luke's lips, and a scornful refusal of the proffered favor. But Mort Sheldon took him by the arm and led him away.

Seeking the shelter of a tree on the opposite side of the Diamond, as the public square was called, Gen. Neville opened upon John with words which he remembered to his dying day.

"Capt. Latimer," the Inspector began, "you applied to me to help your father in his distress, and in consideration of service rendered me—"

"Stop, Gen. Neville!" John interrupted. "I must beg leave to correct you. I am sure, sir, you will do me the justice to allow that I did not apply to you on such grounds.

I came to you, when I heard of my father's arrest, simply to ask an act of justice in behalf of a fellow citizen. In his condition it was only right that he should be admitted to bail. I had reason to believe that his imprisonment was due largely to yourself. I wished you to know that his life would be endangered thereby, and believed that you could not wish that responsibility to rest on you. He had taken the amnesty, and was at least entitled to that much consideration. You were the only man in a position to influence those in power. What I asked, sir, was not a payment of a favor given, but simply what I believed any honorable and just man would be disposed to do."

"Well, sir," replied Gen. Neville, "I have listened patiently to your long harangue, which permit me to say ill becomes you. It looks very like seeking and accepting a favor, and then trying to belittle or renounce the obligation. But we will not discuss that now. I have asked to see you that I may say something which has long been in my mind, but for which I have had as yet no opportunity. You once did me a real service, and I freely admit it. I have wished before this to show my sense of it, but you would not permit it. I honored you for that, while I regretted your choice. My act in asking your father's release was even more for your sake than his. But I have done something more, which I trust may be held as going some lengths towards balancing accounts between us. I have had your name withdrawn from the list of those proscribed by the Government."

"My name, sir?" John ejaculated, his whole form thrilling with surprise and indignation.

"Your name, Capt. Latimer."

"And charged with taking part in the insurrection?"

"You are charged with giving aid and comfort to the insurgents in divers ways, and being present at the burning of my house."

"Who dared prefer that charge?" cried John, speaking wrathfully. "He is a villain and a liar!"

"What charge, Capt. Latimer?" asked the Inspector coolly. "You will certainly not deny being present at the Bower Hill fight? The fact is notorious."

"Ay, and the reasons for it as notorious as the fact. But who makes the charge?"

"The principal accuser, I believe, is David Dandruff of your county."

"Dave Dandruff!" exclaimed John with an outburst of indignation. "Heavens! He is beneath contempt. To think of my good name and personal liberty being at the mercy of such a worthless varlet! Sir, such an accusation is simply an act of malice."

"We will not discuss that, Capt. Latimer. What I want you to know is that the list was referred to me. I noticed your name, and made such representations to the Secretary that it was withdrawn, or at least—"

"Sir," said John, "I tender you such thanks as such an act deserves. But I decline to avail myself of it. I demand a trial. Such star chamber doings are a disgrace to our country and a thrust at our liberties. You have done me an ill turn, sir, under the guise of good. I will meet my accusers and be acquitted openly, or not at all."

"Capt. Latimer, you speak with the rashness of youth and inexperience. If you do as you say, you will repent only once and that will be for a lifetime. Of course, you will suit yourself. But all the same, my act was intended to show a kindly disposition toward you and to repay your gallant offices during our river trip together."

"No more of that, sir, I beg you!" said John impatiently. "The bare mention of it offends my honor."

"Let it be as you say, then. But it is of something connected with that occasion that I wish especially to speak. You then met my niece, Miss Blanche Oldham."

John's heart leaped at the name with a sense of sudden pain and impending calamity. His cheeks, hot with anger and indignation, began to whiten under the reaction of an emotion that he had never before felt. Something like a chill crept over him. A weight seemed to fall upon his brain. He was oppressed as one who labors in breathing. But knowing that the General's eyes were fixed upon him, he sought to rally and assume an appearance of indifference; but felt that he was not succeeding, and the agony of an uncontrollable self-consciousness was added to his emotional distress. He could only muster strength to say: "I had that honor, sir!"

"Very true, Mr. Latimer; and it was an honor. You have used the correct word. An honor, sir, must not be presumed upon. There—don't interrupt me, sir!—I have

heard enough, and more than enough to satisfy me that you have presumed upon that accidental acquaintance in a subordinate relation, to aspire to the affections of that lady. Once for all, I want to say to you, as her guardian, that you are forbidden ever again to speak to her. It is preposterous! I feel humiliated even to mention it. A man of your rank and condition in life to lift his eyes upon my niece! You are beneath her notice, sir! And even if the lady and her friends had not already formed suitable plans for her, a man of honor would not have presumed upon an advantage such as came to you.

“And now, to this inequality of position is added the deep disgrace that attaches to your name and family, if not to yourself, as attainted of treason, riot and arson. That alone, were there no other cause, would make an impassable barrier between you. Now sir, that is what I have to say. I have given you due notice. A word to the wise is sufficient, and I trust you have wisdom enough to give heed. If not, sir—” He hesitated and cast a threatening glance into John’s face.

A tumult of contending emotions racked John’s bosom during this address. The insulting words traversed the whole gamut of honorable feeling, and touched every chord in a manly nature that answers with protest against indignity and wrong. He was surprised at the seeming coolness with which he could reply.

“Sir, your years and your white hairs are your defense against the chastisement which your insults have deserved. As to the lady whose name you have dared to associate with words which no gentleman could utter, were I so bold as to lift my affections to her, or to hope for a favorable response, not all the Nevilles in Pennsylvania or out of it, would hinder me from taking the only answer that I regard from her own lips. As to yourself, sir, who are you, that dare assail an honorable man and citizen of the republic with reproaches of inferior rank? Sir, I know your history and your vaunted pedigree, and I tell you I am your peer in blood and your superior in breeding. I deeply regret that I so far misunderstood your character as a reputed man of honor, as to approach you in my father’s behalf, even for a matter of simple justice and duty. If it were possible, I would undo that and look for justice in another quarter. Your interposition in my own behalf

I reject with scorn and contempt. I had rather swing from the tree above us than owe a moment of life or liberty to John Neville." So speaking, he turned his back upon the General whose face was livid with anger and wounded pride, and stalked away.

Gen. Neville started forward as if to follow, but checked himself. "Proud cub of a low-born traitor!" he muttered. "Never did living man on God Almighty's earth, save Hugh Brackenridge, dare flout and defy me thus. You shall rue it, you shall bitterly rue it! I will cut your comb for you, my fine laddie! You have scorned John Neville's aid; look out for his anger!" So saying he re-entered the court room.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE HARRYING OF THE PEOPLE BEGUN.

John Latimer pursued his course with slow pace, that gave no measure of the rapid beating of blood through his veins. Hot indignation at the dishonor put upon his manhood for the time set other feelings in abeyance. He clinched his fingers until the nails pressed deeply into the ball of his hand. Words of anathema hissed through his teeth. His forehead burned as though at a furnace mouth, and the blood pounded against it as if it would burst through the temples. He plucked off his hat, and let the wind cool his face. His steps quickened until he was at topmost speed. He must go so or the sense of the insult and unmerited wrong would consume him. Heavens! could he let the man live who had treated him so ignobly?

Then suddenly there came upon him the full meaning of General Neville's words. Blanche Oldham and himself were separated by an impassable gulf! He stopped short as if the power of locomotion had left him. Gen. Neville uttered the sentiments of her kin! Were they her sentiments also? No! He could not believe it! What man can believe that he is held so cheaply by the woman whom he loves? But, with such an atmosphere surrounding her? hearing daily from those she most honors and loves such opinions as to his character and behavior, what

other issue could there be but that she must come to think him unworthy of her esteem?

He shot forward again under the impulse of this thought which set his brain aboiling with augmented heats. Men looked at him strangely as he stalked along bare-headed, with face aflame, and brows knit, and eyes set straight forward, giving no heed to anyone.

He crossed the common between the village and the garrison, and skirted the orchard of intermingled apple and pear trees which some kindly British officer had planted in the old days of royal dominion. He turned into the path along the Allegheny River bank, and strode over the level space once known as the King's Artillery Gardens. He never paused until he stood upon the point where the rivers meet, and climbed a jagged bluff that then marked the spot. He gazed westward. Above the intervening Bruno's Island, the rays of the setting sun were tingeing the tall dome of McKee's Rock which, three miles distant, rose sheer above the Ohio where it bends to the northwest. His face was cooled by the breeze that sucked down the channels of the Allegheny and Monongahela and played above the beautiful united rivers.

See there! The sun is kindling a last glow upon the dome of McKee's Rock. Do you mind, John Latimer, how on the evening of the return from Legionville Shooting Match, you climbed the height with Fanny and Blanche, and deciphered the initials or names of the French and British officers who had visited the spot in former times, and left there, cut into the cliff, those tokens of their presence? Ay, and how Blanche declared that her initials must go into the stone with the rest, and borrowed your hunting knife for the work, but finding the task too much for her, left you to finish it? Do you mind what glee there was, as you carved the letters "B. O.," and "F. McC.," and beneath them both, ere you had done with it, "J. L.?" A flush of pleasure came with the recollection, only to be darkened at once with the rush of bitter feelings.

"And there," he muttered, turning his eyes toward the south, where, under the Allegheny bank the keel boat lay at its mooring, "there I first saw her!" The fair vision came before him once more. He could see the maid bounding with free spirits down the bank, and tripping on the gang plank. He could see—ay, he could feel her touch,

as she seized his outstretched arm to steady herself, and so leaped upon the boat. Should he never see her more as on that day?

With that sad query, the mighty wave of anger that had been driving him on began to subside, as waves go down before a contrary wind. He sat down and watched the last rays of the sunset fade away from the ripples on the meeting of the waters. There were no tears in his eyes, but his heart was full of crying. The hush of the sunset hour was on the scene, unvexed then and undisfigured by human houses and burrows, and grimy shops and smoking furnaces, and steam tugs and ferries of Man the manufacturer. The breeze began to sink, as it is wont to do at that hour, and with it fell the high fury of his soul. He was calm at last; at least, so he convinced himself.

The sober second thought had come to him; but with the sinking of the flames of passion there came also the ashes of despair. What was the use of trying to do one's duty? What reward has fidelity? What honor or profit has the true patriot whose devotion has been tried in the furnace thrice heated? What has become of Truth? Who can trust his fellowman, and the plighted word of nations and rulers, when even the proclaimed promises of Washington are as bursted bubbles?

He arose and retraced his steps. A dangerous mood this for a young man, you will allow. If treasonable plans had been upon the tapis; or some deed of reckless daring, with even a shadow of virtue or merit or worthiness therein that might appeal to his moral nature not yet submerged, here would have been an apt recruit, in this stalwart man with his embittered heart, and his injured honor, and sense of wrong rankling within him. Oh, for a chance to throw life away in one supreme rush of valor, upon some foe worthy of his mettle, and in some cause not unworthy the sacrifice! How often has the destiny of men in such moods as this, turned upon the presence or absence of the fitting tempter or temptation!

John's footsteps tended almost unconsciously towards the point where his father's keel boat lay. As he descended the bank he saw in the dusk a group of men seated in the stern, which swung free in the stream. They were conversing in low voices, that sounded over the water in the still air like a confused murmur. As his tread along

the bank stirred the silence, the voices ceased. He stopped and challenged the party: "Who is there?"

"It's all right, John!" was the answer in his father's voice. "Come on, we are waiting for you."

With Luke were Andy Burbeck, Mort Sheldon and Nathan Lane, the two latter having come to Pittsburg with farm supplies and a few horses for sale to the troops.

"We've jist been in conference," Luke began, when John joined the circle, "over a most important matter. It's a delicate affair altogether, and I would like your advice and mebbe your aid."

"Say on, father. But if there's anything you wish me to do, you need hardly trouble to explain. I am at your service, and glad enough to be engaged therein."

"Thank ye, my boy!" said Luke, not noting John's face hidden by the shadow of his hat brim, as he leaned against the rail with his back to the gloaming. "But I want no sarvice that disn't lape with your own judgment. The case is this. After we left you an' Giner'l Neville we walked down toward the boat, an' jist at the crest of the bank, a man whose face was muffled in a cloak, an' whom I didn't recognize, put these papers intil my hand, an' 'thout a ward, ran away. At the top of the sheet is written: "The persons herein named are proscribed by the Government, and orders have been issued for their arrest at midnight of November 13th. Ask your son to copy the list and immediately destroy this paper."

"Who signs the note?" John asked.

"It is unsigned."

"Do you know the handwriting?"

"It's disguised by slantin' the letters back'ard an' writin' them large."

"May I see the paper?"

Luke gave the sheet to John, who entered the cabin and lighting a candle, dropped the curtain before the shoreward door, and read the document. The others silently watched him until he had finished.

"Do you make out the handwriting?" asked Luke.

"I think I do. But guessing might be unjust, and dangerous to one who has enough to do just now to look out for himself, but has generously thought of his imperilled fellow citizens. I had therefore better say nothing. Evidently the writer does not wish to be known; why

should we seek to break through his concealment? He has good reason for his secrecy, no doubt, and the best thing we can do is to obey his request."

Thereupon he made a transcript of the list, and thrusting the original document into the flame, allowed it to consume. The party now entered the cabin, and at once took up the question, what ought to be done in view of the information thus mysteriously received?

"It's plain enough," said John, "that the sender of the list meant us to give warning to the parties named. If my conjecture is correct, he is a person whose character and circumstances guarantee the genuineness of the list. How he got it is a wonder; but if anyone outside of the highest officials could manage it, he is the man to do so. The first question is, ought we to notify these proscribed men?"

"That's jest it," said Mort Sheldon; "an' we'd been hevin' a little parley over that p'int, when you came in. As you know, I've been sharpest agin the anti-excise movement from the outset, as well as yourself; but I give my opinion that it's only just and fair that these men should know that they 're to be struck. What to do about it must then rest with themselves."

"Ay," said Luke, "that's the way it looks to me. I feel a parsonal responsibeelity in the matter; for I know my inflooeence led some of these men intil the movement; and others of them are as innocent as the babe onborn. I'm not inclined to let them suffer if I can hinder it; but I'm afeard to involve others in the charge of aidin' treason. I'm not able to give warnin' myself. I must have aid or I've the matter undone."

"It looks to me like a plain case," said John, handing the copied list to his father. "There are three classes of men in the list. There are those who laid themselves open to prosecution, but took the amnesty in good faith, and have relied on the honor of the Government officials to protect them. Then ~~there~~ are those who took no part in the disorders, but failed or refused to sign the papers, because they thought themselves innocent. And here are some, who like myself both opposed the anti-excise party and signed the amnesty. For one, I shall give myself up to the authorities, and challenge investigation. I am clear that all others should have the same chance to decide upon their conduct. The officers have broken faith with them, and are

seeking to surprise them, and drag them away from their families at dead of night, without process of civil law, and simply by military force. Such dragooning of citizens is an assault upon our liberties. The manner of it is an outrage upon humanity, and a scorning of the plighted word and honor both of the President and our people. I give my vote to warn every man named on the list."

So it was agreed; and as there was little time to lose, plans were at once perfected. Mort Sheldon was to warn those who lived in the neighborhood of Canonsburg, Nathan Lane those in and around Washington, and Luke accompanied by Andy and John, were to warn the Mingo Creek district, which included most of the proscribed.

The conference thus satisfactorily ended, the party got their horses and were ferried across the river, the boat being left in charge of a hired man. It was now arranged that John should hasten forward, leaving Luke to travel easily, and rest for the night with a friend a few miles up the road; for he was well nigh worn out with the fatigue and strain of the day. In the morning he would press on, leaving warning with those parties assigned to him and Andy. They would meet at noon, or as near that hour as might be, at the spring back of Mingo Creek Meeting House, and confer about what further ought to be done, and thence go home.

These matters settled, John carefully read the names assigned to him, as Luke and the others had done, and then the paper was destroyed; "for (said Luke) it might raise suspicion that would be hard to soothe in case we should be so unfort'nate as to fall in with soldiers."

"'Deed," quoth Andy, "that's rare good counsel. Dead men tell no tales, they say; but that depends on what they happen to lave upon their corp's. 'T anny rate, live men tell manny a tale they'd fain hide, by bein' a bit too promiscuous with their letters an' papers, an' the like. What's the use o' puttin' a vise on one's lips, whan his saycrets are l'akin' out at his finger inds, or maybe from his pocket pouch? That's savin' at the spigot an' lattin' out at the bung. The glibbest tell-tale agoin' is a bit of writin' in the wrong hands. There, we're well shet of that!" He scattered the finely torn scraps of the memorandum of names into a brook that crossed the wayside. "An ounce of prevantion is better'n a pound o' cure. We'll jist put lock

an' key on our memories bewhiles, an' he 'll be a rare mileetieman that 'll bang the gangway open."

John exchanged horses with his father, and galloped away in the gathering darkness. The night was cool and growing colder. The rapid motion warmed his blood, and in his mood the solitude and darkness and silence were congenial. The turtle dove's sad monotone, trembling like the plaintive moan of a woman grieving bitterly,—Oo, oo, oo! had died away in the twilight. Then came the cry of the whippoorwill, the hoot of the owl, the howl of a wolf from the far summit of a woody hill. They were not discordant sounds to him, but seemed harmonious with his mood. So were the night and the rising wind that swept in gusts through the nearly naked trees, and switched to the ground with a swish the leaves still clinging aloft, and set those already fallen to skurrying and rustling over one another.

On, on he went, leaving Marion to follow the road without guidance of rein. He seemed to have lived a score of years since last summer. A new man had suddenly formed within him. His own self was separated from the past by a gulf. How deep and wide! Of all Gen. Neville's sentences, two had gone most deeply into his soul. "You are beneath her notice!" These words had maddened him. They had been as metal upon flint, and the fire had flashed and burned until burned out, leaving the noble residuum of lofty scorn of the falsehood, and loftier purpose to let the future show.

The other sentence he could not away with so easily. He could not banish it at all. "Even if the lady and her friends had not already formed suitable plans for her." What did that mean? What else, than that his hopes, faint as they had been, or as he had thought them to be, were forever quenched? As to the lady's friends, their plans might indeed be balked, or be changed. What had been done, could be done. Unwilling kindred had often crossed unequal mating, yet true love had won its way at last.

But the lady herself? Had she formed other plans? There the matter then must end! Ah! Blanche, Blanche, is it indeed so? Then give o'er! As well chase yonder jack-o-lantern flitting over the boggy bottom, as follow a phantom-hope like that! What substance had it ever had? Had it not been folly ever to entertain it?

A bit of selfishness, too! What sort of a home could John Latimer offer a lady like Blanche Oldham? That man is not worthy a noble woman's love who would win her at a cost to her of such sacrifice as Blanche would have to make for him. Yes, yes! She will be happy. Let him be content with that. And if any man can make her happy, and if any man is worthy of her, it is Capt. Ruel Burd. Farewell, Hope!

Was that a sob? or only a clucking call to urge on the horse? On, Marion! Faster! The waxing moon is hanging above the Western hills. It is sinking behind them. It is gone! The shadows of the overhanging trees deepen around the rough road. The wind is chill. Banks of gray clouds drift over the sky, and hide the stars. On, Marion, on through the dark and the cold! Happy horse, who never can know the pain of such a conflict as racks the breast of the unhappy rider.

It was near midnight when John stopped before the cabin of the first person on his list. He rapped long and loud at the door ere he got answer. A rough challenge came at last: "Who is there?"

"A friend, with a message from Luke Latimer."

Then came the racket of removing the bar, and the click of the uplifted latch; and the dim form of a man, barefooted, in his shirt sleeves, with rifle in hand ready cocked, stood in the half-open doorway. In low tones the message was told. The gruff voice softened into an anxious request to come in, and talk over the matter, and what were best to do.

"No, thank you! I must leave other warnings before I stop for the night, and then be off again bright and early in the morning. There is only one thing you can do if you don't want to stand trial, and that is to keep out of the way of the soldiers. If you wish further conference, you can see Luke Latimer to-morrow noon at the Church spring. Good-night!"

The beat of Marion's hoofs died away; but in that lone cot the sore beating of troubled hearts began. Alas, for the women folk in times like these! There will be soul-burdened men and weeping wives, and crying children enough, ere another twenty-four hours shall have passed. The next day at noon John Latimer was at the trysting place, but Luke and Andy had not yet come. Two settlers,

who had got the hurried warning, were seated on the bank above the spring. Their faces were woe-begone; their manner alert and nervous, as that of hunted men. They were fully armed with rifle, hunting knife and hatchet. They were off to Kentucky, they said, till the affair blew over, but had stopped to meet Luke Latimer in the hope of learning something more definite of their case.

John told them as much as he deemed wise, then bidding them tell his father, when he came, that he had been there and would be back soon, he went away. He was disturbed by the grief of the men, who were both honest, hard-working fellows with large families dependent upon them. With a caution which he unconsciously fell into as if he were in a hostile territory, he hitched Marion in a thick-wooded clump beyond the graveyard, and sauntered along the bank of the creek as far as the little waterfall. There he paused, and pondered his condition, while he watched the tumbling waters running full with recent rains, as they dashed over the ledges, and swirled about the pool ere they rushed off over the rocky bed of the stream.

His meditation was broken by a confused sound as of the distant trampling of many horses on the Pittsburg and Brownsville road. He turned away from the waterfall, that he might be rid of its roar and hear more clearly what the noise might be. A hunter running at full speed, and crouching as he ran, sped along the bridle path. He was one of the settlers left at the spring a few moments ago. He barely paused, at John's query, to give a hurried answer.

"The Jarsey Blues have jist passed the spring! They've got your father an' Andy Burbeck, an' are after my neighbor up the old Canonsburg road. See! There's a squad after me. Save yourself!" Standing no further question he plunged into the wooded tract that covered the hill to the right, and was lost to sight.

John stood a moment dazed by this news. Here was a calamity he had not counted upon, and his mind was in a whirl as to how to meet it. Following his first impulse, he ran up the road to attempt a rescue. But—he was weaponless! He had left his rifle leaning against a tree in the clump where Marion was picketed. Fool! when had he ever done such a careless thing? No time for self-abjurgation now. A dozen lighthorsemen were dashing

down the trail. They caught sight of his form as he still advanced toward them.

"Here's our man!" shouted Sergt. Hector Borem, who led the squad.

"No, 'tain't, nuther!" replied a familiar voice. "But it's a derned sight better game. That's John Latimer, one of the peskiest traitors of the lot; an' one of the l'aders, to boot. Nab him, sure!" It was Davy Dandruff, who spoke, doughty David, who had turned informer and spy, and was guiding the Jersey lighthorsemen to their raid upon his old neighbors and associates. It was lucky for David, and indeed for John Latimer also, that the rifle had been left behind in that moment of self-absorption and heedlessness.

How swiftly one thinks! A chain of reasoning may be drawn through the mind in a flash of thought. "To fight will be useless. I am unarmed, and the odds vastly against me. If captured or killed, I can be no help to my father or friends. Here, at least, it is better to fly than to fight. It is the only course open to me; and there is scarcely a chance in a hundred even in that. But nothing venture, nothing have. I'll try!" It was the barest fraction of a moment that John stood thus soliloquizing, awaiting the column of soldiers galloping down upon him, waving their swords and shouting: "Surrender, you cursed rebel! Surrender, or die!"

"Neither, thank you!" was the cool reply. Sharply turning, John sped along the trail with a fleetness that in his best scouting days he had never equalled. There was need for his utmost endeavor. His pursuers were within thirty rods of him.

"Stop or we 'll fire!" cried the leader.

A bullet whistled through the leaves above him, and by the crack John knew that it was a rifle shot, and that Davy Dandruff's malicious hand had fired it. He was opposite the waterfall now, and turned into the chaparral that fringed the creek, intending to plunge over the bank, and follow the stream for a little way. Thus he would throw the horsemen off the track and compel them to dismount, and then he would enter the thick brush beyond, where the horses could not follow, and trust to skill and speed to elude his pursuers.

Down the steep bank he plunged, turning one glance

backward ere he disappeared. Dandruff, Borem and two troopers were close behind him. The others were riding on apparently to head off the fugitive.

"Ah! It is rather close quarters for comfort," John muttered. "It looks as if my cake were dough, as dear old Andy would say." A grim sense of the humor of the situation, as Andy might look at it, flashed through his mind, even at that moment, and he smiled, and wondered that it could be so. "But never say die! Perhaps there's a chance yet. Ah?—well, I'll try it!"

He turned upon his path, threaded the verge of the pool which whirled and foamed at his feet, and darting under the waterfall, crept along the lower ledge, and laid himself but safe beneath the jutting shelf above him. The rock over which the stream descends is composed of three shelving limestone slabs, that rise one above another to the height of twelve or fifteen feet. As the creek now ran full, the shoot of the water was so strong that John had plenty of space for breathing, and through a narrow rift in the cataract could see what went on before him.

Dandruff and Sergt. Borem flung themselves from their horses, and followed by two troopers, rushed down the steep bank, confident that John could not yet have left the bed of the creek.

"Where is he?" cried the Sergeant, puffing between his words. "I—don't—see him—at all!"

"No more do I!" answered Dandruff, shouting aloud to drown the noise of the waters. "He must 'a got acrost somehow. Some of you fellers run down the crick, an' head him off. Follow me, an' we'll have the slippery rascal yit."

"Ay, slippery indeed, Davy!" quoth John, laying his hand against the slimy rock.

Without further ceremony Davy jumped into the narrow stream, waded across, and swinging up the opposite bank disappeared into the bosky border. Sergt. Borem followed somewhat more daintily, and the two troopers joined the hue and cry. Fortunately for John, who could note from his cramped and damp position all that transpired, the searchers soon returned. They were wondering and discussing, with many an oath and expletive, how their quarry could have escaped. They were beating the brush wherever the undergrowth was dense, and thrusting their swords into every bushy clump.

"He came down jist here," said Davy. "Thar! Don't you see whar his feet tore up the turf as he jumped over the aidge? He must 'a gone down the crick, an' got out on t'other side somewhar. But he's left nary trail."

"How fortunate!" John soliloquized, "that I took the rocky edge of the path, as I ran in. It was quite unconsciously done. Ah, dear old Panther! Your lessons of habitual caution have stood me in good stead. Yet, if eyes as keen as yours were on the trail instead of stupid Dave Dandruff's, there would be small chance for me."

"It bates me all holler," continued Davy, "whar that dawgoned critter's gone ter, an' how he got away. The ornary slink! He couldn't 'a flitted up'ards, for he's not a bird. An' by gum! he's no angel. He couldn't 'a swum, for he's no fish, an' nawthin' but a snake,—though he's tar-nation nigh one!—could 'a hid hisself in yan brush, and we not find 'im. Unless,—he's gone straight downward? Wall, I shouldn't wonder! I niver thought of that! They do say the deil is iver good til his own; and nobody but old Nick could 've helped John Latimer git the better of me so many times as he has. Jiminy crackies! I b'lieve I do smell sulphur!" The strapping gawk paused, and looked uneasily around as if half convinced that his last theory might be true, and that John had mysteriously disappeared into Hades by the aid of Beelzebub.

"Maybe he's drowned," suggested one of the troopers; "an' is down there in the pool."

"Sure enough!" exclaimed Davy. "Let's look!" He seized a long dead branch which lay at the water's edge, and strode toward the pool, to probe for the supposed corpse.

"Come away!" said Sergt. Borem. "If he's drowned, he's safe enough. But from what you've said of him, that's not likely, for he must 've been born to be hung. Wherever he is, he's gone and let him go! He wasn't on our list, anyhow, and the Leftenant will be as mad as a wet hen if we don't get back pretty soon."

Much to John's relief the party left. When due time had been allowed for them to get safely out of the way, he cautiously crawled forth. He was thoroughly wet, and chilled to the marrow, and cramped by the scant quarters in which he had lain. He climbed the bank, and having assured himself that his pursuers were gone, wrung the

water from his coat, and swung his arms vigorously until the blood circulated warmly. Then he got his horse, who had honored his war training by keeping quiet during all the racket made by the soldiers, and had therefore not been discovered. He looked to the priming of his rifle, and cautiously followed the lighthorsemen's trail. It was broad enough, and led to Parkinson's Ferry.

Outside the village he stopped at a farmhouse for refreshment and warmth, for his wet garments and the cold November air had chilled him through. He was recognized by the farmer's wife as the man who, in the early morning, had given warning to her husband, who was now in hiding. The grateful woman, though greatly troubled, and timorous lest she might bring ill usage upon herself and family, gave John a hospitable welcome.

A roaring hickory fire in the great open chimney and a generous meal soon restored him to comfort. Ere he had finished, a neighbor dropped in, from whom he learned that Luke and Andy had been taken to a tavern owned by Parkinson and kept by a man named Stockdale. The rumor ran that they had been rudely received by Gen. Bloodson, who commanded a small corps of Jersey lighthorsemen. This officer cursed them as rascals and rebels, and imprisoned them in a cellar, tied back to back and guarded by a sentinel. The cellar extended the whole length of a new log barn which had not been floored or daubed. It was wet and muddy, and neither fire nor victuals and drink were allowed the prisoners. Full of anxiety for his father's health under such treatment, although he apprehended no more serious consequences, John left Marion with the hospitable cotter, and started forth resolved by hook or crook to rescue his father, or at least secure his comfortable treatment.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE DREADFUL NIGHT.

The capture of Luke Latimer and Andy Burbeck was an accident. Gen. Lee's orders issued from his headquarters at Parkinson's Ferry on November 9th thus began: "From the delays and danger of escapes which attend the present situation of judiciary investigation to establish preliminary processes against offenders, it is deemed advisable to proceed in a summary manner, in the most disaffected scenes, against those who have notoriously committed treasonable acts. That is, to employ military for the purpose of apprehending and bringing such persons before the Judge of the District, to be by him examined and dealt with according to law."

The "treasonable acts" referred to were defined "as firing upon, imprisoning and interrupting the United States Marshal in the discharge of his duty; two attacks upon the house of John Neville; assembling or aiding to assemble an army at Braddock's Field; the assembling and acting as delegates in the Parkinson's Ferry meeting of August 14th; the meeting at Mingo Creek Meeting House, termed a Society, sometimes a Congress; the destruction of property, and the expulsion of persons from Pittsburg; plundering the public mail; violence done to revenue officers, and finally the planting of May Poles, impudently called Liberty Poles, with the intention to countenance and co-operate in the insurrection."

Three lists were included in the orders. The first had the names of those who complied with the terms of amnesty, and were entitled to exemption from arrest and punishment. The second, those who were understood to have committed acts of treason, and therefore might be safely apprehended. The third list included the names of desirable witnesses, who were to be treated as such when captured. Moreover, *carte blanche* was given to officers in charge of the arrests to apprehend others of whom, in the course of their operations, they might receive satisfactory information that they had committed like acts.

"Direct all whom you may apprehend," the general

order concluded, "to be conveyed to your camp until further orders. Send off your parties of horse with good guides, and at such a period as to make the surprise, however distant or near, at the same moment; or intelligence will precede them, and some of the culprits will escape. I presume the proper hour will be at daybreak of Thursday morning, and have therefore desired the operation to be thus performed in every quarter."

To execute this extraordinary order in the Mingo Creek district a guide was required; and David Dandruff made his peace with the authorities by offering himself for this disreputable service. That all might be ready for the occasion, Lieut. Meneter had been sent out, ostensibly upon foraging duty, but really to bring the guide into camp. Had not Dandruff been present when the squad passed the Meeting House spring, Luke Latimer and Andy would probably have been unmolested. But Davy was full of rancor towards the Latimers. Therefore, when a stroke of unwonted good fortune threw these men across his path, under conditions that enabled him to gratify his pique, he induced Lieut. Meneter to arrest them.

The prisoners were reported to Gen. Ledger Bloodson. "Turn 'em into the cellar, blast 'em!" he commanded. "It's better than they deserve. They'll have plenty of company by and by."

So saying, he went his way, leaving the prisoners in charge of Meneter. That worthy assigned them to Ensign McKillen, who turned them over to Sergt. Borem, who fulfilled his duty by setting over them a sentinel, with arrangements for relieving guard. The sentinel proceeded to make himself comfortable by kindling a fire in the end of the cellar opposite to his prisoners. Then he laid planks to protect his feet from the mud, and fitted up a rude slab seat whereon he deposited himself with a curse at the disagreeable duty imposed upon him. He was a hulking raw-boned fellow, with an undue proportion of legs, and a lean and hungry-looking face not without some traces of good nature. The cheeks were fringed by a straggling growth of shocky light hair, that hung down his neck, and projected in a tuft from the visor of his military hat, which article was worn in a decidedly unmilitary way on the back of his skull.

Andy from his corner listened closely to the sentinel's

grumbling, and busied himself in taking the man's measure, for he had resolved to buy or break his way out of that den. He was not much concerned for himself, but his indignation and pity were alike excited in behalf of his suffering friend.

"Jist turn round a bit, Luke, if ye pl'ase," he whispered. "I want to git a full view of that chap, an' mebbe git sp'ach of him."

Luke turned toward the wall, and thus brought Andy facing the guard, as the two were tied back to back. Andy had heard the soldier addressed by the sergeant as "Lanky," and by one of his comrades as "Towhead." But deeming neither of these epithets sufficiently complimentary for his purpose, he fell back upon his well-worn device of imaginary promotion.

"Mr. Sergeant!" he cried. "Hi, Mr. Sergeant!"

The sentinel gruffly asked if he meant him.

"Ay, sir; that's jist what A' mane, an' nothin' shorter. Wud your honor be pl'ased to come over here for a minute. A've somethin' important to communicate til ye."

The trooper, made complaisant by such mollifying titles, came up and demanded what he wanted.

"Dod!" said Andy, "that's an odd quistion for a gintleman of your intilligence. Jist look' how they've trussed us up; an' my fri'nd, here, a sick an' sore hurted man. You're a gintleman yoursilf, now, an' how wud ye like sich tr'atement?"

"I vum! It must be mighty oncomfor'ble!" said Lanky, who was not a bad-natured fellow at bottom, and not insensible to Andy's deferential address. "But then, I'm not a rebel, you know, and you be."

"A rebel!" exclaimed Andy with a tone of injured innocence. "Hear til him! Do we look like that sort of folk? Look at my fri'nd here! He's one of the most respectable men in the Western counties, an' well able to reward a man that'll do him a good turn. He were saized up on the roadside 'ithout right or r'ason, an' clapped intil this hole, whan he ought to be snug a-bed. This sort o' tr'atement is like to kill him, an' ye'll be responsible for that, if ye don't help him. Marcy, man! wud ye see a Christian gintlemin like that burn himself away afore his time, like a gutterin' candle? Besides that, aven if we were insargents, as they call our folk, don't you think we're

flesh an' blood the same as yoursilf? Aven the devil isn't as black as he's painted, sir; an' ye'll find us a dacenter lot nor you've fancied, if you'll do the clane thing by us. So jist loosen up this cord a bit, an' let my hand free. A've got some new levies in my pocket, an' ye shall share 'em ginerously if ye'll let me git at them wanct."

To be spoken to like a gentleman, and offered a handsome bonus was a sore temptation to the raw recruit, who had just served out his time as a bound boy to a hard-fisted Jersey farmer.

"I dunno, mister. I'd like to help you amazin'. It's not right to treat human bein's like cattle. I vum! I've had my fill of that business." The bumpkin's gaunt face flushed at the recollection of the hardships he had so lately escaped. "I'm mortal sorry for you, that's a fack. But—"

"Well, then, Sergeant," Andy interrupted, "jist show your sorrow by your deed. 'I love ye,' said the cobbler to the cow, and whacked her with his stick. 'I love you!' said the cow to the cobbler, and gave him down a foamin' bucket of milk. Which was the better Christian, now, the cobbler or the cow?"

"The cow, by jing!" said Lanky.

"A true shot, Sergeant! You hit the bull's eye that time. Eight levies make a dollar, an' there's a silver dollar til ye for actin' like a Christian. If ye'll jist slip that knot a bit A'll do the rest, an' nobody'll be the wiser."

"Dumbit! I'll do it!" said the sentinel. And he did it. Then he went back to the fire, chinking eight York shillings in his pocket, and with a sense of having done a good act besides.

Andy, having one arm free, soon set both Luke and himself at liberty. The tightly drawn cords had stopped the circulation of the blood, and this, added to the frost and damp air, had left them both cold and thoroughly uncomfortable, while Luke shivered with a chill. They could stamp about even though the floor was sticky clay, and that gave some relief; but Luke's teeth chattered and his limbs still shook.

"Come," said Andy, taking him by the arm, "we must go to the fire."

"No, no; the officer forbade that, you know." It was almost the first word that Luke had spoken since his entrance into his cellar prison. He had lost heart, and a

strange stupor had fallen upon his feelings. He wanted to sleep, but could not for the pain of his wound, and for the cold that struck through to his marrow, and the burning heat that flushed thereafter. Never had Andy seen his friend in such a plight.

"Drat the officer, and all his kith and kin!" he cried. "Do ye think A'm a-gahin' to stand here like a bound boy at a huskin' an' see you suffer an' mabbe warse? Gin A' do that, how could A' iver look Polly Latimer an' John in the face? No sirree! Yonder lout of a guard is a good-natured clodhopper; an' besides, he's gone too far a'ready to refuse a little more favor. For when you've slicked a man's hand with a bribe, you've put a noose about his neck, an' may pull him at your pleasure. Sergt. Borem is not like to come this way soon, and no odds if he does. A' would as lief or liefer see you shot to death as shiver to death. Jist come along, my dear fellow, and bandy no more words."

Lanky, whose real name was Amos Huddle, made a show of standing by his orders. But the virtue of a Mexican quarter eased up the bands of discipline, and he agreed to watch at the entrance for the coming of the sergeant till the two men got thoroughly warmed. Moreover, as no one seemed inclined to disturb his solitary watch, and grown bolder by immunity, he consented to transfer the board that had kept his own feet from the mucky floor to the prisoner's side of the cellar; and further to aid Andy in fixing up a rude seat for Luke.

"I vum!" quoth Lanky; it's a mortal shame to treat a wounded man worse than you would a dog. Dumbit! I don't care if Sergt. Borem does cuss me for it. A man don't lose anything by a little kindness." Which certainly was true in Huddle's case; for his pocket was heavier by an additional "fip" which Andy had ventured to give him.

The sentinel that relieved Lanky did not seem a favorable subject for Andy's wiles. Nevertheless he ventured an approach. But the horseman girded at him with such a vicious snort and snapping curse to his curt denial, that the attempt was not repeated. He was relieved at ten o'clock by lighthorseman Lanky, who with a dolorous visage and nasal curse announced that the troop had been ordered out for duty, and he had to stand guard all night. When his comrade had retired, however, he seemed quite

resigned to the situation, and the prisoners thanked the good Providence that had thus interposed in their behalf.

"More chunks to the fire, Mr. Huddle!" said Andy. "It's blind man's holiday here, an' we 're a-shiverin' agin with the cold, bad cess to that dunderheaded haw-buck of a cast-iron image that has jist gone out. Dod! What could ye axpict of sich a country-jake? He lacks the stately manner and soldierly polish of some one—well, of some one A' darsn't name. The feckless donnert fool! It's well seen why they put yoursilf in charge of sich important State prisoners. Ay, ay; they know a thing or two, A'll be bound. An' here, sir," sinking his voice to a whisper, and feigning to hide the act from Luke, "is another levy to celebrate your return."

The prisoners were now quite at liberty to enjoy the fire, and make themselves as comfortable as possible. The sentinel meanwhile watched at the cellar door on the floor above, returning now and then to warm himself, and solace his loneliness with a bit of gossip. Luke's spirits revived so much that his indignation against Lieut. Meneter began to find utterance. He wouldn't stand such an outrage upon his person and liberties! He would set the law in play against him! He would make him feel his horsewhip!

Andy was well pleased at these signs that Luke was coming to himself, but wished to soothe his friend's growing excitement. "Tut, Luke man, let the fellow alone! What 'll you gain by tryin' for to git satisfaction out of sich as he? Ye may lather him or law him, it 'll be all one in the ind. Whichiver way ye go, ye 'll come out of the same hole ye went in at. Mind the old sayin', sue a beggar an' catch a louse! Let the beggar go, siz I. He's not aven worth cussin', let alone kickin' or quarrelin' with. Ye 'll git little better nor a smell by meddlin' with a skunk. Besides, there's those ahint an' above him as desarve the rale blame, an' they 're too high up for aither of us to raich. One thing at a time! Let's get out of this infarnal place, where they 've penned us up like pigs, an' git you wancnt on your feet agin. Then mebbe we'll try a wrastle an' a tassle with Meneter, and mayhap some of the bigger folk."

"True, true, Andy!" sighed Luke, relapsing again into his melancholy. "I'm a broken reed, an' it ill becomes me to be thinkin' of vangance. I'd beeta turn my thoughts to another warld nor this. An' what for should I complain,

Andy? Haven't I brought it all on myself; an' what's warse dragged you, my faithful fri'nd, intil the meshes with myself? God have marcy on me! Andy, I crave your pardon for gittin' you intil this last trouble. Ye'll bear me no ill will, I hope, an' maybe have a kindly thought for me wanc't in a while, when I'm gone. Ay, I've made a sad wrack of it, I misdoubt; a wretched boggle and mux have I made of my life. May the God above forgive me!"

"Luke, Luke, my old fri'nd, niver spake that way agin!" said Andy with choking voice. "The idee o' astin' my pardon for havin' been mixed up with that whuskey risin'! It's me that had better be cravin' forgiveness. A' agged you on, an' niver helt you back, an' was so brash for ivery new fad, an' sich a laggard to let well enough alone. Sure, A'm no spring chicken in years, an' no nose of dough in charackter, that I nades be turned this way an' that at anny man's bid an' call, pinch an' pull. But let bygones be bygones. We 'll mak' the best of a bad bargain, A' warrant, an' have manny a jolly day together on river and forest. Hearten up, man! Niver say die! The darkest hour is jist afore the dawn; an' there niver was a night so long that dayspring didn't follow. That plaguey arm of your'n has nigh worritted the life out'n ye. But jist spunk up a bit an' all will be well."

Andy's voice was broken at times as he spoke, and more than once he had to brush away the tears from his eyes. Luke made no reply, but looked at his friend with a sad smile, and then crouched over the smouldering coals on the muddy cellar floor, and relapsed into silence. So he remained until Lanky came down the rude cellar stairs, and with a mysterious air placed in Andy's hands two objects. One was a note for Luke which Andy read with the aid of a pine splint:

"Keep a good heart. Help is near. I have been foiled thus far, but to-morrow I hope to get your release."

JOHN.

"Do you mind that now, Luke?" Andy broke forth jubilantly. "What was I a-tellin' you? It's jist an echo from the guardian angels, is that bit of paper! Ay; A' knowed we could trust John Latimer not to go back on us. Cheer up, old fri'nd! An' here's somethin' more the lad has sant ye, that 'll mebber do ye more good nor his bit paper." He gave Luke a small flask of Monongahela whis-

key. "There's somethin' to tak' the chill out of your boones, an' the donsieness out of your heart. Was there iver annything more timely? Yet, some folk don't belave in a special Providence! Dod! The dunderheads aren't all dead."

Luke, much cheered by the incoming of the loving message with its breath of hope, and refreshed by the draught of liquor, showed signs of sleep. Andy sat down on the plank beside him, and propping his back against the wall, gently drew the nodding invalid against his broad breast. Soon Luke dropped his head upon Andy's shoulder and slept. Then Andy put the other hand gently around his waist beneath the wounded arm, and held him there securely until he was sound asleep. At last, wearied with the day's excitement and toils, he gradually dropped his chin against Luke's forehead, and after divers catnaps and jerky awakenings, yielded to weary Nature's kind compulsion, and he too slept.

When Amos Huddle next came down, he stood for a few moments and silently looked upon the two friends propped in the cellar corner, whose faces, dimly lit up by the flickerings of the low-burnt fire, showed ghastly through their grime, and even in sleep carried traces of suffering and care. He was touched by the sight, and turned and tiptoed over the muddy floor, and up the slab steps to his post.

"Dumbit!" he ejaculated, and rubbed his eyes. "I never reckoned we 'listed for that sort of thing! If I'd 'a knowed it, I vum—" However, he did not commit himself further. Being happily freed for a long while from fear of obtruding officer of the guard, he sat down upon the upper step, and leaning against the door jamb slept as soundly as if he had been a veteran.

He was aroused in the early morning by the clatter of horses' hoofs on the road outside the tavern. Andy, too, was startled by the noise, and Luke awoke with teeth chattering, and limbs shaking with a violent chill. The fire had gone out. The temperature had fallen so low that the cellar mud was stiff with the frost.

Mr. Huddle swiftly assumed a pretense of military vigilance, and with an air of vigor, and sounding clink of his cutlass, as though drowsiness had never dared to visit his eyelids, cried a loud challenge:

"All right, Lanky!" replied Sergt. Borem. "We've

been out hunting, and bagged a famous collection to add to your show. It'll beat Peale's Philadelphia Museum all hollow. Stand aside, man, and let the animals come in."

Now the mournful procession of prisoners began to descend the cellar stairs. They had been dragged out of their beds at two o'clock in the morning, and forced away, only partly dressed, amid the screams of terror-stricken children and the cries and tears of agonized wives and mothers. Some were hatless, some coatless, some shoeless, and their feet covered with the cold clay of the muddy roads over which they had been driven before the horses at a trot. The troopers bayed at them as they filed by towards the wretched den into which they were to be impounded.

"Hope you'll enjoy your hangin'!" cried one.

"Here! I'll give you a dollar a shot for the chance of poppin' at you!" called another.

"A pretty lot of jailbirds!" exclaimed a third.

"Like to get out of jail, would you?" sneeringly asked a fourth. "So you will, when hangin' day comes!"

Amidst a volley of oaths, nicknames, vulgar insults and irritating epithets, the weary, galled, shivering and heavy-hearted captives filed into their temporary prison, until forty had been told off by Lieut. Meneter.

Now Gen. Bloodson, who had directed the whole, appeared upon the scene. "Tie the rascals back to back!" he ordered, with an oath. "Let the guard have a fire, but keep the prisoners in the opposite end of the cellar."

One of the officers ventured a remonstrance. "But General, they are cold and wet. They ought to have a fire till they get dry, at least."

"Fire! They'll get fire enough after they're hanged!" was the response. "Not a coal, not a spark, at your peril!"

One of the sufferers called for water.

"Not a drop! Not a mite of fire, or drop of drink or crumb of bread shall you have, if you were dying for it. There has been enough dandling and coddling of insurgents. You have got at last into a man's hands that will give you a taste of genuine treason-bitters. You've made your own bed, and you've got to lie in it. Shiver and freeze, and be—" he ended the sentence with an oath.

The excitement of these arrivals for a while aroused Luke Latimer from his torpor. He had tasted the cruelty

of Gen. Bloodson, and had reason to know what the others might expect, yet his indignation burned hotter than the fever, as one after another the prisoners entered the cellar. Most of them he knew, and what puzzled him was, that few of them had taken any part in the insurrection movement. Only two or three of those who had been on his list were among the victims; and they were men who, conscious of their innocence, had disregarded the warning given them, thinking arrest impossible. A few had been present at the raising of liberty poles, nothing more. Some had been at Braddock's Field as spectators. Most of them had signed the amnesty. Several had been taken in mistake for others. Only one man had taken any active part in the tumults, and he, more guilty than all the others, was the only person to receive from the commander any mitigation of his barbarous orders.

The mystery was afterwards explained. The three lists of exempts, of witnesses and of the proscribed, had been drawn and distributed with such carelessness and indifference, that the several names became mixed. Being handed thus to the subordinate officers who conducted the arrests, the innocent and guilty were seized together, and treated with like indignity.

What occurred in the Mingo Creek district, happened throughout Washington and Allegheny Counties, although the treatment of the prisoners was usually less aggravated. Squads of cavalry were scattered throughout these sections, and in the dead of the night hundreds of families were roused from sleep by the trampling of horses before the cabin door, and heads or members of the household were routed from sleep and borne into captivity. Even where insults and threats of personal violence were not used, the agony of the households thus disturbed and robbed of loved members, may better be imagined than described. The district thus invaded became a *Bochim*. The land was filled with the wailing of women and children. So vivid was the recollection of the terror and sorrow of the time, that the night of November 12th-13th was long known among the people as "THE DREADFUL NIGHT."

During Thursday and Thursday night, the victims of the Mingo Creek dragonnade were kept in their den, under guard. Some modification of Gen. Bloodson's order was compelled by the demands of his soldiers themselves.

Some food and drink was allowed, but the rigor of the orders was little relaxed. Yet, all of these persons were subsequently dismissed as innocent men! Only three were sent to Philadelphia for trial; and against these nothing was proved, and they were discharged.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE RELEASE OF LUKE LATIMER.

How fared John Latimer all this time? Every attempt made to secure his father's release, or get abatement of his inhuman treatment had failed. Dandruff had slunk home in the early morning, fingering the price of his nefarious service, despised and jeered even by the troopers who employed him. He, therefore, was out of John's way.

Lieut. Meneter recognized him as the scout from Wayne's Army whom President Washington had received at Carlisle, and knowing nothing more about him, treated him with respect, and presented him to Gen. Bloodson. John vainly tried to soften that officer's heart; and succeeded no better in an effort to inspire fear of the consequences by showing that Luke was now under the protection of the United States Court.

Thence John rode to the camp of Col. Campbell at the mouth of Mingo Creek, and was referred to Gen. Matthews, who in turn referred him to Gen. Lee, whose headquarters were further up the river. The Commander-in-chief declined to act, and advised John to go to Judge Peters. The day was now nearly done, and hastening back to Parkinson's Ferry, John managed, through the tavern-keeper Stockdale and the sentinel Amos Huddle, to smuggle in the note, and the little flask of spirits which he knew his father must so much need. Stopping no further than to bait his horse, he set out for Pittsburg in the dusk of the evening.

The next morning when John told his story to Judge Peters, that functionary flushed with anger. "That is high contempt of my court!" he exclaimed. "A direct defiance of the United States authority. I will see about this!"

He sat down, and rapidly wrote an order to Gen. Blood-

son to at once release Luke Latimer now under custody of his court. He added a sharp rebuke, and signed and sealed the document, which he was about to hand to John. He hesitated; glanced over his letter, shook his head doubtfully, then arose. "Come with me," he said. "We had better consult Secretary Hamilton before we proceed further."

The Secretary of the Treasury was surrounded by clerks and officers, and in the ante-room of his office a motley crowd of suppliants waited. It was easily seen that whoever was commander-in-chief of the troops or head of the judiciary, Hamilton was the power behind the throne. He at once recognized John.

"Ah," said he in a friendly tone. "My stalwart hero of Fallen Timbers! How is the captive maid, your sister?"

John answered briefly, for Judge Peters at once entered upon his story. The Secretary glanced at him from time to time, and the friendly glint in his eyes (at least so John thought, who keenly watched every motion) seemed gradually frosted over.

"Umph! So you are Luke Latimer's son?" he asked, glancing coldly at John, who bowed assent. "Well, I am sorry! But—no! Filial fidelity is a virtue, and a somewhat rare one among American youth. It would be scant charity (addressing Judge Peters) to visit the sins of the fathers upon the children. You are quite right, Judge. This unauthorized imprisonment of Latimer is in contempt of your court. And I may add, of the Executive of the Government, whom I have the honor to represent." Thereupon he wrote a line to Judge Peters' document, signed his name, affixed his seal, and gave the paper to John.

"I thank you, Mr. Secretary, with all my heart. And you, your Honor, for this act. May Heaven bless you both for the relief you have opened up to a wronged and suffering man and to a bitterly afflicted child!" John's voice trembled with emotion, as he spoke. Tears gathered in his eyes. He ended the sentence almost with a sob, and hastily withdrew.

Marion, rested and refreshed by good grooming and hearty baiting, stood ready hitched outside the Judge's door. John leaped into the saddle, and set forth on his holy errand. On, Marion, on! Never did horse have greater need to serve his master well. Ride, John, ride! Never did messenger have greater need of haste. The road

was wet and broken by much traffic; but the settlers averred that it had never been traversed so quickly as on that morning when Marion carried John Latimer from Pittsburg to Parkinson's Ferry.

Flinging the bridle to the hostler at Stockdale's Tavern, and charging him to care for the horse as though he were a brother, John at once presented himself and his document to Gen. Bloodson. That officer's brow was knitted with anger and chagrin as he read. He gazed fiercely upon the young man, then flung the paper down on his table.

"Ho, guard!" he cried; "show this fellow to the crazy man's room and be hanged to him!"

The vague horror which lurked within that coarse speech made John frantic. He leaped forward and seizing the officer's throat tightened his grip until the face grew black, and the man gurgled forth broken cries for mercy. John relaxed his grasp, but keeping his hold thundered forth: "What have you done, you accursed bully? Tell me what you mean! Speak up, or by Heaven, I'll crush the life out of your cowardly carcass."

"Calm yourself, sir," the General exclaimed, when he could find his voice. "I have done nothing, I assure you, to merit such treatment. Your father grew worse. He lost his head a little, I was told. That was all; and I had him removed to a room in the tavern."

John's hand dropped to his side. He turned upon the guard, who happened to be our lighthorseman Lanky, and cried: "Show me to father's room at once!"

Bloodson, released from that anaconda grip and now breathing freely and at a safe distance, recovered his spirits. "Seize him!" he cried in a sudden flush of mortification and wrath. "Cut him down! What do you mean, you image of dough, by standing there like a dummy, while your commander is assaulted? Run him through!" Thereupon he drew his own sword.

"Dumbit!" quoth Lanky. "I, I,—I don't see how—I'm"—And he fumbled with the hilt of his cavalry sabre.

John wheeled about, released his hatchet from his belt and shaking it in his hand, advanced a step. He spoke no word, but—his eyes! Gen. Bloodson never forgot the sudden flame that burned therefrom. Men had seen the like, ere this, in John Latimer, in moments of highest passion, when the berserker rage had seized him. And

never yet had man been found who did not cower before it. Bloodson paused a moment, then sheathed his sword. He sat down at his table, and waved his hand to the guard, as if to say "Take him away!" and bent over some official papers, feigning to be busy with them.

"Come, sir!" said Huddle. John, trembling under the reaction from his outbreak of wrath, followed his guide. In an upper room of the tavern he found Luke lying upon a bed. Andy Burbeck kneeled beside him. The landlord stood at the footboard. A trooper sat in the opposite corner on guard. The light shone through a little window full upon the sick man's face.

Was this his father? Could a day and night of suffering have wrought such a change? The hair, before only sparsely tinged with threads of gray, showed broad streaks of white around brow and temples. The eyes were deeply sunken; the cheeks fallen in; the nose thin and white; the skin pallid as with the touch of death.

"O my father!" cried John. "Has it come to this?" He flung himself down on his knees at Andy's side, and took the hand that hung over the bedside, cold and wasted and soiled with the stains of the vile pen whence Luke had been borne. He kissed it, and the hot tears dropped upon fingers, as he cried again, "O my father, my father!"

"Hoosh, lad!" said Andy, in a soothing tone. "He's jist fallen asleep. Hoosh! it 'ud be ill to disturb him now, seein' what he has gone through."

Andy's warning came too late. Luke opened his eyes, and for a moment looked steadily at John. A smile such as John had never seen thereon, spread over the wan face until it seemed illumined with some rare light.

"My boy, I knew—you would—come!" The fingers closed lovingly upon John's, and the young man then learned how much of human feeling can be uttered in the mute language of hand pressure.

"Ay, father, I have come; and brought from the court and Secretary Hamilton an order for your release. We can go home as soon as your are ready; and there we will soon have you all right again."

"Ahbut—it's all right now, lad! I've got—my rel'ase—I misdoubt,—from a Higher Coort." Then the eyes closed wearily, but the same sweet setting of contentment rested on the features.

"He'll go to sleep now, A'm a-thinkin'," said Andy; "an' that'll do him a power o' good." The sick man gently nodded assent. For several moments the watchers kneeled in silence, the deep hush of the room only disturbed by the restless movements of lighthorseman Lanky, whose undisciplined nature could ill brook such scenes. The silence was broken by the sound of a bugle in the street beneath the window.

"We must be off, now!" said the guard, in a husky voice which he meant for a whisper. "There's the call to saddle. The troop moves soon to escort the prisoners to Washington. And—I'm sorry, Mr. Burbeck,—but it's orders, and must be obeyed,—I've got to take you with me. I'd like you to stay with your friend, 'specially as he is so low, but—"

"An' stay A' wull, orders or no orders!" said Andy, rising from his knees, and speaking also in a deep whisper. "A'd rather die maself nor l'ave this poor unfort'nate man. Nobody but an iron-hearted tyrant would aven think of siparatin' us!"

Now John also arose, and leaving the bedside laid his hand gently upon Andy's shoulders. "You must keep quiet, Andy, my dear old friend. God knows it'll be hard on all of us to have you go just now. But any row over the matter would be dreadfully exciting to father, and might hurt him beyond help. Go quietly; it is best so. Submit now for your friend's sake, if not for your own."

Andy could not resist such an appeal. "You are right, John, it's the only way. But—if—" Here he broke down completely, and the tears streamed over his face, while his chest heaved with sobs.

The hush that had again fallen was startled by the sharp crack of Lanky's knuckles. He went over all the joints of his left hand, pulling them till they snapped; then, carried away by his emotions, he reversed hands and cracked the joints of the right hand fingers.

"Dumbit, Mr. Burbeck!" He also dropped into a hoarse whisper, in the odd notion (which most people have) that a whisper is the proper and soothing thing in a sick room, instead of an irritation to the patient. "I vum! It's too bad! But jest you go off quietly, an' trust to me and King-george there, to make it all right. King-george Kelsey, he's my friend; we was bro' up on a'jinein' farms.

You'll be under our keer durin' the march, I reckon; an' ef there's any way to git you off, dumbit! we'll do it, won't we King-george?"

"We will!" said that royally-named individual, nodding his head emphatically.

Andy turned toward the bed. Luke's eyes were wide open. He had heard it all, then! The great-hearted fellow fell upon his knees, and took the sick man's hand in both his own.

"Oh Luke!" he said; "A've got to lave you. The Philistines be upon us, an' A'm shorn of ma strength. Good bye, Luke dear, an' God bless an' heal ye!"

"It's a true fri'nd ye 've been to me, Andy, since we were boys thegither," said Luke. "A true-hearted fri'nd an' trusty comrade, my right hand's marrows. Good bye! Mind the lad a bit, Andy! He 'll be none the warse for that, nor yourself, mayhap. But, don't—desave yourself—"

There was a pause, during which another bugle call sounded outside. The notes won Luke's attention, and seemed to associate themselves with the winding horn that boatmen were wont to blow upon the river Ohio. His eyes moved restlessly from John's face to Andy's, and back again, with an unsettled glance that showed a wandering mind. Then he continued:

"We're high up—on the bar—at last! The waters are run clear out. Put up the horn, lad; ye'll have no nade of windin' it, I misdoubt. We'll jist wade ashore. Ay, we'll go over dry shod! There's a green bank, an' cool shade yonder. An'—ye'll no forgit—" a faint smile with just a tinge of humor played around the lips,—“to bring the fiddle, Andy. We'll foregather a bit on the green, an'—we'll sing the twenty-third psalm, Andy; an'—an' ye shall have Rouse's Varsion, if ye like.”

The cracking of Lanky's knuckles dropped upon the silence, and an audible snuffle escaped from King-george. Then Andy's voice was heard, low and solemn, and quivering with emotion: "Let us pray!"

"Almighty God, we cry unto Thee for help. Have mercy, O Lord! Thou didst remember David in all his afflictions; remember Luke Latimer in his'n. O Lord, in this day of sore calamity, when all Thy waves and billows have gone over him, attend until our cry. For he is

brought very low. Bring up his soul out of the prison, that we may praise Thy name. Oh Thou, who art the Holy One of Israel, who leadest Thy people like a flock, do Thou shepherd thy sarvant with a gentle hand. Do Thou walk with him in the Valley of the Shadow, and go down with him until the waves of Jordan. An' O Lord God, to whom vangeance belongeth, O God, to whom vangeance belongeth, show Thyself! Lift up Thyself, Thou Judge of the 'arth; render a reward to the proud—"

"Hoosh, Andy!" said he sick man, breaking in with a voice soft but clear. "Not that, not that, pl'ase! 'Father forgive them, for they know not what they do?' .Do ye mind that?"

Andy's closed eyes opened with a slight start, and caught Luke's upturned gaze. Then he went on with his prayer, but in a trembling voice, and in a tone quite emptied of the old Covenanter sternness which it had insensibly gathered.

"Have marcy upon us, O Lord, an' accordin' to Thy tinder marcy blot out our transgressions. An' bring us until Thy peace, at last; where the sun shall not smite by day, nor the moon by night; whose inhabitants shall no more say, I am weary; where there shall be no more parting, nayther shall there be anny more pain, for the former things are passed away. We crave it in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Redeemer. Amen."

"Amen," echoed Luke.

Andy was gone, and John remained alone with the dying man, who soon dropped off into a quiet sleep. It seemed an hour to the young man, as he sat there watching the tranquil face and the slowly heaving breast. In truth, it was but a quarter of an hour. When Luke woke, he looked around him.

"We are alone?" he asked.

"Yes, father."

"Would you—mind—kissing me, lad?"

John bent his tall form and kissed the pallid lips. But the incident quite broke him up. He sobbed, and kneeling by the bedside, buried his face in his hands and wept. His boyhood days seemed to come before him. His father and he had not kissed one another since then. Yet what numberless kindnesses had filled that interval! Now Luke's hand gently and tremblingly felt along John's cheek till at last it rested on the bowed head.

"Bless you, my son!" he said, and added the old patriarchal benediction: "May the Angel that hath redeemed me from all evil bless the lad! You have never given me a moment's anxiety or pain in all your life," he continued, after a brief pause. "You have been a good son, an' God knows I have tried to be a good father."

"You have, you have!" John exclaimed. "Never had son a father and friend such as you have been."

"Tis sweet til hear ye say it, John. But—but the end has come at long last. I know that well—hoosh! don't interrup' me. I've knowed it this while back, an' have made all preparation for it. Ye'll find the estate in good condition. I've left it til your mother an' Meg' an' you, share an' share alike. There'll be enough for ye all, pl'ase God, if—the Gover'ment— But it may never come til that! Annyhow, I l'ave you in charge, an' you'll care for mother an' Meg, my boy, will ye not?"

"As God spares me, I will, father!"

"Ay! They'll nade comfortin', I doubt. An' Meg— poor child!—I'd like for to see her—a little furdur settled. But it's the Lord's wull. It seems hard, I don't deny; but it's all right. The Lord has been far better to me nor I desarved. I die content, for I know mother and Meg are safe with you—an' with the Friend of the widow an' fatherless. Good bye now, John! The fever may come up agin an' mebbe—there, you must be calm! Good bye, and take my lovin' far'wells to my beloved Polly an' to darlin' Meg. Ah, if I could see them wanct more!"

He soon fell into a doze, and slept longer than before. He awakened with a sudden start, and raised himself upon his well arm.

"Ye beeta go out to meet her, John!" he said.

"Yes, yes, father!" John caressed his hand soothingly, thinking that his mind wandered.

"Ay, but I'm not a-ramblin', my lad," said Luke, noting John's thought. "She's comin', for sartin."

"Who is coming, father?" John asked, still bent on humoring a fevered imagination.

"Your mother, lad. She's jist passed the Mingo Creek Meetin'-house. There! She takes the little trail along the creekside. It's shorter, mebbe. She's passin' the Falls now. But that's a bit quare,—she's ridin' Ladybird! I wouldn't 'a thought she could 'a done it."

John put his arm around him to support him, and Luke leaned against his breast, and gazed steadfastly toward the window. A sudden change passed over his countenance, with a following shadow as of disappointment. Still gazing with that fixed look, as of one peering into the distance, he exclaimed: "Ah! it's not my Polly after all—it's Meg! God bless the lass. She'll be here soon at that rate. Put me down, John. Let me down, I say, and go you forth to meet her."

Wishing to soothe the fevered mind, John gave feigned assent to the fancy, and settling his father upon the pillows, went out, leaving the door ajar. He crossed the hallway to a window that looked upon the road, and yet commanded a view of the sick chamber. The troopers had gone. He could see, far down the river road, the rear of the column as it slowly moved out of sight. A slight commotion among the last files attracted his attention. Horses and men suddenly jostled one another to the edge of the highway. A horseman seemed to dart out of the column and return at full speed.

"It's a runaway!" thought John, and waited the approaching object eagerly. "What! I seem to know that horse. Gracious heavens! Can it be?" He flung up the window, and leaned over the sill, and gazed intently toward the swiftly advancing rider. "It is—it is Ladybird! And that is sister Meg!"

He closed the window, recrossed the hall and pushed open the sick man's door. His father was leaning up against the pillows, and must have noticed the awe-struck look upon John's face, for he smiled and said:

"Ay, lad, I telled ye so; but ye doubted. There's nought strange in it; it's the second sight, lad, the second sight. But go ye right down; I'll do well enough to ye come back. The poor lass 'll need someone to meet her." In a few moments John returned with Meg. He had cautioned her to control her feelings, and indeed her life's training would have guaranteed that. Yet she could not forbear putting her arms around her father's neck, as he lay there propped among the pillows. She kissed him again and again. She stroked back the strangely whitened hair, and spoke words of love that fell most soothingly upon the sick man's ears and were better than a cordial to his heart.

"An' your mother?" he asked.

"Mother is well, but much anxious. She would have come, but she gave Snowball to old-man-with-no-horse to ride to Pittsburg with the soldiers. Then she tried Ladybird. But Ladybird no have that. Then Meg have to come, at last. Mother wait to fix house for father when we bring him home."

"Who told—?"

"I sent a message from Pittsburg," said John, "when I went there to get your release."

"Ay, ay. It's all plain now, an' it's all right." His eyes glanced at John, and then at Meg, and then from the one to the other again. He was pleased and satisfied.

A woman's hand works wonders of comfort in a sick room, for which few men, without special training, have the faculty. A bowl of hot water, and towel to sponge off face, neck and hands; the smoothing out of the hair; the deft touches to pillows and sheets, and other little offices, which already Meg had caught from her mother and Fanny, made a great change, at least in the seeming of comfort. Then she looked at the bandages on the wounded arm, and eased them up and adjusted them, promising a dressing by and by.

Luke uttered his satisfaction from grateful eyes. It was so pleasant to have his daughter, his long lost Meg, to minister to him. Merciful God! he had ceased to hope for that boon, and now—his daughter, ay his own daughter would close his dying eyes!

"Thank you, my child," he said, "Heaven bless you richly. Ahbut, I don't wonder that I thought it was your mother. Her livin' image, John! But—I'm sore, sore tired. I can sleep now."

The afternoon wore on, and Luke Latimer slept. The sun went down, and he still slept. The evening advanced; eight, nine o'clock,—and the sick man was sleeping still.

Early in the afternoon, Dr. Cheeseman, the neighborhood physician had come in. He was a tall man with a kindly face, with full reddish brown beard and moustache, a rare fashion among professional men of those times. "Let him sleep," he said, "it will do more for him than I can do." He mixed some medicine from the little vials in his pocket case, and promised to come again in the evening. And now he called, but made no change; yet his grave look, and tender good-night as he left confirmed the watchers' fears.

The doctor's presence seemed to have started some reaction in the sufferer's nerves. He raised his hand and reached it forth.

"He want something, maybe," said Meg, taking her father's hand and bending her ear to listen.

"Polly, love!—take me—home—to MOTHER."

The voice ceased and the slow breathing went on.

Ten o'clock! Sister and brother watched together in the little room. Meg had set the candle on the floor beyond the foot of the bed, so that its light might not fall on her father's eyes. His form lay in the shadow, dimly shown against the sheets. Many times John had gone back and forth uneasily from his chair to the bed, and looked into the gaunt face, and bent his ear to the chest to see if Luke breathed, so quietly he lay. Now he leaned over and listened.

"Meg, come here!" he said. "I can hear no sound at all."

Meg ran to his side, and laid her hand upon her father's face. "Oh, John! O my father!" she cried, and fell upon her knees, and hid her face in the pillows, and wept as if the fountains of her heart had been broken up.

John drew back the sheet and thrust his hand upon the breast. The heart was still.

Luke Latimer had got his release.

The young man kneeled beside the weeping maid, and put an arm about her, and drew her gently to his bosom. He stooped and kissed her cheek. He bent over and kissed the cold forehead of the dead, but did not speak. And he did not weep. The pressure and strain upon him that had wrought his nerves to highest tension, had kept him at the tear point for the last twenty-four hours. He had wept more than once. Now Nature gave no tears. But he lifted up his heart to God in Heaven in a silent prayer, and sought grace and strength for the new duties that must come upon him, and for the dangers that might portend.

So they kneeled together, there, John and Meg, till the maiden's grief had full vent. Then they arose, and reverently, and as fittingly as they could, composed their beloved dead for his long last sleep.

CHAPTER XLVII.

GENERAL BLOODSON'S MENAGERIE AND ANDY BURBECK'S
TRAINED HORSE.

In the street Andy found Rouse his horse ready to receive him. The landlord had kindly taken charge of the animal, and as the troopers were not disposed to go to the length of horse stealing, the owner was allowed to have his own mount. The intelligent creature was as glad to see its master as Andy was to find him at his disposal.

Amos Huddle, as in duty bound, reported to Gen. Bloodson, who was now preparing to depart at the head of his Jersey Blues, having orders to conduct his "menagerie," as with grim attempt at humor he called his prisoners, to Washington

"How's Latimer?" he asked carelessly, as he buckled on his sword.

"I reckon he's dyin', sir, I'm sorry to say."

"Sorry? What for?" was the gruff response. "We'll be saved the expense of hanging him."

Mr. Lighthorseman Lanky was exceedingly rural and democratic in his ideas of military rank and the respect due thereto, as has already been seen. Moreover, his feelings had been strongly enlisted in Luke's behalf. It was therefore perhaps natural, if vastly unbecoming, that he should crack his knuckles under his commander's nose, and break forth with rather pronounced emphasis:

"I vum! Mr. Bla-a—General, I mean!" He was almost trapped into saying "Blackbeard," a piratical soubriquet by which their commander was known among his troopers.

"What, sir?" thundered Bloodson, wheeling toward Amos, and dropping the tip of his sword sheath with a thumping clang to the floor.

"Nothin', sir! I wuz only wantin' to know what I'm to do now."

"Return to the ranks!" was the curt reply.

"Gosh! I nearly made another mess of it!" Thus Amos greeted his friend King-george, when he got to his place. "It mought 'a ben the wuss' mess I ever got into, to boot. I came pesky nigh a-callin' of him 'Blackbeard' to

his face. Dumbit! that's what he is, a reg'lar pirate; an' I was jest on the pint of tellin' him so. But, jings! I bit it off quicker. I reckon he'd 'a cut my head off ef I 'd 'a done it, wouldn't he?"

"No doubt of it, Lanky; an' I shouldn't wonder if he'd do it yet," was the consolatory response. "I've often told you children shouldn't meddle with aidge tools. You'd best be a leetle keerless, young man, ef you don't want to be a cold corpse."

"I ain't hankerin' atter that, nohow," Amos responded. "But I al'ays did make a mess of things. Somehow I can't help it. Messin' things is as nachel to me as fallin' off a log. But w'at's the use of a man, even if he be a General, makin' a nachel brute beast of hisself?" With which bit of moralizing he climbed into the saddle, and awaited the signal to start.

"You're purty hard on the beasts, Lanky," quoth King-george, as he tightened his saddle girth. "There, you're all right, old fellow!" patting his horse's neck. "Now, here's my nag, who never had no schoolin',—in partic'lar; and no soul (to speak of); bu-ut ef he was as low-down ornary as—well, some folks we know of, I'd shoot him, I would, by thunder! Wouldn't I, Old Fourth?" And he stroked his horse's white nose caressingly.

Mr. Kelsey had been named and christened, as he had often reason to explain, in the ante-revolution days when loyalty to the crown was quite as fervent in the American Colonies as in the mother country. It was a deal of annoyance to him at times. But he would not go back on his baptism, and compromised the matter and neutralized the effects of his own name by invariably spelling "George" with a little "g," and calling his horse "Fourth of July." However, he commonly docked the nag's name on the same principle that he tied up its tail when the roads were muddy,—to save work. In short, notwithstanding his royal cognomen, he dearly loved his ease, and shirked hard labor, and was ever on the go to find an easier berth.

"Ah, my son," said his mother, "a rolling stone will gather no moss."

"Ah, my mother," answered Kelsey, "the dog that trots about will find a bone."

So when volunteers were called for the Western Expedition, Kelsey trotted into the army on the back of Old

Fourth. He had fancied that an easy berth; but soon began to have serious doubt thereof. He also chose the Cavalry, as an easier arm than the Infantry; but had been somewhat shaken in that belief of late. Instead of having to take care of a man alone, as with the foot soldier, he was obliged to look after both man and horse. At all events, he found a most congenial comrade in Mr. Amos Huddle, whose chief recommendation, though he possessed many other amiable qualities, was that "he didn't have a lazy bone in his body," as his patron flatteringly averred. He was therefore willing to do all his own tasks, and a good moiety of King-george's as well. With such a strong bond uniting the two men, their friendship seemed likely to be enduring.

When the signal to march was given, the forlorn cavalcade started. Capt. Cattan Swing led the column with Sergt. Borem and a file of troopers. Then followed four prisoners; and so on, troopers and prisoners alternating, until Gen. Bloodson brought up the rear with a squad, among whom were Amos Huddle and King-george. In the group of prisoners just before the last file, rode Andy Burbeck.

Now, it fell out most strangely that Gen. Bloodson took a decided fancy to Andy Burbeck! There could have been no telepathy about that, one would think; for Andy's heart was rankling with hatred toward the cruel oppressor of his friend; and vengeance would hardly have been withheld could the fatal issue have been fully known by him. Bloodson called Andy to his side, and began to question him about the roads. Thence he diverged into the civil condition of the Western counties; and thence to the character and standing of his prisoners. So he passed to the material prospects of the West, and the chances for an active business man, with a little capital, to get along in Pittsburg, or Kentucky, or the Ohio Territory.

Andy seeing which way the wind blew, resolved to take advantage of the situation. In a general way he had made up his mind to escape; but the method of escort adopted seemed to quash all hope. He had counted it particularly unlucky that he was placed practically under the commander's eye.

"But, who knows?" thought he. "Here away may be the openin'! It's a long lane that has no turnin', an' per-

haps we'll strike the turn afore long; an' the sooner the better. Fortune has frowned pritty stidy on me lately. But mabbe she's a-tippin' me a wink the now, an' A'd be a true gommerel not to give heed. Sure, a wink's as good as a nod til a blind mare; an' A'm nayther one nor tother, as ye'll find toe your cost, my brave general, if God pl'ase." Thus soliloquizing, he set to work to interest and amuse Gen. Bloodson. As he had especial endowments in that line, he scored a brilliant success.

Lanky looked on with amazement, as he listened to the General's continuous bursts of laughter. His slow wits could not quite apprehend such delicate diplomacy and dissimulation. More than once his muttered "dumbit!" uttered his disapproval of such hilarity and swift forgetfulness of Andy's sick friend.

"He's a shallow chap!" quoth he in low tones, leaning over to King-george. "I'd never 'a believed he had so little heart in that matter."

"Don't you bother, now!" returned King-george. "He's a deep un, he is! He's up to snuff, sure as you're a foot high."

"But hear old Blackbeard laugh!" persisted Amos. "And the prisoner too. That's too hearty for lettin' on."

Here a trooper came from the front to report that one of the prisoners had fallen in a fit. "He is a Revolutionary veteran, who fought through the entire war, and something ought to be done for him."

"Tie the rascal to a horse's tail, and drag him along!" was the fierce reply. "He's playin' possum."

"Dumbit!" ejaculated Mr. Huddle, most emphatically. And he didn't apologize for it; nor seek to modify it; but ran the round of his knuckles, crack, crack!—and spurred on his horse, lest he might speak up and make another mess of it.

The messenger rode back to his file in towering disgust: and assisted by his comrades, put the unfortunate veteran on his own horse, and made him as comfortable as possible. Indeed, the prisoners, most of whom had to walk, were relieved from time to time by the kind-hearted soldiers, who were indignant at their officers' inhumanity.

"Ah, Giner'l," said Andy after this incident, "a great light was axtinguished in the professional warld when you went a-sodgerin'."

"How's that?" asked Bloodson.

"Ye quite mistook your callin', that's all. It's a physician an' sargeon ye ought til 'a been. Your tratement of fits, now, is somethin' antirely original. One drag at a horse's tail,—to be continued until the patient improves! There's a stroke of genius for ye! Fancy the Royal College of Sargeons in Edinbro' a-discussin' of that prescription!"

Gen. Bloodson's fancy was pleased with the grotesqueness of Andy's idea; but although he did not feel the keenest edge of its satire, he was not wholly insensible to it. He therefore justified his order on the ground that old soldiers, instead of being worthy of greater consideration, were more blameworthy than the other insurgents, for they ought to have known better.

"So they ought! True for ye there, Giner'l," quoth Andy. "It tuk the Britishers siven years to put down the insurractioun thim same old sodgers stirred up, an' than they didn't do it. Ay, the old sodgers were axperienced rebels! 'Deed, they had ought to 've knowed better. What's this man arristed for, may I ask?"

"What is it, Ensign?" turning toward Meneter. The Ensign drew forth a list from his pocket and examined it.

"Present at the raising of a Liberty pole, sir."

"Gracious Heavens! What a hardened villain!" exclaimed Andy, with well-feigned horror. "I don't wander, sir, that you called him a—something rascal, an' let down on him so hard. Watched the insargents a-raisin' a Liberty pole! It 'ud puzzle aven a Philadelpy lawyer for til find an axcuse or defnse for sich a crime. Ah, this is a wicked world, Giner'l, an' a vartuous and sinitive gintleman like yoursilf must feel ill at aise in it. An' what's my own offanse, Mr. Ensign, may I ask?"

"What's your name?"

"Andy Burbeck! Jist plain Andy, 'ithout anny jug handle til it, nayther ceevil nor military. An' an honest name it is, if I do say it maself." The Ensign ran over the list, and reported that there was no such name there.

"What! Andy Burbeck not here, you say? Sure then, I must jist be a ghost, or a vacuum, or somethin' of that sort, an' maself is some'eres else. Your Honor surely don't want for to kape company with a sperit, so I'll e'en say good mornin' til ye." So saying, he made as though he would ride back to the Ferry.

"Hold on there!" cried the General, laying a hand on Andy's bridle. "We can't bear to part with you just yet. We shall at least have the honor of your presence at luncheon." Which hint Andy felt constrained to accept.

The troop was halted to bait the horses on the plantation of Dr. McMillan, nearby his house, a substantial two-story building of hewn logs. The barn and sheds gave convenient shelter, and the well abundant water. Few of the prisoners had brought food with them, yet these shared their rations with their fellows. The good clergyman distributed bread and meat, and although Gen. Bloodson disapproved such pampering of insurgents, he happened to know the Doctor's high standing with the authorities, and did not interfere.

In the interval of waiting, the General suggested that it would be a good time for Andy to show off some of the wise tricks of his horse, of which he had boasted during the morning ride. Andy was agreeable; and as the news spread along the column, a ring of officers and men gathered to see the trained horse perform. The prisoners, too, though so forlorn and dolorous, were glad of the diversion.

"By ordinar', gintlemin," Andy began, "A' would tak' off saddle an' bridle. For ye know that the Scriptur' charges us not to muzzle the ox that treads the corn; which is a good rule for horses and men as well as oxen. But time is money, ye know, as the thafe said when he stole the clock, an' so gintlemin, we'll jist tak' Rouse as he is. He's like cold souse, always ready. Besides, as our Giner'l has humorously obsarved, referrin' to the number of his pris'ners, ye've got 'forty thaves' in tow, with maself thrown in for good measure. So, A'm not sure A' could safely trust saddle and bridle off'n the horse's back. Now, Rouse, ma b'y, make your manners, sir! Right leg!"

The horse bent up the right leg, scraped the ground with his foot, and bowed his head low.

"Now left!" The action was repeated with the left leg.

"All right! The same to yourself, sir." Andy made a formal bow, which Rouse recognized by dropping upon his haunches, and bending his head towards his master and then recovering.

"Now, my lad," said Andy, walking up to the horse and laying his hand on his neck. "A' want ye for til make your manners to the Gineral. Can you pick him out in all this crowd, think ye?" Rouse nodded decidedly.

"Ay, better not be overly positeeve, my fri'nd. The proof of the puddin' is in the atein', ye know. You're sure you can pick him out?" A nod from Rouse.

"Very well, then. We'll let ye try it. Now, A'll jist march around the circle with you an' see what ye'll do. There are several distinguished military gintlemin here, an' your credit is at stake. Look sharp!"

Rouse, accompanied by his master, slowly walked around the encircling group, seeming to scrutinize all the parties carefully. At last he stopped in front of Gen. Bloodson, and amidst the applause of the company, scraped and bowed as at first.

"Tut! gintlemin," said Andy, turning to the applauding crowd, and removing his hat. "There's small merit in that. A' would count my horse lettle better nor a donkey if he couldn't tell the stamp of jainius, whan he sees it so plain as on the form of Giner'l Bloodson, the Hero of the captures of Mingo Creek. Make your manners til him once more, Rouse!" The horse bowed, and Andy took him back to the centre of the ring.

"My horse is a patriotic animal, gintlemin, A'd have you understand. Some of you military folk would give his master an' neighbors small credit for the same. But A'm a-gawin' to prove til ye that there's no more loyal hearts in the Republic nor tham in the Western counties. If riverince and love for the name of Washington is the tist, A'll show ye that aven our critters are patriotic.

"Now, Rouse, attintion! A'm a-gawin' for til tell ye a story. Dr. McMillan, our good pastor, wanct visited our village school, which is a sort of parochial affair, ye must know. The dominie wanted to show off the bairns afore the meenister, an' called up a class of lads to say their Screenshot' quastions. The lads toed the mark on the floor, an' put their hands ahint their backs, all in good shape. Are ye listenin', Rouse?" The horse nodded his head.

"Ay, that's a dacent critter! A car'less hearer pays a poor compliment to a sp'aker. As A' was a-sayin', the b'ys bein' quiet an' all ready, the t'acher began:

"Who was the first man?" he asked.

"General Washington!" sings out the lad at the head of the class, as peart as a parson.

"Next!" thundered the t'acher, vexed an' mortified at sich an answer, right afore the Doctor, too.

“‘Adam was the first man!’ said lad number two.

“‘Right!’ siz the t’acher, ‘go up head!’

“‘Shucks!’ siz b’y number one, as he stepped down til the tail of the class, ‘I didn’t know ye meant *fureigners!*’ What do you think of that, Rouse?”

The audience showed what they thought of it, by hearty laughter. The horse, however, was a little slow to catch the point or see the gist of the story. Andy had to repeat the question, to say nothing of some secret signal that passed, ere Rouse opened his mouth, and drew back his lips until his teeth showed in a broad grin, and then threw up his head vigorously.

“Well, gintlemin,” Andy continued, “the lad was right. Giner’l Washington is the first man in the love of true Americans. An’ barrin’ a few sich *fureigners* as Moses, St. Paul, John Knox an’ William of Orange, he is the greatest man that God Almighty ever made. Now, Rouse, three cheers for Giner’l Washington. Up with ye!”

Andy took off his hat and threw up his arms, at which the horse reared upon his hind legs, lifting his forefeet well in the air—once, twice, thrice. At the third time, he shook his hoofs, and broke forth into a shrill neigh amid the applause of the onlookers.

“Come, gintlemin,” said Andy, turning toward the troopers, “A’m surprised at ye! Would you let an insar-gent’s horse outdo ye in patriotism? Can ye hear the name of the world’s greatest citizen saluted, an’ not jine in the same? Hats off with ye! An’ three cheers for Prsident Washington!” The cheers were given with vigor.

“Come, Rouse,” said Andy, laying his hand on the horse’s neck. Ere the echo of the cheers had died away among the hills, he had Rouse kneeling on his forelegs before Gen. Bloodson. Then he uncovered his head, and bowing low, put in this plea:

“Sir, the people whose very horses can thus honor the name of Prsident Washington, are worthy of kindness at your hands. We beg you to pity these prisoners, do Rouse and I, an’ show them all the favor you can.”

“Come!” said Bloodson. “This has gone too far, sir. But, there! I’ll do it, sir!” Which he could readily promise, as he had just received orders to turn over his prisoners at Canonsburg, three miles distant, instead of conducting them on to Washington.

"Now, if your Honor pl'ase," said Andy, "A've jist one more trick for til show ye. A've t'ached Rouse to be shy of all strangers, espeeially to save him from the wiles of horse thaves, an' A'll show ye what an apt scholar he is. But it'll require a lettle more room nor we have here, an' A'll jist trouble ye to open up the rank on one side, an' give me a clare road. Ah! that'll do fine. But we can't git on furder unless we can find a horse thafe. Would your Honor—ah, no! it would be highly improper to ask ye to act sich a part. Axcuse me! Mebbe there's one of your men that 'll volunteer for til play the part of horse thafe. Thank ye! Here's a volunteer." It was our friend Amos Huddle who came forward, amid the chaff and cheers of his comrades.

Andy whispered or feigned to whisper in Rouse's ear, and withdrew to one side of the road, a little in advance, however. "A silver dollar if ye sucsade shall be your reward," he remarked to Amos.

Lanky gently approached, held out his hand, and spoke in a low, wheedling tone. "Whoa, there, good horsey! Horsey? horsey?" Rouse snapped viciously at him with his teeth, and drew off several paces, while the soldiers laughed, and cheered on their comrade. Again Lanky approached, and this time Rouse allowed him to come almost within reach. But when the lighthorseman made a spring towards the bridle, he leaped away with so sudden a bound that Lanky, grasping empty air, stumbled and fell. Rouse trotted up the road a couple of rods and stopped.

Andy followed. "A'll make it two dollars!" he cried, "if ye captur' 'im now!"

"Go it, Lanky! Try again! You'll be a horse thief yet, if you persevere!" were some of the cries which, with much laughter, greeted this manœuvre.

Undiscouraged thereby, Amos once more approached the horse, shuffling daintily forward, and speaking in the most soothing and cajoling tones, and with the whole Jersey Shore vocabulary of pet names. Rouse had apparently made up his mind either to be caught, or that his would-be captor was not worth minding. He turned his tail upon Lanky, and began leisurely to pick at the grass on the wayside.

This was Lanky's opportunity. Stealthily he edged himself nearer and nearer, flattering himself that he was

unseen; on the strength of which presumption, he also ceased his cajolery. Just as he was preparing to spring upon his unconscious victim, Rouse's hind heels went up in the air, and the unlucky Lanky, more by the force of his own sudden recoil than by the hoof impact, however, tumbled backwards in the road.

Rouse trotted down the highway towards Parkinson's Ferry, at a leisurely pace, followed by Andy, who loudly called "Whoa, Rouse, whoa! Back, old fellow; come back!"

There was some confusion among the troopers as they ran forward to the fallen man. There was also laughter, which greatly increased when Amos Huddle slowly arose, and with a chopfallen air began to dust his clothes, and ejaculate: "Dumbit! I kin do it yit. Lemme try agin!"

Then attention was turned towards Andy and his horse. Rouse kept ahead of his master until the foot of the hill was reached, beyond Dr. McMillan's mansion. There Andy came neck-and-crop with him, and seized him by the mane. Rouse jerked himself away. Andy followed with an impatient gesture.

"Ye hullion!" he was heard to say, in an angry tone. "A'll give ye a lambastir' for this!" A sounding slap upon the horse's flank followed. Then Rouse's heels flew into the air, and Andy was seen to roll backward upon the road, while Rouse galloped up the hill.

Several of the troopers were already in the saddle, King-george among them, and dashed off to capture the runaway horse. Gen. Bloodson, who had watched the performance eagerly, saw Andy slowly arise, and limp away after his truant Rouse, lustily shouting "whoa, whoa!" Then the galloping troopers intervened, and he was lost to sight for the moment.

"Aha! my jolly rebel!" said the General. "You have overshot the mark this time, if you never did before. Your trained horse is like a kicking musket, pretty hard in the back action sometimes. Ha, ha! But we've fooled away enough time here. The horse-trainer can try shanks-mare for the rest of the journey. Sound to saddle, and call back those fellows who have gone after the runaway."

"Where's the prisoner?" he demanded, as the horse-men returned.

"The prisoner?" exclaimed King-george. "Why, we thought he had come back! We seen nothin' of him sence

we passed him down on the road, there, by the corn patch. He was limp'in' along and hollerin' like all possessed."

"Back with you!" cried the General, into whose mind a new light began to break. "Sergt. Borem, take a squad and hunt down that treacherous old fox. Beat up the corn patch on the north side. Scour the woods on the south. Away! We've been fooled, like a lot of ninnies as we are." These orders were intermingled with fearful oaths. Not satisfied with sending the men upon the search, the General set off to give personal direction. The corn field on the left of the road was standing thick with dried stalks, from which the ears had been husked without cutting and shocking. Beyond this, stood an old cabin in which Dr. McMillan had his home when he first moved into the West in 1778. The field was thoroughly explored. The cabin was ransacked from top to bottom. Every outhouse and clump of brush was peered into. No signs of Andy!

The party who searched the wood fared no better. The pursuit had to be abandoned. Disappointed, mortified, enraged at having been thus befooled, and cursing the luck that had lost him the chance for vengeance, Gen. Bloodson at last grudgingly ordered the troop to form as before, and advance. His surly tones and threatening countenance betrayed the bitter spirit within him. It was fortunate for the prisoners that the end of their journey was so near, or Andy's escapade would have been the occasion of many heavy hurts both of heart and body. In Canonsburg the prisoners were transferred to the care of Capt. Dunlap of the Philadelphia City Troop. They were imprisoned in the Canonsburg Academy, a stone building that stood midway of the hill.

What had become of Andy? When the clamor of the search had ceased, and the noise of the departing troops had died quite away, that worthy might have been seen emerging from the hollow butt of a huge oak tree that stood in the meadow just beyond the cornfield. He cautiously crept forth; crawled along the edge of the standing fodder to the road, and having assured himself that the coast was clear, ventured to indulge in a hearty laugh.

"Well, well! What a lucky thing it was that A' Parnt in my boyhood in the old primer book that

"The royal oak it was the tree
That saved his royal majesty."

“Ha, ha! Here’s Dr. McMillan’s Weddin’ Oak Tree, an’ here’s Andy Burbeck a-playin’ the old game of King Charlie! Dod! A’d niver ’a thought of it, if it hadn’t been for the primer. Ha, ha! But—now—where’s Rouse? That’s the nex’ thing. A’ tellt him to go home; but did he do it, A’ wonder?” He rubbed his hands back and forth through his shock of red hair, and clapped his hips in sheer jollity. Then he turned his thoughts to Luke Latimer.

That sobered him at once. He left the road, lest some trooper might have tarried to look out for him, and, by a circuitous route came to Dr. McMillan’s study. Several young men stood around the door of the log cabin wherein the Latin school had been kept out of which Jefferson College finally grew. The building then stood, and until the spring of 1895 continued to stand in the back yard of Dr. McMillan’s home. The Latin school had already been merged into the Canonsburg Academy; but a few students of divinity still occupied it as a study, taking their meals in the manse. These young men had witnessed the stirring incidents in which Andy had lately figured; and being greatly excited by the rare experience, had not yet been able to get down to their tasks. They lounged about the school room door, canvassing one point and another, this with pity, that with indignation, and the next with amusement.

Andy knowing the sympathy of the young men to be with their fellow-countrymen, although they were not favorable to the recent riots, presented himself to them without reserve. He got such information as he required as to the movements of the troop, and in turn related how he had escaped. It was a simple enough matter, after all. The happy thought occurred to him as he chanced to note the wide spreading top of the Doctor’s “Wedding Oak” on the slope of the hill. This was a venerable tree under which the good pastor had once united a worthy backwoods couple in marriage who had presented themselves at the ministerial cabin for that function, on an occasion when Mrs. McMillan was too ill to be disturbed; for the cabin had but one room. The story got abroad, and others who came upon a like errand, were pleased to be put into the holy bonds of matrimony beneath the “wedding oak.”

Now Andy, who knew the place well, knew also that the tree was hollow, and would hold a man quite cannily.

The ruse which the reader knows was shaped upon this fact. The tumble before Rouse's heels was a bit of acting. Andy's lameness was feigned. His eagerness to call back the escaping horse was a pretense. Watching his opportunity, he slipped unobserved through the open rail fence into the cornfield, and running, quite hidden by the tall stalks, along the meadow fence, he crept through it and crawled over the ground to the wedding oak. He got into the great knot hole, which opened on the side opposite the corn, and was secure in the hollow trunk. The old tree stands there yet, as the reader may see; and if he will, he may stand upright within the cavernous butt, as the author has done, and thus prove for himself the truth of this story of Andy's escape.

The young men being satisfied, thought it high time to bring Andy to the Doctor. So they had him into the study, where the story of his escape must be told anew. Staunch friend of the government as Dr. McMillan was, he had no sympathy with the cruelties inflicted on his parishioners and fellow citizens. When he learned how Luke Latimer and Andy had been served, he was highly wroth. His ponderous body surged with mighty and just resentment, and he forthwith offered to equip Andy with horse, saddle and bridle to go away to Parkinson's Ferry. But he advised him to wait until dusk, as the danger of capture would thereby be lessened; to which Andy agreed.

In the meantime, he mounted his own nag and rode off to Canonsburg to look after the prisoners' comfort. He also undertook to see Mrs. Peggy Burbeck, and inform her of her husband's escape and safety; and further, which Andy seemed to think an even more important office, to bid her look out for Rouse, who would be sure to come home to his stable. In truth, when he arrived the Doctor found Rouse already installed in his own quarters, quietly munching his oats. The prisoners were comfortably housed, and under the care of a humane officer.

The story of Andy's ruse and escape had got out, and citizens were telling it on the sly, mightily pleased at the discomfiture of the hated "Blackbeard" and his Jersey Blues. Mrs. Peggy had heard the tale with due amplifications, and not doubting her good lord's ability to look out for himself, put on her sunbonnet and went down to comfort her friend, Mrs. Latimer.

Next morning the prisoners were conducted to Pittsburg under escort of the Philadelphia City Troop. That organization then as now was composed of some of the most substantial and respectable men of the capital city. Their appearance, as interpreted by an eye-witness, left a strong impression of their magnificence upon the minds of the inhabitants of Washington County.

The contrast between the famous troop and their prisoners was striking. The latter were mounted on horses of all sizes and colors. Some were large, some small; some were fat, some lean; some had long tails, some short; some had saddles, some blankets; some bridles, some halters; some were with stirrups, some without. The riders were as various and grotesque in their appearance as the horses. Some were old, some young; some were hale, others pale and meagre. Some were respectably, others shabbily dressed. Some had great coats, others had blankets on their shoulders. The countenances of some were downcast and dejected; those of others stern, indignant, as of men who knew themselves undeserving such treatment.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

MRS. LATIMER AT LAST UNBURDENS HER MIND.

As Andy Burbeck came into the region of the military camp, he proceeded cautiously, and made many halts, and often turned into by-trails. Thus it was past eleven o'clock at night when he rode up to the Stockdale Tavern. He saw the light burning in the little room above the street, wherein he knew that Luke Latimer lay. He saw shadows flitting to and fro across the wall, showing that John still kept his watch of love and duty. He wondered, as he looked upward, if it were well with his friend?

The window was raised. A head was thrust out. John Latimer leaned over the window sill, and gazed into the starlit sky.

"John!" Andy called, softly. "John Latimer!"

John started from his reverie, and looked downward.

"It is I—Andy! Tell me how your father gets on?"

"It is all over, Andy. He left us an hour ago."

“What! Do you mane to tell me he is dead?”

“Yes, he is dead!”

A wail of anguish rose upon the silent night, quickly subdued, but sobbing on low and plaintive. Andy leaned his face upon the horse's neck, and wept for his life-long friend. The words of Holy Writ with which he was so familiar, and in which he was wont to voice his prayers and most sacred and tender emotions, came unconsciously to his lips. He broke forth in the lament of David for Jonathan: “I am distressed for thee, my brother. Very pleasant hast thou been unto me. Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.”

The cry of the Oriental chieftain over the slain of the field of Gilboa reached across the twenty-nine centuries of time, and through the unbroken chain of human grief, and found echo, by the far Monongahela, in the heart of a child of another race and civilization. Thus, in all ages, friendship, whether it knits together the souls of princes or peasants, approves itself to serious thought as the finest, strongest, most unselfish passion of the human heart.

Now the landlord came forth from the tavern door, and bade Andy into the house. With his own hand he led the horse to the stable, while the mourning friend, bowed under the burden of his grief, slowly mounted to the room where Luke Latimer lay. He begged the privilege of keeping watch with him that night,—the last watch with his friend!—as so often he had done in the silent forests, or upon the banks of the lonely river. But John would not have it so. The office was his by sacred right and duty, and who could gainsay that claim? So Meg and Andy were led away by the landlord to rooms where they might sleep, or at least lie down to rest; and John took up his lonely vigil by the dead.

With the dayspring all were astir and considering how the motionless form might be taken home for burial. The few wagons in the countryside were in the service of the army. The rude logging-sled which a neighbor offered, was gratefully accepted, and this was transformed into a unique rustic funeral car. From the woods nearby hemlock boughs were cut, and their lithe branches interwoven, like wattles in a summer booth, until a flat wicker bed was formed. Then armfuls of the feathered tips were gathered, and woven and laid upon the wattled bed until a soft

green mattress was made. Thereon, decently composed and wrapped in his winding sheet, Luke Latimer set forth upon his last journey home. A rude vehicle that, with which to make such a journey. Yet it was not unmeet, as John suggested, that he who had slept so often under woodland boughs should thus be laid, in his last long sleep, upon the fragrant evergreens he loved so well.

Andy's friends had required him to keep out of sight during these preparations. But when the time came to move, he took his place beside John and followed the primitive funeral car, which a neighbor had volunteered to draw with his two horses. What cared he for the risk? Life seemed empty to him, now that his friend was dead. But Gen. Bloodson's troop, on their return trip, came by a more public road than the one chosen for the funeral train, and Andy reached Canonsburg unmolested.

At the first peep of dawn, Meg Latimer had left for home to carry to her mother the sad news of her widowhood, and the morning was still new when she reached home.

Dungy noted her approach and waited to receive her at the upping block. He read the mournful story in her face. "Don' tell me, Miss Meg," he exclaimed, "Oh, don' tell me dat Marse Luke is done gone! O my Lawd!"

The faithful servant burst into tears, and went away to the stable leading Ladybird, crying as he went, and bowing his head low, while he uttered his grief in broken ejaculations. "He was my bes' friend, 'ceptin' only de blessed Lawd. O Father in Heben, pity ole Black Dungy! An' pity pore Miss Polly! It'll break her heart, for shore. An' de young missus, too! O de misery ob it, to fine her father only jist to lose him!"

Meanwhile, before Mrs. Latimer could come to the door, Meg ran in, and putting her strong young arms around her mother drew her close to her bosom.

"O mother!" was all she could say. It was enough.

"He is dead, he is dead!" cried Polly. "I know it! I knew it would be so. O Luke, Luke, my husband, would God I had died for thee!"

She sank upon the floor, half kneeling, half crouching; and Meg still holding her in her arms, sat beside her, and joined in the mourning. The two women, mother and daughter, sat upon the cabin floor, swaying to and fro,

intermingling tears and sobs and bitter cries, until the first outburst of grief was somewhat assuaged.

The latch string was lifted, and Featherfoot, who had heard the news from Dungy, glided into the room. She seated herself near her newly widowed friend, and raised with a gentle, softened tone a wail for the dead, whose broken English could not break the poetic beauty of its Indian imagery.

"The Red Axe and the Panther! Strong as the oak was one, and supple as the hickory the other. But they have fallen! They have fallen, and the vines that clung to them are low upon the ground. They were wise. They were brave. They were good. But they are gone! Many moons they hunted together in the forest, or paddled the canoe upon the river, or followed upon the warpath. They were two men with one heart. Their hearts are one still. One moon—two moons—three moons ago they were here, beautiful in their strength as the mountain pine. Now they have gone hence, over the trail that all must take at last, into the hunting forests of the Spirit World. The wigwam is empty. The cabin is desolate. The lodge of the Manitou in the Happy Hunting Ground is brighter with the mighty spirits of our warriors. Woe, woe for the white widow! Woe, for Sunny Hair! Woe for the Young Oak! Woe, woe, woe for Featherfoot!"

The village soon knew what had happened, and the tidings added to the dread that overhung the community. Their Academy crowded with imprisoned fellow citizens; their streets full of troopers; lighthorsemen still scouring the country for other captives; Luke Latimer already a victim of their cruelty! What next? Who next? Woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the land!

Fanny McCormack was in the store when the word came. Her father had fled the country when the army reached the Monongahela, and the eldest son George, who young as he was had been at Bower Hill and Braddock's Field, went with him. Fanny then took her father's place, and aided by her younger brothers kept the business going. Now she called her mother to take charge, and hastened to the Latimers

Her very presence brought soothing. A kiss; a word of sympathy trembling with intensity of feeling,—and then she quietly took charge of the house. She led Mrs. Lati-

mer to her own room, and left her there alone with her sorrow. She sent Featherfoot upon a message, thus quieting her dismal dirge. She took Meg into the little kitchen, and there, with arms interlocked around each others' waists, the two maidens stood before the crackling fire in the open fireplace, and their hearts were united more closely than ever in the embrace of friendship and the silent passing of sympathy.

Fanny drew forth from Meg the story of her father's death, knowing that in telling the flood gates would open up, and sorrow get relief in tears. Then, wishing to dull the edge of grief by the touch of loving duty, she set Meg to prepare for the coming of the funeral train. Mrs. Burbeck, who had now arrived, joined in this service, and undertook to receive and satisfy the neighbors, who would soon begin to drop in to offer neighborly aid and satisfy neighborly curiosity. Not a matron or maid in the whole countryside but would have been willing to come, and have deemed it an honor to be asked to share in the needful labors which death and burial bring to the living. This done, Fanny went to Mrs. Latimer and told her all she knew, and thus satisfied that yearning, which most of us have felt, to learn all the incidents in the last eventful hours of a loved friend's life.

At last, the interval of waiting ended. "They have come, mother!" said Meg. In a moment more, John's strong arms were around her, and her face rested on his bosom.

"You must be strong, mother dear, and bear up under the blow. Father's last thoughts were for you. His last words were coupled with your name. It is the will of Heaven; and has he not made a happy change?"

"Ay, lad! I know it is better for him. It's little comfort he has had in these last days. But oh! I'm lamentin' my own loss. Niver had wife a truer, kinder husband. Oh, the emptiness of my heart, and the desolation of my home! How can I live without him?"

"But you have your children, mother."

"I have my child; yes, I have Meg. O, John—I have lost my husband,—I shall—lose my son. You have been a son to me John—a true son—"

"What can you mean, mother? How can you lose me? The soldiers may take me, and keep me away for a little

while; but I'm certain to come back to you. Father's last thoughts were of you and Meg, and I promised at his dying bed never to forsake you, but to care for you as long as you lived. And with God's help, so I will, mother dear!" He bent his face and kissed her tenderly; but his soothing only evoked a more violent outburst of tears and sobs.

Now the trampling of feet was heard on the outer steps. Through the chamber door Mrs. Polly saw, as she raised her head, the neighbors slowly bearing up the path a silent form, which too well she knew must be her Luke.

"O, to come back home this way! Let me go to him!"

"Not yet, mother!" John held her firmly in his arms.

Fanny McCormack went forth to meet the bearers, one of whom entered the house and with doffed hat, in a subdued voice, asked: "Where shall we put it?"

"It?" Heavens! How swiftly man notes the immeasurable change that death makes in us all,—the swift transformation from the personal to impersonal insensate matter, from "I" to "It!" But love does not so quickly note the change, nor drop from speech the language of personal address.

"Bring him in here!" cried Mrs. Latimer, breaking away from John's embrace, and running forward into the living room. "Lay him down on his own bed, poor dear! Let him rest there. Yes, he shall lie nowhere else.' Luke Latimer was not simply a voiceless It to that loving spirit.

The measured heavy tread of men's shodden feet beat upon the white board floor, as they bore the body in and laid it where the widow wished. Then the bearers went out, and Fanny shut the door, and left the family there a little while, alone with their dead.

"Hist, Andy!" said Mrs. Burbeck, beckoning to her husband who was going forth with the bearers. "Come hither! I've got a message for ye." Her manner was flurried; her face was shadowed with grief and wet with tears.

"Ah Peggy, dear, ye may well greet," said Andy with a mellow and shaking voice, as he followed his wife to the kitchen. "We've lost the best fri'nd we iver had or shall have. It's a sorry loss for us all." As the little woman stopped he put his arm around her and kissed her.

"Ay, indade, Andy! But it's not that, the now, I'm a-thinkin' of. It's yourself, darlin'. For I've bad news for ye, ay, an' sad news for meself." She wiped her eyes

with the corner of her apron. "The sodgers have come for ye, Andy, bad cess til 'em for choosin' a time like this! Shame a haet care they for sickness or death, or feasts or funerals. Ay, it's bitter botherment we 've wrought among hands with our axcise doins'."

"Hoosh, Peggy love!" said Andy. "Not a wordd of that, jist now an' here above all. It's bitter usury that poor Luke has paid for his part therein, an' it's ill castin' up reproach til the dead. But where are the sodgers, lass? A'll away to them at wanct, an' know the warst." Peggy opened the door that led into the porch, and Andy passing through found himself face to face with Capt. Dunlap of the City Troop. A file of soldiers stood outside the yard.

"Your sarvant, sir," said Andy. "A' hear that ye 're astin' for me?"

"This is Andrew Burbeck?" asked the Captain.

"Ay, A'll no deny it."

"Well, sir, I regret to intrude upon you at such a time. I have heard of your warm friendship for Mr. Luke Latimer and his family, and would gladly spare you and them if I dared do so. But my orders are plain and positive, and I must do my duty. I am directed to arrest yourself and Capt. John Latimer, and conduct you to Pittsburg. Part of my troop has already gone with prisoners and the rest await my coming. I must ask you to go with me."

"Marciful heavens, sir!" exclaimed Andy. "An' do you mane to say that you would take John Latimer away at a time like this? Would ye lave the widow to mourn alone, an' deny the son the satisfaction of followin' his father to the grave? It's a fearsome act! A' can't think ye 're in 'arnest, sir. A' can go with ye maself, hard as it 'll be not to see my old fri'nd buried. But—Captain Jock? Ach, mon, it 'ud fair melt a heart of flint to think o' that; an' if all A've h'ard of you be true, Captain Dunlap, it's not flint but a kind human heart that ye carry within your bosom."

"Thank you for saying that," said the Captain, a flush of gratification suffusing his cheeks. "I have tried to show to the unfortunates committed to my charge all the kindness consistent with duty. I have asked to see you quietly that I might explain how it is, and beg you to help me lighten this disagreeable service as much as possible. I have resolved to take the risk of leaving Capt. Latimer here until after his father's burial, if he will give his word

of honor to report to the court at Pittsburg immediately thereafter. Do you think he will do it?"

"God bless ye, sir, for your noble thoughtfulness. A'm sure Captain Jock will accep' your ginerous terms with gratitude. A'll away at wancet an' bring him here to ye."

Mrs. Peggy called John from his mother's room, and Andy gave his message and explained the situation. John at once went to Capt. Dunlap, and gave his parole, and acknowledged with warm emotion the humane consideration which had prompted the kindly arrangement. If he could only add to the obligation, and stretch his authority a little further to allow his father's old friend the same privilege—

"Ay, sir!" broke in Andy. "It's not well to urge on the willin' horse, they say, but an' if you could strain a p'int an' do me that favor, A' would be everlastin'ly beholdin' til ye. Though it's not likely your honor 'll iver nade the sarvice of sich as Andy Burbeck; an' it 'ud be an uncanny word to say that A'd do the like by you if you iver had like occasion. But indade, sir," Andy persisted, encouraged by a gleam in the Captain's eye which his last remark had evoked, "whativer should ye be takin' two bites out'n a cherry for? Jist make one good mouthful of it, an' let the two of us stay. It's a good turn ye have done us, an' God bless ye for the same! But disn't one good turn deserve another?"

Andy's plea was here cut short by the appearance of Dr. John McMillan, who had hastened like a good pastor at the news of sorrow to bring consolation. He joined his request with that of John and Andy, and became surety that the latter would be as true to his word as the former, and report in Pittsburg immediately after the funeral. Thus fortified in his own kindly wishes, Capt. Dunlap consented, and withdrew with his file of troopers.

Now, the first outbreak of grief had quieted, and the confusion wrought by the coming of the funeral cortege had ceased. Neighbors left the house, and the first silent meal was spread for the family. How the master was missed! No one would take his vacant place at the head of the table, and ere the meal was half done Mrs. Polly fled from the board in tears.

John went forth into the yard, and was looking after matters around the house, when Meg brought a message

that his mother wished to see him in his room. At once he re-entered the house, and mounting to his chamber, which lay just under the roof, he found Mrs. Polly seated before his reading stand. His pocket Bible lay open before her, and beside it the little red leather-covered box, ornamented with brass-headed nails, in which he knew his mother kept sundry articles that she prized. There she sat, her head erect, her face flushed, her lips set firmly together, the deep blue of her eyes with that glint therein which came when some disagreeable duty or troublesome task lay before her, and to which she had urged herself with strong will.

The flush of high excitement intermingled upon her face with that mellowing cast which sorrow throws over the human countenance, and so illumined it that John thought he had never seen her look so beautiful. And indeed a handsome matron she was. But he could not understand this swift transition; and wondering at the change of mood, stood a moment in silence and looked at his mother.

Mrs. Polly must have read his thoughts, for she spoke up at once. "Ay, John, I'm not surprised that you should wonder what has come over me all at wanc't. Sit you down, my boy! I've sommat to say til ye 'at consarns ye much, an' has been kep' back too long. Manny an' manny's the time—but oh! I couldn't bring myself to the doin'. Sit down, lad, an' listen. Don't spake, plaze, till I've said my say. There's a great burden on my mind that I must git rid of at wanc't. It has tormented me day an' night for a score of years or more."

"There's jist wan saycret (O Lord forgive me), only wan that iver cast a shadow betwixt my husband an' myself. I niver meant that he should die 'ithout knowin' it. I've braced myself to the tellin' a hunder, ay, a thousand times, but shrank away from it, for I could niver abear the thought that he might cast me off, or cease to love me, or that his poor heart would be sore hurted or broken. Oh, if I had telled him! I meant to do it, God knows, afore he died, and now he is gone. He cannot hear me. He cannot spake til me. He cannot upbraid me. He cannot forgive me, as mayhap he might 'a done, for he was aye tender as well as just. Oh, that I should have been so false to him, an' so cowardly as well! Ay, I was fearder of hurtin' him nor of offendin' my God."

Her hands trembled; her voice quavered, and it seemed as if she would quite break down and sob out her grief and remorse. But she set her underlip within her teeth, and clasped her hands with interlocked fingers till the blood forsook them, and though her frame shook with the conflict, she overmastered her feelings, and after a moment's pause resumed her story in a quiet voice.

"John, I've been a false woman to Luke Latimer, an' have betrayed the trust of as loyal an' lovin' a heart as iver bate in human bosom."

"Mother!" cried John, half rising from his seat at the shock of these words.

"Hist, lad! God forgive ye!—not that, not that you're a-thinkin' of, God be praised! False I was, but not unfaithful. Hear til me! Ye mind the story your father telled you,—I niver telled it myself, Heaven knows!—of the baby Moses that came til us on the Ohio flood two weeks after you were born, an' how the baby died while your father an' grandfather were away lookin' after their traps? Ye mind it, John?"

"Yes, mother, I remember well. And the grave where the little fellow sleeps side by side with Bended Knee."

"Ay, it's that of which I'm to tell ye. It's there 'at I was false to Luke Latimer, for the baby that died was my own child, an' you're the one, John, that came to us that day on the ragin' river."

She paused, and John started to his feet. His head seemed to whirl around. He reached out both arms as if to ward off some impending danger. His limbs grew weak beneath him, and he dropped back into his seat. The blood beat and burned around his temples. Then, through the tumult and confusion of his mind flashed the thought that grief had unseated his mother's reason! Thereat a great wave of pity was surging through his heart, when Mrs. Polly, who had followed his every movement with anxious even agonizing gaze, took up speech once more. She spoke with the same low voice, but slowly and steadily, as if struggling with a hard duty and resolved to go through with it.

"It's the God's truth, I'm a-tellin' ye, John. Don't interrump' me. I'll tell ye all as Christ is my judge; an' oh, may He judge me marcfully; and may you too, John Latimer! While Luke and grandfather were away, my

baby died. It was a sudden attack, an' I was all my lone there in the woods, for Featherfoot had gone away with Meg on a nadeful arrant an' didn't come back to all was over. It was an awful hour a-holdin' my dyin' child there in the lone cabin in the silent forest, an' no livin' bein' near but a helpless infant, the wee waif we had rascued from the waters. Oh, the sorrow an' amptiness of my heart as I laid my dead baby boy out of my arms, an' thought of his father's homecomin', an' the bitterness of his disapp'intment an' grief.

"Jist then you stirred an' began to cry. God forgive me! but the truth it is, that pitiful wail at first filled me with envy. I upbraided God for takin' my boy an' lavein' the little stranger lad. My heart was hardened agin you, an' I let you lie an' cry untended. But you was iver a lusty bairn, an' lifted up your voice an' lamented so loudly that, for pure shame, I took ye up. Then ye hooshed your cry an' smiled prettily through your tears. Oh, you were a bonny babe, John! I laid you to my breast, an' you began to gurgle an' suck, an' stare up at me with your blue eyes, for all the warld the very marrows of my own baby John's! Indade, you favored him strongly. The same eyes, an' the same silky yellow hair, an' the same broad high forehead, an' rosy complected, an' limb for limb the same bigness;— for bouncin' babes you both were.

"It must 'a been this that put the thought intil my head. Luke couldn't tell his own baby from the lettler stranger; an' I kep' your coral necklace about your throat for him to tell ye apart. I knew the differ bravely, to be sure; but men are not so obsarvent about weeny weans, leastways my Luke wasn't. Then it came to me, as I sat there softly cryin' an' nursin' you, how an Injun fortun' teller wanct had tellt me that I should have three childer, three an' no more. Howiver she found it out I could niver tell, unless it was pure witchcraft; but the truth is my mother had three childer, an' her gran'mother afore her the same. So it frighted me to hear what the old squaw said, an' I hurried away. But I didn't forgit; an' when my baby was born, I knowed it would be the las' child; for one darlin' girl baby had we buried, an' Meg bein' a lass, you can't think what store I put by the laddie, an' most of all because Luke was so pl'azed to have a boy. An' now, thought I, he will come home an' find his boy dead!

“Oh! my heart was sore pained. It was for him, for love for my Luke alone, God knows, that I did it. I don’t think I r’ally meant to do it at first. But as I laid out my dead child in his cradle, I seemed j’alous that you should be robed better nor he, an’ I put upon my own child the necklace that you wore when you were rascued, an’ got out the dainty frock that was on you when you came, an’ dressed the lettle body in it. I mind yet, thro’ all the years I mind how swate he looked in it.

“Jist then Meg came in with Featherfoot, an’ seein’ the dead child lyin’ there, went up to him an’ looked at him, an’ felt his cold cheek. Then she turned to me an’ ast what-iver was the matter with Moses? Was he dead? She did not know her own baby brother! Then an’ there it was that the temptation came to me so strong that I gave way til it an’ said, ‘Ay, Meg, he is dead!’

“She wept at this, an’ went away til where you lay an’ began sortly cooin’ over you with lovin’ words an’ pet names. Soon thereafter came Luke and Bended Knee, an’ Meg ran forth an’ tellt them that Moses was dead. An’ I couldn’t find it in my heart to deny it. For Luke came in an’ looked pitifully at the little corp, an’ then turned an’ took you up, an’ fondled you more lovin’ nor iver, an’ thanked God that his own bonnie laddie was so bright an’ well! Ah! how could I tell him then? I was fearder of hurtin’ my husband nor of offendin’ my God. They all desaved themselves, an’ I didn’t undesave ’em; an’ from that day on, they niver knew better, an’ niver suspicioned anny wrong.

“Aven Featherfoot was desaved at first; but afore the burial she found out the truth. For whin she came to help in layin’ out the baby for his coffin, she noticed that the birthmark was gone which baby Moses had on the instep of his left foot, jist on the side thereof, a brown half-moon-shaped mole. Then she crossed over to where you lay and looked, an’ lo! there was the birthmark on your foot! An’ that is how she found out. But she niver telled on me. She kep’ the sacret loyally. Indade, she seemed to think little of the matter, for she took it that I had adopted the livin’ child, as indade I did, an’ with her Indian ideas of adoptin’ childer intil their tribes an’ families, she saw little differ. A son was a son, whether by birth or adoption, one way or another, what mattered it? Only, she couldn’t

understand why I wouldn't tell Luke, or what differ it would make with him more nor to me.

"Ah! it was there I was in fault! But I niver could git out'n the pit intil which I had put myself. One thing brought on another, an' the longer I delayed the furdur I wrought intil the mire, an' the harder it was to break forth. An' now it is too late, as far as Luke is consarned. I can't undo the wrong I did him. He loved ye, John, more'n you'll iver know, for he was not a man for to show his feelin's. You were dear to him as the apple of his eye; an' though I was often sore pricked in heart to do my duty an' tell him the truth, I trimbled an' shrunk back least I might blight his fondest love, an' raise a cloud betwixt him an' you, as well as betwixt him an' myself. But oh! whin you brought him home to me a corp the morn, I couldn't abear it longer. It was an awful warnin' that came to me. An' with my dead husband lyin' in the house, I resolved, come what would, I would onburden my mind to you, who are most consarned to know. I cannot carry the saycret longer. Ay, John, though you should hate me, an' lave me, an' disgrace me afore all the town, an' I should go forth into the warld mother-naked as I came, ye must know the truth. God help me an' forgive me!

"An' these are yours, John," she said after a long pause. Then she took out of the little box the suit of baby clothes and the little coral necklace, and laid them beside the Bible upon the stand.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE PASSING OF JOHN LATIMER.

As the confusion and shock at the first startling news passed away a strange restlessness possessed John. The foundations of his life seemed to have suddenly dropped out. His proper self-hood, his personality—he, John Latimer was passing from himself—whither? Luke Latimer not his father? He could not grasp that as a tangible fact. This woman before him not his mother? His ears heard, his mind gave assent, but his heart could not receive it. The habits of life refused to be loosened. A multitude of queries and doubts and indefinable sensations arose and

whirled over the plane of consciousness. But he pushed them aside, and listened spellbound to Mrs. Latimer's confession. As the story went on, he arose and leaned heavily upon the back of his chair. He sat down again; then got up and walked the room, his eyes fixed the while upon the narrator. Then he leaned against the foot of his couch, and folded his arms tightly over his breast, and stirred not till the tale was ended.

Then he came up to the stand, and speaking not a word, turned over and over the dainty baby clothes lying there, brown and creased, but just as they had come from his infant body. He took up the coral necklace and fingered it, and looked at the golden oval bead upon it. An image seemed to arise in his imagination, shadowy, spirit like, of a woman whose hands might have stitched those tiny garments, and fastened that toy about his baby neck. But as it faded away, it bore the form,—he could see it in no other wise—of Mrs. Latimer. Still he said nothing. Mrs. Polly, who had risen, watched him with deeply flushed cheek and frightened look. At last John looked up

“Mother!” he said. “Did you never—”

At the word mother, Mrs. Polly's face was illumined as by a sunburst from a dark cloud. Tears came to her eyes, and waiting not the end of John's question, she sprang forward and threw her arms around the youth, and laid her face upon his shoulder and wept.

“Oh, John!” she sobbed, “can you—call me mother, still?”

John for answer pressed her to his bosom, and stooped and kissed her forehead, and led her to her chair, and bade her be seated and compose herself, for she was sobbing violently. When she was somewhat quieted, John finished his question: “Did you ever try to find out who my parents might be?”

“Did I ever try? Often an' often I thought of it. But what could I do? It was few people we saw, save Indians an' stragglin' hunters, an' now an' then an immigrant boat that stopped at our cabin landin', an' went on intil the wilderness. It behoved to be cautious lest I betray my saycret, an' it misliked me sore to tell a direct untruth. An' I niver did; though indade, my whole life was little less nor a livin' lie. But I bade Featherfoot find out what she could; an' Luke was aye tellin' to newcomers the story of

Moses an' his cradle. But nothin' iver came of it. The dark forest an' the lonely river kep' their own saycret fine, an' all that I iver l'arned is jist what I've'telled ye the now. An', O John, what with my lost Meg, an' my dead baby, an' the fear of bein' found out hangin' over me, an' the stress an' sting of a hurted conscience, it was a weary road I had to walk an' a bitter burden I bore. You would 'a pitied me, bereft of my bairns, an' berated by my troubled mind. Ay, an' ye may pity me still; tho' comfort came to me by an' by in the love I grew to have for yourself. For Heaven is my witness, I soon got to know no differ atween you an' a born child of my own. An' savin' only the saycret that I kep' from ye, I niver failed in duty,—I defy the face o' clay to say that I iver failed in duty an' love to ycu. O my poor heart! O my Saviour, have marcy!"

The tension to which the strong willed woman had keyed herself for the telling of her tale relaxed as she reached the end. She buried her face in her hands and wept, while her frame shook with sobs. John stood forcing back the sobs heaving up from his breast, the tears meanwhile trickling down his cheeks. When Mrs. Latimer was somewhat composed he broke the painful silence.

"You have nothing more to say to me, mother?"

"Nothin'," said Polly, and made as if to leave.

"No, no!" John exclaimed. "Stay here, if you will. I must go by myself and think."

He took up the coral necklace, leaving the other things upon the stand, and went forth from the Latimer cabin. He crossed the Chartiers by the little bridge, and scarcely heeding where he went, turned into the winding path to the Hill Church. It seemed to him that he was once more upon the flooded river, drifting he knew not where. Who was he? What mystery was this that had suddenly dropped into his life, severing him from all he held most dear?

He had grown up with a strong and just pride in his own name and relatives. Luke Latimer was not much given to moral or religious lectures or lessons; but he had a few simple principles which he tried to instil into his boy's mind, and a few words which were often on his tongue. "Honor" was one. He made much of that. That seemed to him indeed the principal thing. Be honorable! he would say. Be the soul of honor! Keep your honor bright! Never do or say aught that can stain your honor!

"Family" was another favorite word with Luke. Indeed, he linked it with that other, and made much of family honor. "Never disgrace your family, lad!" he would say to John. "Your family are proud of you. Do naught that will turn their pride into shame."

Luke made no claims to noble descent, or high connection in the old country, as one sometimes heard; but showed honest pride in an honest and godly stock, and an honorable family and name. John from his childhood had responded keenly to these lessons. Next to "God" and "duty," he held "honor" the worthiest word in the English tongue; and next to honor came "home" and "family." He was proud of his family, and had a right to be. And now, he was not a Latimer! He had no family! At one blow he had lost all that he had been taught to hold dear. He was—who was he?

There came a flush of indignation, a sense of personal injury that he had been suffered thus to take root in the Latimer home only to be rudely torn away in the end. Why was he not told the truth at once, that his life might have shaped itself truly and naturally to the facts? It was wrong! It was a wrong to him as well as to his father!

His father! That is, Luke Latimer. Could he ever think of him in any other way? He resented the thought that he must lose out of his life what had been one of its greatest pleasures, the sense of sonship to that strong, true, great-hearted and honorable man, who, with whatever shortcomings, had been to him the heart of goodness.

At this point in his mental struggle he reached the spot where, on the evening of the sacramental camp-meeting, he had stood with Fanny McCormack and Blanche Oldham, and looked upon the fair landscape as it stretched away to the southwest over the rolling hills, and to the north along the winding valley of the Chartiers, with the full light of the moon shining upon it. How changed the scene since that evening. How bleak and barren now, in that raw November air, with the gaunt arms of the leafless trees stretched toward the cold gray sky, and the dull and lowering clouds trooping across it, and swirling here and there in wreaths and misty rolls around the summits of the peaks. There he stood and thought of Blanche. Ah, a true symbol this of what had befallen his hopes; dark

clouds and chilling winds and biting frosts and blackness of coming winter. The hot blood throbbed around his temples as he recalled the supercilious words of Gen. Neville. And now, this last cruel blow must surely end it! If her kin would scorn him as the son of a reputable citizen of good standing and fortune, what would they say to him as a nameless waif?—a penniless, nameless waif?

Yes, penniless! For though Luke Latimer's will left him the third part of a goodly estate, it was done under the delusion that he, John, was his son and therefore entitled to it. Well he knew that Mrs. Latimer's generous love would insist that the will should hold. But could he permit it? No! Not a dollar could he honorably receive. He would go forth into the world as lone and poor as he had come into it.

But how could he go forth? He was a prisoner, charged with treason to his country, to be marched away to his country's capital and tried for riot, arson and treason. What would the end be? An ignominious death? prison? exile? God help him! Well, what mattered it? Heaven itself seemed to be against him during these last two months. The rudest billows of fate had gone over him, and buffeted him, and cast him up without name, without family, without possession, with his fair reputation and honorable life stained with a secret suspicion and an open charge of an infamous crime.

And Meg? What would she say? She had closely wrought herself around his affections since that day of her deliverance. Truly he loved her. And must he wrench her too from his heart? Could he expect her longer to love him as a sister loves a brother? How could she do so? In his distress, he cried aloud: "Oh mother (still mother!), how could you do this thing?"

John had now reached the little graveyard back of the Hill Church, and sat down upon a stile that gave entrance from the churchyard close by the sanctuary walls. He gazed around upon the humble headstones and monumental slabs, and thought of the peaceful rest of those who were sleeping there. How gladly would he lie down with them in the dreamless slumber of the dead! His musings were broken by the sound of voices. Two men approached bearing picks and shovels. They were the church sexton and a helper.

"Ah!" said the sexton with an apologetic tone. "We have jist come to dig the grave—" and there stopped.

"My father's grave?" asked John, rising from the stile. "Luke Latimer,—my father?"

"Ay, John, jist that; an' maybe it's well you're here;" the sexton replied, not noting the broken phrasing that betokened the conflict in John's mind. "You might help us mark the spot where your mother said she wushed him laid." That office done, John left the men to their sombre but needful task and took the road toward home.

Home? Yes, that it must be for a little while longer. The scene at the graveyard had given his mind a more kindly turn. His thoughts were much chastened, and his heart softened. Very sad and quiet he was as he slowly descended the hill. As far back as memory could recall his past, from the first consciousness of childhood to the present, one form hung above and circled about his life. It was that of his mother—his mother Latimer. On her generous bosom he had sobbed away his boyish griefs and found a soft pillow for his fevered and aching head, when the ills of childhood had visited him. A strong, wise, loving hand was hers to guide him through the perplexities and crude rugosities of youth.

What a happy home had she made for him. What brightness and warmth awaited at the fireside and table when he came in from daily duty. What heartsome welcome when he got home from hunting, scouting and boating. Did ever mother do more for her own child than Mrs. Latimer had done for him? Could one be loved by a real mother more than he had been loved? Oh, the wealthiness and unwearied output of the long-suffering patience and self-denial of her service! And all that for one who was not her own child; for a waif borne to her breast from the bosom of the flooded Ohio!

Was not this love? Ay, mother love! or so nigh akin to it that he at least could not discern the difference. What did he not owe to her? He owed her his life, such as it was,—a poor possession now for him or for anyone. He owed all that he had been or hoped to be to her and to her husband. What then should he do? What could he do? Come what would, his love and gratitude for her should never lessen! Yes, his mother she must remain, as far as love and allegiance could go.

He stepped off more quickly. The decision seemed to give a buoyancy to his feelings. Providence had cast his lot with the Latimers. Why should he go counter thereto and separate his destiny from them? Yet, was not something due to truth and honor? Should not his true relations to the Latimers be made known? Surely! But how would the telling affect his mother? Would it not so lower her in public opinion that her life would be made miserable? What would Dr. McMillan say? and the Church Session? That was a serious matter, indeed! What would be gained by publishing the facts? Would it not be better to let matters abide as they were, for the present at least? Surely something was due to charity as well as to truth.

He paused, and gazed at the straggling village beneath him, the blue smoke curling from its cabin chimneys. With the gray sky and dusking day, the shadows were deepening along the valley. Across the cottage windows played the flicker of blazing wood fires and the glimmer of candle lights. Yonder was the Latimer cabin! There, in the darkened room lay the silent form of one whom he had loved above all men. And still loved! There, his mother awaited his coming,—yes, he did not doubt it— with anxious heart. And Meg, poor, dear Meg!

And Fanny McCormack? Was she there too? No! She must have gone home now. Must Fanny know? What would she say to all this? He had been thinking of that all along, with a longing, which almost overmastered him, to tell her everything. Yet, he dreaded the telling, lest somehow it might change her and becloud her sisterly love. And then?—

But he must have help. His heart craved human sympathy and counsel. Whose advice could be so much to him, so wise and true, so sure to be right, as that of his childhood's loving friend and playmate—his sister Fanny? He had never had a sorrow or joy, never a plan of serious work and duty, never even a deep emotion (save one) that he had not carried to her, and shared with her, and always been the happier and better. He must tell her this also!

Yes, come what would, he would confide in her and be guided by her counsel. He must settle his plans in life once for all. After that wretched imprisonment and trial should be over, he must start life anew. What ought he to do? Should he let the world know all? He would away to

Fanny McCormack. That at least was clear. Fanny must know all and tell him what to do. He sprang away down the road with rapid pace, and bent his steps toward the McCormack cabin. At that hour of the evening, he felt sure Fanny would be there, called thither by the pressing duties of household and store.

He had guessed aright. Fanny had just returned from the Latimers, and was at the desk in the store going over the simple accounts of the day. She was alone. The customers were at their evening meals; and the lads had run out for a frolic in the fresh air.

Fanny marked at once the signs of agitation in John's face and manner. She had never seen him in that wise. He was even-tempered and self-poised and rarely flurried, although, when matters required, swift in action and execution. But now? What was it? Not his father's death, for nothing of this manner had appeared during the day. What had happened? She laid down her pen and with a throbbing heart and anxious glance that came despite her efforts to be composed, awaited his approach.

"Fanny, have you heard anything?" John asked, coming to the desk and speaking without formal greeting.

"Have I heard anything?" echoed Fanny. "I do not understand. What is the matter, John?"

"Mother has told you nothing, then?"

"Nothing!"

"Are you alone?"

"Quite alone."

"I have something I must say to you all by yourself."

"You can speak freely, then. We shall not be interrupted, I think." She spoke quietly, but there was a quaver in the tones of her voice that betrayed her inward agitation. What could John have to say to her? Had he at last found out? No! Unworthy thought. Silence! Shame to think of it now. The maid's cheeks flushed and her eyes flashed. Then she cast them down, and looked at the book before her, and tapped upon the desk with the nib of her quill.

John, thinking only of unburdening his mind and getting the help which he craved, told the story in rapid and impassioned utterances; told all his feelings, all his struggles, his perplexities, his doubts. He made a clean breast of it all, leaning upon the top of the desk as he talked.

Fanny started at the shock of the first news, and with a cry of painful wonder dropped back upon the high writing stool, and leaning forward upon the account book, hid her face in her hands and wept. John waited patiently until Fanny had got the mastery of her emotion and raised her face flushed and wet with tears.

"O John!" she cried. "O my brother! I am so sorry for you."

When all was told, the matter which troubled him most came up. Should he make the truth known, or hide it? How could he keep up the deceit before the world? Yet how could he bear to bring upon his mother the reproach of a disclosure? What would Fanny advise?

"The truth must be told, John!" Fanny said at last. She spoke slowly, and every word seemed to cause pain in utterance; but there was no token of doubt in her tones. John had felt sure that such would be the verdict; yet it seemed to fall upon him like a sentence of death.

"The truth must be told!" Fanny repeated. "But not by you, John. Mrs. Latimer might make it known to Dr. McMillan, and leave him to settle matters with the Church and the people. Stay you here meanwhile, and go quietly on as usual. Do you not still love Luke Latimer?"

"Yes, with all my heart. I could not love and cherish his memory more were he my own father. I know, I feel no difference. Yes, I love him still."

"And Mrs. Latimer?"

John hesitated a moment, for he wished to be true to his conscience, and speak forth his heart without disguise to Fanny looking at him there through her steady blue eyes, mirrors of that soul of truth within.

"The news was a shock to that reverence and absolute confidence which I have always held. There was a shrinking away at first, as if I could never feel as I have felt. I was confused, yes angry, I do not deny. But that has passed;—at least it has nearly gone. I have thought of all that has been done for me. My heart unites with my reason to cling to mother Latimer as my own mother. I could not feel otherwise; I would not if I could. For the present, at least, whatever time may affect, I have only one mother, and I can say with my whole heart that I love and shall continue to love her as such. Besides, I promised father Latimer on his dying bed that I would never cease to care for her and Meg. I will be true to my word."

"Thank God for what you say!" was Fanny's answer. "It is what I expected."

"Another thing troubles me," John continued. "Father told me that he left me an equal share of his estate. I cannot accept it. Even if it should be proved lawful for me to do so, I cannot reconcile it with my own sense of right. After the funeral, I shall give myself up to the Government authorities, and shall be taken for trial to Philadelphia, I suppose. What the end will be, Heaven only knows; but whatever betide, I must take up life anew. But not here in Canonsburg! On some other field, perhaps the new West, I must try my fortunes."

"Have you thought," said Fanny, speaking with hesitating words in broken sentences, "that this may seriously affect your prospects with—that is, your hopes of—"

"Blanche, you mean, I suppose?" John interrupted.

Fanny lowered her eyes, fearful that she had intruded, and tapped lightly with the pen point upon the desk. "Yes, I feared you might have forgotten,—"

"No, I have thought of that. But what difference could it make? I have no reason to hope—but if I did, would that matter?"

"No, certainly not, not with Blanche. At least, if she loved you as—as she ought!" Fanny answered.

Tap, tap, tap! The nib of the quill beating upon the desk-lid was the only sound that broke the silence, as the two young people paused. Both pairs of eyes followed the monotonous movement of Fanny's fingers, a tumult of fear, disappointment and hope beating within their breasts.

"Have you told Meg?" Fanny asked at length, escaping from the embarrassing situation by changing the subject.

"I have not, and I dare not think of doing so. Would you mind telling her? It will come best from you."

"Yes, I will tell her. Poor, dear Meg! I fear it will go hard with her. I will come over after supper."

Fanny closed the account book and rose from the stool. John gave her cordial thanks and reached a hand across the desk, which Fanny took and gently pressed. But John would not leave it so, for he bent over and raised the hand to his lips and kissed the back thereof. "My good angel!" he said. "My true-hearted sister!" Then he left the store and left too a hot tear drop on Fanny's fingers.

Fanny followed him to the door and closed it and

turned the key. She paused and put her lips to the spot that John had kissed. Then returning to her place, she knelt down in the narrow gangway behind the counter, and laying her head against the shelf, sobbed aloud.

"Hush, my heart!" she murmured. "God help us all!"

She lifted up her face to Heaven, and with clasped hands, in the shadow of the darkening evening prayed silently for John Latimer. This done, she arose composed in spirit, and entering the cottage by the rear door, sat down to the evening meal with countenance bright with the reflected peace within, and with cheerful voice talked over with the household the events of the day.

Surely self-sacrifice has its own especial type of joy. You do not call it happiness? Well, then, call it blessedness; and let us say that this was the grace that enfolded the spirit of Fanny McCormack that night as with a garment of myrrh. This was not a new conflict now waged within her, nor a new victory won; only another stage of the old struggle, another triumph of true love over self-love. She knew now, and had long known that she loved John Latimer so well that she would not, even if she could, draw him to herself from another woman with whom he could be happier. Yet, there were times when she inwardly chafed at this verdict, and wondered: could she really love him and be willing to lose him, even for the sake of his greater happiness? Verily there grows within the garden of the heart a plant called "Bittersweet," and Fanny knew well the mingled savors thereof.

Mrs. Latimer awaited John's coming with an anxiety that even her sorrow for the dead could not quench. She had lifted a corner of the curtain and watched him from the window as he climbed the hill path, until he was lost to view. She knew that he would fight out the matter by himself (that was ever his use and wont), and come back with mind made up one way or another. So, at his home-coming she glanced keenly into his face for outward token of his mind. It was all right! She saw that and was glad.

John came up and kissed her and said softly but very tenderly, "my mother!" Then her tears welled forth, but they were tears of joy as much as of sorrow. He kissed her again, and spoke out so that Meg and Mrs. Burbeck might hear: "Keep a good heart, you still have Meg and me."

When the evening meal was done, Meg arose and got

the family Bible, and without a word laid it down before John, as she had learned to do for her father. "Ay, John, you must tak' the Book now," said Mrs. Polly. "There's none else to lade our warship."

Reverently, then, John opened the volume and read the chapter which his father loved, the fourteenth of St. John's Gospel, whose pages were thumb-marked with frequent reading. As John read on, the sweetness, the comfort and happiness of the gracious words of Jesus distilled into his heart, and fell like gentle dew upon the spirits of those who heard them.

As he closed the book and kneeled down, Meg softly came and kneeled beside him. Her mother seeing that, came also, and kneeling on the other side, bowed forward weeping upon the table edge. John placed one arm about each of the mourning women, and so, with face uplifted, took up the household priesthood that Luke Latimer had laid aside, and as best he could led the family prayer.

This done, he slipped away to his own room. There lay the baby things that Mrs. Latimer had given him. He took them up and examined them closely, and wondered: Would he ever know who his parents were? Would these things be the key to unlock the mystery? He picked up the pocket Bible and turned over the pages with a new interest. Here and there a passage had been marked, and a rude figure of an index-hand drawn upon the page. Whose hand had done this? he inwardly questioned. One text especially caught his eye. It was enclosed in brackets, and on the margin in a delicate hand, a lady's handwriting evidently, were what seemed to be the initials of a name.

"When my father and my mother forsake me, the Lord will take me up."
M. M.

He sat for a long time musing upon the text. He had often noted this and other marked passages, but in truth had taken no special heed to them. There they had always been, and it did not occur to him to raise a query about the matter. But now? It was a vain fancy, he knew, but he indulged it, and dreamed and dreamed of what had been, and what might be?

He turned to the title page. The name and date had once been written thereon, but they were so thoroughly blotted out with heavy ink lines that not a letter could be

traced. He turned the fly leaves, and noted a print pasted upon the inside cover, which had often excited his boyish wonder, but which he had long ceased to think about. It was a book plate with an engraved coat of arms. There had been an engraved name also, it would seem, but that was erased, as was the lower part of the figure.

Of heraldry, its uses and its symbols, John was ignorant, or had but the faintest glimmer of knowledge. He had indeed heard of coat armor, and shields and crests, from folk around him, some of whom were not unfamiliar therewith in the old country. But in the fierce republicanism of the era, all such gawds and vanities were despised and eschewed as toys and tokens of a proud aristocracy. It was therefore but the dimmest outline of a thought that came to him that perhaps these hieroglyphs might mark for him the trail to those who could unfold the mystery of his birth.

Yet, on the other hand, he had known books sold in the open market at a Pittsburg store with like devices in them; old books that had drifted west from Philadelphia, from New England, from Great Britain, from Holland, the flotsam of broken libraries picked up by immigrants and by them bartered again. Perhaps this Bible had a like history. Indeed, some of the books in his scant library had thus been purchased; and this picture on the book plate, it might well be, had naught to do with the last owner. Still, in some way the Bible was associated with his infancy. It lay in his cradle as if someone had been reading it when the flood came, and had thrown it into the cradle and fled for life. A rap on the door startled him.

"Come in!"

At his call, Meg Latimer entered, and standing with hand upon the half-open door, hesitated and looked timidly toward him. John rose and came near to her.

"Has Fanny told you?"

"Yes, Fanny told all. She say you not my brother John! How that? Meg not understand. You not my born brother, mebbe. Meg sorry for that, very sorry! But what differ make that? Mother say she adopted you into the family. She take you for her true son, same as her own dead baby. That very good, too. That all the same now as if you were true born child, so mother say. That Indian way, too. That a good way! She love you still. You her own boy now,—if you like. You must like! Oh,

John, you will like? Meg cannot give you up. You are her own brother still. Father love you very much. He put Meg's hand in yours afore he die, and say 'you will love one another truly! You will care for Meg, my boy? Oh, John, what you say to that?'"

The maid spoke rapidly, dropping wholly the reserve with which her Indian habits had clothed her ordinary speech. Her voice trembled with the eagerness of her heart. Tears were glistening on her long eyelashes.

"You not going to leave us, John? You not get angry, and cast us away from you? No, No! Who save Meg from Indian? Brother John! Who bring her home and give her father and mother and everything? Brother John! Who watch with her when father die, and say he never, never leave her? Brother John! Yes, yes, mother take you for her son; you take Meg for sister, too? You my brother John still?"

John watched the beautiful girl as she made her plea for brotherly love with such eloquent manner and speech, and his heart beat high with happiness and pride. He took her into his arms and kissed her. "Oh, Meg, my sister," he said, "it is I who should plead for your love. Who am I to think of throwing away such a priceless gift? God bless you for your love! I am happy and grateful to you for it. God do so to me and more also if aught but death part thee and me!"

Meg smiled through her tears, and said "Good brother John! Come! Let us go to our mother."

And the two went out of the room hand in hand.

CHAPTER L.

OFF TO PHILADELPHIA.

Four horsemen—John Latimer, Andy Burbeck, Mort Sheldon and Nathan Lane—slowly held along the road from Canonsburg to Pittsburg. The funeral rites were over, and Luke Latimer had been left to sleep on the sunny bosom of the hill whereon the Chartiers' Churchyard lies. Home farewells had been spoken; for John and Andy were about to redeem their parole, and give themselves up to

the national authorities at Pittsburg, expecting to be sent to Philadelphia to be tried for treason. It was therefore a sad and silent group that jogged along the road through the Chartiers' Valley.

But Hope is a perennial fountain in man's breast. John was young; Andy's buoyant spirits could not long be repressed; and little by little conversation started. The habit of companionship cleared the obstructed channels, and the gloom of home good-byes was gradually lightened. Naturally, the talk turned upon the impending trials, and the probable treatment at Pittsburg and Philadelphia. Thence it drifted to the condition of affairs in the Survey, and especially in Washington County. What should become of those who had been arrested? What should become of those who had fled? So came David Bradford upon the scene, and the manner of his flight.

Nathan Lane had been given the duty of warning those in Washington and the neighborhood who were blacklisted upon the paper so mysteriously placed in Luke Latimer's hands. David Bradford was among this number, and at his door Nathan presented himself in due time. The house stood and still stands on Main Street, and was one of the finest in the West, and said to be the first stone residence built in the village. Nathan's knock brought a slave girl to the door, who held with one hand to the brass knob of the huge iron lock, and peered suspiciously from within through the narrow opening, and asked what was wanted. The manner of the servant betrayed the master's anxiety.

Nathan's explanation was satisfactory, and he was admitted into the wide hall, where he noted the broad stairway with its ornamented rails and balustrade of solid mahogany, a most notable object in that day there on the verge of the wilderness. He was shown into the parlor, a spacious room with a wood fire burning in the fireplace over which was a mahogany mantel. The surrounding wall was wainscoted with mahogany panels to the very top of the carved cornice.

After a brief waiting, Nathan was shown into the adjoining room. Bradford sat at a desk placed before the fireplace, whose mantel, as with the parlor, was panelled to the ceiling. On either side were shelves with quaintly leaded glass doors. Bradford laid aside his papers, and

knowing Nathan well, greeted him with that genial manner which had won him wide popularity among all classes.

"A cold morning, Mr. Lane," he said. "Sit up to the fire, sir! Pray, to what am I indebted for this early call? Surely our staid friend Passon Nathan has not got into any trouble that requires my legal counsel?"

"Wall, no, Squire!" Nathan replied. "Not jist precisely that. I ain't in no scrape, onless comin' here may count for one. The boot is on t'other foot this time."

"Ah?" exclaimed Bradford, looking up quickly, and fixing a disturbed and inquiring gaze upon his visitor. "What's in the wind now? Something about myself?"

"It's jest that, Mr. Bradford. I'm not come to git but to give counsel. Fact is, an' there's no use beatin' about the bush as I ever seed, I'm like Cushi of old, a bearer of evil tidings. The Government's got a purty sizable trap ready to spring, an' as I've found out that you're included among the victims, I've come to say that I reckon about the best thing you kin do is to light out suddent, and make tracks for the Ohio kentry or New Orleans."

Thereupon he told how he had come by his information, and rose to leave. "You know, Squire Bradford," he continued, "that I never took nary stock in your schemes an' doins'. But I like to see every man have a fair chance, an' don't approve by no manner of means the way the army officials are calkelatin' to treat our citizens. Seems as though they was goin' slap-dab into the face of President Washington's proclamation."

Bradford questioned Nathan until he was thoroughly satisfied that the warning was timely, and then dismissed him with warm thanks for his friendly act. "Be sure, sir," he said, as he shook Nathan's hand cordially, "that I shall not divulge the name of my kind informer. I would be loath to bring suspicion upon one who has done me this good turn, not without risk to himself."

"Taint wuth speakin' of, Squire," Nathan replied. "Shucks! I wouldn't give a pinch of snuff for a man that wouldn't resk somethin' to git a neighbor out of trouble. Good bye, sir! and good luck to ye!"

Thus far, Nathan could report to his companions how he had fulfilled the duty committed to him. What followed that was a matter of common fame. Sooner than Bradford expected the soldiery visited him. They had intended

to take him unawares, but Nathan's warning prevented surprise. Bradford was in his office, hastening the arrangement of his papers, when the troop came up the street. His faithful slaves were on the lookout and ran to him with the news. Without further ceremony he escaped through a back window of his office, and made good his flight.

At Pittsburg, Capt. Dunlap was found busy preparing to escort Governor Mifflin back to Philadelphia, having been assigned command of the advanced corps of the Pennsylvania cavalry on their return march. John and Andy were therefore turned over to the provost guard. After expressing their hearty gratitude to Capt. Dunlap for his considerate treatment, and bidding their companions good bye, they were conducted to the garrison, and delivered to the care of Major Butler, the commander. Here they were kept a week awaiting orders to proceed to Philadelphia under an escort commanded by Gen. Ledger Bloodson, who had been assigned to that service at his own particular request. On the last day of their stay a sentinel called Andy into the commandant's office to see a visitor. He crossed the parade ground to the little brick building built by Col. Bouquet in 1764, and which still remains, the sole relic of Fort Duquesne, and is known as the Block House. Mr. Ormsby, a citizen of Pittsburg with whom Andy had a slight acquaintance, greeted him warmly and presented him to the commandant with the remark: "This is the man, sir; this is Andrew Burbeck."

Major Butler handed Andy a paper, which he turned over several times and glanced at the endorsements on the back. Then he slowly opened it, wondering the while what it could be. This is what he read:

HEADQUARTERS, PITTSBURG, November 24, 1794.

By direction of Major General Henry Lee, Commander-in-Chief, Brigadier General Ledger Bloodson will release the prisoner Andrew Burbeck of Washington County, now confined in the garrison at Fort Pitt.

DANIEL MORGAN,

Major General Commanding the Winter Defense.

Beneath this was an endorsement as follows:

In accordance with the above order, Major Butler will please discharge without further delay the prisoner, Andrew Burbeck. LEDGER BLOODSON, Brigadier General.

Andy slowly read the order. He was confounded. He thrust his fingers through his hair until every particular red capillary seemed standing upon end. "Whatever does this mane, sir?" he exclaimed. "A' don't understand it."

"It means that you are discharged, Mr. Burbeck, and I heartily congratulate you!" returned Major Butler. "Mr. Ormsby will explain the rest; you owe your release to him."

Andy turned his wondering gaze upon his visitor, holding the while the document with both hands. "Is it a joke you're playin' off on me?" he asked.

"A joke, my good fellow!" exclaimed Mr. Ormsby, grasping one of Andy's hands and warmly shaking it. "Nothing was ever surer than that you are a free man; and I wish you joy of the same. I'm glad to be able to do this for you as some slight proof of my gratitude."

"Gratitude?" echoed Andy. "Come now, Mr. Ormsby, that's another riddle you're puttin' til me. A' niver had anny dalein's with you in my life, barrin' a ferry acrost the river betimes whan sarvin' for Luke Latimer."

"Hah! my fine fellow," Mr. Ormsby returned. "Have you forgotten the night on Braddock's Field? I never knew what I owed you till yesterday morning, when I chanced to meet Zedick Wright, who asked about you. He spoke many good words in your behalf, which I little minded, till he related how your kind and canny manœuvres saved my lad's life from the masked ruffians who would have hung him. I have some influence with the authorities here, thank God! and I never gave myself a bit of peace till that discharge was signed. And there it is, just in time to save you from the march to-day. My good wife and myself will hold you in grateful remembrance as long as we live; and my son, sir, will soon speak for himself, I hope."

Andy listened with keen interest. A merry twinkle came to his eyes, which gradually grew into a smile, and then into a broad grin that broke forth in hearty laughter. "Ah, that's it, is it? Ha, ha! Axcuse me, gentlemine, it wasn't quite ginteel to laugh out that way. But it 'ud make a dog laugh to mind that affair. Bless my heart, Mr. Ormsby, if you'd a knowed how much ginoowine fun A' had out'n that divarteesment, you'd niver 'a mentioned gratitude. Ay, A' was well paid for what lettle A' did. Ha, ha! Howsomiver, A'm obleeged to ye all the same, an' A'm truly grateful for your kindness. But sir, if it's all the

same to you, A' can't accip' this bit o' paper." Whereupon he handed the document to Major Butler.

"Are you mad?" the officer exclaimed.

"A'm not mad, your honor!" Andy answered, "but spake forth words of sober a'rnest. Jist as long as Cap'n Latimer is a prisoner, Andy Burbeck stays a prisoner, too. A'm off to Philadelphy the day with him, an' its share an' share alike with us!"

"This is nonsense! Absurd!" exclaimed Major Butler. "What good can you do Capt. Latimer if you go with him as a prisoner? You don't even know that you would be allowed to march in the same gang with him; or stay in the same prison when you arrive; or be tried at the same time; or—pshaw! Guard, ask Capt. Latimer to please step over to headquarters."

The honest soldier's words were quick and brusque, as they fell upon the ear; but there was a glimmer in his eyes, and something rising in the throat, that showed how Andy's act of self-denying friendship had won his heart. John appeared in a few moments, and without a word Major Butler handed him the order for Andy's discharge.

"Thank God!" exclaimed John, when he had read the paper. His face was radiant with joy, and seizing both of Andy's hands in his own, he shook them again and again and wished him joy. "Now, I can go away in peace, my dear old friend," he cried. "Hurrah! Hurry back to Canonsburg, and carry my love to all the home folks, and my hearty congratulations to Peggy. Ay, and to Bounce and Betty and Rouse and all the rest. This is glorious news, indeed. How did it come about?"

All this time and while Major Butler briefly explained, Andy remained silent, and stood with downcast eyes, and John wondered at that.

"And now," the Major concluded, "your friend flatly refuses to accept his discharge, and has returned the document to me. Doubtless, you can guess the reason, sir; and one might well envy you such devoted friendship as this, which prefers the discomforts and sufferings of a prison with a friend, to the pleasures of freedom apart from him!"

"Dear old friend!" John cried, turning and once more grasping Andy's hands. "Did you indeed do that for me? Thank you, with all my heart. But it must not be. It shall not be! I cannot accept such a sacrifice as this,

though I feel proud and glad that you stand ready to make it. I would never have a peaceful moment were I to permit you to do this wrong to yourself and family. Ay, and to myself, too. You can serve me better here than anywhere else. You can stay and watch for me, and report how affairs go, and serve me in a hundred ways that may help on my case to a favorable issue. Besides, you forget, Andy, that father left the ferry in your hands with a half interest in the business. You might sacrifice your own share justly; but how about mother's? You owe it to her and to Meg, ay, and to the memory of your dead friend to stay here and bide by the stuff."

By this time, tears were rolling down Andy's cheeks. He had difficulty in commanding his voice, and at last spoke. "Well, Jock, an A' must, A' suppose A' must! But it goes agin the grain to lave you alone in the hands of the Pheelistines. But A' know there's no changin' your mind wanct it's truly made up. A' mind your mother's wush for ye, manny an' manny's the time: the Lord kape him right, for A' know he'll be steadfast! A' jealous A' must axcep' my liberty, though it mislikes me sore."

"A wise decision!" said Major Butler. He endorsed the document: "Andrew Burbeck, discharged this 24th November, 1794." Then he signed it, and gave it to his adjutant, directing him to make out a copy for Andy.

"And now, Capt. Latimer," he continued, "the time has come for you to leave. The prisoners are being mustered. The troop escort is formed, and I see you are ready for the journey. Ah, there goes the bugle! Good bye, sir! And may your suit prosper as you deserve."

"Your honor," said Andy, as the Major moved away. "Mayn't A' march a bit of the way with Cap'n Latimer? This comes very suddent like, an' A' think A'd be better raconciled til 't if A' could see my friend safely on his journey. It 'ud be a great comfort to me, that!"

"You've a strange idea of comfort," the commandant remarked with a smile. "Especially on such a bleak day as this. But if it's any satisfaction, be off with you! I shouldn't wonder to hear that you had enlisted as a trooper and had gone to Philadelphia with your friend as one of his guard."

"Not a bad idea that, your honor!" said Andy, "an' for Jarsey Blues 'll long be a name of terror to Washington

God save ye for your kindness. Mayhap A'll consider it. But, no!—hark til yon, wull ye? They'll be no listin' for Andy Burbeck in yon company, your honor. Them's the Jarsey Blues."

The sound which had won Andy's attention was a chorus which the troopers had started while waiting for their final orders. They were jubilant at being homeward bound, and voiced their pleasure in a song evoked by the stirring events of the time, and which was very popular among the soldiers of New Jersey. It had been written by Gen. Howell, the Governor of that State, when the President called for troops to march to Western Pennsylvania. These are the words that the troopers sung and which excited Andy's unfavorable comment:

JERSEY BLUES.

To arms once more, our hero cries,
Sedition lives and order dies.
To peace and ease then bid adieu,
And dash to the mountains, Jersey Blue.

CHORUS.

Dash to the mountains, Jersey Blue,
Jersey Blue, Jersey Blue!
And dash to the mountains, Jersey Blue!

Tho' tears bedew the maiden's cheek,
And storms hang round the mountains bleak,
'Tis glory calls; to love adieu;
Then dash to the mountains, Jersey Blue.

Should foul misrule and party rage
With law and liberty engage,
Push home your steel, you'll soon review
Your native plains, brave Jersey Blue.

Dash to the mountains, Jersey Blue,
You'll soon review, you'll soon review
Your native plains, brave Jersey Blue.

The last lines so stirred the singers with the glad hope of home-coming, that they fairly made the welkin ring with their refrain. Andy shook his head. "The sooner the better!" he muttered, "Whup out of the land as fast as ye like. The Westerners 'll not begrudge ye a sight of your native plains. Good riddance of bad rubbish, siz we, County folk."

Major Butler stood in the doorway and heard Andy's soliloquy. "Yet the Jersey Line," said he, "are among the best disciplined soldiers of the army."

"It 'ud ill become me to conterdic' ye," Andy replied. "An' it 'ud 'a been different if your honor had commanded 'em astead of Giner'l Bloodson. It's the old proverb, you know, about the fly in the pound of intment."

CHAPTER LI.

JOHN GETS INTO JAIL AND THERE GRAPPLES WITH CERTAIN MYSTERIES.

The song of the jubilant troopers had no echo in the prisoners' hearts. Disturbed by prospects of their future, distressed by present inconveniences, grieving bitterly for the losses that must follow their removal, and the poverty and suffering that must befall their families, most of them fell into line at the order, with slow movement and sorrowful visage. Some, like John Latimer, were supported by the force of their indignation at their unworthy treatment.

An escort of forty mounted soldiers formed around them, and they marched away from the garrison, across the Common, through the village of Pittsburg towards Greensburg in Westmoreland County. Two days thereafter, November 27th, the troop arrived in Greensburg and the prisoners were lodged in the jail. On the 29th, they were drawn out and paraded in the streets midleg deep in mud and snow, and were finally turned over to Major Durham. Then they proceeded upon their weary journey to Philadelphia. Each prisoner marched on foot between two mounted soldiers. The guards were ordered by Gen. Bloodson to keep their swords drawn, and if any attempt should be made at rescue, "the heads of the prisoners should be cut off and brought to Philadelphia."

There were twenty prisoners in all. Among them was one minister, Rev. John Corbley. There were several military officers, Col. John Hamilton, Sheriff of Washington County and commander of a regiment of militia; Col. Wm. Crawford, and Capt. Robert Porter who commanded a company in the war for Independence and subsequently in

the frontier defense. Many of them were ill provided against the rigors of the march before them. John Latimer had supplied himself with changes of underwear, which were stowed in leather saddlebags that he carried strapped upon his shoulders like a knapsack. His pocket Virgil and a volume of Shakespeare had a place therein. His Bible he carried in his pocket, and the relics of his babyhood were next his body in a pouch that hung about his neck. He wore strong cloth leggings wrapped about the lower legs as a protection against the heavy roads. His lusty strength and high spirits supported him well through the wearisome march, and left him some surplus to expend in comforting and helping his feebler fellow sufferers.

There followed a dismal journey of thirty days, made along the most primitive roads, over mountains, through forests, across streams, painfully plodding through snow and mud in the most inclement time of the year. At night the prisoners were placed in cellars, barns and such other places as suited the disposition or fancy of their guards. Some of these were considerate and even kind. Others frequently vented their ill humor, real or pretended, against the rebels who had occasioned their going so far over the hills and mountains "without the satisfaction of a man to oppose them or a gun fired at them."

Near the pretty railroad station of Bala, one may see the remainders of what was known a century ago as the Black Horse Tavern. Before this wayside hostelry the prisoners were paraded for their last day's march. They were a dejected and travel-stained band. One can hardly imagine the state in which a month's tramp afoot under the above-named conditions of weather, roads and lodging must have left these unfortunates. Even John Latimer, who was always fastidious in the care of his person, and by long experience in scouting knew how to meet such a situation, found himself sorely bedraggled. Knowing that he would be conducted through the streets of the capital, he tried to make himself presentable.

He had chosen for the march his scouting uniform, a green hunting shirt fringed with orange, and his scout's coon-skin cap with its pendant tail and an eagle feather at the side. He now hung upon his left breast two decorations which he prized. One was a medal for skill in shooting at the Legionville match; the other Gen. Wayne

had given him for valor as a scout. After a long inward debate he added a third decoration, for who knows, thought he, what might come from it? It was his coral necklace, knotted in loops with the bit of plaid ribbon which came with it, and the pendant oval golden bead.

Another decoration was offered him by the Major commanding the troops, which was not so flattering to his vanity. As the prisoners were drawn up in rank ready to move, a slip of white paper was presented to everyone, on which was written in large letters the word "Insurgent." It was to be worn in the hat like a cockade. This was done by Gen. Bloodson's command, and against Major Durham's remonstrance. John Latimer gravely received his paper, and with mock courtesy bade the commandant commend him to Gen. Bloodson for his *fleur de luce*, then tore it to pieces and trampled it in the mud. A few others refused to mount their dishonorable cockades; but the most part had grown indifferent to insult, and timorous lest they might further compromise their cases submitted to the humiliation.

A three miles march along the Lancaster road brought the strange parade to the Market Street bridge over the Schuylkill. On the hills to the left were the pleasant homes of the straggling village of Hamiltonville (now West Philadelphia), showing among their groves of stately trees. Along the banks of the Schuylkill still remained many tokens of the huge camps which had been established for the fugitives from the town during the yellow fever pestilence of the preceding summer. Beyond the bridge, the spaces now occupied with solid blocks of dwellings were chiefly held by fields and farm houses, with here and there bunches of buildings, pioneers of the future city.

But though the houses had not yet come to the river bank, the people were there. For this was a holiday; the happiest holiday of all the year in the old Philadelphia as it is now in the new. Across the river, and over the rolling wood-capped hills that swelled upward from the Delaware and Schuylkill, the guards and prisoners alike had heard the bells of Christmas, mellowed by the distance, ringing worshippers into their sanctuaries. To the soldiers the sounds proclaimed a Merry Christmas, and told of rest and feasting and welcome, and home-folks near at hand. They were in high expectation, and boisterous jollity pre-

vailed. Horses were groomed until they shone, arms and accoutrements were burnished, uniforms brushed and brightened, and with light hearts and hearty outbursts of song and cheer, they heard the bugle call to advance. But for the prisoners on that day there was no "peace on earth," and no "men of good will" to hail them on the thither bank of the Schuylkill. Wearily they fell into line, and trudged away towards their nation's capital with only one consolation in their hearts—that their toilsome march was nearly over, and they would soon know the worst.

Around the city streets the triumphal procession moved. Groups of citizens who had come to the bridge to get the first view of the captive insurgents, increased into hundreds as the parade approached the town. The hundreds grew into thousands as the city was reached. Twenty thousand citizens, high and humble, men, women and children had turned out, and thronged the sidewalks of Philadelphia to see these twenty woebegone Western insurgents ostentatiously paraded through their streets!

Around the city streets the triumphal procession moved by a circuitous route, and still the populace shouted as though some victory had been won. "Can it really be?" John exclaimed, for he was highly wrought up and could not restrain his speech, "that this people honestly think these troopers have done some great and valorous act? Twenty mud-stained men, peaceful citizens all of them, brought three hundred miles across the mountains as the sole trophies of fifteen thousand soldiers who marched to the West, and who are now marching back again, without firing a shot or finding a foe to shoot at? Can it be possible they believe this to be an achievement worthy of such a triumphal reception? I wonder if Gen. Washington approves all this?"

The parade turned into Mulberry (now Arch Street) near the Delaware shore, and moved westward again. It passed the little shop where Mrs. Betsy Ross made the first American flag, and which readers may see to-day, if they will. At the door the good dame stood like another Barbara Fritchie, waving a little American flag at the passing soldiers, her face jubilant as with the joy of a national conquest. The parade crossed Third Street, and beyond it, near the corner of Fourth, passed a spacious house whose front porch was occupied by a group of ladies and gentlemen. A Christmas party, no doubt, who had stopped their

home festivities to come forth and see the great holiday show of the day.

"Look!" whispered Col. Hamilton to John Latimer, "there's Col. Presley Neville!"

John turned just in time to see that Col. Neville had recognized him in the prisoners' ranks, and was calling the fact to the attention of a lady who sat beside him. The lady arose, and gazed toward the front file of prisoners in which Capt. Latimer marched. It was Blanche Oldham! Capt. Burd stood behind her. The whole party showed by their movements that Col. Neville's information had spread among them, and all were intently gazing toward John.

What should he do? The blood mounted hotly to his cheeks. Ah, if he had not looked that way! If he had passed unwittingly, proudly marching by, as he ought to have done!—looking straight before him and taking no heed at all. But now? He could not withdraw his eyes. A resistless fascination fixed them upon Blanche. She had seen him. Their eyes met. Can his vision have deceived him? The maid raised her handkerchief and waved it toward the ranks! Too late to hinder it, Col. Neville reached forth his hand and tried to stay the act, his face the while glowering with displeasure.

The eyes of the balcony party, which had rested a moment before upon John Latimer, were turned by this movement upon Blanche Oldham. She yielded her handkerchief to the Colonel, but fixing her eyes again upon John, dropped a profound courtesy and left the porch. Not, however, before she had noted John Latimer lift his hat and bow, as he marched by, with a grace which (as one of the ladies remarked with unqualified surprise) was worthy of a trained courtier. Capt. Burd, who had raised his hand to his hat at Blanche's first motion, bowed to John in cordial recognition, and followed the lady into the house.

How that family party ended John never heard. But one thing he well knew, that thereafter he seemed to be walking upon the clouds. What cared he for the hooting rabble? What cared he that all the finer feelings of his nature had been dishonored to help grace a Christmas holiday for a street mob? Blanche Oldham, at least, had seen and saluted his manhood, and dared to acknowledge his

name and friendship in the face of the people and of her friends. And Capt. Burd, too,—generous fellow! Ah?—

At last the disgraceful scene was ended; no doubt to be remembered with supreme disgust by many who had assisted in it when their sober second thought came next day. The prisoners were brought to the new city jail at Sixth and Walnut Streets and locked up in the cells. It was a boisterously happy Christmas holiday in the town outside the prison walls. Christmas greens hung at the windows. Christmas trees glowed in nursery, parlor and living room, as the shadows of evening gathered. Every inhabitant of the city had eaten and drunken his full. It was Christmas, Merry Christmas, and—the Insurrection was put down!

But in the prison cells, that Christmas night, not a crumb of food nor a ray of light came to relieve the hunger and weariness and homesickness and humiliation and distress of those twenty friendless men. Yet, not one of them was afterward found guilty; and many of them were as innocent as John Latimer, of act, or purpose, or even thought of treason and insurrection.

The next day the turnkey entered John's cell with a package, which he handed him with a mysterious and important air. Mr. I. Turner Locke (spelled with an "e" if you please!) was his name, as appeared in printed characters on certain soiled cards which he distributed to his guests. The same further set forth that Mrs. I. Turner Locke kept a general provision store at No. — Sixth Street, within an easy block's distance from the jail, and would be pleased to furnish gentlemen (meaning the prisoners, convicts, etc.) at their lodgings (meaning their cells) with such comforts and luxuries, solid and fluid, as etc., etc.

Mr. I. Turner Locke was a podgy person, five feet nine or ten inches high, with a massive protuberance in front which was encased in a long buff waistcoat, with tremendous flapped pockets. These were commonly filled with sundry miscellaneous articles, including snuff, which he took freely, and carried traces of it at the neb of his nose. His legs were developed proportionately with his paunch, and were of nearly equal thickness from body to slippers. His knee and shoe buckles had a dull lustre suggestive of pewter, though he habitually alluded to them as silver. His catsup-colored coat was greasy with long use. His bulbous

cheeks hung in rolls to his double chin, and the face was shaven clean—twice a week, and at intervals between shaves presented the appearance of a patch of stubble whose redness rivalled that of his nose. His head had an open swath of hairlessness from the forehead over the cranium to the fat wrinkled neck behind, and its fringes on either side were of reddish-brown, tipped with gray.

“Good mornin’, Capt. Latimer!” said Mr. Locke. He spoke in a voice whose soft unctuousness highly became a person of his general oleaginous conditions. “This package was brought you a w’ile ago by a gentleman w’at seemed to be an officer. He wanted to see you, but it’s agen orders without a permit from the U-nited States Marshal; so I had to refuse him. And you’ll excuse me, sir, for examinin’ of the package; but that’s orders, too. Nothin’ comes to the prison without inspection.”

John thanked the turnkey, and waited for him to retire before he broke the wrappings, but that gentleman lingered. He moved about, apparently inspecting the cell furniture, but gave John occasional glances as if something were on his mind, which he wished to communicate.

“By the way!” at last he said, as if a thought had suddenly struck him. “I was much interested in them decorations w’ich you wore on your buzzum yesterday. You hain’t them on now, I see?”

“No!” said John, “I rarely mount them; only on great occasions—such as yesterday, you know.”

“Jes’ so, jes’ so! But you wouldn’t mind showin’ of ’em to a feller now, would you? I’d be ever so much obleeged.”

“Not at all!” said John, and took out of his side pocket a little bag from which he withdrew two medals and handed them to Mr. Locke.

That gentleman’s face betrayed disappointment. But he feigned satisfaction, and examined the medals carefully, commenting upon their designs, with sundry complimentary phrases interspersed. “And so you was a scout, was you? And fought with the Injuns?” Mr. Locke spoke with enthusiasm. “I must have a good long yarn about that from you some day. But not now, not now! They’ll be plenty of time, I suspect. Now, I always did think I would like to have ben a scout. I fancy I might have done somepin in that line meself. Though,

perhaps," glancing with an approving look upon his protuberant front, "me heft might be a leetle agen me. Is them all your decorations?"

"These are all the medals I have," John answered.

"Come now; there's another, I'm sure," insisted Mr. Locke. "You might as well be comfortable and confidential with me." He twisted his face into what was intended to be a roguish look and wink, but which got no further than a leer. "There was some kind of a curious ribbon and coral chain, with a gold badge or somepin of that sort. Can't you show me that, too? Fact is—that—well I'm specially interested in sech things."

John started. What could this fellow be after?

There must be something behind this. He surely didn't speak for himself. At least, he would try him. Fixing his eyes keenly upon the turnkey, he suddenly inquired. "Who got you to ask this question? and what does he want?"

Mr. Locke was taken aback by the inquiry. He hemmed, stammered, and wiped the glossy boulevard on his mid-cranium with a red bandanna handkerchief, with great embarrassment, and then apparently made up his mind to be confidential.

"Er—that is—the truth is—however you were smart enough to see through it, that a gentleman as has a fancy for old bits of jewelry and sech things, seen it on you and got interested in it. He stood beside you w'en you halted by the State House, and had a clost view of it, and wondered w'ere you picked it up. He called 'round here yarly this morning, and said as how you might be wantin' money; an' though it's a good 'eal more than its wuth, he had a ten-dollar note for you, ef you cared to sell. That's all there is about it; excepen, of course, my little commission. W'ich gentlemen willinly pays w'en they finds it conwenient to ne-gotiate sech matters."

"What's the man's name?" John asked.

"Him? Oh, he's no consequence; only an old Jew dealer in jewels and diamonds and sech trinkets. He mightn't care to have his name known. But w'at say you, sir? W'at would you care to sell that bit of finery for? It'll help along amazin' to make things more comfortabler here, an' it's w'at gentlemen allez does, sir, before they come to the end of their terms."

"No, thank you!" John replied. "Fortunately I'm not in present need of money; and your friend must offer a larger price than you've named to get what he wants." This answer appearing to be final, Mr. Locke withdrew in his ponderous way, and locked the door behind him with a sounding snap.

John now opened his package. It contained a bit of Christmas cake with a sprig of holly on it. A card lay underneath the holly, which John eagerly took up and read: "Miss Oldham gives Capt. Latimer cordial Christmas greeting and wishes him a quick and honorable acquittal." A tide of joy swelled up and filled his heart. He sat with the card in his hand, and scarcely moved for an hour as he thought and dreamed of liberty and love. At last he came to himself.

"Fool!" he exclaimed; "to build such castles in Spain on so flimsy a foundation as a generous lady's simple recognition of acquaintance, and expression of her confidence in my innocence!"

Nevertheless his heart was warm and happy all the day long, and the cell seemed bright with a mysterious presence. He placed the Christmas green in his Virgil, just next the spot where Gen. Neville's pistol ball had been stayed. The card he put away in his pouch where the necklace and little baby slip lay, just over his heart.

Two days afterward the turnkey made John another visit. He was greatly concerned about the noises which the lock and hinges of the cell door made when used. "It's an unbecomin' racket," he remarked, in his most unctuous tones; "an' calkylated to shake the sensibilities of delicate nerves. Many an official in me position wouldn't think it dignified to pay attention to sech trifles. But sir, me theory is that kineness had ought to be shown in leetle things. If a gentlemen is so unfort'nate as to be confined for a season, there's no need to add to their misfortuns by the clangin' of locks and the creakin' of hinges. Now, sir, maybe you don't mind it; you've got good strong nerves. But I could tell you of folks that has bean under me care that were a'most distraught by the prison noises. I remember one man,"—Thereupon he launched forth upon a stream of talk, busy the while oiling and rubbing the lock and hinges, and trying them until at last they moved to his satisfaction.

"Now, le's try an expeeriment!" said he, quite in the tone of a Franklin, or a scientific philosopher of modern days. "There's nawthin' like expeerimental conclusions. Jes' you turn your back toward the door, an' I'll turn the lock. There! Did you hear it, sir? Good! hardly noticed it at all, you say? Ah! I thought so; that'll do finely! Well, we'll try the hinges, now. How does it go, sir? Couldn't hear 'em at all, hey? Ha, ha! My expeeriment's bean a *suckcess*. Now we'll have some comfort. And you'll not be forever havin' creakin' suggestions from lock an' hinges that you're inside prison cells."

"By the way, I've seed that trader w'at I was talkin' about, the other day; him as wanted to bargain for the coral chain and locket. He seems dead bent on gettin' it somehow. Cur'ous taste, that, some folks has, for collectin' all sorts of rubbish an' things. W'en it gits hold of a man there seems no sense left in him. He gives up his time an' money as free as water, jes' to gratify his fad. There's a neighbor of mine w'at's got a craze on bugs and things of that sort. He goes chasin' of 'em round the country in summer time; and in the winter pins 'em in boxes. There he'll set and mope and mope, with his nose over them dead insects. Oncet he gits sot on em, his wife can't hardly git him to his meals. Faugh! That's a cur'ous fancy. The idee of a man gatherin' and keepin' round him bugs and creepin' creeturs of that sort! But everyone to his taste, as the old woman said when she kissed the cow. Now, old jewels and sech is a more reasonabler fad, seems to me. They's allez somepin in 'em that one can git out agen. But w'at the old Jew trader can want with your chain passes me time of day. W'y, would you believe it? He told me t'other day to ast you to name your own price. Annything short of \$50 says he, an' I'll give it willin'. There! W'at do you think of that? Shan't I tell him I can bring it to him, Cap'en? Wat say you?"

"That's several times more than the necklace is worth, I daresay," John answered. "But I doubt if your friend has money enough to buy it. However, tell him to come and see me about it. If ever I part with it, I must see and know the man who gets it."

"Come now, that's not final, is it?" asked Mr. Locke, thrusting his hands into the pockets of his coat, and surveying John with a deeply disappointed look. "Be rea-

sonable, Cap'en Latimer. W'y it's most like takin' money out of me pocket, to say nawthin' of your'n. Me commission on that sale would 'a ben nigh onto ten dollars! W'at good can an old thing like that do a man in your circumstances?"

"What good can it do your friend, Mr. Locke?" John replied. "Tell me that, and maybe I can answer you?"

For several days Mr. Locke continued his attack on the stubborn scout, varying his appeals by laying all sorts of little pitfalls, which he spread with supposed artfulness to trap the unsuspecting prisoner into telling where and how he fell upon the ornament, and why he valued it so highly. At last, he abandoned the contest, and therewith many of the little liberties by which it is possible for a turnkey to add to the comfort of a prisoner, and which during the above negotiations had been profusely dispensed.

One night, about three weeks thereafter, John was roused from a sound sleep by what seemed to him the presence of some one in his room. The habits of the scout at once asserted themselves. His senses, always acute, were now alert and tensely strained for the faintest sound. The night was moonless and cloudy, and not a ray of light came through the little window into the cell to break its darkness. Yet, surely, some one was approaching his bunk!

Who—what could it? A momentary shiver passed along his nerves, as he recalled the eerie tales that had fallen upon the ears and haunted the memory of his boyhood. But, tush! that suppressed breathing is human! No ghost there! Without raising his head, he peered into the blackness, and just discerned a deeper shadow than the darkness around him gliding towards him.

"Assassination!" was his first thought. "Gracious Heavens! Can it be that the Government means to resort to this Oriental mode of disposing of its prisoners?"

The shadow paused close by the foot of John's cot. It seemed to be fumbling with something there. "Ha! (thought John) that is where I hang my clothes, over the back of the chair. It is robbery that is intended."

Fumble—pause! It must be an expert indeed who can so nearly deceive even John's trained senses. Fumble—pause! Now a faint, very faint clink as of metal touching metal fell upon John's ear.

Then a deeper pause ensued. Was the robber about to

retire? It must be so. His back must then be toward the cot. Villain! John's indignation was now in full heat. He noiselessly slipped aside the blanket and raised himself upon the bed, then with a sudden spring, like that of a panther, flung himself upon the retiring shadow. It was a very solid phantom indeed that he grasped, even the portly person of Mr. I. Turner Locke. Seizing both the robber's arms with his two hands, he pinioned them to his side with a vise-like grip and forced his body downward to the floor.

"Oh-o-o! Mur—"

"Silence!" John fairly hissed into the turnkey's ear, for he was mightily enraged. The cry was quickly suppressed. "Utter another sound, and I will squeeze the life out of you, you wretch! Is this the way you guard and protect your prisoners?"

"Ouch! Mercy!" wailed the turnkey. "You have broken me bones with your awful grip. Spare me, Cap'en! O me poor wife and children. O me poor bones!"

"Hush, you dog! Why didn't you think of that before?" John exclaimed. Nevertheless, he relaxed his grip; but kneeling on the floor held the prostrate man down. He resolved to keep him until daybreak. He bade the fellow cross his arms, and guided by touch alone, bound his wrists together. Then he ordered him to get up, and leading him to a short bench which served for an extra seat, bade him sit down with back against the wall.

"What devil's work would you be at?" John asked, when this was done. "Robbing me? Surely you have a safer way of getting your prisoners' money than that?"

"Oh, Mr. Latimer! Good Mr. Scout, it was not your money," the turnkey wailed forth.

"Not money! What then? My medals? That's even worse,—to steal the badges of honor won by a soldier. It's as mean as stealing the coin off a dead man's eyes."

"No, no! It was not the medals, nuther. O goody-gracious, how my arms do hurt! It was the coral chain and locket, Capt. Latimer. That's w'at did all the damage. I thought it was in the pocket with the others. I thought I could get it without you a knowin' of it. An' you was so stubborn about it! An' I meant to give you the heft of the money,—An' you'd 'ave seen by 'n by that it was for your good. Oh, I'm undone! I'm lost and disgraced forever. Pity, Pity! It was too bad of you not to sell it an' give me

me commission. It was so!" He was blubbering like a boy.

John had taken the precaution, after Locke was fairly bound, to secure the key from the outside of the door, and then close and lock it. He had his captive secure enough until he could make up his mind what to do. When the first gray light of morning began to steal into the cell window, it showed the turnkey's lugubrious form seated on the little bench, back to the wall, chin fallen upon his breast until the bald head pointed almost straight at the observer. He was sound asleep, and vigorously snoring, a performance which was wrought by no means in such unctuous tones as Mr. Locke was wont to assume in conversation. John had decided on his course. He awoke the turnkey and unbound his hands.

"Locke," said John, "there's no use preaching to you on the crime you have attempted. You are evidently an old hand at this business."

"On me honor, Capt. Latimer," the turnkey interrupted, "I never before—"

"Hush! Don't put a new sin on your soul by lying. It is unnecessary. I have made up my mind to release you, and say nothing about the matter."

"May God in Heaven forever bless you!" the turnkey exclaimed, his huge face radiant with joy.

"But," John continued, "I shall impose one condition."

"Anything! Only name it," was the eager answer.

"You promise that henceforth you will treat all insurgent prisoners with respect and consideration?"

"Yes, yes, as God is me Judge, I'll do it!"

"If ever you fail to do so, I shall disclose this night's attempt to the United States Marshal. You note that, and you agree, do you?"

"I do, I do indeed!"

So it was settled; and Mr. I. Turner Locke proved true to his word. From that day to the end, as the prisoners met for their daily exercise in the prison court, they ceased to complain of various petty annoyances that had embittered their first few weeks in prison. They found they had enough to eat and drink from the prison fare, without calling upon Mrs. I. Turner Locke to furnish additional solids and liquids at prices highly remunerative to that lady. How she settled her losses with her lusty lord this history cannot record. But it is to be feared that his peace

of mind was not increased by the diminution of Madam Locke's profits.

To John Latimer the change was especially advantageous. His hour of exercise was never abridged, and an extra stroll within the court was often allowed when the cell grew too tedious. A daily newspaper was permitted him, which he circulated among his fellow-prisoners when he had read it. This, with his Shakespeare and Virgil and Bible gave much relief to his imprisonment.

Indirectly, the attempt of the turnkey impressed John with a deeper sense of the probable importance of his infant belongings in discovering his parentage. He was inclined to hold Locke's Jew trader as a supposititious character. It did not seem reasonable that a mere whimsey should have prompted so strong a wish for possession. There was something or some one behind his interest, which in some way or other might concern himself. The mystery was impenetrable. But the infant memorials were guarded with greater care. The Bible was now always carried about his person, and at night was laid under his pillow. Often the question reverted: "Who am I? Shall I ever know?" His solitary confinement, which turned the mind upon itself, developed his interest in this matter to a degree that he had never before thought possible.

CHAPTER LII.

HOW JOHN GOT ON IN JAIL.

With all his privileges, John Latimer was a prisoner. He who had been used to the boundless freedom of the forests was living in a narrow cell. He chafed in spirit and walked back and forth until he was lashed well nigh into fury by his thoughts. He never before understood the feelings and movements of the wild beasts that he had once or twice seen fiercely pacing the floors of their cages, weaving among their fellow-prisoners, and turning now and then to glare with ferocious green eyes, and to hiss or growl or bay at their gaping human visitors. He had hoped for a speedy trial, but in this was disappointed. He had hoped that he might soon be released on bail, but that

was denied him. He had joined with several of his associates in a petition to the Court that they might be tried in the counties where their offenses were alleged to have been committed, so that testimony could be more easily obtained. The Court refused this.

The month of January, 1795, saw six of the prisoners, including Col. Hamilton, admitted to bail, and this made a large gap in their ranks. The released went forth with congratulations of their less fortunate comrades. But their deliverance emphasized the hardships of those who remained. February was a gloomy month; March brought three more removals, including their "chaplain," Mr. Corbley; and now the first of April had come.

Four months' imprisonment had left their mark not only on John's spirits, but on his body. The prison fare palled on his appetite. The prison smell, that strange odor, unlike any other known, which hangs about jails and almshouses, nauseated him. He grew irritable and querulous, though he fought manfully against the petty temper. Trifles assumed the proportions of world events, and unduly amused or annoyed him. He knew that the horizon of his manhood was narrowing, while thought of himself was disproportionately expanding. Not a day passed, often not an hour, without some indignant outbreak against himself for his miserable pettishness and pettiness. It seemed to relieve him to pace the cell floor and denounce himself with gritted teeth and clenched fingers, and even with palms smiting his cheek. Then he would pause with the cry in his heart: "Am I growing mad?"

Then he would throw himself upon his cot and groan, and rebuke himself for his lack of patient and manly endurance; and after due self-mortification, and resolution to do better, would fall asleep and rise to enter upon the same struggle. Truly, a barnyard fowl may endure the cage, but the mountain eagle, proud bird! frets grievously behind the bars.

Mid-April came with softer air. The voice of spring called even within the quadrangular court and the walls of the City Jail. This month was wont to have a strong influence on John Latimer. A yearning to be away, to be wandering somewhere would seize and possess him. The common restraints of life irked him. The nomadic impulse was almost as resistless in his bosom, at such a time,

as is the migratory instinct of fowls. Nothing gave him relief but a run in the forests with Panther or with his father, or an excursion along the river. The fresh, sweet smell of the running water; the scent of the forest mould; the fragrance of hemlock and pine; the returning activities in the animal world as the birds and minor beasts began to come forth and show themselves in the sunlight,—these all satisfied him and helped him to a contented heart with which to return to his duties.

There in the jail, the old impulse seized him, and for a little while he raved and chafed in the hopelessness of its gratification. But, and he wondered at himself, it soon expended its fervor. He grew listless. Indeed, he had noted lately that he was becoming more and more indifferent to what might happen to himself and his case. Was he getting contented with jail life? Had confinement and seclusion from his fellow-men already begun to deteriorate his manliness? Would he settle down, if this imprisonment should be prolonged, to be as contented with his cell and its surroundings as his fellow-tenants, yonder spiders?

Well! He had done all he could to get a hearing. He believed that all awaiting for a complete vindication was that he should come before the Court. He could prove his innocence beyond question. How often had he reasoned thus! And as often a flush of indignation would burn across his cheek at the thought that it was necessary for him, loyal friend of the Government as he ever had been, to prove his innocence. One day, early in April, the turnkey when he brought him the daily papers, tarried in the cell, and with a smirk upon his oleaginous face, said something about John's power to "awaken an interest in the buzzum of the fair sect."

John cast upon him a look in which disgust mingled with wonder; then turned to his paper remarking: "Indeed? Upon my word, Locke, I think you must be trying the experiment of a fresh joke on me this morning. In truth, I relish your stale ones a good deal better."

"Truly not, Cap'en! W'y not yourself as well as others? Now I've often noticed that no feller is so hard down on his luck, nor so low-down worthless hisself, as not to have some woman or other that dotes on him. They hain't bean many women folk around these insurgents now, I'll allow. But that's becaze they're too far away from

home belongin's. But there was one woman here yesterday, and a likely specimen she was, too! A reel lady, none of your made-up sort! You can't fool me on them article. I know true quality when I see 'em. An' she was not askin' around general, nuther, but partic'lar for Cap'en John Latimer."

John had already begun reading; but his interest in the "Advertiser" visibly diminished as Locke went on, and when he had finished, the paper lay upon his lap.

"Yes, indeed!" the turnkey continued, seeing he had won attention. "But excuse me, if you don't mind, I'll take a seat, as I'm a leetle too hefty to hold up long without settin' down. This lady insisted on goin' all round the place to see how the prisoners lived; and I was proud to show her how comfo'table and snug ev'rything is."

"Humph!" said John. "No doubt she must have been tempted to apply for lodgings with you. Go on!"

"And this is w'ere they exercise, is it?" says she, as I took her to the courtyard. Yes, says I, an' a bright, airy place it is, too,—w'en it's not too crowded, w'ich sometimes it is, unfortunate. But it's thinned out now; quite comfo'table, quite so! Now, here's w'at the men calls the 'Scout's Walk,' says I. You see that figger-of-eight sort of path, takin' in pretty much the whole outlines of the court? That's Cap'en Latimer's favorite parade. Here he starts in, and then curves across cat-a-corner to yander angle; and sweeps with a long round turnin' to the next corner; an' then cuts cat-a-corner acrost to this angle over here, an' so on, weavin' in an' out among the others, who never trench on his preserves w'en he's exercisin'. My! How he does swing to it! It fairly takes a feller's breath even to look at 'im. He has worn that track you see, jest this winter, by pacin' and pacin' over it.

"Now w'at do you think, sir?" the turnkey continued. "Didn't the little lady jest start in and pace off that figger-of-eight, jest to see how it goes, says she. And w'en she got through, upon my honor, sir, I do believe there was tears in her eyes; though she dropped her weil, and I couldn't be dead sure about it. 'Could you show me his cell?' says she at last, 'without his knowin' of it?' That I could, Miss! says I, and so I brought her up to this gallery and showed her your cell. That's it, I whispered, No. 2, second flight, and a jolly good room it is, Miss! says I. She

passed by rapidly, walking on tiptoe and hardly breathing. I can't take my solemn oath, to be sure, but I ruther guess she stopped long enough to peep into the leetle hand-winder. At least, I did, sir, and there you sot on your bench, with your elbows on your knees, and your cheeks restin' in your hands, starin' up at the winder and watchin' the sunlight stream in.

"As she was leavin', says I, it's a fine man the Cap'n is, Miss—ah—Miss Latimer? says I, kinder feelin' after her name. I suppose he's a brother of your'n?"

"You've not guessed quite right," says she, with a smile. 'I've a good name of my own; but it's not Latimer,' says she. 'But never mind! That's not a name to be ashamed of; and here, Mr. Locke,' says she, 'is somepin for your trouble and courtesy. Look well after the Captain! Hah! sir! it was a fair handful of shiners she left me as she bowed and went away. No pusson ever tipped the rhino to me quite that free before. Oh, she's a true lady! A reel lady, sir; and I flatter meself I knows one w'en I sees her."

John had little to say. What could he say? One form rose before him and filled his mind and heart—Blanche Oldham. God bless her! Did she take all that trouble for him? He thought she had forgotten him. He had not heard a word from her since Christmas. Not a word from her or hers. He had been unjust, unjust! He longed to be alone that he might keep this sacred vision to himself untainted by—. Yet, she had walked the prison rounds with this very fellow! He heartily begrudged the oleaginous rascal his good fortune, and disliked him more cordially for the same.

"Was there anything else?" John asked, as Locke seemed disposed to linger.

"Yes, there was one thing else the lady ast me. 'Who is the Captain's lawyer?' says she. He hain't none, Miss, I answers. He won't have none; though I've offered to send him one of the wery best sort in the city; and cheap too; and no commission charged. It's a idee the Cap'en has that innocence is its own defense. He means to try his own case. He keeps talkin' at me about a feller bein' thrice armed whose cause is just, etcetery. That may have been good enough law in Shakespeare or w'atever country that is he was talkin' about, but it's no go in ol' Philadelphly! I'd ruther have one good smart Philadelphly lawyer

an' a poor case, than the best three arms agoin', and the best case besides, without any lawyer."

"Well, and what did the lady say to that?" John asked.

"W'at did she say? W'y she jest laughed out a bright little laugh, the sweetest tinklin' laugh, sir, you ever heerd. It fairly made me fall in love with her. 'Well!' says she, 'you jest ask Cap'en Latimer if he ever heerd the old sayin' that a man who is his own lawyer has a fool for a client?' An' off she went, sir, laughin' to herself as she went away.

"That I will, madam, says I, and thank you for your interest in the Cap'en. He's a special friend of mine, and I'd grieve hearty to see sech a fine young fellow lose his liberty and maybe his life jest on a point like that."

At last the turnkey was gone and John was left alone. His eyes dropped to the paper upon his lap, and as they wandered mechanically over the column, a familiar name met them. He seized the journal and eagerly read this item of news: "The Oldham mansion on Arch Street is once more the point of attraction for some of the brightest ornaments of society. Last night a happy and select company met there to give formal welcome to Miss Blanche Oldham, who returned a few days ago from Virginia, whither she had gone, just after the Christmas holidays, to visit her kindred."

John started to his feet. A coincidence? It was more than that. It was confirmation! It was all clear now to his mind. Blanche's long silence was explained. She had been away—far distant in Virginia, and now, at her first opportunity—

He grew dizzy with the sweet and wonderful thought, and sat down. The daily news did not interest him further. He had something better to think of. He recalled his late indifference to the issues of his case, and to what might become of himself. He wondered that he ever could have felt that way. The cell seemed to shine even in the gloom. Despondent? No! Not he. While there's life there's hope! Ay, John Latimer, or what is a good deal more to the purpose, while there's hope there's life. The sun never shone brighter than on that April day. The prison cell fairly revelled in light, although the only beam shone in through the little ventilator window far up near the ceiling and was broken by three transverse iron bars. Blanche Oldham had not forgotten him! Blanche Oldham had

been to see him! Could any case be lost in which she was interested? Cheer up, faint heart!

He took out the bit of Christmas holly, whose color and lustre were now nearly gone, and got Miss Oldham's Christmas card, and put the two together in his Bible, and sat and thought and remembered and dreamed. So he mused on into the night, until the sunlight gave place to moonlight. Then he lay down and slept dreamlessly.

CHAPTER LIII.

MR. JUSTUS REID, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW.

Two days after this incident Mr. Locke escorted into John's cell a gentleman whom he announced as Mr. Justus Reid, an attorney, "and one of the wery best sort, Cap'en Latimer. None of your picked-up tuppenny shysters."

"Thank you, Locke!" the lawyer returned. "You needn't wait. And see, please, that there's no one loitering around the gallery to disturb us or be eavesdropping."

"Oh yes, your worship, quite so. Indeed, I'll stay myself and see that no one comes near."

"That would be entirely too good of you!" returned the lawyer. "Can't think of troubling you, Locke." To make sure that the turnkey did not carry out his benevolent purpose, Mr. Reid accompanied him to the door and held it ajar until Locke's ponderous form had disappeared down the gallery stairs.

"Old swindler!" ejaculated the lawyer, as he closed the door. "And cute! He's the slipperiest eel I ever saw. And with no more conscience than his iron keys. He knew well enough whose prying ears I dreaded. If he could catch anything of your case, now, he would tattle or sell it to the prosecutor, and at the same time squeeze the prisoner out of his last copper on pretense of helping on his case. He ought to have been dumped out of here long ago. We set a man to guard our prisoners, but who is to guard the guards themselves?—*quis custodiat ipsos custodes?* I hope now, Capt. Latimer, that Locke hasn't made a victim of you? You are such an up-and-down character, I understand, and brought up in the backwoods, that you'd be no match for Locke unless forewarned. Even then, I doubt—"

Thereupon he slipped his left hand within his right and drew it down toward the finger ends, then reversed the movement with the other hand, and swung both open palms away from him toward the door. It seemed to John that he was going through an imaginary process of washing his hands of the dismissed turnkey and all his works; and he almost expected to hear him exclaim: "There, I am done with that fellow!" This gesture he afterwards found to be a peculiarity of Mr. Reid's, one of the little oddities that went to make up a most picturesque character.

"However, I anticipate. My name, as you have learned, is Justus Reid, and I'm your lawyer."

"I am certainly pleased to make your acquaintance," John replied. "But really, this is my first intimation of the fact you communicate. I beg an explanation."

"Most assuredly!" was the answer. "And meantime, with your permission, I'll take possession of this chair and table. There, we are all ready for business now!" he exclaimed in a hearty voice, as he deposited his blue bag upon the little prison table and began taking out some papers. "Ah, what's this? A pocket Virgil, as I live!" He picked up the volume which John had been reading when he entered. "My favorite author, sir. Do you read Latin?"

"Fortunately, yes!" John answered, amused at the open-eyed wonder with which the bustling gentleman stared at him. "I don't know how I could have endured this cell, if it hadn't been for my Virgil and one or two other books."

"Well, well!" Mr. Reid rejoined. "I don't wonder that the young woman—. But sir, do all our Western scouts know Latin? However, that's an idle question. We must to business. About taking your case; that's the point before us. This is how it came about. A young lady, who for some reason, which perhaps you best know, seems to be interested in you." Here the lawyer turned a quick, keen glance upon John, who, though he tried to keep his countenance, flushed, and grew more confused as his vexation began to burn against himself for his lack of self-control.

"Ahem! As I was saying," Mr. Reid went on, "this young lady called on me and asked me to undertake your case. She stated it in a wonderfully sensible way. Never had a client that equalled her. She'd make a mighty fine lawyer, that young woman would. And sir, according to her showing, no man could have a better case than yours."

She told me your point of honor about your innocence being too transparent to question, and your resolve to conduct your own case, etc. That will do very well, Capt. Latimer, very well indeed—when we come to the millenium! Then, maybe, we'll have no need of lawyers. Though I'm not so sure of that. But, here's the point, young man,—*quod bene notandum*,—I want you to note it well. It's not so much the facts we are looking at, as the way of getting the facts before the Court and the Jury. That's where the lawyer comes in, sir. That's his business, sir—that is, unless his client is a rascal, and then—*mutatis mutandis*; his function is to conceal the facts.

“Now, sir, there's one very good reason why you need a lawyer to prosecute your case. Unfortunately, you are in jail. It's all wrong, we know, sir, you and I, but there you are! Facts are stubborn things, especially when they're shut in between iron doors and double locked. You are not free to move about, and get evidence, and do divers and sundry things needful to put your innocence before a jury and bring conviction to the public.

“Moreover, sir, proceedings at law have their own peculiarities. They are like a forest, sir, and they need a trained guide. They are like an ocean, sir, and they need an experienced pilot. Because a sea captain could sail my ship across the ocean, do you think I would trust him to lead me through the Ohio woods? No sir, I would call on Capt. Latimer the scout. Now, sir, in these legal affairs a lawyer is precisely what a navigator is to the ocean, or a scout to the forest. Do you see that, sir? I am sure you do. It is too reasonable for you not to see, if you are gifted with the common sense your young lady friend fancies you possess.” Here Mr. Reid paused and fixed his eyes on John for a moment, then closed them and waited for his decision, drumming the while upon the table-top with his finger-ends a lively tune which he seemed to be whistling within himself.

John meditated. He was indeed convinced. Yet there remained that bit of pride of opinion which has so often to be overcome before honest judgment can have sway. If the truth were told, he was thinking of Blanche Oldham, and how she might be grieved if he thwarted her plans in his behalf. That turned the scale. He looked up and fixed his clear blue eyes on the lawyer.

"I must yield my judgment, I see. No doubt you are right, sir. But one matter must be settled before we go further. Gentlemen of your profession are not apt to spend their strength for naught. I can never consent to have any unknown friend take the financial responsibility of my case. Yet, I am a poor man, and can pay you but little, at least at present."

"Young man!" said the lawyer, and he spoke now in a deeper tone of voice, and with great earnestness and feeling, dropping the brisk, business-like manner that he had heretofore shown. "You make the mistake of the vulgar multitude concerning our profession. There are black sheep in all flocks; even in the most sacred calling. But Society and Civilization and Liberty owe more to the self-denying fidelity and the unremunerated services of lawyers, sir, than to any other class of men. That's history!" Thereupon, he brought his closed fist down emphatically upon the table.

"Moreover," he resumed, "there's no part that the true lawyer more willingly and freely assumes than that of *vindex injuriæ*—the avenger of wrong, sir. The amount of unpaid advice and service, and the generous, yes, chivalrous aid given to the most unfortunate class of men and women in the world by lawyers,—ay, by lawyers, sir! is not exceeded in value, tried by any standard whatsoever, by the contributions of any profession or calling, learned or unlearned. And that,"—here Mr. Reid brought the palm of his hand down upon the table with a sounding smack,—“that, sir, is experience and observation!

"But excuse me, Capt. Latimer. That's not business! You are quite right, sir. I appreciate your feelings, and assure you on my honor that your unknown lady friend has not paid, and will not pay me a cent. But sir, you have a mother, who is both able and willing; and she has communicated her wishes and anxieties to this young woman. The latter simply represents the former, as I understand it, though she is deeply interested in your case herself. Now, Capt. Latimer, you're not of the calibre I take you to be, if on a mere question of personal pride, or propriety, you are prepared to resist the lawful wish of a loving parent, and lay great disappointment and the possibility of a great sorrow on her heart. But, sir, if that does not satisfy you, I agree to take the case,—though it is not our

custom, sir, I assure you, quite the reverse—and leave the question of fee to yourself and the future. Are you content? Shall we go on, sir?"

John felt himself disarmed. He had been met at every point and vanquished. His vision of injured innocence as its own defense, and of himself standing alone (not without public applause, perhaps, in the outcome) as Self-Vindicator of his injured honor and loyalty, suddenly dissolved into mist. Nothing remained but to give his assent, and this he did in a hearty, manly way.

"Wisely decided, young man!" exclaimed Mr. Justus Reid. "Wisely done, every way. We can always trust ourselves to our mother's hand. The old law maxim is never so satisfactory for one as when it relates to his mother, sir:—*qui facit per alium facit per se*. Yes, yes, he is well represented whom his mother represents. Ah me!" A cloud fell upon the bright face. A vision of his own mother had for a moment flitted across his papers. He dismissed the thought with a wave of his hand. "Moreover, sir," he continued, "it is not unworthy of your valor to consult the wisdom of the law; just as letters and art and jurisprudence have to admit their dependence, at times, upon the stalwart strength and courage of our soldiery. *Tam Marte quam Minerve!* We cannot dispense at present with either Mars or Minerva, war or wisdom."

Then followed question after question in such rapid succession, and with such keen discernment of the merits of the testimony, that John had soon unbosomed himself of all matters pertinent to his case, and of much besides. His admiration of the little lawyer, for he seemed small in comparison with himself, though a good five feet six inches high, increased with every moment. The favorable impression was due not only to his questions, but to his pithy comments upon the answers, and the racy observations that he dropped as he ran on, rapidly and clearly taking notes of the evidence, with a mind apparently quite free for other subjects.

The good opinion was mutual. John was hardly conscious of the process by which the adroit, experienced attorney was deftly testing and sifting both his testimony and himself. But the residuum was highly satisfactory. "He rings true! True gold!" soliloquized Mr. Reid inwardly. "No base coin here! An admirable fellow!" So

the little bustling gentleman communed within himself, and his zeal for his case and his determination to win it grew proportionately. No doubt, he would have tried to do his best had it been otherwise. Yet who can escape from the inward trammels by which one's selfhood is conditioned, and throw his very best into a cause which he knows to be unjust and untrue?

At last Mr. Justus Reid was satisfied, and rose to arrange his notes and gather his papers together. There was only one point on which he had seriously differed with his client. John wanted Andy Burbeck summoned as a witness. In giving his reasons, and especially when relating how Andy had been with him at Bower Hill, the lawyer shook his head.

"Too many suspicious situations there, Capt. Latimer! In the hands of a skillful cross-questioner like Mr. Rawle, he would damage our case, I fear, more than he would help it. Unless he is a most extraordinarily cautious witness! And by all I learn from you, he's anything but that. Too garrulous, too garrulous, I fear! Steer clear of a gabby witness, Captain. I prefer him on the other side, on the other side. He's spoiled many a good case for me. *Vir sapit qui pauca loquitur*,—he speaks wisely who speaks briefly. Excuse me, Capt. Latimer, for translating my quotation. No detriment to your learning intended, sir. A bad habit got by addressing juries. Jurors like a bit of Latin tipped to them now and then. It compliments their intelligence and seems to put them on an equality with the learned. A subtle kind of flattery, sir! But you must always delicately introduce a translation, sir, or you'll spoil it all. Jurors want to know what you say. It frets 'em to leave 'em in ignorance.

"But, you may be right as to your friend Burbeck. I'll think of it, and consult our unknown agent, sir, our lady friend. Let me see, I have her address here!" Pulling out his notebook, he ran down the memoranda. "The Indian Queen Tavern—tush! That's the Hibernian Society dinner. The American Philosophical Society,—pshaw! That's a paper by Priestley. Executive Mansion,—tut, tut! That's one of Lady Washington's drawing rooms. Ah, here it is,—Arch, corner Fourth. Just so!" He put his notebook into his pocket, thrust his papers into his bag and turned to bid John good bye.

"I will call in a day or two, Capt. Latimer, when I've gone over my notes more carefully. Then we'll talk about some special points that I've noted. Cheer up, Captain! *Fortes fortuna juvat!*—Fortune favors the brave, sir. And besides, you've got a case that's sure to win. But, look out for that man Locke! Not a word of our case to him, mind you! No confidences with that old squeeze! *Silentium altum*, sir—deep, deep silence; deep as the sea! Oh, he's a character! You don't know him, sir, or you wouldn't marvel at my caution."

"Come, come, Mr. Reid!" John replied pleasantly. "I am not quite so green as you fancy. I suspect I could give you some pointers about the turnkey that you don't even dream of. I haven't spent a part of my life in tracking the trails and circumventing the wiles of Indians on our frontier, to be altogether at a disadvantage among the official savages of Philadelphia."

"You don't say? Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Reid with a mixture of surprise and incredulity. "I'm truly glad to hear it, sir. You have had experiences, hey? Well, well! But I can't stop to hear. It is now time our portly Cerberus had come. I told him to be back in two hours, and it is now ten minutes past the time." The lawyer looked uneasily at his watch.

"You needn't wait for the turnkey, if that's all that detains you," said John walking to the door and quietly opening it. "Come; I will escort you to the court."

Mr. Reid looked on with blank amazement at this proceeding. John smiled mysteriously. "Perhaps," he continued, "you did not observe that when the turnkey left, he quite forgot to lock the door. In fact, you didn't give him time to do it. He was very much agitated. Perhaps you observed that also?"

"No, no!" broke in the lawyer, "I observed nothing. I haven't your keen eyes. Ah, a summer at scouting would be fine training for a lawyer, I see."

"Well," said John, "whether you observed it or not, a signal passed between us, which was meant to soothe the turnkey's agitation. Probably you heard me say, 'It's all safe, Locke; you can trust me.'"

"Ye-es, I did, now that you speak of it. And thought it curious, too, at the time. But I couldn't imagine what you meant, in fact didn't try."

"Just this; he was a little uneasy at having me closeted with a lawyer. Do you take the scent, sir?"

"Whe-ew!" Mr. Reid issued a prolonged whistle. "But come now," he continued, as John threw open the door and followed him into the hall. "Isn't this rather too much of a good thing? You don't mean that you can walk out that way, and I. Turner Locke not call you to account for it? Well; I will have to learn your secret some day. You must have tipped the teaster with a vengeance, young man."

"Oh, no," said John smilingly, as he walked along the gallery. "There is something better, at least more forceful even than the *argumentum ad crumenam* with turnkeys of the Locke school."

"Impossible!" ejaculated the lawyer. "The argument of tips and bribes is supreme with those fellows. What can exceed it, sir?"

"*Argumentum ad beculinum*—club law, sir!" John responded. "But, we are at the court; and here is the turnkey to escort you to the gate. Mr. Locke, if you have no objection, I'll take a little fresh air before I go back. And maybe you will join me in the court by and by."

"Certainly, Capt. Latimer, certainly! With great pleasure!" The turnkey bowed graciously to the lawyer, but even more graciously to John. He conducted Mr. Reid to the gate and dismissed him in a state of mind as near wonder as he ever allowed himself to attain.

"An inexperienced young man, forsooth!" he muttered. "Learned in forest lore, but ignorant of the snares and wiles of designing men!" So my young lady client defined this stalwart scout. Whe-ew! *Credat Judea Appella!*" Softly whistling "Hail Columbia," Mr. Reid walked down the street, hugging his blue bag underneath his arm.

As to John, hope had risen high in his bosom. But the one thing that clung to him most tenaciously, and over which he brooded most lovingly, was the address of his unknown young lady friend, inadvertently made known by the lawyer. He smiled within himself at the thought that, with all the astute attorney's endeavors to conceal the name of his client, and her own attempts to cover up her trail, he had nevertheless been so easily able to reach the facts. "Corner Fourth and Arch!" he murmured. Well he knew that address, for during Blanche Oldham's visits

West, her home had often been described in her talks with Fanny McCormack and himself. He had several times carried homebound letters for Blanche, to be mailed at Pittsburg, superscribed "Fourth and Arch." Was it not there that he—not thinking and indeed not then knowing where he was—came across her when undergoing that humiliating march through the streets of Philadelphia? Was it not from that house that he received the generous greeting which had warmed his heart for many a day? There had been hardly a doubt before as to the identity of his young lady friend. The matter was now placed within the realm of absolute fact.

Presently the turnkey came up to John, as he was striding back and forth along his favorite figure-of-eight walk in the court, and received assurance that not a word of the mysterious night's adventure had been communicated to Mr. Justus Reid. There were, therefore, at least two persons that night, within the bounds of the city jail who had untroubled sleep: John Latimer who was soothed by love and hope, and I. Turner Locke whose craven fears were quieted.

CHAPTER LIV.

JOHN LATIMER STANDS HIS TRIAL.

Mr. Justus Reid as he walked along Fourth Street from Arch toward Spruce Street where he lived, differed little in appearance from Mr. Justus Reid closeted in the City Jail with John Latimer. He was in evening dress, and although the night was cool, was without a top coat, which under no stress of weather, even in midwinter, would he consent to wear. Except in the fineness of texture of coat and small clothes, and greater smartness of the hat, and the addition of gloves and a cane, he was dressed as his friends and the public always saw him. A continental coat of black cloth with a velvet collar; long buff waistcoat, buff breeches clasped to gray silk stockings by massive silver buckles, ruffled shirt front and ruffled cuffs,—such was Justus Reid, Esq., as to the outward man. In the office, in the court, on the street, in the drawing-room, in his high-backed pew on Sunday in Old Pine Street Presbyte-

rian Church, his dress was always the same. His cuffs and ruffles were immaculately laundered, and were kept spotless under all conditions. No one ever saw them soiled or even rumpled, though he took snuff in a moderate way, rather as an aid to conversation and an adjunct to his profession than for the satisfaction thereof. Yet he never seemed to be looking after his clothes, nor to care especially for dress, and was not in the least dandified. He simply had the faculty possessed by so many women, and by all insects, of moving freely through all sorts of litter without taking the least ruffle or stain.

He had the habit of softly whistling some lively air as he wrought at his papers or walked the streets, and its measure was never quickened by success nor retarded by trouble and failure. Whether or not, therefore, the interview in the Oldham mansion was satisfactory, could not be determined by Mr. Reid's manner. Business was business. It belonged to a separate sphere of life, and he had the power of completely isolating it from all other affairs. When he left his office at night he locked up his law cases in certain brain cells, much as a prison turnkey does his prisoners. There they stayed until he turned his key in the morning, or at other convenient time, and bade them come out, which they did along with his blue bag, quill pens and ink horn. He was a happy man in this and most other respects, including his home relations. Howbeit, the rumor sped that his wife, who was a roly-poly domestic body, whose whole life energy was consumed in taking care of her house and husband (they having no children), was occasionally inclined to conversation that smacked somewhat more of high temper than of high learning or high breeding.

However, we are wandering, our only excuse therefor being that we are following the example of Justus Reid, Esq., as he sauntered toward his big, old-fashioned house on Spruce Street. That worthy had scarcely reached his residence ere his lady client had written and sealed a note whose preparation, judging by the play of her countenance, seemed to give her equal perplexity and pleasure. It may have only been a coincidence, but the next morning Mr. Prosecutor Rawle had a consultation with his associate counsel Mr. Wm. Bradford over matters suggested in the following letter:

DEAR SIR:—The writer has reason to believe that a certain Andrew Burbeck of Washington County, Pennsylvania, has valuable information bearing on the case of Capt. John Latimer, now under trial for treason. The said Burbeck is commonly engaged in Pittsburg in conducting a ferry across the Monongahela River. It so happens that the undersigned knows that the attorney for the defendant has refused to summon the above-named Burbeck as a witness on account of sundry compromising situations in which he saw Capt. Latimer.

I have the honor to be,

A FRIEND OF JUSTICE AND THE GOVERNMENT.

Phila., April the 3d, 1795.

"A lady's letter that, I take it," said Mr. Bradford.

"A lady's handwriting, at least," Mr. Rawle replied, "although the script is boldly writ. Yet the language is not at all feminine. A gentleman's dictation and a lady's writing, I fancy. But the hint is worth considering. We will need all the evidence we can get in this case. What would you suggest, sir?"

Leaving the learned counsellors to their deliberations, we return to John Latimer. He had still much to learn of the tedious and perverse course of justice. His patience was sorely taxed by the frequent postponements of the day for his trial. April passed and May day came, and still he was in jail. The first two weeks of May brought to trial another instalment of the insurgents, of whom all were acquitted. At last the day for John's trial was fixed, the 18th of May. He dressed himself with unusual care, but held to the scout's uniform. That seemed to him a mute witness of fidelity to his country and of honorable service in her behalf, most fitting for one in his position. In the same spirit he put upon his breast his medals of merit. His rough shoes and leggings he laid aside, and donned a new pair of beautifully beaded moccasins, a gift from Featherfoot. The long shanks came well up the calves of the leg, which were covered with white ribbed wool stockings, his mother's gift and knitting; and these were fastened at the knees with whangs of deer-skin. His broad leathern belt, Panther's gift, was ornamented with beaded edging, and like the knee breeches was fastened with whangs in lieu of a buckle.

He longed to swing his woodman's hatchet in its loop

at his belt, but neither that nor the hunting knife would the sheriff permit; and John admitted the impropriety of a prisoner going into court bearing deadly weapons. Yet his pouch and powder horn he hung over his shoulder, and this was allowed, seeing that the horn was empty. These were the gift of his "sister Fanny," and he was gratified at permission to wear them, for they completed the armor of love and friendship with which he fancied himself to be girded, as he went forth to the ordeal on which his future depended. All his dearest ones were represented in his uniform, for the coat was his father's gift, the cap was Andy's, and the long necklace of buckeye nuts alternated with claws and teeth of wild animals, thrown across his left shoulder as a brace to his knife sheath, was a present from Meg. A barbaric sort of ornament this, no doubt, but it suited John's purpose and it was Meg's gift. And Blanche Oldham? Ay, she too should have a place! Where the eagle's feather was looped upon his coon-skin cap he fastened the little bow of azure ribbon that had come from her with the Christmas holly.

Thus accoutred, he passed the inspection of even Mr. Justus Reid, who greatly valued the effect of external appearance upon a jury. "Sentiment rules one-third of the world," he remarked sententiously. "And that third rules another third. Of the remainder, a good moiety go by blind chance, and the rest are swayed by reason, by passion, by bribery and by bigotry in varying measures."

It was a bright day in the old Capital, which never looks fairer than in the month of May. John felt like a new being to get beyond the prison walls, even for the short walk around the corner of Independence Square to the City Hall. How balmy the air! How blithe the carols of the birds, basking freely in the sunlight and singing their songs of love and liberty! He expanded his lungs and filled them with the delicious atmosphere, perfumed with May blossoms and with the odor of lilacs, whose homely bushes showed their purple blooms in a spacious yard hard by. Yet in the midst of his joy, his heart grew suddenly sick, and his cheek took a paler hue as the fear arose within him that he might lose his suit and be sent back from all this brightness and sweetness to his cell.

At the period of which we write, and until A. D. 1800,

the United States Circuit Court for the District of Pennsylvania held its sittings in the second-story room of the City Hall, at the southwest corner of Fifth and Chestnut Streets. To Philadelphians of this generation the room was known as the Mayor's Office until, a few years ago, the municipal offices were removed to the present ornate Public Buildings on Penn Square.

John was placed in the prisoner's box or "bar" with several others arraigned for like offence. The public seats were all occupied, and a buzz of interest stirred the audience as John entered. His tall and shapely form and picturesque uniform attracted all eyes. He was embarrassed by this notoriety, and felt relieved when the crier called the Court to order. Justice Patterson presided, and was supported by Judge Peters who had accompanied the Western Army to the Monongahela as a representative of the judiciary. The morning hour was largely consumed in discussing a point of law. An Act of Congress required that a person charged with treason should have delivered to him a copy of the indictment and a list of the jury and witnesses, with their abodes, at least three entire days before the trial. This requirement had been omitted or only partly attended to in the cases of the insurgents, and the question was argued before the Court whether the trials could go on.

The Judges held that the errors in notification must be amended in the respects indicated, and that three days must elapse after such amendment before trial. But John Latimer waived the right of notification in his own case, and urged that his trial proceed, in which position Mr. Justus Reid cordially acquiesced. As the witnesses were present, many of them from a distance and at great inconvenience, and as all parties were quite agreed, the case was called. A number of witnesses were examined, with only one or two of whom this story is concerned.

"Call Andrew Burbeck!" said Prosecutor Rawle.

Mr. Justus Reid gave a slight start at the name, just a slight betrayal of uneasiness mingled with a bit of self-satisfaction at his shrewdness in discerning that this witness would not be a helpful one for the defense. He glanced at his client, and gave a little nod as much as to say "I told you so!"

John Latimer was somewhat discomposed at the first

intimation that his old friend was to be a witness against him. But his face at once cleared up as he saw the genuine pleasure with which Andy greeted him. Indeed that person seemed to have no thought of court or jury, or of anything else but the satisfaction of once more seeing his friend. He would have gone straight up to the prisoner at the bar and shook hands with him, had not the tipstaff sharply reminded him of the august presence in which he stood, and led him to the witness stand.

"Do you swear or affirm?" asked the clerk.

"A' swear, sir! A' consated that affirmin' was for Quakers; an' A'm not of that persuasion, sir."

"Manifestly not!" said Mr. Rawle, with a smile. "Hand the witness the Bible, Mr. Clerk."

"If your warship plaze," said Andy, "A' niver kiss the Buk. It's lettle more nor a relic of idolatry. A' swear with uplifted hand, sir, as did ma Covenanting forebears."

He held up his right arm, with palm and fingers spread open wide, and reverently stood with a solemnity upon his face and in his whole demeanor that at once impressed the court and jury. A moment's silence followed which continued until the ceremony was ended. "So help me, God!" said Andy, echoing the clerk's closing asseveration, and then dropped his arm.

After preliminary questions, the Prosecutor asked: "Do you know the prisoner at the bar, Mr. Burbeck?"

"Do A' know him, sir?" answered Andy. "Dade an' A' do! A've knowed Jock Latimer from a b'y. An' that's himself; at laste, what's left of him. But if he spends sax months more in your City Hotel, sir, A' wouldn't wonder if his own mother didn't know him. It goes to my heart, sir, to see him lookin' so pale an' pinched like."

"Spare your sympathies for another occasion, Mr. Burbeck," said the Prosecutor. "Do you know the part that Capt. Latimer took in the late insurrection?"

"A' do, indade, your warship. An' it'll not take much of the honorable jury's time for til tell it. A short horse is soon curried, sir." An audible titter escaped from one of the jurors who was in the livery stable business.

"Did you ever hear anyone speak of the prisoner as a traitor?"

Mr. Reid here objected to the introduction of hearsay evidence. Whereat, Mr. Bradford explained that their

purpose was to show a general reputation for disaffection to the Government, which, under the circumstances, he conceived to be quite proper, as showing a motive for and as explaining certain actions which would be proven afterward. The Court allowed the question, and Mr. Reid having entered a protest, took his seat and Andy answered.

"A' did, sir," Andy replied. "But, indade, it's not worth while troublin' the gintlemin with what the likes of him said about sich a gintlemin as Capt. Latimer."

"We will let the jury judge of that for themselves, Mr. Burbeck. Tell us, if you please, just where you heard Capt. Latimer called a traitor and by whom?"

"It was at Bower Hill, sir, whan Capt. Jock was escortin' Mrs. Neville and the ladies to a place of safety, afore they began a-firin' on the house. It was a duty he had craved of the committee; an' as he was gittin' the party through, he was stopped by a santinel. The Captain showed his pass from the Commander, but the man was obstreparous, an' cussed the Captain for a stuck-up aristrycrat an' a dawgoned traitor to the pop'lar cause, an' no better nor Giner'l Neville himself."

"Ah!" exclaimed Mr. Rawle. "Is that all?"

"No, sir. That was n't all, by no manner of manes. Mebbe your honor's fond of wrastlin'? Well, sir, jist you try a throw with Captain Jock, there. He'll give you a p'inter about a twister well worth knowin'. He's got a wonderful trick with his heels, Capt. Jock has; an' afore that sassy giard knowed what he was about, he was a-sprawlin' in the dust with feet p'inted heavenward an' his own bay'net p'inted at his buzzum. That's what he got for callin' Jock Latimer a traitor. A' suppose your warship would like to know the man's name, too?"

"That doesn't matter, Mr. Burbeck," remarked Mr. Rawle carelessly.

"Ay, your warship, that's jist what A' was a-tellin' you at first, an' you wouldn't bel'ave me. It disn't matter what a drunken, ne'er-do weel like Dave Dandruff says. It's him as swore out the afterdavy agin Capt. Jock Latimer. Ay, he's a flamin' patriot now, by all accounts; but he was the blatentest insargent in all the West in them days. The Lord's marcy is iver great, sir, an' convarts the chief of sinners."

"Come, come, Mr. Burbeck!" said the Prosecutor im-

patiently. "We want facts and not your opinions and comments. Save your pious observations for a more fitting place. You're a little too free with your tongue, sir; and my advice is that you restrain it a bit while you are giving your testimony, for it may bring you into trouble."

Andy dropped his face, and assumed a look of the utmost humiliation. Then, in a penitential tone, he remarked: "A'm greatly obleeged to your warship for your good advice. It's jist what my Peggy, that's Mrs. Burbeck, your honor, sir, is al'ays a-tellin' me. 'Andy,' siz she, 'the tongue's an unruly mamber; an' nayther bit nor bridle did ye iver try to put upon your own, tho' you're fell fond o' checkin' ither folks's. Barrin' the lawyers', siz she, 'there was niver a man but was the warse for a loose-hung tongue, an' if they're better for it, all the rest of us mayhap are the warse. There's too much talk wid ye Andy,' siz she, 'an' too lettle do. Ye're all cry an' no wool, as the shoemaker said whan he shore the pig.'

An outbreak of mirth in which even the judges joined, and which was not suppressed by the crier's calls for order, interrupted the staid proceedings of the Court of Justice. The only person in the whole house apparently unaffected thereby was the witness himself, who lifted up his face, and fixing his eyes upon Mr. Justus Reid, who was especially enjoying the situation, regarded him with a look of injured innocence.

"You will be good enough, Mr. Burbeck," said Prosecutor Rawle, "to tell the jury of any other time or place in which you heard the prisoner classed with the insurgents. Do you remember any other occasion?"

"Yes, sir!" answered Andy. "Whan Capt. Dunlap, of the City Troop, an' he's a gintlemin if there iver was one, God bless him! arristed Capt. Jock at his father's funeral, I misdoubt they miscalled him an insargent in the bit paper they read til him."

"Never mind that, Mr. Burbeck. Is there any other occasion that you remember?"

"There is, sir. Yes, there's one more." He hesitated and paused. "But it mislikes me sore to tell it. It might go agin the Captain, for the gintlemin seemed to have a rare chanct for to know his opeenion of politics; leastways, so he said, sir."

"You're not to consider whether your statements go

for or against the defendant," said Mr. Rawle, speaking with severity and emphasis. "You are simply to declare the whole truth. Go on with your testimony.

"This mornin', your warship, as A' was a-waitin' in the anteroom there with other witnesses, some of the city officers were havin' a crack together over the prisoner's trial. There's one of 'em, sir, that's purty high up, judgin' by his talk, a captain of police, at laste, or sich like matter. He was denouncin' Capt. Latimer as the p'isenest sort of an insargent. His words were awful profane, your honors!"—turning to the judges' bench—"A' would like your honors to axcuse me from tellin' the whole truth, though A've sworn to do it. A' niver h'ard sich cussin', aven on the frontier; an' A' niver axpected to live for to hear it in this Quaker city, sir. It's ralely too wicked to repate in your honor's prisence, an' A'd be feard of shockin' the gentlemn of the bar."

"We will excuse the profanity," said Justice Patterson with a smile, "out of regard for our lawyers' morals. Give the substance of what the gentleman said, and consider the adjectives as excused."

"Thank your honor! Well, says this high officer, if they don't hang this (axcused) Latimer, there's no use in gal-luses. He's the (double axcusedest) peskiest, p'izenest rebel of the whole pedogerie. I've handled ivery one of them (axcused) leather-breeched, linsey-woolsey, half-savage (axcused) bog-trottin', brogue-chatterin' Scotch-Irish riffraff, siz he. Ivery one of 'em, siz he, growin' ax-cited and bringin' his big fist down on the window sill. Ivery one of 'em I've handled, an' that (double axcused) long-legged, sly-footed, Injun-huntin' scout of a Latimer is the bluest, beastliest, rankest an' most rantankerous (axcusedly axcused) rebel of 'em all! I'd give a handful of golden eagles to have the hangin' of him. There, gintlemin of the jury an' your honors, that's the whole truth, barrin' the words which his honor was good enough to ax-cuse. A' hope the honorable gintlemin of the jury won't allow the opinion of sich a high officer of this honorable city to prejudyce their minds agin the prisoner at the bar. For sir, A' as good as made him ate his wareds. A' couldn't stand thim sayin's agin Capt. Jock and the Scotch-Irish; so A' walked up til him with my doubled fists, an' siz A': You're a (axcused)—liar! But this man here (turning to

the tipstaff) pulled me away. Then he says to the captain of police, or whatever he is, sir, you're jist the man they want inside the coort room there. Come along now, siz he, and give your tistimony, for A' dar' say it'll be vallyble in hangin' the prisoner at the bar. An' what do you think, your honors and gintlemin? That high-up officer sn'aked out of the room without as much as sayin' by your lave! A' saw him go acrost the street intil the tavern; an' A' dar' say he naded coolin' refreshment, for there must be a mort o' burnin' brimstone inside a man as can pour forth sich het-up stuff as that. Savin' them two men, gintlemin, A' niver h'ard mortal man accuse Capt. Jock Latimer of bein' a traitor to his country."

"You were at Bower Hill, Mr. Burbeck?" asked the Prosecutor, quietly changing the subject.

"A' was, bad luck to the same!"

"You saw the prisoner there?"

"A' did sir. He was escortin—"

"We have heard the fact before. Did you see him during the fight?"

"A' did indade, sir, an' had hard work persuadin' him to take to kiver; for the bullets was a-flyin' that thick, an' barkin' the trees all round us, an' A' was kinder ashamed to take tree while the Captain stood up there. So to save my own bacon—"

"I daresay!" interrupted Mr. Rawle. "But what we want to know just now is, if you saw the prisoner take any part in the action?"

Here Andy thrust first one hand and then the other through his hair, apparently in a state of embarrassed excitement.

"Speak up, Mr. Burbeck. Tell us what part you saw the prisoner take in the action at Bower Hill?" the Prosecutor urged.

"Your warship an' gintlemin, A' did see him make two charges; an' that's the truth, if A' must spake out.

"The first one was jist this way. In the midst of the scrimmage one of the nayger quarters was sot on fire. Thereat Capt. Jock runs over to whar the insargent commander stood, an' ast him if that had been done by his orders. 'No, sir,' says the Major. 'It's an accidint; an' I've jist ordered a party to quench the fire.' 'Can I lade that party?' says Capt. Jock. 'Sartain!' says the Major.

An' away Capt. Jock tears like mad, the bullets flyin' all around him an' riddlin' his clothes; for, ye see, the soldiers an' the naygers thought he was a-chargin' on thim. But he kep' right on an' began workin' at the burnin' shanty. Then the darkies seein' what we was at, stopped shootin' an' began to help; an' so we got the fire out. But the Captain was a sight to see, A' can tell you. He looked more like a chimbleysweep nor a gintlemin. 'But niver mind,' siz he, 'we saved the property.' That's one charge Capt. Latimer led, your warship. An' we was all mighty sorry to see him take his life in his hand that way, an' mighty glad whan he got out safely."

"Well!" remarked Mr. Rawle, "the jury will not be inclined to put that to his disadvantage, I daresay. But the other charge that the prisoner made, was it of the same peaceful nature?"

"N—no, sir. It was not, indade. It was genuwine fightin' that; an' pretty sayrious wark, sir."

"Capt. Latimer led in that, you say?"

"A'm loth to say 'at he did."

"Very well; that's just what we want to hear. State the facts precisely as you saw them, Mr. Burbeck."

"Whan the garrison showed a flag of truce," Andy began, "Major McFarlane ran out to stop his men from shootin'. Jist then a volley came from the house an' struck him down in the road. Capt. Latimer rushed out under a sharp fire an' brought in the Major's body to the shelter of the grove. But he was dead, sir. That put the militia beyant all control, an' they fired the outhouses, an' closed in on the mansion, so that the garrison had to surrender. Out they comes, the soldiers from Pittsburg with Lieut. Burd their commander, and Major Kirkpatrick who had been sarvin' a musket. The soldiers was all sot free at wanct; but somehow the rioters blamed Major Kirkpatrick with killin' their l'ader, an' that inunder a flag of truce. So they made a rush at him an' surrounded him, an' began cryin' out to hang him, an' to kill him, which A' dar' say they might 'a done. Jist then a man charged intil the midst of the mob, an' began tossin' 'em right an' left, an' trippin' up one, an' knockin' down another, an' beatin' up muskets an' rifles an' a shoutin' shame! shame! at the top of his voice. It was amazin' how soon he cl'ared the ring an' got the old man out of the dust an' onto his feet agin."

That sir, was the pluckiest charge A've seen, though A've been in many a hot scrimmage, an' that's the man, sir,"—pointing to John Latimer—"that led it! Ay, sir, led it single-handed.

"It mebbe would 'a gone hard with him, but jist then his father come up, who had succaded to the command, an' the men got quieted down. Meanwhile, Capt. Jock had led Major Kirkpatrick intil the woods, an' mounted him on his own horse, an' bade him make tracks, an' lose no time, an' started him out for a place of safety. Which the Major not lackin' in kenspeckle, whatever else he may lack, sir, did without farder delay. That was the ind of the fightin' at Bower Hill, an' Capt. Jock an' maself soon after left for home with his father, who was sore hurted in the scrimmage. Nex' day the Captain left for Wayne's Army, an' was there a-scoutin' till after the battle of Fallen Timbers."

"May it please the Court," said Mr. Rawle, "we have no more witnesses to present."

"I am sorry to hear my learned brother say so," said Mr. Justus Reid. "Very sorry indeed! Especially if the prosecution have any more witnesses like the last. We decline to cross question, and there is only one witness whose testimony we ask to present. That is done more for regard to the wishes of our client for a complete public vindication, than because his counsel thinks there is the least necessity for it."

Capt. Burd was then placed upon the stand, and related his interview with Capt. Latimer at Bower Hill. He told the incidents of the prisoner's coming to the scene of the attack, as explained to him at the time; and his reasons for volunteering for the peaceful act of escorting the ladies of the household to a place of safety. He also confirmed Andy's account of John's gallant and humane behavior in securing the safety of the surrendered garrison; and his personal knowledge of John's unswerving loyalty to the Government through all the anti-excite riots, and that under circumstances peculiarly trying. He expressed the decided opinion that instead of prosecution and the six months' imprisonment which this gallant officer and loyal gentleman had endured, the Government should have added to the marks of honorable service which he already bore upon his breast from the hands of Gen. Anthony Wayne.

"Your honors," said Mr. Reid, when Capt. Burd's evidence was ended, "we have only this documentary testimony to present." He handed to the Court the written instructions of Gen. Wayne to John Latimer and the Mingo Indian Panther, to forward certain despatches and letters to Major Butler, the commandant at Fort Pitt, and to return with as full an account as practicable of the state of things in Western Pennsylvania, and to report whether the same was likely to interfere with the Western Army's supplies. The order was endorsed by Major Butler, certifying that John Latimer had delivered the aforesaid despatches on the morning of July 15, 1794.

"Mark the date, your honors and gentlemen of the jury. That was the very morning of the fight at Bower Hill, and confirms the sworn statement of the witnesses Andrew Burbeck and Capt. Burd as to the circumstances under which the prisoner was present at that affair. The motive of his appearance at the fight is made entirely plain, and is as honorable to Capt. Latimer as his conduct has been under all circumstances."

A brief consultation followed between the prisoner's counsel and the attorneys for the prosecution, and then by mutual consent Mr. Rawle addressed the Court. "May it please your honors," he said. "We have examined twelve of the most substantial witnesses against the prisoner at the bar. Others, whose testimony is circumstantial, we deem it useless to present. After consultation with our learned brother who represents the defendant, we have agreed to submit the case without further argument, and leave it to your honors to give the charge to the jury upon the testimony before you."

The presiding judge, Justice Patterson, arose and the jury having been polled stood up and were charged as follows: "Gentlemen of the jury, you have heard the accusation read against the prisoner, and you have listened to the sworn testimony which has been presented. The opinion of the Court is that the prisoner is not guilty. The charge has not been supported by a single witness or by the slightest proof. If you agree with the Court in this opinion, you will find for the defendant and bring in a verdict of not guilty."

The jury bowed to the Court and after a consultation of less than two minutes and without leaving the box, returned a verdict of "not guilty."

"The prisoner is discharged!" said Justice Patterson.

A burst of applause followed this announcement, which the Court did not try to restrain, although the crier lifted up his voice and shouted: "Oh-yeez, oy-yeez! Order in the honorable Court!" It was observable, however, that the tone of this venerable functionary was rather like a cheer than a call to order.

High above all these sounds arose the rich Doric of Andy Burbeck's "Hurray! The Lord be praised!" He stood outside the bar, swinging his wool hat in one hand and with the other "hackling his hair," to quote Mrs. Peggy's phrase, while the tears flowed freely down his honest, freckled face.

Meanwhile, John was receiving the congratulations of his faithful attorney and of the Prosecutor as well. Even some of the jurors in the front seats leaned over the box and grasped his hand. John was in an ecstasy of inward joy, although his outward bearing was quiet, and marked by that high courtesy which sat so easily upon him. He was free! His honor was vindicated! He was a man, a free man once more! He longed to go out into the sunshine, and leap over the face of the earth, ay, to fall down and kiss the ground over which once more he could walk at liberty.

The voice of the judge quietly calling the next case fell upon his ear. The crier's loud "O-yez" rose above the momentary bustle and soothed the court room into quiet. John passed beyond the bar. The tipstaff shook hands with him, and bade him good luck. Capt. Burd waited to greet him with warm congratulations. Then Andy, dear old Andy, seized him with both hands and took possession of him, almost bearing him bodily down the stairway into Independence Square.

Ah, Good Lord! what a glad day it was! The leaves on the embowering trees waved to him as he walked along. The birds bobbed their heads, and wagged their tails, and as they flew away with their wings twinkling in the sunlight, seemed to wink at him and say: "Free, free! che-wee, che-wee, che-weet! Sweet, sweet!" The horses as they jogged along; the dogs frolicking in the street, the children playing on the sidewalks and filling the air with their glad, young voices, all seemed to John to be celebrating his release. These familiar sounds had a strange tim-

bre; a tone and temper not new indeed, but as of somewhat that had been unloosed from memory and was ringing up scenes and sensations of long, long ago. Yet he had been a prisoner just six months and six days!

CHAPTER LV.

A DISH OF NEWS AND A DINNER AT THE INDIAN QUEEN.

From the City Hall, John Latimer accompanied by Andy walked to the jail. He would gather together his few belongings and say good bye to friends and acquaintances who yet awaited their trials. Then he would go forth, he knew not whither, but at least he knew that he would be free. It was the work of but a few minutes to pack his luggage in his saddle bags, which Andy insisted on toting.

The prisoners were out at their daily exercise. The companionship of suffering had drawn John closely to his fellow captives, and as he bade them a tender good bye, he cheered them with words of hope. It was a comfort to him to feel that among them all there was not one who did not with a sincere heart wish him joy at his deliverance, and yet not one who did not see him leave with some sense of personal loss.

"It will be a gloomier prison," said one of the insurgents, as he pressed John's hand, "when your bright face has gone from among us. God bless and preserve you, Capt. Latimer!"

"Ay, ay," arose from every side.

"Three cheers for Capt. Latimer!" cried one of the group. The hurrahs were given with a will, and Andy's lusty voice added not a little to their volume.

And now, as the last words were being spoken, Mr. I. Turner Locke entered the quadrangle. His face was fairly radiant, and was wreathed with smiles. He moved with a vigor and agility that his ponderous frame seemed hardly capable of. With both hands outstretched, he pressed through the group of prisoners, and in a voice resonant with seeming delight, exclaimed:

"Cap'en Latimer, God bless you, sir! I have jest heerd

the gelorious noos. I was a'most too late to give you me hearty congratulation. It has bean more than a windication; it has bean a triump, sir! They's none of your friends happier than meself at your release. Although, we shall miss you here; we shall miss you greatly, Cap'en Latimer."

Meanwhile, Mr. Andrew Burbeck was exhibiting a series of remarkable facial transformations. His eyes, that were moist with pleasurable excitement, began to open wide with wonder. The jolly face, red with the exercise of shouting cheers for his friend John, lost its mirthful curves, and lengthened by the dropping of the lower jaw until the mouth was wide open. This amazement of visage which had so swiftly followed his joyful expressions, was as quickly followed by indignation. He dropped the saddle bags, and springing between John and the approaching turnkey, struck up the outreached hands. Mr. Locke started back and exhibited as remarkable a facial transformation as Andy had displayed. A flush of surprise and displeasure came to John's face, but before he had time to interfere, Andy broke forth:

"Back with ye! Would ye dar' touch Capt. Latimer with your greasy trecherous paws? You miserable mountain of puddin's! You glib-tongued, double-faced cumber-ground! May the false mouth of you be scalded by the soft solder that's a-gushin' from it! Ye'd like to have the hangin' of Captain Latimer, would ye? Ye'd like to thropple him with the hangman's rope, would ye? Oh, ye lard-lapped limb of Sattan! Ye black-hearted son of Jack Ketch! Up with the two fists of ye this minute; for big as ye are, A'll lam ye till ye're as flat as a pancake."

Mr. Locke grew pale. He backed away from his enraged adversary. He was evidently about to turn and run, when John Latimer interposed. He laid his hands on Andy, and exclaimed: "What does this mean? Are you mad, my friend?"

"Mad!" echoed Andy, "mad's no word for it, Mr. Jock. Whativer do you interfare for? Look at yon hulkin' hul-lion! That's the man A' telled the Coort about this mornin'. That's the Captain of Police, or whatever he is, that denounced ye in the waitin' room as the p'isenest, peskiest traitor in the whole lot, an' said he only craved the job of hangin' ye. An' him to come here an' bam-boozle ye with his flam an' pertanded congratoolations!

L'ave loose of me, Mr. John! A'll job the face of him! O ye barrel-shaped boogyboo!"

But John held tightly to his wrathful friend. He had never seen Andy so wrought up before; and indeed he would have broken away and made good his threats had not Capt. Robert Porter aided John to restrain his outbreak of temper. Meanwhile several of the jail officers had gathered, and Mr. Locke somewhat recovered his equanimity. But though relieved of bodily fear, he dared not look John in the face. He slunk behind his official associates, and without another word sneaked from the quadrangle.

"Come, Andy!" said John. "He is not worth a thought, let alone such a tempest as this. You will get yourself into a row that will land you in jail, and then I'll have to come back and keep you company. A jolly time we'll have of it, with turnkey Locke for our keeper!"

Andy took up the saddle bags, and put on his hat and followed, but grudgingly. He felt that he had been hindered in an act of justice. "What's a bit of tongue lashin' to yon trumpery besom?" he exclaimed. "It rolls off'n his slithery sides like water from a duck's back. It's a thorough skelpin' he nades. A'll be whupped if A' wouldn't pay a year's wages for the chanct til give him a good lambastin'. Ah, Capt. Jock, ye hindered me of a rare, providential opportunity. What's justice worth in this world, if ye can't administer it wanct in a while to sich a craitur as yon?"

As the two men left the prison grounds, an old gentleman with a bowed back and long gray beard entered the gate, and slowly made his way towards Mr. Locke's room. It was Judah Solomons, the jeweler. He found the turnkey in a sadly dejected frame of mind. The public exposure of his double dealing with Capt. Latimer, and Andy's terrible torrent of Irish expletives, had irritated and punctured even his pachydermatous sensibilities. Moreover, he was greatly exercised in mind over the probable results. His official record had lately grown unsavory, and his standing had become insecure. He was conscious of this, and the morning's flurry seemed to him to foretell the storm that would sweep him out of office.

"Goot mornings, Mr. Locke!" said the Jew. "I haf come to see you dis mornings about dot Cap'en Latimer, an' his bit of old chewelry. What is de wort you haf for me? Somedings goot, I hope?"

Even Mr. Solomons, hardened as he was to the ways of the profane world, was shocked at the storm of oaths that his question evoked. He stroked his beard violently; and backed toward the door, while the turnkey invoked all powers in the highest heavens and in the deepest hades to confound and eschew Capt. Latimer and all his works.

"I haf nefer seen you in dis conditions, Mr. Locke," at last the Jew remonstrated. "Dis is highly unbecoming a city officer, is dis. I will call again when you are quite a sober mans." He placed his hat upon his head and was about to retire.

"If it is to see that Latimer," Locke thundered after him, "you needn't come back here again. He's gone."

"Gone?" echoed the Jew, advancing a step towards Locke in his anxiety. "Gone? Where?"

"To the devil, I hope! W'ere are your eyes, old man? You must 'ave passed him as you came into the jail."

"Ah, so I dit, so I dit!" exclaimed Mr. Solomons, remembering the outgoing party whom he had met as he came in. He turned to run after the released Captain; then seeing the folly of pursuit, came back and asked:

"Haf you not his address? Did he not say where he haf gone? Tell me dot! You must know, surely. It will be a goltten eagle, ay, two goltten eagles in your hant, if you tell me where dis young man haf gone. My client haf come back to me; an' he offer me a huntert dollar for dot trinket which de Captain of de Scout wear. Tell me where I can fint him; I will rewart you well."

The turnkey only groaned. Twenty dollars lost after such a morning's experience! Luck was all against him. "I know nothing!" he exclaimed. "I can tell you nothing. He's gone, and I don't know w'ere. And get you after him!" he cried. "O Lord! The devil is in it all!"

Mr. Solomons retired precipitately to prosecute his research as best he could, leaving the turnkey to his own bitter meditations. Fortunately for future prisoners, his premonitions of coming evil were soon realized. His resignation was demanded within a few weeks, and to the joy of all within the jail bounds, he betook himself to the little provision store of Mrs. I. Turner Locke. This lady's vinegary temper and bitter tongue, rendered trebly acrid by the loss of her profitable jail connection, amply revenged the wrongs of the prisoners whose unhappy lives had been made more wretched by her husband's greed.

At the Indian Queen Tavern John engaged rooms for himself and Andy, and leaving an order for a six o'clock dinner, started out to look at the city. He had asked Mr. Reid to dine with him, not only to celebrate his deliverance, but to advise him in a most important matter which he would lay before him. Tired of sightseeing John got back early, and went to his room, and while waiting for his guest discussed with Andy the changes that had occurred in the West. Mrs. Latimer had sold the Canonsburg place and removed to Pittsburg, where Luke had made some advantageous purchases of land. With the advice and aid of her lawyer Mr. Brackenridge, she made yet larger investments in town lots, and settled in a comfortable home with her daughter Meg and Featherfoot as companions, and Dungy, now a freeman by Luke Latimer's will, installed as majordomo and man of all work.

The true story of John Latimer's adoption had been told to the Canonsburg Church Session, and thence had spread through the community. Mrs. Latimer had not seriously lost caste thereby, yet she made up her mind that she would be happier away from the old home, and preferred to begin life anew in new surroundings. Meg and Mort Sheldon had made it up to be married, and the wedding only awaited John's release that he might be present. Mr. McCormack and George his son had got back from their self-imposed exile in Kentucky, and Fanny McCormack was again free from the burden of the store.

The country had quieted down, and was never so prosperous. The West was booming. The invasion of the army had given impulse to business of all sorts. Emigration had greatly increased. Many of the soldiers who had crossed the mountains as invaders were returning as settlers. The composure of Indian hostilities by Gen. Wayne had also stimulated emigration to the further West by opening up the navigation of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. That, with the furnishing and transportation of supplies for the Legion, added to the quantity and profit of business. Moreover, a circulating medium of coin was introduced with which the farmers could pay their revenue tax, and therewith the chief objection and burden of the excise laws disappeared. The West waited to give John a welcome, Andy averred, and there was a great field therein open for him to enter upon.

John assented to this. Indeed, it was what he had determined upon. There were some things which he had made up his mind to do, and then Westward-ho! He would make an effort to solve the mystery of his birth.

"Moreover," he continued, "I must call on Miss Oldham. That is perhaps my first duty. You remember her, Andy, of course?"

"Is my memory a cullender, do ye think?" Andy answered, "that a lass like that would run clane out of it? Ay, I mind her fine."

"She has shown a great deal of interest in my case," John continued.

"An' what for not?" asked Andy. "You showed a lot of interest in her whan she greatly naded the same; an' one good turn desarves another."

"Tush, Andy! You don't know what you're talking about. Any true man would have done all that I did. A gentleman is bound to relieve a woman when in danger and trouble. But it is quite different with a beautiful and accomplished lady. She is under no obligations."

"Now, Capt. Jock," quoth Andy, "you're like the oarsman who looks one way and rows t'other. If it's true gentility in a man for til mind a favor, it's the same in a woman. Sure, what's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander."

"Well, well!" John responded somewhat impatiently. "Let that go. Whatever obligations the past imposed have been fully cancelled. Miss Oldham volunteered to testify for me, and suggested Capt. Burd as a witness to my lawyer. Indeed, it is to her that I owe the employment of Mr. Reid, who has so successfully conducted my case, when I was intent on standing trial without legal aid!"

Andy lowered the untasted mug of ale he was lifting to his lips, and gazed at John with undisguised surprise.

"I have heard of her interest in many ways," John continued; "although she never made herself known to me, and tried to conceal her identity. Out of delicate regard for my feelings, I suppose. She even called at the jail to see for herself how I was treated, and made interest for me with the prison officials."

Andy's mug, which had been held midway of mouth and table during the last remark, now came down upon the table top with a thump. The free hand made a quick jour-

ney to his hair, which, after several excited excursions of his fingers therein, presented its normal expression of intense emotion.

"That caps all!" he cried. "Whatever could have possessed ye, Jock Latimer? Do you rarely mane what you're sayin'?"

John flushed deeply, and glowering at Andy with no pleased look, exclaimed: "Do you question my word? What do you mean, man?"

"Ay, ay; A' see it is aven so!" Andy returned, shaking his head. "A've h'ard that love is blind! but A' niver knowed afore that it was deaf an' dumb too. If some half clacket gawk had 'a done this, now, A' wouldn't 'a wondered. But that my old fri'nd, Capt. Jock, that's as keen as a brier and as wide awake as a bagful of fleas, should be so stupid, passes all belafe! Why Jock, man, that wasn't Blanche Oldham at all. It was Fanny McCormack!"

"What!" cried John, fairly lifted to his feet by the impulse of this great surprise. He glared angrily at Andy. "Don't trifle with me!" he exclaimed. "There's no man living from whom I would bear as much as from you, but there are some feelings that even our friends—"

"A'm not triffin' with you, Jock," said Andy with a soft voice and kindly look. "It's God's truth A'm a-tellin' ye. Fanny McCormack was here durin' Aprile, an' only went home two weeks agone. Your mother would 'a come til ye, but she was laid up with the rheumatiz, an' Meg, of course, wouldn't do. So Fanny was ast, an' she pulled up stakes at wanct, an' crossed the mountains, bringin' a racommand from Mr. Brackenridge to Mr. Justus Reid. We all knowed that you was sacrificin' yourself, an' we resolved to hender ye if we could. That's the long an' short of it, John. An' it's to Fanny McCormack an' not Blanche Oldham that ye owe Mr. Reid's interest an' aid."

The red blood ran out of John's face, leaving it blanched. The hand that rested on the back of his chair trembled. He stared at Andy with dull, almost expressionless eyes. Then he dropped listlessly into his chair and leaned his elbows on the table. "Fanny McCormack!" he muttered, his eyes still fixed upon his friend. "Fanny McCormack?"

"Ay, John!" Andy responded in the soft, sympathetic way which he could so easily command. "Fanny McCormack it was, and none else."

Now the blood rushed to John's face until it was red to the roots of his hair. He threw himself back violently against his chair. Disappointment, surprise, mortification, were struggling within his bosom.

"Idiot!" he cried between his teeth. "To think that I have been living in such a fool's paradise! Oh, this is unbearable!"

A knock at the door startled him. The waiter had come to lay the table. John arose and hurried from the room into the open air, and paced to and fro the little side-yard walk until the waiter came to tell him that Mr. Reid had arrived. No one would have known by his manner what a tempest had been raging within him. Panther's lessons in the Indian art of self-repression had not been in vain. When dinner was served, the waiter brought in Andy's contribution to the feast, a huge bunch of lilac blossoms set within a crock.

"Capt. Jock loves laylocks," he explained, as they were set in the middle of the table. "They're his favoryte flower. A' got these off a bit blue-eyed lass that A' saw swingin' on a picket gate, with a yardful of shrubs ahint her. A' promised her saxpence for a han'ful, an' she didn't skimp her measure, ye see, for she brought me an armful, the ginerous little darlin'! An' then, whan A' offered her the money, she refused to take it. 'Sure, they're worth nothin' to us!' siz she, 'an' you're welcome!"

"As A' was givin' her my thanks, she eyed me curiously, an' asks, 'Are you an Injun-sargent, Mister?' An' what's an Injun-sargent? siz I. 'Well, I don't jist know,' she says; 'some kind of an Injun, I 'spose. But you're dressed jist like the folks I saw marched through the streets las' Christmas that they sayd was Injun-sargents, from way off West som'ers. I thought mebbe you was one of them kind of Injuns."

"Ha! Ha! God bless her curly pate! No, no, little sweetheart, siz I. A'm not an Injun-sargent, nor anny other kind of an Injun. A'm jist one of Capt. Jock Latimer's scouts. An' we're the folks 'at fought the Injuns, an' kep' 'em from comin' acrost the mountains an' skulpin' all you Quakers.

"Then the blue-eyed lass laughed out loud and clear. 'Ha, ha!' siz she with a merry twinkle in her eye. 'I'm not a Quaker. I'm a Presbyterian! An' I belong to Mr.

Ewing's. He says I'm a little blue-stockin'. I dunno why, for I never wore 'em in my life. But you're got on blue stockin's, haint you, Mister?"

"So A' have, siz I, laughin' hearty; an' good, warm, home-grown wool, at that. An' so you're a Presbyterian, are ye? God bless ye, then! that's jist what A' am maself. Do you know your quistions, A' asts,—your Catechiz? 'Not all of 'em,' siz she, spakin' up chirkey. 'But I'm a gon' tuh! I'm mos' half through; but I git awful stuck on "Who's the Redeemer of God's elect?" an' "Effectual callin'." Do you know them, Mister?' Well, siz I, kindeh dodgin' her quistion like, Here's good luck to you! So A' shuk hands with the little maid, an' cam' away with my laylocks."

Mr. Reid sat down in high spirits. He was greatly pleased with the issue of John's trial, and bubbled over with quips and anecdotes and bright sayings, and quoted bits of Latin for John's especial benefit. Andy caught the contagion, and being particularly anxious to ease his friend's disappointment, let his gayety run at full tap. Ere the dessert came on, Mr. Reid declared that his sides were sore from laughing.

"If good digestion waits upon good spirits and good fellowship," he remarked, "this will be the best digested meal I have eaten in a twelvemonth. Ah, Capt. Latimer, those old Romans understood the secret of happy and wholesome dining. Next to a good meal, yes, and doubtless before a good meal, a sane man ought to prefer jovial friends at his table. You know what Horace says: '*Nil ego contulerim jocundo sanus amico.*'"

"Aha!" he said again, in response to a remark which John had made, evidently to call him out on the subject; "so you have found out who the fair unknown is? Well, well! It was a little conspiracy among the ladies and your friends to throw you off the trail. At least to mystify you a little. I suspect they did throw a bit of dust into your eyes, hey, Mr. Scout?"

John made no reply.

"She's a wonderful woman, is that Miss McCormack," Mr. Reid went on. "If she's a fair sample of your Western ladies, our Eastern belles must look out for their laurels. A different type from Miss Oldham, now. Entirely different! But they're both beauties. And both splendid speci-

mens of womanhood. But Miss Fanny takes the lead there, according to my thinking. Character? She's a born diplomat and manager. As comely as she is deft, and as strong as comely. There were lively times at the Oldham mansion when she was here, I can tell you. At least half a dozen of our Philadelphia beaux have lost their hearts to her. They're still toasting the 'Fair Insurgent' and the 'Wild Rose of the Monongahela' at all the bachelor dinners. By the way, gentlemen, let us do the honors. Here's to the health of the Captain's unknown friend!

"You'll have to look out, Capt. Latimer. There'll be a migratory wave of Quaker City bachelors flowing over the Alleghenies before the summer is over. You must try not to be jealous. And no duels, mind you! Nothing more serious than wraslin', at least. Hey, Mr. Burbeck? You musn't give away that favorite twister of the Captain's that you commended to Mr. Rawle at the trial. Ha, ha!"

"By the way, I didn't know, at one time, but Miss Oldham might be jealous of her Western guest. But that's all right now. She's fairly caught at last. Mrs. Reid has just been telling me that her engagement to Capt. Ruel Burd has been announced. They're to be married early in the autumn. Well, they are a worthy pair and well mated. Capt. Burd is a fine character. A splendid gentleman. The Oldham family never had any objection to him, I believe, except that he is not a man of fortune. But dear me! What does that matter? Miss Blanche has enough for both. And here's wishing her happiness! Gentlemen, join me in the toast."

The little lawyer ran on with his chatter and gossip, and took no note that the cheeks of his host had suddenly paled, and that he sought, while responding to the toast, to hide the sudden pain that shot across his face, behind the glass that he lifted to his lips. Andy felt by the jar on the table the shock that had come to his friend. With the instincts of the true gentleman that underlay his rough exterior, he did not raise his eyes toward him, but turning quickly to Mr. Reid, launched upon an amusing story, which left John unobserved and unsuspected to regain his self-control, which he did with a mighty effort. John perceived the kindly device, and his heart warmed with gratitude toward his humble friend.

At last the dinner was over. When the clock struck nine, Mr. Reid protested with genuine surprise that he could not believe that the night had so far advanced. He must away home. His good wife was lonely, and liked not that he keep late hours.

"Before you go, Mr. Reid," John began, "there's an item of business to transact. If you will excuse me, as another opportunity may not serve, I would like to settle my account with you for your legal services. My friend Andy has brought me a goodly sum from the sale of my horses and other belongings, enough I hope to satisfy your just dues. But if that does not suffice, he bears also a well-filled purse from my mother."

"As you please!" said Mr. Reid; and after a brief counting up of columns, and comparing of notes, that matter was settled to the satisfaction of both parties.

"Now," John continued, "I have a matter of great importance to myself in which I ask your advice and aid." Thereupon, he told the story of his babyhood as Mrs. Latimer had related it. This done, he brought out his relics, the Bible and coral necklace and the infant gown.

Mr. Reid did not try to conceal his surprise at this revelation. He was highly excited as the tale went on, and when the relics were produced, examined them with intense interest. "Strange, very strange!" he exclaimed. "No name anywhere. No clue that I can see, except the coat-of-arms on this bookplate. And that's very uncertain, for the Bible may have been a second-hand purchase. I have several old volumes in my library with as many coats-of-arms. The flotsam of broken-up libraries. Or chance books brought over by emigrants and sold under stress, and drifting through book stores into our libraries. Very uncertain! Have you any theory, Capt. Latimer? You must have thought much about the matter."

"I cannot say that I have a theory," John answered, "except that I feel sure the book was not a second-hand purchase, as you suggest. Look at the gold bead on the necklace. You observe that it has the same crest and the same motto as appear on the bookplate. That seems to establish a connection between the two, does it not?"

"You are quite right. An acute reflection!" Mr. Reid answered. He carefully studied the engraving on the gold bead, and compared the figures with those on the book-

plate. "Yes, they are quite the same. An uplifted arm holding a naked sword, issuing from some kind of a cap or chapeau. I'm an ignoramus in heraldry. Never thought that my profession would ever need to draw upon that department of human knowledge. Ah! a lawyer ought to know something of everything as well as a good deal of some things. The same motto, too, I observe, 'Honneur sans Repos.' Yes, you are quite right. The owner of the necklace and the owner of the bookplate were one. But the name is scratched out; no trace of it left on the cover. Is there no name elsewhere?"

"There is none," John answered. "There has been a name here, you observe, on the title page. But it has been inked out so thoroughly that it is impossible even to trace a letter. There is just one more clue. Beneath the name is written a date and address. The date is gone. After long and careful study, I detect, or think I do, the fragments of the last three letters of the address. They are 'hia,' the closing letters of Philadelphia."

"A shrewd guess. Scouting still, I see!" exclaimed the lawyer. "The book was probably purchased here. The parties seemed to have belonged to this city. Is that what you mean?"

"Yes. I have no other clue except two letters "M. M." written here, you see, opposite this text in a lady's hand. Now you have my case, Mr. Reid. I am anxious to solve the mystery that hangs over my birth. I have little doubt of my mother's death. My father may be living, and I want to make an effort to find him, or at least to find out who he was, and I wish you to help me."

"I will, I will most heartily," Mr. Reid exclaimed. "Thank you for your confidence. But I fear I can do little. Yet, who knows? I have solved some perplexing mysteries in my day. Did you ever unravel an old stocking? I have done it often to make a ball. You want to pick out the right thread to start on. Then, a pull—and, whirr-r—away it goes! Let me think! The coat-of-arms on the bookplate is our clue. Fie! Fie! Why don't I know more of heraldry? Who does know? Let me think!

"I have it! Eureka! There's my friend Elias Boudinot. Yes, and Charles Thomson, the first Secretary of Congress. They were on the committee to devise the Great Seal of the United States, and I remember they

gave a lot of time and pains to such affairs. They were mousing over all sorts of sketches and studies and samples of coats-of-arms and seals. Mr. Thomson is at his country seat on the Schuylkill. But Mr. Boudinot lives with Mrs. Wm. Bradford over here on Arch Street just below Second. Not far from your friend Miss Oldham, Captain. He is our man! We will go to him. I will call to-morrow morning at nine o'clock promptly, and we will go over to Mr. Boudinot's and ask him to help us. If he cannot do it of his own knowledge, he will know some expert or other to whom to refer us. Good night! At nine o'clock to-morrow! Good night, gentlemen!"

John hastened to his room. He seemed to himself to have lived a score of years in that one day. What a day it had been! Breakfast in a prison cell—His trial—Vindication—Freedom—Parting with the friends of his captivity—The stirring news from Western friends—News that the old home was broken up—The rude awakening from his dream of Blanche Oldham's friendly interest in his case—Fanny McCormack's sisterly and successful aid.—The tidings of Blanche Oldham's engagement, the last blow that shattered all his hopes of love!—The opening up of a possible clue to his parentage! Thus a destiny had been crowded into a day. What extremes of emotion had been his, from the highest joys to the depths of despair!

Blanche Oldham to be married! All then was over. He threw himself upon a chair, and burying his face within his hands sobbed aloud. Only twice before since he was a slip of a boy had he shed tears,—when his father, Luke Latimer, had died, and when his mother told him the true story of his babyhood. The tears relieved him. He rose and walked the floor until after midnight. Then he lay down and slept.

He was up with the sun, and went out and strolled along the banks of the Delaware. He hired a skiff from a waterman, and pushed into the middle of the stream. The tide was flowing out. The current ran swiftly. He drifted down, down by the city shops and homes; past the shipping at the wharves, lightly plying his oars and keeping in mid stream. The sun had risen over the Jersey plains, and its rays sparkled and shimmered and rippled on the face of the river. They lit up the spire of Christ Church, and the tower of the State House, and the Old First Church on

Washington Square, and St. Peter's spire, and the classic front of Pine Street Church. He was drifting, drifting! Whither? What mattered it? Had not his life been cut rudely loose from all its old anchorage?

He leaned over, and with cheeks resting on his palms looked drearily back across the stern of the boat upon the city from which he was receding. A flash of color, blue, white and red, shot up into the air. It waved and shimmered in the full, bright beams of the May sun. It stopped suddenly. It spread into a broad band of glory and streamed forth in the wind. It was the Flag of his Country, which the janitor had just sent aloft upon the flag-staff of the State House. At the same moment Independence Bell gave tongue, and its joyous notes pealed over the city and echoed from the river banks.

John's heart leaped within him at the vision. He sat erect upon the thwart. He grasped the oars firmly and swung the boat about, setting the bow upstream. The whole tenor of his feelings was changed. His combative energy was roused. The tide and current were against him. Let them flow! He bent to the oars. He threw all his vigor into his strokes. The heavy skiff seemed to fly through the water against the tide, against the current, until Pine Street, and Spruce, Walnut and Chestnut and Market, Arch and Vine Streets had been left behind.

The sailors and watermen and workmen on the wharves looked at him and wondered. But he did not heed them. There was a wild satisfaction in the exercise of his strength; a joy in overcoming something; in making headway against obstacles; in forcing his boat whither he would, although the forces of nature seemed to say he should not.

At last he stopped and turned his boat down stream, and slowly paddled to the Market Street wharf. He was flushed with heat and the pleasure of exercise, and sweating at every pore. The fresh air, the bright sunlight, the cheerful voices of the morning, the ripple and plash of the stream, the combat with the tide and current and the sense of triumph, the stir of human life, the natural buoyancy of health and youth, all wrought upon and wrought themselves into his heart.

He had felt the wounds of grief, as was the lot of man. But only the ignoble would void their grasp of duty and service because of that! The woman he loved, loved an-

other. Well, that other was worthy of her love. She would be happier with him, because of her love for him. What but selfishness would inspire grief at such an issue? True love seeks the highest happiness of its objects, even though by the way of self-sacrifice. If he truly loved Blanche Oldham, let him be content, yes, let him be glad that she was happier with another than she could have been with himself. God bless her, and—good bye!

Farewell his dream of love! He would hide his disappointment in the depths of the forest, and learn,—not to forget, O no, never that!—but to do life's work as duty and honor showed the way, and learn contentment, even happiness, it might be, in such paths as Providence should open up. So the inward conflict ended, and John Latimer's full manhood was once more at the helm.

Back to the hotel, and after a bath and breakfast, he was ready for what the new day might bring forth. He greeted Andy with the usual heartiness, a little subdued and a savor of sadness therein; but enough like the old-time manner to bring laughter into the honest fellow's eyes and set his heart beating with pleasure.

CHAPTER LVI.

THE STORY OF A BOOKPLATE.

Promptly at nine o'clock, Mr. Justus Reid was at the Indian Queen Tavern, and set forth with John Latimer to the Bradford house. The two gentlemen had hardly got to the library when the door knocker again sounded, and Mr. Charles Thomson was shown in, just as Mr. Boudinot himself entered. He had dropped in for a few moments on some matter of business.

"Most wonderful stroke of good fortune!" exclaimed Mr. Reid, when greetings had been exchanged. "Nay, it is almost providential. I count it a happy omen. Of all the men in Philadelphia you are the two that I wished to see together. And here you are!"

He related John's history, and placed before his distinguished acquaintances the Bible and necklace. "Now gentlemen," he continued, "I know something of the law,

I hope, but heraldry to me is a *terra incognita*. Can you help me identify this bookplate? Or at least put me on the track of some one who will do so?"

"I am but a tyro in the science," said Mr. Boudinot, laughing. "But here is Mr. Thomson; he is the man of authority you are looking for. What little I know of heraldry I owe chiefly to him, having got it by absorption while we were making up the Great Seal of the United States. What say you, Mr. Thomson? Do you remember anything of this sort?"

Mr. Thomson examined the engraving closely. "I think I have seen this before," he said with some hesitation. "Where are your notes and memoranda used in preparing the seal of our Church General Assembly, a few years ago? You were much interested in that as President of the Trustees, and I gave you some help in the matter. You collected quite a lot of seals, emblems and coats-of-arms, and I fancy I have seen this engraving among them."

Mr. Boudinot went to his library shelves, and after a little search found a portfolio of plates. He laid it upon a centre table and untied the binding strings. The other gentlemen gathered about him and looked on with eager interest as he slowly turned over the sheets, making comments as the various figures passed in review.

"Those look like old friends," said Mr. Thomson as a lot of national emblems were turned up. "There's Washington's seal. And that's Washington's coat-of-arms. And that's Washington's bookplate. Ah; Barton's sketches for the United States Seal! And there's a copy of my own first rude sketch! What's that?"

"An old Masonic figure," answered Mr. Boudinot. "A serpent on a cross, quite an ancient design. We used that in preparing the device for our Church seal. You remember it, do you not? A serpent on the cross lifted up in the wilderness."

Still he turned the sheets; now and then giving the titles of the figures. "Pennsylvania's coat-of-arms. The seal of the Province of Pennsylvania. Seal of the City of Philadelphia. New York Colonial seals. Ah, these are what are we looking for! Here are cuts of the coats-of-arms borne by Philadelphia gentlemen and their ancestors, and bookplates of private libraries." All eyes were now fixed upon the figures as Mr. Boudinot slowly turned the plates.

Mr. Reid meanwhile held John's Bible upon the table for easy comparison.

"There!"

The word fell at the same moment from the lips of John and the lawyer

"That's it!" cried Mr. Thomson in the same breath. "What's the name?"

"Hugh Montgomery!" said Mr. Boudinot.

"Major Montgomery!" Mr. Reid exclaimed. "To be sure, I might have known. Stupid! I have seen that bookplate in his library."

"That's the name! I recall it now!" It was John who spoke, and with such an emphatic and excited manner that the others turned quickly toward him.

"What do you mean?" asked Mr. Reid.

John explained the cases of mistaken identity which had so perplexed him at Carlisle, and the name that he had heard, but imperfectly, attached by one of the parties to the title "Major."

"Was the Major with the Western army?" Mr. Boudinot asked.

"He was," the lawyer answered. "He went out as one of the President's staff, and came back with him from Bedford. And now that we have the cue, look at this young man, gentlemen! You both know Major Montgomery. What say you?"

"A striking likeness!" Mr. Boudinot exclaimed.

"A marked resemblance, certainly!" said Mr. Thomson.

"Ay!" exclaimed Mr. Reid. "The only marvel is that it didn't occur to me before. I don't wonder that in a dim light the one man should have been taken for the other. Barring his younger face, John Latimer is the duplicate in size, figure and features of our friend Major Hugh Montgomery. But come, gentlemen, let us look a little more closely into this. We have enough to start on, but we must make sure, make sure! Let us compare the two plates."

"They are the same, no doubt of it!" said Mr. Thomson. "In both, the shield is parted quarterly, as you see, the first and fourth quarters azure, with three golden fleur-de-lis, the historic Montgomery arms. The second and third quarters are red, bearing three golden annulets. And here also is the red inescutcheon with its golden sword and sceptre crossed. The two engravings are un-

doubtedly impressions from the same block, and this Bible must have once belonged to Major Montgomery's library."

"Examine the locket, please," said John. "Here it is."

Mr. Thomson scrutinized the figure on the gold bead. "It is a miniature of the crest on these two bookplates," he remarked. "A dexter arm issuing from a chapeau or cap of dignity, and holding a naked sword. They are the same." The necklace now made the circuit of the group, and all confirmed Mr. Thomson's observation.

"Was Major Montgomery ever married?" asked Mr. Boudinot.

Mr. Reid hesitated. "I know little of his early life, although I attend to his legal business. We have occasionally met one another socially; but he is not a society man. He is a widower; at least that is the common belief, but I never heard him speak of his domestic history. Yet, now that I mention it, I remember to have heard my wife speak of some incident, something sad and romantic, that befell his early years. But the Major is not a man to encourage talk about his private affairs."

"Young man, you will excuse me for speaking frankly," said Mr. Boudinot, turning to John and looking at him gravely. "You perhaps know enough of the world to understand that the search upon which you are bent may uncover facts that most men prefer to conceal. Whatever Major Montgomery may be now, his youth may not have been blameless. Supposing, for the moment, that you can trace your parentage to him, the discovery might give little satisfaction to him and less to you. A bar sinister on one's escutcheon—"

John interrupted. "Sir, I understand you, and thank you for your candor. But I would stake my life on the womanly purity of her whom I believe to be my mother. Look at this Bible! Since I learned its true history, I have gone over it from cover to cover, and have traced the spiritual life of her who doubtless owned the book, by its marked texts and passages. Look at this text opposite to which are written her initials 'M. M.' 'When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.' Look at this one!—turning rapidly over the leaves of the New Testament to Matthew 11: 28-30—'Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' No woman whose soul was anchored upon such

hopes as these, and could set up such landmarks of her inward life, could be aught but a good woman. I would pledge my life that her honor was unsullied, and that I was born in lawful wedlock. But, gentlemen, were it otherwise, I would desire to know the truth. The reality cannot be worse than the suspicion. I would not wish to pass among my fellow-men for what I am not. If the sinister bar is on my shield, I would count it false and dishonorable to wish to hide the fact from myself or from others, and go through life under false colors."

"Very well, then!" said Mr. Boudinot, looking at John with a pleased expression. "It shall be as you wish; and whatever the issue your sentiments are highly creditable. I hope, I almost believe you are right as to your mother. Major Montgomery's office is not far from here on Market Street. He has been ill, and confined to his house since New Year, but is now able to look after his affairs, and I daresay will be found at his desk. I will send for him."

He summoned a waiter and despatched him with a note, saying that Messrs. Boudinot and Thomson would be glad to see him without delay on business of the utmost importance. In the meantime, Mr. Reid and John were asked to wait in the adjoining room while Mr. Boudinot and his friend arranged their personal business. The messenger soon returned saying that Major Montgomery would attend immediately. In a little while the gentleman was announced, and ere he was shown into the library, Mr. Justus Reid was called in, John being told to bide where he was until summoned.

"We have sent for you on a matter of some delicacy," said Mr. Boudinot. "And at the outset, I must crave your indulgence if we seem to be intruding upon personal and it may be sacred affairs. But it seems to be our duty to proceed. Do you recognize this bookplate?" he asked, handing the little Bible to the Major.

"Of course," was the response, "it is my own. My family coat-of-arms, sir. But how came it—"

"Look at the book itself," Mr. Boudinot continued, "and see if you recognize it. Look carefully."

Major Montgomery stood by the centre table, slowly turning over the leaves. John had placed a bookmark between the pages containing the passage marked with the initials M. M. Thereat the Major paused. He read the

text. He noticed the letters, and raised the book to his face to examine them more closely. A flush of recognition passed over his countenance, an expression of pleasure followed by one of pain. The bright color in his cheeks slowly faded out. He looked up and cast a searching glance upon the three men, who were intently watching him. Then he dropped his eyes, and having again scanned the letters, hurriedly turned back to the title page, and scrutinized it carefully. The book trembled in his hands as he looked up once more, and asked with a voice broken with emotion: "Gentlemen, where did you get this book?"

"First tell us, please," said Mr. Justus Reid, now taking up the case, "if you recognize the volume?"

"I do, I do!" said the Major with emotion. "Yes, though it is many years ago—but there can be no doubt of it! It is a pocket Bible which I gave my young bride twenty-three years ago. It is associated with the sweetest joys and deepest sorrows of my life. It disappeared suddenly after her death. It was lost, as I supposed—"

"Stop! Before you go further, look at this!" said Mr. Reid, and placed in his hand the necklace. "Did you ever see it before?"

Major Montgomery laid the Bible upon the table and eagerly took the necklace into his hand. He glanced at the faded ribbon bow tied upon it, and nervously stroked it with his fingers. He looked a moment at the oval bead with its engraved crest and raised his eyes. They were dim with tears. His lips were twitching with emotion.

"Great God!" he cried, and turned quickly toward Mr. Reid. "How came you upon this? O my baby boy! My poor lost child! Sir, I know this necklace well. It was a gift from my mother, who gave it to me because I had worn it when an infant. When my son was born, I placed it upon his neck. He was lost,—drowned in a fearful flood that swept away my home on the bank of the Allegheny near Pittsburg, and the necklace was lost with him. I have never seen it since, until I chanced to recognize it on the breast of a young insurgent last Christmas. I knew it first by the MacKinlay tartan on the ribbon, for my mother was of that clan. I tried to trace it, and buy it from the prisoner. I believed that my child's body had drifted ashore somewhere, and had been found, and the necklace taken from it, and I wished to know how it had come into this

person's possession. It seemed to me that it would be a satisfaction to learn whether the little body had been found, and where it is buried."

"Why did you give up your search?" asked Mr. Reid.

"I did not. But soon after Christmas I was taken sick, and my quest was suspended until my recovery. A week ago, I again set my agent upon the track. I have heard nothing of the matter since. And the Bible? Yes, that must have been picked up with the drift of the deluge. But how came they together? And how came they into your hands?"

He spoke rapidly, his voice quivering with the intensity of his feelings as the melancholy events, so suddenly and strangely recalled, passed before his mind.

"Be seated, Major!" said Mr. Boudinot, seeing how deeply his friend was affected. "There, compose yourself! Mr. Reid has something further to communicate. He will explain all. Perhaps, he may have some good news to tell you. Compose yourself, sir! Gentlemen, be seated."

The good man had evident need of the advice which he gave, for his feelings were profoundly stirred. The other gentlemen were equally moved. The little lawyer, to disguise his emotion, drew out his snuff-box, thumped the top vigorously, opened it, snapped the lid to, and returned it to his vest pocket quite forgetting to partake of the contents. Then he told of John's rescue by Luke Latimer and the Bended Knee, and recited his history up to the present.

Major Montgomery started to his feet in a tremor of excitement.

"My child lives?" he cried. "Can it be possible? Gracious God, Thou art indeed merciful! Only this morning I read the account of Capt. Latimer's trial and vindication. I was pleased that any innocent man should be set free, but not especially concerned. And to think that he is my lost child!" He paused, almost overcome by his emotions. "But gentlemen, stop! Are we not taking too much for granted? This all seems plausible. But is it proof? Full proof, satisfactory proof? May I depend upon it confidently? Something more, it seems to me, must be required before I can be sure of a matter of such vital importance to me."

"Well, there is something more. There's a good deal more, in fact," said Mr. Reid, rising and crossing the library floor. He opened the door of the room in which John had

been waiting, and returned leading him by the arm. He brought him up to Major Montgomery, and taking that gentleman by the arm also, led the two, one on either side, to a large pier glass at one end of the library. Then he stepped away and left the two men standing side by side looking at the two images that faced them from the mirror.

The same height, six feet two inches! The same broad shoulders. The same tapering trunk and straight, shapely legs. The same hand, large yet nervous looking, and with broad squarish finger tips. The same fair complexion; the same curling chestnut hair, except that through the scattered locks of the elder there were threads of gray. No one spoke. The three gentlemen looked on at the two stalwart figures and the two reflected images thereof, and awaited results.

"My son, my son! Great God, it must be my son!" the Major exclaimed, and reached out his hands. John grasped them warmly, and the two men stood looking into each others faces. Their hearts were bounding with unutterable emotion. But there was no embrace. That eager, silent hand grasp, the trembling voice, the quivering lips, the tear-dimmed eyes, uttered all. It was not in the blood of their race, even in a supreme moment like that, to make greater demonstration of what was passing within.

Mr. Boudinot advanced. "Gentlemen, I wish you joy! Major Montgomery, I congratulate you. God has given you back your child. It is indeed wonderful!"

"Ay," said the Major, grasping his hand, "Blessed be His Name!"

Mr. Thomson gave his hearty greetings, and then Mr. Justus Reid.

"You are satisfied, Major, I hope?" said the lawyer. "You have reason to be. The proof is unquestionable. I have not the least doubt myself of the identity of this stalwart, noble fellow with your lost child. The case would stand in any court of law in Christendom. And, sir, let me say, you have every reason to be satisfied with the result. I know something of this young man. Any father might be proud of him. He's a chip off the old block, sir. A second edition; ay, and meaning no disparagement to yourself, revised and if anything a little improved."

"I am satisfied!" Major Montgomery replied. "Yes, I believe I am fully satisfied. Yet, there is one thing else I think of, that would clinch and confirm all."

"What is it, sir?" asked Mr. Reid.

"I remember little of my infant, of course," the Major resumed. "He was so young and small, and I was ignorant of such matters. But I recollect that the Scotch nurse who had charge of the babe and was lost in the flood that swept him away, pointed out a birthmark on the bairn that seemed to me very curious. It was a crescent-shaped mole on the left foot. I often looked at it afterwards, for I loved to hold the wee, soft pink feet in my hand, and thus came to remember it. Such birthmarks I believe never disappear."

"On what part of the foot was it placed?" asked John.

"At the side of the instep, just about midway of the heel and toes."

"Gentlemen, will you excuse me if I uncover my foot?" John asked.

"Certainly!" said Mr. Boudinot. "Do it at once."

John kneeled upon the floor, unlaced the left shoe, unbuckled the stocking, and stripped it off the leg displaying the naked foot. All the gentlemen bent eagerly forward to look. The half moon-shaped mole was there!

"It is enough!" cried Major Montgomery. "Gentlemen, I take you to witness that this is my son and heir. I doubt no longer. God be praised!" He once more grasped John's hand and pressed it warmly.

"It is past ten o'clock," said Mr. Thomson. "Yet I am sure we all would like to hear so much of Major Montgomery's life as may complete the remarkable and romantic disclosures of this morning; provided, of course, the Major has no objection to the narration."

Mr. Reid seconded the suggestion, and added that such a statement would really be necessary to connect and explain all the facts.

"I have not the least objection, gentlemen," said Major Montgomery. "Indeed I think you ought to know all. I have nothing to conceal, though much to regret and much to mourn. I am an Irishman by birth, although of pure Scotch ancestors, and my family is a younger branch of the noble house of Montgomery. At my majority, as my preferences were for the army, my father bought me a Lieutenant's commission, and I was sent out to the American Colonies. In the early seventies, I was ordered to Philadelphia. I was fond of society; and as his Majesty's

officers were welcome guests and visitors in the best Colonial families, I soon found many pleasant acquaintances. Among the young ladies whom I met was one in whom I became greatly interested. The interest was mutual, and ere long deepened into a mutual affection.

"I informed the father of my love for his daughter, and asked to be recognized as a suitor for her hand. He was satisfied with my family standing and character, but denied my plea. He was a member of the Society of Friends, and I a member of the Scotch Kirk. He, as a Quaker, was opposed to war. I was a warrior by profession. He had a third reason which I afterwards learned. The troubles between the British Government and the American Colonies had already begun to foment, and he was a determined patriot and partisan of the Colonies; while I, of course, as one of his Majesty's officers was necessarily on the other side. These facts made a series of incompatibilities too formidable to be overcome. In view of the circumstances, my suit was not only rejected, but I was asked to discontinue my visits to the family.

"Of course, I was greatly broken up by this decision, but tried to submit. Yet I could not forget the young lady. I loved her too sincerely and deeply for that; and I found that she was as much grieved over the matter as I, and as persistent in her love. Why should I dwell on what followed? A painful and hopeless effort to change the purpose of the parents at last ended in a clandestine marriage, or rather a runaway match. I had a small patrimony, which with my pay as a Lieutenant seemed to justify me in taking a wife. At least, I was able to support one in a modest fashion. I do not attempt to justify my act. As I look at it now, it wrought a great wrong to one whom I truly loved. Her Church and her family disowned her. As she was a woman of a most affectionate and domestic nature and deeply attached to her kindred, this alienation nearly broke her heart.

"She had hoped and believed that her parents would soon relent and be reconciled; but they were unyielding. My family also were greatly displeased with my act, but I never told my wife of that. Had it not been for this trouble, we would have been perfectly happy. Even with that cloud hanging over us, I look back to those days as the sweetest and brightest of my life."

"You have not mentioned the lady's name, Major," said Mr. Reid. "Have you any objection to do so?"

"Certainly not!" was the reply. "It was Mercy Rhodes. She was the eldest daughter of Jonathan Rhodes, a wealthy and influential tea merchant. He had but two daughters, Mercy and Rebecca."

"Jonathan Rhodes!" exclaimed Mr. Reid. "Then she must have been the sister of Mrs. Rebecca Oldham."

"She was," the Major answered. "The gentleman had only two children; daughters both. Rebecca was the younger, and is now the only surviving member of the family. She also married out of meeting as her sister Mercy had done; but though the Society of Friends disowned her, her parents did not. Their sad experience with their eldest daughter had softened their hearts and perhaps had enlightened their minds. I have reason to believe that they bitterly deplored their course with us. Perhaps, had Mercy lived longer they would have relented. But I had no communication with them, except to inform them of their daughter's death and of the death of our infant. They never made approaches of any sort to me, nor I to them, and the alienation has continued with the Rhodes' connection."

"According to that, then," said Mr. Reid, turning to John, "you are a full cousin of Blanche Oldham and Col. Neville; for Rebecca Rhodes married the youngest brother of Gen. Neville's wife."

John who had followed the narrative with keen interest, started and flushed deeply, but said nothing, and his father resumed his story.

"In the autumn of 1772, I was ordered to Fort Pitt on special duty. The Colonies were then almost in a condition of revolt over the revenue laws, and the Ministry were anxious concerning the condition of the frontier posts, and of the probable attitude of the Indian tribes in case of armed resistance. I was to consult with the Commandant at Fort Pitt about these matters, and to forward whatever negotiations might be thought necessary.

"My young wife insisted upon going with me, and I was willing enough, for I knew that, cut off as she was from her kindred, she would be wretched in Philadelphia. It was a rough journey at that early day; but we had a strong escort and pleasant fellow-travellers, and the glory

of the American October was upon the landscape. Everything was strange and new, which made the trip a continual pleasure to us both. We reached Fort Pitt in November, 1772, and I at once reported to the commander. Among the villagers, however, I was known as a Mr. Eglinton, engaged in establishing trading posts for a Fur Company. I bought a bit of land and built a cabin on the banks of a little stream called Two Mile Run, that flows into the Allegheny River.

"Here we spent a happy winter, though at times it was lonely enough for Mercy, for my duties compelled me to make several long journeys into the backwoods. But I had brought with me a steady middle-aged Scotchwoman named Jane Campbell, who was a most faithful companion and attendant, and to whom I could confidently commit the care of her whom I held dearest.

"In May, 1773, our child was born. A few bright days followed. How happy the little mother was, and how proud of her fine, big baby boy! But soon she sickened with fever, and in two weeks after the baby's birth, I buried her in the graveyard of the First Church, whose site adjoins that of Trinity Church in the plot of ground granted to those congregations by the Penn proprietors.

"Two weeks afterwards, while I was at the Fort, a storm suddenly arose. I hurried homeward, but ere reaching the cabin my course was stayed by such a downpour as I had never seen. A cloudburst had broken above the hills, and the little Run that threaded so quietly the meadow before my door had become in a few moments an angry torrent. When at last I reached a point where I could look upon the site of my cabin, I saw only a broad sheet of fiercely running water. Not a trace of my home remained. That hour and that spot are wrought into my memory so deeply by the awful agony of my soul, that I recall the whole scene as vividly as if it had happened yesterday. I could only stand helplessly there in the rain and wind, and gaze at the flood raging before me, and toss my arms wildly and cry out for my child. I seemed forsaken of God. I was tempted in my misery to rush into the cruel waters, and let them engulf me also. But hope, the barest shadow of a hope that something might have happened, withheld me. Perhaps, the good Scotch nurse to whose care the baby had been entrusted, might have foreseen the flood and escaped in time?

“Alas! It was a vain hope. When the waters went down, which they did almost as quickly as they had arisen, not a fragment of my house remained. The whole homestead from the cabin to the border of the stream was a level of yellow mud. We found nurse Campbell’s naked body wedged between the branches of a tree. A neighbor whose cabin was on the hill opposite us had seen her shortly before the cloud-burst sitting in the open porch reading and rocking the cradle beside her. When the flood began to roll down the ravine, fearing for our cabin, which stood upon the flat, this neighbor ran out to look. He saw Jane running towards the stable, and stopping at the door as if to open it. Then a mighty wall of water intervened, and he saw no more.

“We inferred that the nurse, seeing the waters come up to the stable which stood much nearer to the run, and having no idea of what had happened, and perceiving that the cattle might be made uncomfortable, had run to open the door and let them out, intending to come back to the child. But the flood overtook her.

“The edge of the torrent, pushing up toward the hillside, must have lifted up the cradle with the sleeping child within it and the Bible where Jane Campbell had dropped it, and floated it out of the open porch, and borne it upon the quieter margin of the inundation to the river, and so on to the place where the Latimers found it. It seems to me little less than a miracle that it could have been safely carried such a distance. But I have long ago learned that the marvelous is a permanent factor both in the preservation and the destruction of human life. Above all—yes, I dare not doubt it! Some good angel of God must have guided the little vessel.

“Gentlemen, there is little more to tell. In a few days I left my Western post. Indeed, there was no more for me to do, that I was willing to do, and I returned to the East. By that time the Boston Tea Party, as it is commonly called, had occurred, and the country was full of excitement. The British Government was stubbornly and blindly bent upon that policy which eventually led to the Revolution.

“I was in sympathy with the colonists in their contention for liberty, as were many British officers, and some of the noblest and best of the citizens of England and Scot-

land. Shortly afterwards I received directions from Gen. Gage, then in Boston, to go to the West on secret service. The instructions which I received thoroughly aroused my indignation. They were little less than to foment hostilities among the Indian tribes against the frontier settlements, and to turn hordes of cruel savages upon the helpless border. No doubt it was a policy of diversion and retaliation which the tactics of war may sometimes sanction. But my conscience and heart revolted against it. I threw up my commission, and when the Revolution began in earnest, offered my sword to General Washington.

"You know, gentlemen, that I served during the war with some degree of fidelity on the side of the colonists, and since independence was won, I have given myself to business. I have lived quietly and alone. I could not quite shake off the shock of my double sorrow. But the old love and the old joy will live again in this resurrection of the son whom I have so long mourned as dead."

CHAPTER LVII.

FATHER AND SON.

It was a striking looking trio that issued from the Bradford mansion and walked along Arch Street and down Third. At Market Street, Mr. Reid bade his companions good morning, but not before he had received a charge to call soon at the Major's office, since this day's disclosures had made his professional services necessary in the testamentary disposal of certain properties and values.

"With the greatest pleasure!" was the cordial response. "A worthy charity or two may suffer by the change. But you are quite right, sir. Charity begins at home. And (laying his hand upon John's arm) that blessing is now yours. A man without a family may keep house, but cannot have a home. Good bye! You have both gained at least an inch this morning, I verily believe. I will be utterly overshadowed if I stay longer with such sons of Anak. Au revoir!"

He folded and rolled his hands in a transport of satisfaction, and flung them toward his stalwart companions as

if for the moment happy to toss such a burden off his mind. His clerks got a great surprise when he reached his office. Something extraordinary happened. For a full half hour the lawyer's books and papers lay untouched before him on the table, while Mr. Justus Reid sat in a brown study thrumming the table with his fingers, a look of vast content upon his face, and ever and anon smiling and nodding his head as though pleasant thoughts were having a merry chase around his brain.

The senior clerk thrust his quill behind his ear, and left his high stool to submit to his chief an important document which he was copying. "Beg pardon, sir?" he said at last, seeing that he was unnoticed.

"Certainly, certainly!" said Mr. Reid smiling at the corner of the ceiling. "Excellent!" And kept on softly whistling and beating time with his fingers. Thereat the senior clerk went back to his stool, rubbed his bald poll in perplexity, smoothed down the green baize apron that protected his well-rounded waistcoat, and waited.

"Odd, this!" he muttered. "I never before saw the chief even the least bit O-be-joyful. And at this time o' day, too!" He shook his head in solemn deprecation of such impropriety.

"Fuddled, by jings!" quoth the junior clerk leaning across the desk and eyeing Mr. Reid furtively. A broad grin wrinkled his cadaverous face, for he was delighted to catch the chief in a weakness for which he had often taken his clerk to task.

At last the lawyer pulled himself together with a sudden jerk, and looked around as one who had just awakened from sleep. The keen, accustomed business glance came back to his eyes.

"Here, Mr. Scribely!" he exclaimed briskly. "We have lost two good hours this morning. We must buckle to it now. Have you those papers ready? Ah, yes, to be sure." Then he bent to the day's work; and there was no more dreaming until he sipped his Madeira after dinner, and listened in an absent way to Mrs. Reid's voluble comments upon the rare news about "the Montgomerys."

As for the clerks they concluded that some strange mistake had been made in their diagnosis of the lawyer's case. Mr. Scribely cast sundry anxious looks towards the chief's desk during the day, and as often shook his head gravely.

"Too much head work!" he ejaculated. "Ah; there's a brain for you!"

"Say, Scribely," quoth the junior clerk, "we was all out about the chief, wasn't we? Sober as a parson, by jings! I'm kind-uh sorry for it, too. Just for once, you know. Hey?" To which Mr. Scribely's only response, his dignity being offended by such familiar address, was the queak, queak of his goose-quill pen as he vigorously drove it across the paper.

John and his father walked silently up the street side by side. Their hearts were throbbing with a strange gladness, the ecstasy of a new-born affection. Friends and acquaintances of Major Montgomery returned his quiet but cordial greeting as they passed upon the sidewalk; but stopped, and looked back, and wondered to see the Major's double pacing the pavement at his side. That morning John had left off his scout's uniform, and donned a suit in the ordinary fashion of the time, differing little from that which his father wore. This change of dress made the likeness between the two men more striking.

The Major would have taken his son immediately home, but John must first have him to the Indian Queen, where he knew that Andy eagerly awaited the outcome of the visit to Mr. Boudinot. To this the Major heartily consented when he learned the warmth and depth and fidelity of Andy's friendship.

That worthy had grown somewhat weary during the long delay. He had got his few belongings together and stowed within his saddle bags ready to leave for the West on the next day by the Pittsburg stage, which had lately been set up. But that was a brief service. He had exhausted the contents of a pitcher of home-brewed beer, which he had hospitably shared with the landlord. Then, with time hanging heavily upon his hands, he betook him to the stable. The hostler, and the stable boy, and two idle urchins of the sort wont to be attracted to such a place by the savory odor of mews, were gathered about him, as he smoked his pipe and spun a yarn of Indian adventure. Of course, Capt. Jack Latimer figured therein prominently, and it is to be feared not altogether accurately. But the audience was none the worse for Andy's wide swing of imagination, and the story was doubtless much the better. Just as the adventure had reached its climax

and close, the stable boy shouted with a wild whoop and wave of the horsebrush over his head,

"There he is now!"

The hostler and the two urchin amateurs started as if some of Captain Jack's Indians had suddenly appeared, and rushed pell-mell to the stable door. Andy withdrew his pipe and followed; but as he glanced toward the gateway quickened his leisurely pace and brushed by the hostler and his aids. He even dropped his pipe in his excitement as he ran through the yard. He stopped face to face with John and his father. For a moment not a word was spoken as Andy looked from one to the other with a subdued awe upon his countenance. Then with the rush of gladness from his heart solemnity fled from his face, and with eyes gleaming with joy, he grasped John's hand.

"Ah, Jock lad!" he exclaimed. "You don't nade for til say a worred. It spakes for itself. If the gentleman were yourself you couldn't favor him a bit more nor you do. This must be your father, my b'y! You have found your father, A'm sure."

"Yes, Andy, you have guessed rightly. This is my father, Major Hugh Montgomery."

"I am pleased, sir, to meet you!" said the Major, his fine, old-fashioned manners fairly illumined by the heartiness of his feelings as he warmly shook Andy's hand. "I have already heard somewhat of your long and faithful attachment to my son. I thank you, sir, with all my heart, and I hope you will let me have an opportunity to show my gratitude."

Andy was not wont to be abashed in the presence of men; but his readiness and volubility for once failed him, and he stood bowing and blushing like a schoolboy, and teasing his hair with his fingers. John relieved his embarrassment by bidding the party into the house; and not until they were seated in John's apartment and the Major's story briefly told, did Andy regain his self-possession.

"What was the name by which you christened your infant b'y?" was one of his first questions. "Faith, it's not much of a baby he is at this present; risin' sax feet two inches an' still agrowin', A' do belave." Strangely enough no one had thought, at least no one had spoken of the point which Andy raised.

"What did we name the lad?" the Major answered. "I

had no opportunity to get him christened, but we had agreed upon a name. I wanted him called Hugh, an honored family name of the Montgomerys for many generations, and the mother readily consented. But the day before her death, knowing no doubt that the end was near, her thoughts turned often and tenderly to her childhood's home. She spoke much of her father, and looking up tenderly at me and then lovingly down at the infant by her side, she asked me if I would mind it very much if the laddie were named Jonathan instead of Hugh?—Jonathan being her father's name. 'No, darling,' I said, 'no indeed! Have it as you wish. Jonathan it shall be.' I stooped and kissed the pale little mother, and then the wee red-faced laddie. For the two weeks that my dear wife lived, we called him naught but Jonathan. And so it is written in my Family Bible, in which I made record of the date and day of my marriage, and of Mercy's death, and of the supposed death of our child. And there you will see it, my son, when you go home. Ah, well!" The strong man sighed, and wiped a tear from his eyes, as indeed the others did also. "But, thank God!" he continued, "we will write an addendum thereto; and it will be a happy event, God be praised! And you, sir," turning to Andy, "must come and dine with us, and see the record made."

Andy was highly pleased with the invitation, but with generous thoughtfulness declined it. "No, no, you must have your first dinner your lones. Sorry a soul should come atween you two at sich a time. And so the b'y's name was Jonathan? Well, well! It's not so far out of the way, for the lad was christened John by Dr. McMillan. A' mind well when it was done, for he kicked and yelled brawly when the water fell upon him. The gossips threaped Mrs. Latimer that she had pinched the bairn to make him cry; for, siz they, it's good luck for a wean's voice to be h'ard in the Kirk at it's bapteesin'. Jonathan! Ay, the poor lettle mother had her will after all; for what is John but short for Jonathan? Will ye be after changin' the name, think ye?"

The Major laughed pleasantly, and said they would have to settle that matter later. It would hardly do to have another christening; and if they were to venture on such an impropriety "the infant," perhaps, would have something to say about the name. However, to put that

matter to rest in the reader's mind, it may here be stated that no change was ever made except to add the paternal name to the old one, and thereafter our hero was known as John Latimer Montgomery. In sooth, however, among his Western friends, it was rarely enough that he was called by the new surname.

Another point that struck Andy's fancy was the connection which John's new relationship established between him and the Nevilles. "Blanche Oldham your cousin?" he exclaimed, "an' first cousin at that! Faith, you might 'a gone funder for kin an' fared warse, Mr. Jock. Quare how the Good Bein' brings things about! Who'd 'a consated, when you two uns were first acquaint on that trip down the Ohio, that ye were cousins all unbeknownst? She's a bonny lass, is Miss Blanche, an' worthy to have kinship aven with John Latimer,—beggin' your pardon! A' should 'a said John Montgomery. It sounds oddly, disn't it? It'll be hard wark a-wormin' my tongue around the new name, A' misdoubt."

"Don't try it, Andy!" said John. "Keep the old name, Jock. I will always be that to you, dear old fellow, whatever I may be to others."

"Thank you, Mr. John!" Andy responded with great heartiness. "A'd prefer to bide by the old name, if it's all the same to you. We've good authority, indade, for sayin' that 'the old is better.' The new name's a grand one, no doubt. Didn't your father Latimer sarve a while with Ginerl Richard Montgomery in the war for Independance? Ay, A' defy the face o' clay to find a better name nor that in the auld country or in the new. But an auld name is iver the tastiest to an auld friend, Major Montgomery."

"An' to think of Captain Jock bein' a cousin of Col. Presley Neville! That's not so bad, mebbe. But there's the auld Ginerl! Jock Latimer a nevvie til *him*! Uncle Neville, to be sure! Ha, ha! No doubt, he'll be proud of his new connection, the auld curmudgeon! He thought for to break ye intirely, but it's himself that is broken up. He digged a pit for another, as the Good Book hath it, an' he's fallen intil it himself. Ay, there's manny a slip 'twixt cup an' lip. But A' misdoubt, A'm talkin' in riddles to your father here, so A'll e'en explain."

And explain he did, with high satisfaction, and many a merry quib and sarcastic fling and sundry compliments

meanwhile to the landlord's home-brewed. The Major was surprised at what he heard, for he knew the Nevilles well, and waxed indignant and even wroth as Andy's tale proceeded. But John mollified his anger, and softened his friend's statements as much as truth would permit.

"Ay, Capt. Jock, that's you, forsooth! Al'ays ginerous an' forgivin'. An' it's quite right; an' highly Christian, A'll no deny that. But A' go in for the Screeptur policy of forgivin' the returnin' an' penitent prodigal. When the Giner'l comes back in that fashion—Ah well! But it's a brave bit of humble pie he'd be atin', whan he h'ard 'at the man he helt too common to aven spake to Blanche Oldham, is his own nevvy! An' a Montgomery, at that! A Montgomery as was a mighty fam'ly among the notables five centuries afore the Nivilles was thought of. Ay, ay, Giner'l, ye wrought your plan out fine to ruin Capt. Jock; but it's been bravely undone for ye. Sure, what comes in over the divil's back goes out under his belly, as ma auld mother uset til say; an' she niver taught me truer words nor them. You wouldn't 'a splashed along in your plans so bold mebbe, if you'd 'a knowed what was comin'. Faith, you was wadin' in dreggy waters, an' got beyant your depth afore you know'd it. Axcuse me, gintlemin, but A'll be mighty plazed for til see him flounderin' about a bit. Despisin' an' parrsecutin' his own relation! Ay, but there's a marrciful Providence that sands curses like chickens home to roost. But letabee, siz I. The Giner'l aimed to do ye a harem, but it's only good he's done ye; an' we beeta not abuse the bridge that carries us over. Though it's small thanks to the bridge in the prisent case."

If Andy was exalted to the seventh heaven of satisfaction over his friend's rare good fortune, Major Montgomery was, in his milder way, highly pleased with Andy. "A most original character!" he exclaimed as John and he walked homeward. "I don't wonder you are so strongly attached to him. A witty dog! How he did score my old comrade Gen. Neville! And his fun is informed with genuine good sense. Does he always quote proverbs as freely as to-day?"

John laughed. "Proverbs? Yes. I verily believe he thinks and even dreams in proverbs. Wherever he got them all, and how he remembers them, passes my comprehension. He has the accumulated proverbial wisdom of all Ulster at his tongue's end."

"Which is simply the wisdom of Scotland, once removed!" the Major interposed.

"Yes, no doubt. But Andy seems to give the imported articles a peculiar flavor and force native to the soil. At all events, they rarely suffer in either humor or wisdom in the process of transition through Andy's brain. He is a natural genius; and if it had been his good fortune to receive an education in his youth, he would have made a man of rare power. He is as true as steel, and as honest as the sun; a man of genuine piety and goodness, with just enough old-fashioned prejudice to give an effective foil to his piquant character. A little too free occasionally with the bottle; but never drunken, and never coarse nor unkind even in his cups. Rare old Andy Burbeck! He'll never lack a friend while I live."

"Bravo!" exclaimed the Major. "Let me join you in that pledge, for henceforth your friends shall be mine."

We will not further follow the two men, father and son, as they entered Major Montgomery's house on Spruce Street. Nor will we try to picture the gladsome fussiness of the old housekeeper; the stir of excitement that disturbed the placid order of the place; the revolution wrought by the coming in of a new, young life; the swift transformation in the Major, in his habits, in his home; the flurried happiness of fitting up John's room; the cosy breakfasts, and hearty dinners, with Andy an early guest, for he was persuaded to defer his journey home another week, and then Mr. Justus Reid and Messrs. Boudinot and Thomson; and other friends, by and by. Nor can we enter upon the long delightful evenings as the two sat chatting in the cool southern porch, around whose sides the fragrant woodbine climbed, while the soft southern breeze brought up to them the scent of roses from the garden. Nor can we record the mutual exchange of personal history, as the father learned the story of his son's romantic life in the Western forests, and the son learned the varied incidents of his father's long and honorable and checkered career. All these we must leave the reader to imagine. The month that followed was one of the happiest that the two men had known, or were to know. Sorely grieved the Major was that these incomparable domestic sweets were so soon to cease.

CHAPTER LVIII.

A PACKET OF LETTERS.

In the possession of one of the writer's friends is a small leathern-covered box. The leather is dyed red and ornamented with round, brass-headed nails arranged along the sides and angles and over the top in divers geometrical figures. Within the box are bundles of letters folded in the old-fashioned way that our grandsires practiced, with marks and remnants of wafers and sealing-wax along the edges, whose little ragged gaps show where the precious missives were opened. The paper is brown with age, and some of the letters are darkened by creases and thumb marks that show signs of much handling and frequent reading. Two, at least, bear on the wax well-preserved impressions of the counterpart in miniature of the Montgomery arms, as engraved upon the bookplate that bore so prominent a part in discovering to John Latimer his parentage.

In sooth, these letters are the property of a granddaughter of that worthy gentleman, who gave them to her when he was a stalwart, white-haired man, delighting to tell the child tales of the Western borders and waiting to pass beyond this earthly Border into the Fields Illimitable. To the courtesy of this lady the reader and author are indebted for the privilege of reading what follows. In the copying some liberties have been taken with the spelling, which is only what our ancestors themselves were wont to do, and sometimes to a degree that would sorely prejudice their standing did they live in these exacter days. Some of the profuse capitalization has also been in part at least revised, and the grammar altered, if not improved, in accordance with modern usage. Otherwise, the reader has these old-time letters just as they came to the author, with all the odor of the past upon them, yet with the freshness of that present which is continually being renewed in the unchanging emotions, affections, hopes and fears of humanity.

LETTER No. 1.

From Blanche Oldham to Fanny McCormack.

PHILADELPHIA, May 21, A. D. 1795.

MY DEAR FRIEND FANNY:—I take my pen to write you a few lines before the weekly Western stage leaves for Carlisle and Pittsburg. There are great News for you to hear; indeed the City has been all agog with it. John Latimer has found his Father! And what is more wonderful, he turns out to be my own full Cousin! This is how it all happened. * * * Is not that a strange Story? It reads like a romance, and you may know into what a State of Excitement it has thrown us. My poor dear Papa was the youngest of the Oldham Family of whom Aunt Neville was the oldest child. So you see that in spite of all Uncle Neville's prejudices against Cousin John—how odd it seems to call him so!—he is one of the Family Connection. I knew that Major Montgomery had married Mamma's oldest Sister, who had died years ago; and that there was something that quite separated him from our Family. But I never knew the Particulars until they all came out in proving Cousin John's birth. There is no doubt about it at all. The lawyers have gone over the Evidence, and everything is made as plain as can be. And to think that the little baby Things that he wore should have kept all this time, and should have led to his Discovery! Major Montgomery is a highly respectable person, indeed, and comes of a very good old family. I believe he claims to have descended from one of the ancient Scotch or Irish Gentry. Mamma says he is well off, so that Cousin John is thought to be very Fortunate.

He has been to see us once with his Father, and the old Family trouble has been reconciled. I like Major Montgomery (who, of course, is my Uncle), very much; and Mamma says he is a fine Gentleman with courtly Manners, and reminds her of the old Stock. That, you know, is the highest praise Mamma could pass upon any person. After this visit, John came to see us by himself. Poor fellow! he seems sad. It is hard for him to get settled into the new Soil, as he says. He is very fond of his mother (Mrs. Latimer, I mean) and his sister Meg. It seems like tearing up the Roots of his past Life to give them up as his own kin. He will never cease to love them as his mother and sister, I am sure, from what he says.

He talks of going West again; can't be content in the East. Mother fears his roving Habits in the Forest have spoiled him for Steady Life here. But that must soon pass away. There is something else, I am certain, and you will pardon me, dearest, if I speak of it * * * Of course, I would not have told anyone but you all this, and I greatly fear you may think it unmaidenly to speak of it even to you. But somehow I always feel like unbosoming all my Perplexities as well as my Pleasures to my dear Fanny. I think I must have learned that from Cousin John. * * * I daresay if We had known more of one another at that time, instead of being so long and so far separated, those Feelings which were excited in my Breast during that first Meeting on the Ohio River and the stirring Incidents that followed, might have grown into a deep and strong Affection.

Then Uncle Neville was very bitter against Cousin John, without the least reason in the world; and Aunt Neville has such high notions about Family, and all that. Really, I have no Patience with her in these Matters! But dear Mamma is greatly influenced by her, and indeed feels a great deal in the same Way. That's the way with all our best Philadelphia Families; they are dreadfully set on Good Blood and Respectable Connections. I never believed half nor quarter of the Stories told about John; no indeed! But I must confess they did influence me some. Then we were so far away from one another; and when we met, as it happened afterwards, I thought he was distant, and maybe cold. Poor fellow! I daresay he felt—but, I must not enter on that again.

I am glad that Capt. Burd and he are great Friends. The Captain thinks he is the very Soul of Honor and Courage, one of the Manliest Men he has met. That is true of Capt. Burd himself, I am sure. It is pleasant to hear them talk. But the Captain is all bubbling over with joy these days, and Cousin John is so gentle and sad even with all his bright and pleasant ways. Mamma says she never saw a young man with finer Manners. He is quite like his Father in that, and she wonders at it. But Blood will Tell, as she says. Ah me! if some Folk had found that out sooner, who knows what might have happened? But it was for the Best and truly Providential. * * *

And now dear Fanny, you must believe me the one

Thing that influenced me more than anything else was that Discovery. Indeed it was not hard to see that you loved the very ground he walked on. To think that he was so stupid as never to suspect it! Sister, indeed! But I've noticed that some of these very Clever Men are regular bats and moles in some things. I am sure, my dearest Fanny, that you, and only you, could make him Truly Happy, Happier far than I. You are just suited for one another, and just meant for one another, I do truly believe. And down in his Heart somewhere there is—a—a—Something, that some day will ripen into True Love, Stronger and Sweeter than any he has ever Felt. * * * That is what I pray for day by day, and I believe that now he knows how it is with Capt. Burd and myself, he will find it out for himself. * * * Capt. Burd thinks He is sure to be ordered West before long, and then I will be once more at Pittsburg, and we will have O how many Things to talk about!

Your loving Friend,

BLANCHE.

P. S.—My Engagement was announced on the day before Cousin John's trial, and the Wedding will be early in the Autumn. How I wish you could come on! Capt. Burd's Evidence at the Trial was very Strong, and just broke down the Prosecution. He says Andy was at his best. It was better than a Play to hear him; and Mr. Rawle, the Prosecutor, was greatly pleased with Andy, too. He came to see me, and is rollicking full of Joy. Dear me! he thinks there is no one like Capt. Jock, and he says his Peggy thinks there is only one woman in the world worthy of him, and she—well, dear, just look into your mirror, and you will see her!

LETTER No. 2.

From Blanche Oldham to Fanny McCormack.

PHILADELPHIA, June 23, A. D. 1795.

* * * * *

I hope the Things which I sent you by Andy Burbeck, who left two weeks ago, have safely reached you. He seemed to have as much Pleasure in taking as I had in sending Them. It is Wonderful how much Improved the Traffic between Philadelphia and Pittsburg has become since I first rode over the Mountains. Capt. Burd says He thinks

there will soon be a tri-weekly Stage to the West. Think of it! But one must allow something for His Enthusiasm about our Country and its Progress. * * * If all is true that I hear, you will see Cousin John before long. It is said that President Washington has commissioned him to carry some Important Despatches to General Wayne whose Army is somewhere out in the far West,—Ever so far; you will know better than I Where it is. It is something about the Treaty with the Indians they are making at a place called Greenville. The President wants Someone who can be trusted for Intelligence, and who knows the country and can travel rapidly. It seems Cousin John has a great reputation as a Scout. Capt. Burd says it is a great Compliment to him. I think He would like to go along if it was not for the Wedding; and maybe if it had not been for that, President Washington might have selected Him. I am sure no one can be Braver or Wiser; though perhaps Cousin John knows more of the woods as he was brought up in them, almost.

Major Montgomery does not favor the plan, but John is resolved to go, the Captain says, and the President's wish goes a Great Way, of course. The Major thinks of going as far as Pittsburg with John. He fancies it would be a good place for Investments; and then he is so devoted to his Son and would like to see as much of him as possible. * * * Mamma has just bought the Stuff for my Wedding Gown. I am sure you would like to hear about it.
Ever your affectionate Friend,

BLANCHE.

P. S.—It is all true. John will go West by the very Stage that carries this Letter. He came to bid me good bye. It was very sad, poor Fellow! I am truly sorry for him. He says he don't know when he will be back, which I thought was very strange. He brought me a little Box for a Wedding Present, he said, as he could not be here; and when I opened it, you may judge what a Surprise I got! It was a Pearl Brooch! Such Beauties, and so Large, and the Loveliest Setting! I couldn't help crying, and when he said good bye, I just reached up and kissed him. The Captain said "well done, Blanche!" and I am sure he meant it, too. Why should I not kiss my own Cousin? John must have felt sad at going, too, for I saw just a little Tear on his Eyelids when he stooped—the big Fellow he is!—to get my Kiss.

LETTER No. 3.

From Capt. John Latimer Montgomery to Major Hugh Montgomery, Spruce Street above Sixth, Philadelphia.

GREENVILLE, OHIO TERRITORY,

August 21, A. D. 1795.

MY DEAR AND RESPECTED FATHER:—An Army mail is about to leave this point, and I take advantage of the occasion to advise you of my condition and occupations. I have been and am in my usual excellent health. Sickness, thank God! I have never known, and but little pain (at least of body) beyond occasional trifling hurts that borderers are exposed to. But if I were ever so doncie, a trip into the open prairies and wild woods would be sure to bring me to myself again. I am never better than when out upon a Scout. I was fortunate enough to get my Despatches into General Wayne's hands with unusual Promptness, having made the shortest journey ever yet accomplished between Pittsburg and this point. This feat, of course, gratified me and won me some Applause. I shall return in a few days with a Copy of the Treaty with the Indians fully signed, which I am to deliver to the Commandant at Fort Pitt to be forwarded thence to the Government at Philadelphia. I daresay you will be disappointed that I do not go through to the Capital, and indeed, for some Reasons I could wish to do so. But I have accepted an important and delicate Service which will take me to the Mississippi; first to St. Louis and thence into the Spanish Possessions at New Orleans. This will consume the entire Winter, and it will be an agreeable change to pass these Months in that warm Climate. I do not expect to get back to Pittsburg before the Spring of 1796, and am doubtful if I get to Philadelphia again before the Summer or Autumn of that year. You know my Reasons for this long delay * * * I will not say anything more on this point, having already opened up candidly and fully the State of my Feelings. As matters now are, I cannot return to Philadelphia. If Capt. Ruel Burd and his Bride (as I heard it rumored before I left) are to be stationed at Pittsburg next Spring, I would find it too trying upon my feelings to be there. All this seems foolish and unmanly to myself, and I am therefore all the more grateful that you were able to exercise so much Charity and Sympathy with me in the deep wound which

my heart has received. I have struggled and am struggling against the feeling, and believe I will overcome it in the end; but I am happier for the present in the Solitudes of these distant Wilds, engaged in the Activities and Adventures of my Life as a Scout. * * *

I was vastly pleased that Mother Latimer (you will pardon me if my heart still clings fondly to that name) made such an agreeable impression upon you, and you were able to discover so soon the solid worth and strong natural gifts of this noble lady. For such I may surely call her, if not by external Polish of Society, yet by native Endowment and Grace. She is well worthy of your Esteem, and I know how greatly she enjoyed having you as her Guest along with myself and the others. As for sister Meg, her delight in having you at her Wedding was only second to that of having her "brother John." She is a most attractive character, none the less so for the peculiar Charm of Simplicity and traces of Forest wildness which still cling about her. You have inspired her with a high Degree of Reverence as a wise and good Chief, and therewith also a strong Affection as my Father. It was amusing to hear her propound a problem that had sorely puzzled her untutored Mind. If I am her brother, and on that point her Indian notions of adoption admit of no doubt, and you are my Father, are you not then also *her* Father? That was her quandary. I did not venture to solve the question positively, but comforted her with the Assurance that you would doubtless feel highly complimented to have such a comely lady as Mrs. Morton Sheldon for a Daughter.

I thank you for your kind offer of money, but my wants are so few here that I am more than able to provide for them. Indeed, I have sold a large pack of furs, gathered last season, the proceeds of which I have invested in Lots in the new town called Cincinnati on the north Bank of the Ohio, opposite the Licking River. It already has several hundred Inhabitants, and promises to be an important and growing Point. I expect to spend a Month or two in the late Winter hunting with a few of my pioneer Friends, and hope to get a goodly Reward therefor from the fur Traders. Thus you see I am not likely to need your kindly proffered Aid, but am none the less grateful for the same.

I have noted the point raised by Mr. Justus Reid and

communicated by you without comment, since as you say it involves my own interests solely. The lawyer may be correct in his view that since Mr. Jonathan Rhodes died intestate I have a good claim upon my Mother's share of the Estate. But if the case were already decided, and the money proffered me, I would reject it. My Grandfather's strange neglect to make a Will may have been caused by his Satisfaction with the provision which the Law would make for his Family in that event. Certainly, he never reckoned on any other heir than his Wife and surviving Daughter Mrs. Oldham. My Mother was dead, and my Existence not even suspected. Whatever my supposed Right in Law may be, I have none in Morals or in Honor. I would scorn to touch a penny of such ill-gotten gear. In truth, even were that difficulty out of the way, I would never consent to better my own estate at the expense of my Cousin Blanche. I now ask, nay, I demand that the matter be dropped at once. And please tell Mr. Reid under no circumstances to allow Blanche or her Mother even to suspect that this question has been mooted.

Accept the most sincere Expressions of my continued Respect and filial Esteem, and believe me,

Your Dutiful and Affectionate Son,

JOHN LATIMER MONTGOMERY.

LETTER No. 4.

From Major Hugh Montgomery to Capt. John Montgomery.

PHILADELPHIA, June 16, A. D. 1796.

MY DEAR SON:—I wrote you quite a long letter from Pittsburg whither I went on my second visit early in the Spring as soon as the Roads were opened. I addressed it to Cincinnati, thinking it might catch you there on your way up the Ohio River. I need not tell you how greatly I was disappointed at not finding you there; but the two letters from you came to my hand through the Politeness of Mrs. Latimer, to whose care you had sent them. These gave me much desired Information as to your whereabouts and doings; and the Contents of your last Letter added to my Satisfaction, and mitigated my Disappointment at not seeing you and my not being able to await your Coming. I hail with heartiest Joy your Announcement to abandon your roving Life in the Woods, and take up some settled Occupation! Need I say how strongly I

yearn to have you near me that you may solace with your Companionship the closing years of my Life. Yet, I trust I am not altogether selfish in this, for I am well aware that your future Interests as well as your highest Usefulness will be greatly forwarded by the change in your Mode of Life. * * * In view of the uncertainty of the Mails, I may repeat some of the News written in my former Letter. Your sister Meg is the Mother of a Fine Boy, and both Mother and Infant are doing well. There was some serious Discussion over a proper Name for the little Man, but at last filial regard triumphed, and the lad is to be christened Luke. But should the Parents be blessed with another Son, you may be confident it will be a Namesake of Yours. Mrs. Sheldon is worthy of the high regard in which you hold her, and her husband is a person of remarkably strong character. He is prospering finely, and is already one of the most substantial Landholders in Washington County.

Your Indian friend Featherfoot is still a protégé of Mrs. Latimer, but I learn is beginning to decline in health. It is hard to transplant these wild natures into the Soil of Civilization. But the good Squaw seems anxious to join her warrior Husband in the Happy Hunting Grounds. Dungy continues to be the invaluable majordomo of Mrs. Latimer's Establishment, and begs me to send his duty to Massa John and say that Marion is in prime condition. "Jist tell Cap'n John," says he, nodding his head and rolling up the whites of his eyes, "dat ole Dungy keeps Marion all ready for him when he gets home; an' dat he can gallop over to Canonsburg in forty minutes an' not hurt him a bit, an' be better for it, as de Cap'n will be hisself, to say noffin of oder folkses." I am sure I do not understand what occult meaning lies in the old negro's Message, but he evidently was greatly pleased over it, and went away chuckling within himself and shaking his sides with suppressed Pleasure.

Mrs. Latimer insisted that I should again be her guest, but I could not bring myself to tax her Hospitality, and so found pleasant quarters in the Maine House. But I often called, as Mrs. Morton Sheldon was on her first visit with the Baby to its Grandmother, and Mr. Sheldon was There also. I found it Very Pleasant. By the way, I was more surprised at the Superior character of Mrs. Latimer than on

my first trip to Pittsburg nearly a Year ago. She is certainly a Remarkable Woman, full of Information, and a most piquant and original way of imparting it. Though not possessing great advantages of Education, her original Powers have been so well cultivated that she would not do discredit to the best Society. For that matter, even in Education she is not behind many of our leading Society Ladies in Philadelphia. Moreover, she is in the Prime of Life, and is certainly one of the most comely Matrons that I have seen in these parts, or even in Philadelphia, which is justly famous for its Handsome Ladies. I do not wonder, since I have come to know her and her daughter Meg, that this Western country has such strong Attractions for you. I fear I shall never be able to overcome the Attraction and get you all to myself, unless I form some kind of an Alliance with the powers that be at Pittsburg, and transfer the Attraction to my own Home!

I frequently met Gen. Neville and his son the Colonel, and indeed all the Connection. I was at first disposed to resent the General's action towards you; but he was so polite to me and expressed himself so kindly toward you (on which Subject he appears to have experienced a change of heart) that I concluded it better to bury the hatchet. Mrs. Latimer, however, is not so indulgent, and still feels very bitter, which perhaps is not to be wondered at. Pittsburg is growing rapidly and everything there is moving briskly and showing great signs of increasing Prosperity. A party asked me about your bit of Ground, and wondered if you would sell it? But I would not advise you to do so yet. I am pleased to know that your Venture in Cincinnati holdings is likely to turn out well. I would advise you, if this reaches you in time, to put all your ready money in other desirable lots. Mrs. Latimer I may say, has shown great Business Shrewdness in her Investments, though she has been well advised by Mr. Brackenridge. Her Property has rapidly advanced, and if discreetly managed will make her in a few years a Woman of considerable Fortune, quite equal, indeed, if not Superior to my own. That, however, I trust is large enough for the Happiness of myself and Son. Yet, if what I learn be not exaggerated, he has inherited a goodly share of Ancestral canniness from both the Scotch and Quaker sides, and promises to do so well for himself that I suspect I might recall Mr. Justus

Reid and restore to divers Charities some of the Bequests expunged from a former Will.

Your adopted Mother showed much concern over your future Welfare. She seems to love you as tenderly and strongly as though you were her own born Son. I sincerely pity her. When talking of your return to Philadelphia and final separation from her, she could not conceal her Grief. Truly I feel as if Something were due to her long and loving Devotion, and that such sacred Feelings ought not to be rudely dealt with. Yet how can it be helped? A father surely has the best right to his own Son. But the Lady's sincere grief and deep motherly Affection have moved my pity as well as Admiration. She evidently thinks you will not be happy and quite settled until you are married to some Worthy Woman, and I suspect she has some match-making project for you in her Brain. No doubt Marriage is the best Estate for all men, though my long widowhood would seem to contradict that Opinion. But even if the old wound should be healed (and time composes all such hurts of the affections), I hope you will not be hasty in your choice, nor allow yourself to be unduly influenced by others. Your Happiness is a matter of the highest Concern to me; and as Marriage may well add greatly thereto, so also it might bring into one's home a life-long bitterness and burden.

Your affectionate father,
HUGH MONTGOMERY.

In preparing the next following letter for the printer, the author has been embarrassed as to how far his censorship would justify alteration of its matter and form. By such changes as he has ventured upon, he does not imply that honest Andy's phonetic and original methods of spelling and divers rhetorical peculiarities are in the least inferior to the revised text. But the prejudices of readers are so pronounced in these matters, that not only in kindness to their feelings, but in order to preserve their favorable opinion of this admirable character, some degree of revision has been attempted. It is hoped that the racy flavor of Andy's style has not thereby been edited quite away. If the personality of the letter-writer appears occasionally to be somewhat confused, and certain monologues and dialogues not usually inserted in letters are herein

presented, the reader will be good enough to remember that Mr. Burbeck had somewhat the reputation of a genius in the parts where he was best known. As genius is allowed some eccentricities, and occasionally is applauded for striking out into new lines in literary method, as well as in other fields of human activity, the author has not felt that he would be justified in eliminating these peculiarities. In short, he has left parts of the letters as they appear in the original autograph.

LETTER No. 5.

PITTSBURG, PAY., Sevinteen hunder-96.

To the Honorable Capt. John Latimer Montgomery, Esq.:

HONORBLE SIR AND DEAR JOCK:—I take my pen in hand, bad luck to it! (the pen I mane, for it's a spluttery one) to write you these few lines, and hope your Honor is the same. P. S.—If them addressses and Titles is not all right, we ast your pardon (that's Peggy an' me); I jist wanted to begin "dear Jock," but Peggy threeped me it wouldn't do, an' made me git in them high-an'-mightys, which is your desarts an' more too, but pesky bothersome to handle. Howsomiver, I got in Dear Jock in spite of her, an' I won't scratch it out, though it's spattered a bit, but that's the pen, bad cess til it! But he ain't no pernickety popinjay, says I, if he *has* struck a broad trail of good luck, but jist the same ole Jock as iver. As I laid out to say, me an' Peggy's pretty hearty; an' so is Rouse, an' Bounce an' Betty, though the last litter of pups is a rother mangey lot. I reckon it comes of grievin' for your bein' away so onconscionably long. They hain't had a reg'lar out-an'-out jig since you left. So you see you're missed by high an' low. Like master like man, folks say, which is true of a dog as well as a man, says I; an' that's why our famby is younanimous in sendin' love to Cap'n Jock an' wishin' him a safe an' suddent return.

We've moved over to Pittsburg; for the ferryn' bizness has been jist royal; an' I was kep' a-goin' so stiddy that Peggy wouldn't stand it, no more would Bounce an' Betty, bein' jelous (that's Peggy I mane) seein' there's so many fine lasses around Pittsburg. *Witch isn't a ward of troot in it, an' he knows it. It was the tavrins, more belike! But I muss say he's gittin' a long well, and is a savin' upp munny. An' I can niver be two greatful for ewer Farther's kyneness in lavein' of him half the Feree.*

Dear Jock, Peggy writ that while I was out restin' a spell, for this ritein's offal hard wark. It makes a feller sweat wuus'n polein' up strame. So don't you mind, for you know Peggy pritty well. God bless her bright eyes! P. S.—That's for her, you see, for she *will* read over my shoulder an' korreck my letter, sayin' I don't know how to spell! Well, says I, Peggy, my love, I know someone as can talk a whole libary an' not spell a page korreck—witch isn't meant for her, leastways not to rite it out.—Well, we moved to Pittsburg and is comfortable enough, considerin'. An' Peggy couldn't live without bein' near til Mrs. Latimer, which I don't blame her for.

All your friends here are hearty, an' some as aint here. That's not includin' Dave Dandruff, drat him! Jist kape still Peggy, I won't scratch it out! Don't you think Cap'n Jock wants a feller to rite to him nayteral like, jist as he would talk? Double drat him! says I, the dirty skunk! He stole one of Mort Sheldon's hosses, an' they caught him, an' was a goin' to string him up. But Mort wouldn't hear til it; so they jist tarred an' feathered him, an' railrid him to the Chartiers an' pitched him in, and said if he iver showed up in them coasts agin he would stretch hemp. So he's gone to jine the robbers down the river, I reckon. Look out for him. He's a reglar snake in the grass, an' no mistake.

Talkin' of Mort Sheldon, you mind Passon Lane his head man? Well, it's the beatenest thing I've h'ard. If I knowed how to laff on paper I'd do it sartain. He's bin a tryin' to set up with the Widder Latimer! Think o' Passon Lane agoin' courtin'! But he got his walkin' papers short metre, I can tell you. No sich as Passon Lane nade apply at *thim* headquarters! It's true, an' you naden't conterdick it, Mrs. Peggy! 'Tain't no discredit to the Widder if folks fancy her, as I knows on. An' there's a heap higher folks nor Passon Lane as have their eyes sot that way, betwixt me an' you. An' it wouldn't be no discredit to the widder aven ef she should take a fancy to sum other folks, says Peggy; for Andy, says she, love's like sourkraut, all the better when it's warmed over. I don't see annything out'n the way in tellin' Cap'n Jock all about it. Ain't he bound to hear it?—says I to Peggy. But you naden't be consarned about the matter, Jock my b'y, for you'll find that Lady all an' allays the same til

yoursilf. For niver mother loved a child more truly nor she loves you; an' aven if she'd 'a marrit your own Farther hisself she couldn't love you a mort more.

O yes! I was jist a goin' to tell him 'bout that when you nudged me. There, Peggy! You've made me splatter that line! So you muss excuse us Cap'n Jock; for rightin' ain't our trade. It was jist about a month ago I was a-sittin' on the bank waitin' for a customer, whin along comes your old fri'nd Mad Ann Trotter. "Goodness gracious!" says I. "Is it you, Mrs. Trotter?" "No, it haint," says she, "not by a long shot! Try agin, Sonny!" says she. "Helloa!" says I, "none of your cranks on me, ole leddy! You're Mad Ann Trotter or I'm a nayger." "Well, Andy dear," says she, "then a h'Ethiopian you are, to be sure, for hit's not Mad Ann Trotter. W'at would you say now to Mad Ann Bailey?" "Jiminy crackies!" says I, "Is that so?" "Ay, indade!" says she. "An' w'at for not?" "No rayson in the warld, Mrs. Bailey," says I, "if that's your name. An' here's my hearty congratulations; for Aleck Bailey is as fine a man as is on the Border. Bu—ut," says I hesitatin' like. "But w'at?" says she, sp'akin' up sharp an' eyein' me keenly. "Well, Mrs. Ann, *you* may be comfotable enough, bu-ut—how's Aleck?" says I, lookin' sort of solemn like, an' a-shakin my head. "Does *he* kape hearty these days? Or is he kind o' pinin' away, an' gunk like?"

Boys-O! how she laffed at that! "You're a sly rogue, h'Andy!" says she. "An' ye can't vex me with your chaff. Jist you come down to h'our plantation near W'eeelin' Crick, an' I'll show you a man as isn't 'en-pecked, like someone I knows of 'at isn't a mile h'off. An' jist as 'appy an' 'arty as the day is long. Good bye, h'Andy!" says she, laffin' an' jogglin' her head as she walked down the road. "Good bye; h'it's all right! Like Jack an' Jill is me an' Bailey. Love to *Mr.* Peggy!" No, I won't scratch it out, nuther! It *was* "Mister" she called you. "I reckon Mad Ann thinks it's a compliment!" says Mrs. Peggy, tossin' her head in a pretty huff, "for she's half a man her ownself!" Lord bless the dear old gal, Jock! Ef I do taze her a bit, whiles, she's the best wife in the Western Survey, an' well she knows I belave it.

Your new Father has been West agin, an' a lookin' round to plant a little spare cash, as he says. He's a grate

favoryte out here, an' you may well be proud of him. 'Tanny rate he's mortal proud of you. There's nothin' starchy nor stuckup about him. He's a ginuwine old cavalier. But that's the way with the rale quality. The higher up you go the clearer runs the strame. It takes one of them mushroom 'ristocrats that's jist fresh up out of the dirt-heap to put on airs an' let on they're some punkins.

The Major is the rale old sort, an' no mistake. He took a lot of satisfaction in visitin' your ole home, an' made me take him round to your ole hants, an' niver seemed tired a-talkin' about you. We went over to the McCormack's, of course, an' Fanny would have us stay to supper. The Major says she 's the most "queenly damsel" he has seed for manny a year, an' laughin'ly vowed if he was as young a man as his son Jock he would lose his heart til her at first sight, w'ich Peggy says she could find a woman nearer his own age as would suit him better. "Is she engaged?" the Major ast me, as we rode home talkin' up our trip. "Not jist yit," says I, kind of onsartin like, as tho' it mought be so. "Oh? Then, I suppose she has prospects. I might have known that!" says he, kind o' sighin'. Bless his rare ole Soul! I belave he was rayther disap'inted, an' had sort o' picked out our Fanny at the first blush for a daughter-in-law! An' he might 'a gone a long way furdur and fared a nation sight warse, Cap'n Jock, says Peggy an' me.

He has a high opinion of Mrs. Latimer, the Major has, an' niver missed an avenin' callin' on her while he was in Pittsburg. He went up reg'lar to see your sister Meg an' the baby, says he. He staid a week or more longer nor he meant,—a-waitin' for you to come on, he said; though I told him there wasn't anny chanct for it afore July. But he stayed all the same, an' seemed to have a good time a-visitin' Mrs. Sheldon an' the baby. * * * I've been jist a plum week, a-ritin' out this plaguey letter, which if it causes you as much worry as it did me, I'd better throw it intil the fire nor send it. But somehow that would seem like an offal waste o' precious time. That's not countin' the Holy Sabbath that intervaned. Which Peggy allowed I might right on that day, bekase it's not your ord'nary implymint, says she. "But don't it say 'Thou shalt do no work?" says I. "An' if iver I struck work afore in these settlemint's or elsewhere it's a-righten of letters. It would

'a been a offal breakin' of the Sabbath!" says I. Runnin' a ferry isn't a patchin' to 't. I've whitted up 2 goose quills aready, an' my fingers is all cramped, an' the corners of my tongue is all sore a-bitin' it, which Peggy says is a judgment for a-sassin' her so, an' 'll give her a good rest not to spake of other folks. So no more letters at prisent, an' the Good Lord deliver us! Witch is all the 'piscopole sarvice as I knows, an' comes in amazin' pat. So wishin' the same to your Honor an' dear Jock, an' all other blessin's till you git back, I am

Your obaydint Sarvint, an' faithful to comeand with highest respects,

ANDY BURBECK AN' PEGGY, TWO.

At the bottom of the old leather box in which the above were kept was a little packet of letters browner and more worn than the rest. They were carefully tied together with a faded blue ribbon. "These," said the lady who owns them, Mrs. Fanny Montgomery Fleming, "were my grandmother's, and she cherished them as the apple of her eye. They were given to me by grandfather shortly before his death because I was named after grandma and (as he thought) greatly favored her in personal appearance when she was young."

They are love letters, and they disclose experiences too sacred to be set before the public gaze. Perhaps after all, the reader will have a keener pleasure in putting imagination to the task of interpreting their contents. Across the back of the outer fold is written in a somewhat wavering hand, apparently of an aged man, this endorsement:

"These Letters tell how I awoke from a long and painful Dream, to find the greatest Blessing and Joy of my life. Underneath the withered Foliage of a disappointed Affection lay the Seeds of a life-long Love, which waxed Stronger and Brighter till the End came. And now my Dearest awaits me in the Heavens with the Benediction of an Eternal Love. And I wait with Patience, yet with Longing, for the Glad Reunion.

J. L. M."

[THE END.]