BROTHER JONATHAN

BY

HEZEKIAH · BUTTERWORTH

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The rider gasped, “Where is your father, Faith?”

BROTHER JONATHAN

BY

HEZEKIAH BUTTERWORTH

AUTHOR OF
IN THE DAYS OF AUDUBON, IN THE BOYHOOD OF LINCOLN,
IN THE DAYS OF JEFFERSON, ETC.

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PREFACE

The writer has heretofore produced in the vein of fiction, after the manner of the Mühlbach interpretations, several books which were anecdotal narratives of the crises in the lives of public men. While they were fiction, they largely confided to the reader what was truth and what the conveyance of fiction for the sake of narrative form. It was the purpose of such a book to picture by folk-lore and local stories the early life of the man.

The folk-lore of a period usually interprets the man of the period in a very atmospheric way. Jonathan Trumbull, Washington's "Brother Jonathan," who had a part in helping to save the American army in nearly every crisis of the Revolutionary War, and who gave the popular name to the nation, led a remarkable life, and came to be held by Washington as "among the first of the patriots." The book is a folk-lore narrative, with a thread of fiction, and seeks to picture a period that was decisive in American history, and the home and neighborhood of one of the most delightful characters that America has ever known—the Roger de Coverley of colonial life and American knighthood; very human, but very noble, always true; the fine old American gentleman—"Brother Jonathan."

It has been said that a story of the life of Jonathan Trumbull would furnish material for pen-pictures of the most heroic episodes of the Revolutionary War, and bring to light much secret history of the times when Lebanon, Conn., was in a sense the hidden capital of the political and military councils that influenced the greatest events of the American struggle for liberty. The view is in part true, and a son of Governor Trumbull so felt that force of the situation that he painted the scenes of which he first gained a knowledge in his father's farmhouse, beginning the work in that plain old home on the sanded floor.

From Governor Trumbull's war office, which is still standing at Lebanon, went the post-riders whose secret messages determined some of the great events of the war. Thence went forth recruits for the army in times of peril, as from the forests; thence supplies for the army in famine, thence droves of cattle, through wilderness ways.

Governor Trumbull was the heart of every need in those terrible days of sacrifice.

His wife, Faith Trumbull, a descendant of the Pilgrim Pastor Robinson of Leyden, was a heroic woman to whom the Daughters of the Revolution should erect a monument. The picture which we present of her in the cloak of Rochambeau is historically true.

The eminent people who visited the secret town of the war during the great Revolutionary events were many, and their influence had decisive results.

Look at some of the names of these visitors: Washington, Lafayette, Samuel Adams, Putnam, Jefferson, Franklin, Sullivan, John Jay, Count Rochambeau, Admiral Tiernay, Duke of Lauzun, Marquis de Castellax, and the officers of Count Rochambeau and many others.

The post-riders from Governor Trumbull's plain farmhouse on Lebanon Hill (called Lebanon from its cedars) represented the secret service of the war.

When the influence of this capital among the Connecticut hills became known, Governor Trumbull's person was in danger. A secret and perhaps self-appointed guard watched the wilderness roads to his war office.

One of these, were he living, might interpret events of the hidden history of the struggle for liberty in a very dramatic way.

Such an interpreter for the purpose of historic fiction we have made in Dennis O'Hay, a jolly Irishman of a liberty-loving heart.

In a brief fiction for young people we can only illustrate how interesting a larger study of this subject of the secret service of the Revolution at this place might be made. We shall be glad if we can

so interest the young reader in the topic as to lead him to follow it in solid historic reading in his maturer years.

HEZEKIAH BUTTERWORTH.

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BROTHER JONATHAN

CHAPTER I

TWO QUEER MEN MEET

Dennis O'Hay, a young Irishman, and a shipwrecked mariner, had been landed at Norwich, Conn., by a schooner which had come into the Thames from Long Island Sound. A lusty, hearty, clear-souled sailor was Dennis; the sun seemed to shine through him, so open to all people was his free and transparent nature.

"The top of the morning to everybody," he used to say, which feeling of universal brotherhood was quite in harmony with the new country he had unexpectedly found, but of which he had heard much at sea.

Dennis looked around him for some person to whom he might go for advice in the strange country to which he had been brought. He did not have to look far, for the town was not large, but presently a man whose very gait bespoke importance, came walking, or rather marching, down the street. Dennis went up to him.

"An' it is somebody in particular you must be," said Dennis. "You seem to me like some high officer that has lost his regiment, cornet, horse, drum-major, and all; no, I beg your pardon. I mean—well, I mean that you seem to me like one who might be more than you are; I beg your pardon again; you look like a magistrate in these new parts."

"And who are you with your blundering honesty, my friend? You are evidently new to these parts?"

"And it is an Irishman that I am."

"The Lord forbid, but I am an Englishman."

"Then we are half brothers."

“The Lord forbid. What brings you here?”

“Storms, storms, and it is a shipwrecked mariner that I am. And I am as poor as a coot, and you have ruffles, and laces, and buckles, but you have a bit of heart. I can see that in your face. Your blood don’t flow through a muscle. Have you been long in these parts?”

“Longer than I wish to have been. This is the land of blue-laws, as you will find.”

“And it is nothing that I know of the color of the laws, whether they be blue, or red, or white. Can you tell me of some one to whom a shipwrecked sailor could go for a roof to shelter him, and some friendly advice? You may be the very man?”

“No, no, no. I am not your man. My name is Peters, Samuel Peters, and I am loyal to my king and my own country, and here the people’s hearts are turning away from both. I am one too many here. But there is one man in these parts to whom every one in trouble goes for advice. If a goose were to break her leg she would go to him to set it. The very hens go and cackle before his door. Children carry him arbutuses and white lady’s-slippers in the spring, and wild grapes in the fall, and the very Indians double up *so* when they pass his house on the way to school. His house is in the perpendicular style of architecture, I think. Close by it is a store where they talk Latin and Greek on the grist barrels, and they tell such stories there as one never heard before. He settles all the church and colony troubles, which are many, doctors the sick, and keeps unfaculized people, as they call the poor here, from becoming an expense to the town. He looks solemn, and wears *dignified* clothes, but he has a heart for everybody; the very dogs run after him in the street, and the little Indian children do the same. He is a kind of Solomon. What other people don’t know, he does. But he has a suspicious eye for me.”

“That is my man, sure,” said Dennis. “Children and dogs know what is in the human heart. What may that man’s name be? Tell me that, and you will be doing me a favor, your Honor.”

“His name is Jonathan Trumbull. They call him ‘Brother Jonathan,’ because he helps everybody, hinders nobody, and tries to make broken-up people over new.”

“And where does he live, your Honor?”

“At a place called Lebanon, there are so many cedars there. I do not go to see him, because I did so once, but while he smiled on every one else, he scowled *this way* on me, as if he thought that I was not all that I ought to be. He is a magistrate, and everybody in the colony knows him. He marries people, and goes to the funerals of people who go to heaven.”

“That is my man. What are the blue-laws?”

“One of the blue-laws reads that married people must live together or go to jail. If a man and woman who were not married were to go to *him* to settle a dispute, he would say to them—‘Join your right hands.’ When he rises up to speak in church, the earth stands still, and the hour glass stops, and the sun on the dial. But he has no use for me.”

“That is my man, sure,” said Dennis. “Trumbull, Trumbull, but it was his ship on which I sailed from Derry, and that was lost.”

“He has lost two ships before. It is strange that a man whose meal-chest is open to all should be so unfortunate. It don’t seem to accord with the laws of Providence. I sometimes doubt that he is as good as all the people think him to be.”

“But the fruits of life are not money-making, your Honor. A man’s influence on others is the fruit of life, and what he is and does. A man is worth just what his soul is worth, and not less or more. He is the man that I am after, for sure. How does one get to his house?”

“The open road from Norwich leads straight by his house, all the way to Boston, through Windham County, where lately the frogs had a great battle, and *millions* of them were slain.”

Dennis opened his eyes.

“Faix?”

“Faix, stranger. Yes, yes; I have just written an account of the battle, to be published in England. After the frogs had a battle, the caterpillars had another, and then the hills at a place called Moodus began to rumble and quake, and become colicky and cough. This is a strange country.

“But these things,” he added, “are of little account in comparison to the fact that the heart of the people is turning against the laws that the good king and his minister make for the welfare of the colony. They allow the people here to be one with the home government by bearing a part of the taxes. And the people’s hearts are becoming alien. I do not wonder that frogs fight, and caterpillars, and that the hills groan and shake and upset milk-pans, and make the maids run they know not where.”

“I must seek that man they call ‘Brother Jonathan.’ Something in me says I must. That way? Well, Dennis O’Hay will start now; it is a sorry story that I will have to tell him, but it is a true heart I will have to take to him.”

“I am going back to England,” said Mr. Peters.

“Well, good-by is it to you,” said Dennis, and the young Irishman set his face toward Lebanon of the cedars, on the road from Boston to Philadelphia by way of New York. He stopped by the way to talk with the people he met about the warlike times, and things happening at Boston town.

His mind was filled with wonder at what he heard. What a curious man the same Brother Jonathan might be! Who were the Indian children? What was the story of the battle of the frogs, and of the caterpillars; what was the cause of the coughing mountains at Moodus; why did Brother Jonathan, a man of such great heart, scowl at the same Mr. Peters, and who was this same Mr. Peters?

Dennis took off his hat as he went on toward Lebanon, turning over in his mind these questions. He swung his hat as he went along, and the blue jays peeked at him and laughed, and the conquiddles (bobolinks) seemed to catch the wonder in his mind,

and to fly off to the hazel coverts. Rabbits stood up in the highway, then shook their paws and ran into the berry bushes by the brooks.

Everything seemed strange, as he hurried on, picking berries when he stopped to rest.

At noon the sun glared; fishing hawks, or ospreys, wheeled in the air, screaming. A bear, with her cubs, stopped at the turn of the way. The bear stood up. Dennis stood still.

The bear looked at Dennis, and Dennis at the bear. Then the bear seemed to speak to the cubs, and she and her family bounded into the cedars.

This was not Londonderry. Everything was fresh, shining and new. At night the air was full of the wings of birds, as the morning had been of songs of birds.

The sun of the long day fell at last, and the twilight shone red behind the gray rocks, oaks and cedars.

Dennis sat down on the pine needles.

“It is a sorry tale that I will have to tell Brother Jonathan to-morrow,” said he. “It will hurt my heart to hurt his heart.”

Then the whippoorwills began to sing, and Dennis fell asleep under the moon and stars.

If the reader would know more about Mr. Peters, Samuel Peters, let him consult any colonial library, and he will find there a collection of stories of early Connecticut, such as would tend to make one run home after dark. The same Mr. Peters was an Episcopal clergyman, who did not like the Connecticut main or the “blue-laws.”[1]

[1] See Appendix for some of Rev. Samuel Peters’ queer stories.

Dennis came to the farming town on the hills among the green cedars; he banged on the door of the Governor’s house with his hard knuckles, in real Irish vigor.

The Governor’s wife answered the startling knock.

“And faith it is a shipwrecked sailor. I am from the north of ould Ireland, it is now, and would you be after a man of all work, or any work? There is lots of days of work now in these two fists, lady, and that you may well believe.” He bowed three times.

“The Governor is away from home,” said my lady. “He has gone to New Haven by the sea. What is your name?”

“My name is Dennis O’Hay, an honest name as ever there was in Ireland of the north countrie, and I am an honest man.”

“You look it, my good friend. You have an honest face, but there is fire in it.”

“And there are times, lady, when the coals should burn on the hearth of the heart, and flame up into one’s cheeks and eyes. A storm is coming, lady, a land storm; there are hawks in the air. I would serve you well, lady. It is a true heart that you have. I can see it in your face, lady.”

“And what can you do, Dennis O’Hay? You were bred to the sea.”

“And it is little that I can not do, that any man can do with his two fists. You have brains up here among the hills, lady, but there may come a day that you will need fists as well as brains, and wits more than all, for I am a peaceable man; I can work, and I could suffer or die for such people as you all seem to be up here. The heart of Dennis O’Hay is full of this new cause for liberty. I could throw up my hat over the sun for that cause, lady. I would enlist in that cause, and drag the guns to the battle-field like a packhorse. Oh, I am full of America, honest now, and no blarney.”

“I do not meddle with my husband’s affairs, but I can not turn you away from these doors. How could I send away any man who is willing to enlist for a cause like ours? Dennis O’Hay, go to the tavern over there, and ask for a meal in the name of Faith Trumbull. Then come back here and I will give you the keys to the store in the war office, for I can trust you with the keys, and when my goodman comes back I will send him to you.”

“Lady, this is the time to say a word to you. Ask about me among the other sailors, if they come here, so that you may know that I have

lived an honest life. Does not your goodman need a guard?”

“I had never thought of such a thing.”

“You are sending soldiers and food and cattle to the camps, I hear; who knows what General Gage might be led to do? They have secret guards in foreign parts, men of the ‘secret service,’ as they call them. Lady, there are things that come to one, down from the skies, or up from the soul. It is all like the ‘pattern on the mount of vision’ that they preach about. A voice within me has been saying, ‘Go and work for the Governor among the hills, and watch out for him.’ But you must test me first, lady. I would keep *you* from harm; there is nothing that should ever stand between these two fists of Dennis O’Hay and such as you. But that day will come. I will go to the tavern now, and God and all the saints bless you, and your goodman forever, and make a great nation of this green land of America, and keep the same Dennis O’Hay, which I am that, in the way of his duty.”

The tavern, which became an historic inn, where some of the most notable people of America and of France were entertained during the days of the Revolution, stood at a little distance from the Governor’s house. Dennis O’Hay went there so elated that he tossed his sailor’s hat into the air.

“It is little that I would not do for a lady like that,” he said. “The sea tossed me here on purpose. Night, thou mayest have my service; watch me, ye stars! Liberty, thou mayest have my blood; call me, ye fife and drum. Let me but get at the heart of the Governor, and his life and home shall be secure from all harm under the clear eye of Dennis O’Hay. Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah! and it is here I am in America!”

The landlord stood in the door.

“And who are you, my friend?”

“Dennis, your Honor.”

“And what brings you here?”

“Not the ship; for the ship went down. What brings me here? My two legs—no——”

He paused, and looked reverent.

“The Hand Unseen. I came to enlist in the struggles for the freedom of America. Give me a bite in the name of the lady down the road.”

“My whole table is at your service, my friend. I like your spirit. We need you here.”

“And here I am—how I got here I do not know, but I *am* here, and my name is Dennis O’Hay.”

He waited long for the return of the Governor to the war office, or country store, looking out of the window over the tops of the green hills.

“An’ faix, I do believe,” he said at last, “I minds me that this is the day when the world stands still. But, O my eyes, what is it that you see now?”

A light form of a little one came out of the door of the Governor’s house and walked to the war office. It was a girl, beautiful in figure, with a sensitive face, full of sympathy and benevolence.

She opened the door.

“My name is Faith,” said she. “I am Mr. Trumbull’s daughter. I keep store sometimes when my father, the Governor, is away late. I thought I would open the store this afternoon. Customers are likely to come, near nightfall.”

“I would help you tend store,” said Dennis O’Hay, “if I only knew how. It is not handy at a bargain that I would be now, and barter people, if you call them that here, would all get the best of me. But I may be able to do such things some day.”

He looked out of the window, and suddenly exclaimed—“Look!”

A man on a noble horse was coming, flying as it seemed, down the Lebanon road from the Windham County hills. His horse leaped into the air at times, as full of high spirit, and dashed up to the store.

Faith, the beautiful girl, went to the door.

The rider gasped—"Where is your father, Faith?"

"He is gone to New Haven, Mr. Putnam."

"I want to see him at once; there is secret news from Boston. But I must see him. I must not leave here until he returns. I will go over to the tavern and wait."

Dennis came out and stood in front of the store.

"Stranger," said the rider, "and who are you? You do not look like a farmer."

"Who am I? I am myself, sure, a foreigner among foreigners, Dennis O'Hay, a castaway, from the north of Ireland."

"And what brings you here?"

"I came to enlist," said Dennis.

"You will be wanted," said Mr. Putnam. "You have shoulders as broad as Atlas, who carried the world on his back."

"The world on his back? What did he walk upon?"

"That is a question too much," said the rider. "I'll leave my horse in your hands, Dennis O'Hay, and go to the tavern and see what I can find out about the Governor's movements there."

He strode across the green.

The sun was going down, sending up red and golden lances, as it were, over the dark shades of the cedars. On the hills lay great farms half in glittering sunlight, half in dark shadows.

"Have you any thought when the Governor will return?" asked the rider of the tavern-keeper.

"No, Israel, I have not—but I hear that there is important news from Boston—that it is suspected that the British are about to make a move to capture the stores of American powder at Concord. The Governor, I mind me, knows something about the secrets of powder hiding, but of that I can not be sure."

“Great events are at hand,” said Putnam. “I can feel them in the air. I had the same feeling before the northern campaign. I must stay here until the Governor arrives.”

“You shall have the best the tavern affords,” said the innkeeper.

The sun went down blazing on the hills, seeming like a far gate of heaven, as its semicircular splendors filled the sky. Then came the hour of shadows with the advent of the early stars, and then the grand procession of the night march of the hosts of heaven that looks bright indeed over the dark cedars.

The air was silent, as though the world were dead. The taverners listened long in front of the tavern for the sound of horses’ feet on the Lebanon road.

“Will the Governor come alone?” asked Dennis O’Hay of Israel Putnam, the rider.

“Yes, my sailor friend; who is there to harm him?”

“But there will be danger. There ought to be a guard on the Lebanon road. Did not the Governor save the powder, ammunition, and stores, in the northern war? So they said at Norwich. Some day General Gage will put a long eyes on him.”

“Silence!”

The taverners went into the tavern and sat down in the common room.

“I will wait until midnight before I go to my room. My message to the Governor must be delivered as soon as he returns.”

The public room was lighted with candles, and a fire was kindled on the hearth. It was spring, but a hearth fire had a cheerful glow even then.

The taverners talked of the military events around Boston town, then told stories of adventure. Dennis came from the store, and sat down with the rest.

“Mr. Putnam,” said one of them, “the story of your hunting the she-wolf is told in all the houses of the new towns, but we have never

heard it from yourself. The clock weights sink low, and we wish to keep awake. Tell us about that wily wolf, and how you felt when your eyes met hers in the cave."

THE WITCH-WOLF

"I never boast of the happenings of my life," said Israel Putnam. "It is my nature to dash and do, and I but give point to the plans of others. That is nothing to boast of. Put on cedar wood and I will tell the tale of that cunning animal, a 'witch-wolf,' as some call her, as well as I can. The people at the taverns often ask me to kill time for them in that way.

"I came to Pomfret in 1749. For some years I was a busy man, toiling early and late, as you may know. I raised a house and barn; some of you were at the raising. I chopped down trees, made fences, planted apple-trees, sowed and reaped.

"My farm grew. I had a growing herd of cattle, but my pride was in my flock of sheep.

"One morning, as I went out to the hill meadows, I found that some of my finest sheep had disappeared. I called them, and I wandered the woods searching for them, but they were not to be found. Then a herdman came to me and said that he had found blood and wool in one place, and sheep bones in another, and that he felt sure that the missing sheep had been destroyed by powerful wolves.

"In a few days other sheep were missing. Day by day passed, and I lost in a few months a great number of sheep.

"One morning I went out to the sheepfolds, and found that some animal had killed a whole flock of sheep.

"'It is a she-wolf that is the destroyer' said a herdman, 'a witch-wolf, it may be. Would you dare to attack her?'

"My brain was fired. There lay my sheep killed without a purpose, by some animal in which had grown a thirst for blood.

“‘Yes, yes—’ said I, ‘wolf or demon, whatever it be, I will give my feet no rest until I hold its tongue in my own hands, and that I will do. I have force in my head, and iron in my hands. Call the neighbors together and let us have a wolf hunt.’

“The neighbors were called together, and the conch shell was blown. We tracked the wolf and got sight of her. She was no witch, but a long, gaunt, powerful she-wolf, a great frame of bones, with a sneaking head and evil eyes.

“We pursued her, but she was gone. She seemed to vanish. ‘She is a witch,’ said the herdman. ‘She is no witch,’ said I, ‘and if she were, it is my duty to put her out of existence, and I will!’

“We hunted her again and again, but she was too cunning for us. She disappeared. She would be absent during the summer, but in the fall she would return, and bring her summer whelps with her. She fed her brood not only on my flocks but on those of the farms of the country around. We gathered new bands to hunt her; the people rose in arms against her—against that one cunning animal.—Put cedar wood on the fire.

“I formed a new plan. We would hunt her continuously, two at a time.

“She lost a part of one foot in a steel trap at last. Then the people came to know that she was no witch. We could track her now by the mark of the three feet in the snow. She limped, and her three sound feet could not make the quick shifts that her four feet had made of old.

“One day we set out on a continuous hunt. We followed her from our farms away to the Connecticut River. Then the three-footed animal came back again, and we followed her back to the farms.

“But the bloodhounds now knew her and had got scent of her, and they led us to a den in the woods. This den was only about three miles from my house. She may have hidden in it many times before.

“We gathered before the den, and lighted straw and pushed it into the den to drive her out. But she did not appear.

“Then we put sulphur on the straw and forced it into the den, so that it might fill the cavern with the fumes. But the three-footed wolf did not come out of the den. The cave might be a large one; it might have an opening out some other way.

“We called a huge dog, and bade him to enter the cave. He dove down through the opening. Presently we heard him cry; he soon backed out of the opening, bleeding. The wolf was in the cave.

“Another dog, and another were forced to enter the cave, both returning whining and bleeding. Neither smoke nor dogs were able to destroy that animal that had made herself a terror of the country round.

“I called my negro herder.

“‘Sam,’ said I, ‘you go into the cave and end that animal.’

“‘Not for a thousand pounds, nor for all the sheep on the hills of the Lord. What would become of Sam? Look at the dogs’ noses. Would you send me where no dog could go?’

“‘Then I shall go myself,’ said I, for nothing can stop me from anything when my resolution has gathered force; there are times when I must lighten.

“I took off my coat and prepared to go down into the cave. My neighbors held me back. I took a torch, and plunged down the entrance to the cave, head first, with the torch blazing.

“Had I made the effort with a gun, the wolf might have rushed at me, but she crouched and sidled back before the fire.

“The entrance was slippery, but my will forced me on.

“I could rise up at last. The cave was silent; the darkness might be felt. I doubt that any human being had ever entered the place before.

“I walked slowly, then turning aside my torch, peered into the thick darkness.

“Two fierce eyes, like balls of fire, confronted me. The she-wolf was there, waiting for some advantage, but cowed by the torch.

“Presently I heard a growl and a gnashing of teeth.

“I had drawn into the cave a rope tied around my body, so that I might be drawn out by my neighbors if I should need help. I gave the signal to pull me out. I understood the situation.

“I was drawn up in such a way that my upper clothing was pulled over my body, and my flesh was torn. I grasped my gun and crawled back again.—Put more cedar wood on the fire.

“I saw the eyes of the wolf again. I heard her snap and growl. I leveled my gun.

“*Bang!* The noise seemed to deafen me. The smoke filled the cave.

“I gave a signal to my neighbors to draw me out. I listened at the mouth of the cave. All was silent. The smoke must have found vent. I went into the cave again.

“It was silent.

“I found the body of the wolf. It was stiff and was growing cold. I took hold of her ears and gave a signal to those outside to draw me out.

“As I was drawn from the mouth of the cave I dragged the wolf after me.

“Then my friends set up a great shout. My eyes had met those of the she-wolf but once, then there was living fire in them, terrible but pitiful. Hark—what is that?”

There was a sound of horses’ feet.

“The Governor is coming,” said one of the taverners.

Israel Putnam ran out to meet him, and spoke to him a few words.

“Let us go to the war office at once, and shut the door and be by ourselves,” said the Governor.

They hurried to the war office, and the Governor shut the door, not to open it again until morning.

Dennis O’Hay went back to the tavern, and wondered and wondered.

“Faix, and this is a quare country, and no mistake,” said he. What would the Governor say to him?

Would he be the first to tell him that the ship had gone down?

He talked with taverners about the subject.

“I must break the news, gently like,” he said. “I would hate to hurt his heart.”

“He has lost ships before,” said one.

“His losses have made him a poor man,” said another. “But he marches right on in the way of duty, as though he owned the stars.”

Dennis fell asleep on the settle, wondering, and he must have dreamed wonderful dreams.

CHAPTER II

THE JOLLY FARMER OF WINDHAM HILLS AND HIS FLOCK OF SHEEP

There was an old manor in sunny England to which Lord Cornwallis used to resort, and a certain Captain Blackwell purchased a territory in Windham, Conn., among the green hills and called it Mortlake Manor, after the English demesne. Here Israel Putnam purchased a farm of some 500 acres, at what is now Pomfret, Conn., and began to raise great herds of cattle and flocks of sheep, and to plant apple-trees.

He was made a major in the northern campaign, afterward a colonel, then in the Indian War he became a general. They called him “Major Putnam,” for the title befitted his character, and he wished to be sparing of titles among the farmers of Windham.

Israel Putnam was born a hero. He had in him the spirit of a Hannibal. He had character as well as daring; his soul rose above everything, and he never feared a face of day.

He had the soul of Cincinnatus, and not of a Cæsar. He could leave the plow, and return to it again.

His conduct in the northern campaign had shown the unselfish character of his heroism. A jolly farmer was he, and as thrifty as he was jolly. He could strike hard blows for justice and liberty, and like a truly brave man he could forgive his enemies and help them to rise in a right spirit again.

Why had he come here at this time?

Let us go into the store, or, as it was beginning to be called, the “war office,” with these two men of destiny.

“Governor Trumbull,” he said, “I am about to go to Boston, and I want your approval. Boston is being ruined by British oppression. She is almost famine-stricken, and why? Because her people are true to their rights.

“Governor, I can not sleep. Think of the situation. Here I am on my farm, with hundreds of sheep around me, and the men of liberty of Boston town are sitting down to half-empty tables. Some of my sheep must be driven away.

“They must be started on their way to Worcester, and to Newtowne, and to Boston, and, Governor, the flock must *grow* by the way.

“I am going to ask the farmers to swell the number of the flock as I start with my own. Boston Common is a British military post now—but I am going to Boston Common with my sheep, and my flock will grow as I go, and I will appear there at the head of a company of sheep, and if the British Government does not lift its hand from Boston town, I will go there with a company of soldiers. Have I your contentment in the matter?”

“Yes, go, hero of Lake George and of Ticonderoga, go with your sheep and your flock, increase it as it goes; but as for that other matter you suggest, let us talk of that, the matter of what is to be done if British oppression is to increase.”

They talked all night, and Putnam said that the liberties of the colonies were more than life to him, and that he stood ready for any duty. He rode away in the light of the morning.

As he passed the tavern, Dennis O’Hay went to the war office, where the Connecticut militia used to appear, to meet the Governor.

“The top of the morning to you, Governor,” said Dennis, holding his cap in his hand above his head.

“My good friend, I do not know you,” said the Governor, “but that you are here for some good purpose, I can not doubt. What is your business with me?”

“I was a sailor, sir, and our ship went down, sir, but I came up, sir, and am still on the top of the earth. I am an Irishman, sir, from Ireland of the North, that breeds the loikliest men on the other side of the world, sir, among which, please your Honor, I am one.

“I have heard about the stamp act, sir. England has taxed Ireland into the earth, sir. We live in hovels, sir, that the English may dwell in castles, sir. I wouldn’t be taxed, sir, were I an American without any voice in the government, sir. That would be nothing but slavery.

“I would like to enlist, sir. I have heard of the minutemen, sir, and it is a half-a-minute man that I would like to become.”

“I see, I see, my good fellow; I read the truth of what you say in your looks. Let me go to my breakfast, and I will talk over your case with my wife, Faith, and my daughters, and my son John. In the meantime, go and get your breakfast in the tavern.”

“The top of this earth and all the planets to you, sir.”

After breakfast the Governor summoned Dennis to the store, which came to be called the “war office.” The back room in the store was the council room.

“Did you notice that man who rode away in the morning?” he asked.

“Sure, I did, sir. I heard him tell a story last night in the tavern. The flesh was gone from one of his hands.”

“It was torn from his hand while pouring water on a fire which was burning the barracks near a magazine which contained 300 barrels of powder. That was in the north.”

“Did he save the magazine?”

“Yes, my good friend. He is a brave man, and he is soon going with a drove of sheep to Boston.

“You ask for work,” continued the Governor. “I want you to go with that man, Major, Colonel, General Putnam, and his drove of sheep to Boston, and to keep your eye out on the way, so, if needed, you might go over it again. I wish to train a few men to learn a swift way

to Boston town. You may be one of them. I will have a horse saddled for you at once; follow that man to Pomfret, to the manor farm at Windham. I will write you a note to him, a secret note, which you must not open by the way."

"Never you fear, Governor; I couldn't read it if I did, but I can read life if I can not read messages."

In a few minutes he was in the saddle, with his face turned toward the Windham hills.

He found General Putnam, the "Major," on his farm.

"It is the top of the morning that I said to the Governor this morning, and it is the top of the evening that I say to you now. I am Dennis O'Hay, from the north of Ireland, and it is this message—which may ask that I be relieved of my head for aught I know—that the Governor he asked me to put into your hand. He wants me to learn all the way to Boston town, so that I may be able to drive cattle there, it may be. I am ready to do anything to make this country the land of liberty. After all that ould Ireland has suffered, I want to see America free and glorious—and hurrah, free! That word comes out of my heart; I don't know why I say it. It rises up from my very soul."

"You shall learn all the way to Boston town," said the Major, "and I hope I shall not find you faithless, or give you over to the British to be dealt with according to the law."

Putnam was preparing to leave for his long journey on the new Boston road. His neighbors gathered around him, and young farmers brought to him fine sheep, to add to those he had gathered for the suffering patriots of Boston town.

The driver of this flock knew the way, the post-houses, the inns, the ordinaries, and the Major assigned Dennis to him as an assistant.

Putnam was a lusty man at this time, in middle life. He wore homespun made from his own flocks. His great farm among the hills had been developed until it was made sufficient to support a large family and many work-people. He raised his own beef, pork, corn, grain, apples and fruit, and poultry. His family made their own butter

and cheese; his wife wove the clothing for all; spun her own yarn. The manor farm might have been isolated for a hundred years, and yet thrift would have gone on.

No one was ever more self-supporting than the old-time thrifty New England farmer. His farm was more independent than a baron's castle in feudal days.

He "put off" his butter, cheese and eggs, or bartered them for "West India goods"; but even in these things he might have been independent, for his maple-trees might have yielded him sugar, and roasted crusts and nuts a nutritious substitute for coffee and tea.

Putnam drove away his sheep, stopping at post-houses by the way, and telling some merry and some thrilling stories there of the wild campaign of the north, and of his escapes from the Indians under Pontiac.

He arrived at Boston and was welcomed by the patriot Warren.

A British officer faced him.

"And you have come down here," said the British officer, "to contend against England's arm with a lot of sheep. If you rebels do not cease your opposition, do you want to know what will happen?"

"Yes."

"Twenty ships of the line and twenty regiments will be landed at the port of Boston."

"If that day comes, I shall return to Boston, and I shall bring with me men as well as sheep."

"Ho, ho!" laughed the British officer. "That is your thought, is it, hey? It is treason, sir; treason to the British Crown."

"Sir," said Putnam, "an enemy to justice is my enemy; is every man's enemy. It is a man's duty to stand by human rights."

Dennis studied every farmhouse and nook and corner by the way. He had a quick mind and a responsive heart, and he was learning America readily.

He could read lettered words, so he looked well at the sign-boards at four corners and on taverns and milestones. He “stumbled” in book reading, but could define signs.

“Could you find your way back again?” asked the Major of him, as they rested beneath the great trees on Boston Common.

“And sure it is, Major. I would find my way back there if I had been landed at the back door of the world.”

“Well,” said the Major, “then you may go back in advance of us alone.”

Dennis parted from the Major, and dismounted in a couple of days or more before the Governor’s war office with

“And it is the top of the morning, it is, Governor.”

“Did you bring a recommendation from the Major?” asked the Governor.

“No, no, he sent me on ahead, but I can give a good report of him.”

“That is the same as though he brought a good report of you. A man who speaks well of his master is generally to be trusted.

“Well, you know the way to Boston town. I think that I can now make you useful to me, and to the cause. We will see.”

Dennis found work at the tavern. He would sit on the tavern steps to watch for the Governor in the evenings when the latter appeared on the green. He soon joined the good people in calling the Governor “Brother Jonathan.”

Dennis was superstitious—most Irishmen are—but he was hardly more given to ghostly fears than the Connecticut farmers were. Nearly every farmstead at that period had its ghost story. Good Governor Trumbull would hardly have given an hour to the fairy tale, but he probably would have listened intently to a graveyard or “witch” story.

People did not see angels then as in old Hebrew days, but thought that there were sheeted ghosts that came out of graveyards, or

made night journeys through lonely woods, and stood at the head of garret stairs, “avenging” spirits that haunted those who had done them wrong.

So we only picture real life when we bring Dennis into this weird atmosphere, that made legs nimble, and cats run home when the clouds scudded over the moon.

Dennis had heard ghost story after ghost story on his journey and at the store. Almost everybody had at least one such story to tell; how that Moodus hills would shake and quake at times, and tip over milk-pans, and cause the maid to hide and the dog to howl; how the timbers brought together to build a church, one night set to capering and dancing; how a woman who had a disease that “unjinted her jints” (unjointed her joints) came all together again during a great “revival”; how witches took the form of birds, and were shot with silver bullets; and like fantastic things which might have filled volumes.

“I never fear the face of day,” said Dennis, “but apparitions! Oh, for my soul’s sake, deliver me from them! I am no ghost-hunter—I never want to face anything that I can’t shoot, and on this side of the water the woods are full of people that won’t sleep in their graves when you lay them there. I shut my eyes. Yes, when I see anything that I can’t account for, I shut my eyes.”

That was the cause of the spread of superstition. People like Dennis “shut their eyes.” Did they meet a white rabbit in the bush, they did not investigate—they ran.

Dennis would have faced a band of spies like a giant, but would have run from the shaking of a bush by a mouse or ground squirrel in a graveyard.

He once saw a sight that, to use the old term, “broke him up.” He was passing by a family graveyard when he thought that an awful apparition that reached from the earth to the heavens rose before him.

“Oh, and it was orful!” said he. “It riz right up out of the graves into the air, with its *paws* in the moon. It was a white horse, and he

whickered. My soul went out of me; I hardly had strength enough in my legs to get back to the green; and when I did, I fell flat down on my face, and all America would never tempt me to go that way again."

The white horse whose "paws" were in the moon was only an animal turned out into the highway to pasture, that lifted himself up on the stout bough of a graveyard wild apple-tree to eat apples from the higher limbs. Horses were fond of apples, and would sometimes lift themselves up to gather them in this way.

The ghost story was the favorite theme at the store on long winter evenings.

"If one could be sure that they met an evil ghost, one would know that there must be good spirits that had gone farther on," reasoned the men.

"They may as well all go farther on," said Dennis. "Such things do not haunt good people."

CHAPTER III

THE FIRST OF PATRIOTS AT HOME

A noble private school first made Lebanon of the cedars famous. It had been founded by the prosperous hill farmers under the influence of the Governor. To this school the latter sent his five children, who prepared there for college or the higher schools.

The Governor possessed a strong mind, that was so clear and full of imagination as to be almost poetic and prophetic.

The Scriptures were his book of poems, and he read many books —*Job* in Hebrew, and *John* in Greek.

At home among his five children, all of whom were destined to be notable, and two of them famous, he was an ideal father. His one thought was to educate his children for usefulness.

One of his sons was named John, born in 1756. Nearly all of my readers have seen his work, for it was his gift to paint the dramatic scenes of the Revolutionary War, and these great historical paintings adorn not only the rotunda of the Capitol at Washington, but several of them most public halls, and tens of thousands of patriotic homes in the country, especially The Battle of Bunker Hill, The Signers of the Declaration of Independence, The Death of Wolf, The Surrender of Cornwallis, and Washington's Farewell to his Army.

The home of the Governor may have been matted, but was not carpeted. It was the custom at that time to strew white sand over floors and to "herring-bone" spare rooms. Of this sand we have a curious story.

Two of the daughters, Faith and Mary, were born to a love of art. They were sent to school in Boston after graduating at the Lebanon school, and there Faith began to admire portraits painted in oil.

She studied painting in oil, and she returned to her plain and simple home. She hung upon the walls two portraits painted by her own hand that were a local wonder.

The Governor looked upon his gifted daughter's work with commendable pride.

"You have done well, Faith. I did not expect such gifts of you. To detain age, in keeping the face at the age in which it is painted, is indeed a noble art. It is worthy of you, Faith."

At this time John Trumbull was a little boy. He had been housed and nursed tenderly by his mother, because he had a misformed head which had to be shaped out of a defect by pressure.

This boy turned his face to his sister Faith's paintings with surprise, as they transformed the walls of the room.

"I want to paint, too," said he.

"No, no," said the Governor, "painting is not for boys."

He asked his sister for oils.

"You are too young," thought the artistic Faith, who was a loving, noble sister.

"But I must, I must."

One day his mother entered the sanded room. The white sand had been disturbed. It was lying about in curious angles. She stopped; the sand had formed a picture. Whose picture—probably it was intended for herself.

The boy's face met hers, possibly at an opposite door.

"My son, what have you been doing with the sand?"

"Painting, mother."

"But what led you to paint in that way?"

"Faith's pictures on the wall. I had to paint. I must. I will be a painter if I grow up. The things that father does will not live unless

they are painted. Pictures make the past *now*—they hold the past; they make it live."

"My little boy sees the value of the art like a philosopher. You and Faith have a gift that I little expected. I have nursed that little head of yours many an hour; there may be pictures in it—who knows?"

"But father thinks that painting is girlish. How can I get him to let me paint?"

"You may be able to paint so well, that he will be proud of your art."

The next day the sand took new form; another picture filled the floor, and so day by day new pictures came to delight the good mother's heart.

The Governor saw them.

"There is a gift in them," said he. "It is all right for a little shaver like him. Boys will have to wield something stronger than the brush in the new age that is upon us. But we must not crush any gift of God."

He turned away.

His family loved to be near him, and he told them wonderful tales from the Hebrew Scriptures.

Queer tales of early times in the colonies he related to them, too; stories that tended to correct false views of life and character. Suppose we spend an hour with the good Governor in his own home.

It was early evening; snow was falling on the green boughs of the cedars of Lebanon. A great fireplace blazed before the sitting-room table, on which were the Bible and books.

On one side of the fireplace hung quartered apples drying; on the other a rennet and red peppers, and on the mantelpiece were shells from the Indies, candlesticks, and pewter dishes.

The room became silent. The Governor's thoughts were far away, planning, planning, almost always planning.

The stillness became lonesome. Then little John, the painter in the sand, ventured to ask his mother for a story, and she said:

"I am narrowing now in my knitting; ask your father, he is wool-gathering; call him home."

Little John touched his father on the arm.

"It is a story that you would have," said the Governor. "I am thinking all by myself on a case that comes up before me to-morrow, of a young man who has broken the law, but did not know that there was any such law to break. He had just come in from sea.

"Now, what would you do in such a case as that, Johnny? I am thinking how to be merciful to the man and just to others."

"I would do what mother would do—mother, what would you do in a case like that?"

"I do not know; there may be things to be considered. I would follow my heart; if it would not endanger others."

"Father, what will you do? Animals break laws about which they do not know. I pity them."

"Well said, John," said the Governor.

He added, beating on the back of his chair:

"I may have to follow my heart; but I will tell you a story of an old Connecticut judge who followed his heart, and something unexpected happened."

The Governor dropped his stately tone, and used the language of home. That was a charm, the home tone.

"It was at the time of the blue-laws," he said. "Those laws in one part of the State were so strict as to forbid the making of mince pies

at Christmas-time.

“One of these laws forbid a man to kiss his wife in public on Sunday.”

The Governor seldom used story-book language. He was going to do so now, and it would make the very fire seem friendly.

“Wandering Rufus was a merry lad. He married a young wife, a very handsome girl, and he loved her. Soon after his marriage he went to sea, and it was after he went to sea that the law was enacted against the Sunday kissing. The lawmakers little thought of the men at sea.

“His wife looked out for him to come back, as a good wife should. She pressed her nose against the pane. She dreamed and dreamed of how happy she should be when he should come leaping up from the wharf to greet her.

“Three years passed, for he was a whaler as well as a sailor.

“Three years!

“One day there was heard a boom at sea—boom off New Haven. The ship was coming in, and it was Sunday.

“The young wife dressed herself in her best gown, and she never looked so pretty before. Her cheeks glowed like roses in dew-time.

“She hurried down toward the wharf to meet him, just as the bells were ringing and the people were all going to meeting.

“He came up the highway to greet her, leaping—not a becoming thing, I will allow. And he rushed into her arms, and gave her smack after smack, and her bonnet fell off, and the people stopped and wondered. The magistrate wondered, too.

“There was a man in the seaport who was like Mr. Legality in the Pilgrim’s Progress. The next day he had the young sailor arrested for unbecoming conduct on the street on Sunday, and I mind me that his conduct was not altogether becoming.

“The judge came into court, and read the law, and asked:

“‘Rufus, my sailor boy, what have you to plead?’

“‘I did not know that there was any such law, your Honor; else I would have obeyed it.’

“You may see that he had a true heart, like a robin on a cherry bough.

“‘I must condemn you to have thirty lashes at the whipping-post,’ said the judge—‘No, twenty lashes—no, considering all the points of the case, ten; or five will do. Five lashes at the whipping-post. This is the lightest sentence that I ever imposed. But *he* did not know the law; and he was a married man, and he had not seen his wife for nearly three years; I must be merciful in this particular case, and I will not say in this same case how hard the lashes shall be laid on.’

“So the young sailor was whipped, and Mr. Legality said that five lashes would not have scampered a cat.

“Rufus, the wanderer, prepared to go whaling again.

“Now, the captain of the ship had caused a chalk-mark to be drawn across the deck of the ship, and had made a ship law that if any one but an officer of the ship should cross the mark, the person violating the law should be whipped with a cat-o’-nine-tails.

“I am sorry to say that our young sailor should have had a revengeful spirit, but he seems to have shown a disposition not altogether benevolent. He invited Mr. Legality to go on board the ship with him, just as the ship was about to sail. Mr. Legality to atone for his want of charity went, and he had hardly got on board before he stepped over the chalk-line.

“‘Halt, halt!’ said Rufus. ‘We have a law that if any one steps over the chalk-line he must be whipped.’

“‘But I did not know that there was any such a law,’ said Mr. Legality.

“‘But it is the law,’ said Wandering Rufus.

“‘But how could I have known?’ asked Mr. Legality.

“‘How could I have known that there was a law that a man must not kiss his wife on the street on Sunday?’ asked Rufus.

“‘I see, I see; but don’t let me be whipped with the cat-o’-nine-tails.’

“‘That I will not, for I am a hearty sailor. If any one is whipped it shall be me. I wanted to show you how the human heart feels.’

“Mr. Legality left the ship as fast as his legs would carry him, and somehow that story sometimes rises before me like a parable. I think I shall follow my heart with this new case that comes off to-morrow.”

“Do, do,” said the children, all five; and the mother, lovely Faith Trumbull, said, “Yes, Jonathan, do.”

“And now,” said the Governor, “let us read together the most beautiful chapter, as I mind, in all the Epistles.”

The snow fell gently without; the fire cracked, and they read together the chapter containing “Charity suffereth long, and is kind.”

“Beareth all things, endureth all things,” read little John. Then tears filled his eyes, and he said:

“Father, I love you.”

But there was another side to the love and loyalty of this sheltered town in the cedars. There were Tories here, and they did not like the patriarchal Governor. You must meet some of them, if it does change the atmosphere of the narrative.

It has been said that no dispute could ever stand before Brother Jonathan; it would melt away like snow on an April day when he lifted his benignant eyes and put the finger of one hand on the other, and said, “Let me make it clear to you.”

Queer old Samuel Peters, the Episcopal agent, or missionary in the colony, made so much fun of the good people in his History of Connecticut, and so led England and America to laugh by his marvelous anecdotes and description of the blue-laws, that the really thrifty and heroic character of these people has been misjudged.

A wonderful family had Brother Jonathan. His children who lived to become of age became famous, and they were all remarkable as

children. Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., could read Virgil at five, and had read Homer at twelve, and could talk with his father in Latin and Greek, and discuss Horace and Juvenal when a boy. He, as we have said, became a great painter, and commenced by drawing pictures in the sand which was sprinkled on his father's floor. They used "herring-bone" to tidy rooms in those days, spare rooms, by dusting clean sand on the floor, in a wavy way, leaving the floor in the angles of a herring-bone. We do not know that it was in such herring-boning sand that young Trumbull began to draw pictures, but it may have been so.

We have visited the rooms in the old perpendicular house where he began to draw. His good father did not approve of his purpose to become a painter, but he thought that genius should be allowed to follow its own course. A man is never contented or satisfied outside of his natural gifts and haunting inclinations. So the battles into which his father's spirit entered, John made immortal by painting, and his work may be seen not only in the rotunda of the Capitol at Washington, but in the "Trumbull Collection" at Yale College.

Young Trumbull was led to continue to paint by his sisters Faith and Mary, who went to Boston to school. This was the Copley age of art in Boston. You may see Copley's pictures at the Art Museum, Boston, and among them the almost living portrait of Samuel Adams. When these girls returned from visits to Boston, Mary began to paint inspiring pictures and to adorn the rooms with them.

She and her brother studied the lives and works of the old masters. How? We do not know, but genius makes a way.

A thrifty farmer and merchant was Col. Jonathan Trumbull in his young days. You laugh at these old-fashioned men, but look at what this man, who could discuss Homer and Horace with his boys, and the arts of Greece with his girls, accomplished through the good judgment and private thrift in his early life. Says his principal biographer, G. W. Stuart, of the fine young farmer, who had ships on the sea, and was beginning to turn from a farmer to a notable merchant:

“So the first years of Trumbull’s life as a merchant passed in successful commerce abroad, in profitable trade at home, and with high reputation in all his contacts, negotiations, and adventures. And ‘his corn and riches did increase.’ A house and home-estate worth over four thousand pounds; furniture, and a library, worth six hundred pounds; a valuable store adjacent to the dwelling; a store, wharf, and land at East Haddam; a lot and warehouse at Chelsea in Norwich; a valuable grist-mill near his family seat at Lebanon; ‘a large, convenient malt-house;’ several productive farms in his neighborhood, carefully tilled, and beautifully spotted with rich acres of woodland; extensive ownership, too, in the ‘Five-mile Propriety,’ as it was called, in Lebanon, in whose management as committeeman, and representative at courts, and moderator at meetings of owners, Trumbull had much to do; a stock of domestic animals worth a hundred and thirty pounds—these possessions, together with a well-secured indebtedness to himself, in bonds, and notes, and mortgages, resulting from his mercantile transactions, of about eight thousand pounds, rewarded, at the close of the year 1763, the toil of Trumbull in the field of trade and commerce. In all it was a property of not less than eighteen thousand pounds—truly a large one for the day—but one destined, by reverses in trade which the times subsequently rendered inevitable, and by the patriotic generosity of its owner during the great Revolutionary struggle, to slip, in large part, from his grasp.”

Here is a picture of thrifty life in a country village estate in old New England days.

He preached at first, then became a judge, and he “doctored.”

They were queer people who doctored then, with wig and gig. Brother Jonathan doctored the poor. He doctored out of his goodly instincts more than from a medical code, though he could administer prescriptions from Latin that it was deemed presumptuous for the patient to inquire about. Now people know what medicine they take, but it was deemed audacious then to ask any questions about Latin prescriptions, or to seek to penetrate such an awful mystery as was contained in the “Ferrocesquicianurit of the Cynide of Potassium,” or to find out that a ranunculus bulbosus was only a buttercup.

Among the good old tavern tales of such old-time doctors was one of a notional old woman, who used to send for the doctor as often as she saw any one passing who was going the doctor's way. Once when there was coming on one of these awful March snow-storms that buried up houses, she saw a teamster hurrying against the pitiless snow toward the town where the doctor's office was.

"Hay, hay!" said she to the half-blinded man. "Whoa, stop! Send the doctor to me—it is going to be a desperate case."

The doctor came to visit his patient, and found her getting a bountiful meal.

"The dragon!" said he. "Hobgoblins and thunder, what did you make me come out here for in all this dreadful storm?"

"Oh, pardon, doctor," said she, "it was such a good chance to send."

In ill temper, the country doctor faced the storm again.

There was both an academy and an Indian school in the town, and all the children loved Brother Jonathan.

The children of Boston used to follow Sam Adams in the street in the latter's benign old age, and the white children and red tumbled over their dogs to meet Brother Jonathan, when he appeared in his three-cornered hat, ruffles and knee-breeches, and all, in the snug village green around which the orioles sung in the great trees.

He had some kind word for them all. When his face lighted up, all was happiness.

Among his neighbors was William Williams, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and a man of beautiful soul.

The old church gleamed in air over the green. On the country roads they held meetings in smaller churches and in schoolhouses.

A queer story is told of one of these churches at the time of foot-stoves; how a good woman took a foot-stove to church and hid it under her cloak. The stove smoked, and the warm smoke rose up under her cloak, which was spread around her like a tent, and

caused her to go to sleep. As she bent over the smoke came out of her cloak at the back of her neck and ascended into the sunlight of a window. Now smoke is likely to form a circle as it ascends, and the good people, who did not know of the foot-stove, thought that they saw a crown of glory hanging over her head, and that a miracle was being performed.

Brother Jonathan and his good wife and children were always in their pew on Sunday. Probably there was a sounding-board in the primitive church and an hour-glass. Possibly, a tithing man went about with a feather to tickle sleepy old women on the nose, who lost consciousness between the 7thlys and the 10thlys, and so made them jump and say, “O Lud, massy sakes alive!” or something equally surprising and improper.

CHAPTER IV

“OUT YOU GO”

Old Peter Wetmore, of Lebanon, was suspected of being a Tory, but he kept shut lips. “Don’t open the doors of your soul,” he used to say, “and people will never know who you are. They can’t imprison your soul without the body, nor the body unless the soul opens its gates,” by which he meant the lips. “What I say is nothing to nobody. I chop wood!”

Morose, silent, grunting, if he spoke at all, he lived in a mossy, gable-roofed house, with a huge woodpile before his door.

There was a great oak forest on rising ground above him. Below him was a cedar swamp, with a village of crows and crow-blackbirds, which all shouted in the morning, and told each other that the sun was rising.

He was in his heart true to the King. When the patriots of Lebanon came to him to talk politics after the Lexington alarm, he simply said, “I chop wood.”

Chop wood he did. His woodpile in front of his house was almost as high as his house itself. But he chopped on, and all through the winter his ax flew. And he split wood, hickory wood, with a warlike expression on his face, as his ax came down. He had one relative—a nephew, Peter, whom he taught to “fly around” and to “pick up his heels” in such a nervous way that people ceased to call him Peter Wetmore, but named him Peter *Nimble*. The boy was so abused by his uncle that he wore a scared look.

Lebanon was becoming one of the most patriotic towns in America. At one time during the Revolutionary War there were five hundred men in the public services. The people were intolerant of a Tory, and old Peter Wetmore, who chopped wood, was a suspect.

A different heart had young Peter, the orphan boy, who was for a time compelled to live with him or to become roofless.

The Lexington alarm thrilled him, as he heard the news on Lebanon green.

He caught the spirit of the people, and as for Governor Trumbull, he thought he was the “Lord” or almost a divinity. The Governor probably used to give him rides when he met him in the way. The Governor did not “whip behind.”

When Peter had heard the news of the Lexington alarm, he said:

“I must fly home now and tell uncle that.”

It was a long way from the green to the cabin that Peter called “home.”

He hurried home and lifted the latch, and met his uncle, who was scowling.

“What has happened now?” said the latter, seeing Peter had been running.

“A shot has been fired on the green.”

“What, on Lebanon green?” gasped the old man in alarm.

“No, on Lexington green.”

“That doesn’t matter. Lexington green is so far off. Who fired the shot? The regulars,” he added.

“The young men at Lebanon are all enlisting. I wish I were old enough to go!”

“For what?”

“To fight the British.”

“What, the King?”

“Yes.”

“The King? Do I hear my ears, boy?”

“Uncle?”

“I am going to pull the latch-string, and out you go. Don’t talk back. Do you hear? Out you go, and you may never be able to tell *all* you lose.”

The boy half comprehended the hint, for he believed that his uncle had money stored in the cellar, or in some secret place near the house. As the latter would never let any one but himself go to the soap-barrel in the cellar, the boy suspected the treasure might be there, or in the ash-flue in the chimney.

Young Peter turned white.

Old Peter tugged his rheumatic body to the door, and turned.

“I am going to pull the string, Peter.”

To the boy the words sounded like a hangman’s summons.

“Where shall I go, uncle?”

“That is for you to say. I’ve got store enough, boy. Somebody will bury me if I die. But the King, my King, he who goes against the King goes against me. Who do you go for?”

“The people.”

“The people!” shrieked the old man. “Then *out* you go; out!”

“There is one house, uncle, whose doors are open to all people who have no roof.”

“Which one is that—the poorhouse?”

“No, the Governor’s.”

“That makes me mad—mad! I hate the Governor, and his’n and all! I can live alone!”

He pulled the latch-string and cried, in trumpet tone:

“*Out!*”

Peter went out into the open April air, into the wood. He went to the Governor’s, and told him all, but in a way to shield the old man.

“He is a little touched in mind,” said Peter, charitably.

“You shall have a home with me, or mine,” said the Governor. “My son-in-law over the way will employ you as a shepherd. If he doesn’t, others will. And you can use the hills for a lookout, while you herd sheep. Dennis will find work for you to do at times in his service. Boy, perilous times are coming, and you have a true heart. I know your heart; I can see it—I know your thoughts, and people who sow true thoughts, reap true harvests. Don’t be down-hearted; you own the stars. I will cover you.” He lifted his hand over him.

“You won’t harm uncle for what I have said?”

“No, no, I will not harm the old man for what you have said now. It is better to change the heart of a man and make him your friend than to seek to have revenge on him. He will turn to you some day, and perhaps he will leave you his gold, for they say that he has gold stored away somewhere. You have a heart of charity—I can see—as well as of truth. Charity goes with honor. As long as you do right, nothing can happen to you that you can not glorify.”

Peter was made acquainted with Dennis by the Governor, who was a father to all friendless children, and he was employed as a shepherd boy, on the hills.

The hills were lookouts now.

People went to the old man to reprove him for his treatment of his nephew, but he would only say:

“I am cutting wood!”

While he lived with his Tory uncle, Peter used to hear strange things at night.

The old man would get up, bar all the doors, light the bayberry candle, and bring something like a leather bag to his table.

Then he would talk to himself strangely.

“*One*,” he would say, putting down something that rang hard on the table.

“*One*, if he stays with me, and is true to the King.

“*Two.*”

There would follow a metallic sound.

"*Two*, if he stays with me, and is loyal to the King.

"*Three*, if he stays and is loyal.

"*Four.* All for him when I go out, if only he is true."

Then the bag would jingle. Then would follow a rattling sound.

"*Five*, *six*, *seven*, *eight*," and so on, adding up to a hundred. He seemed to be counting coin.

Then there would be a sound of sweeping hands. Was he gathering up coin—gold coin? Presently there would be sounds of chubby feet, and a chest would seem to open, and the lid to close, and to be bolted.

"All, all for him," the old man would say, "if he only stays with me and is loyal to the King, whose arms are like those of the lion and the unicorn."

Then he would lie down, saying, "All for him," and the house would become still in the still world of the cedars.

The boy wondered if "him" were the King, or if it were he, or some unknown relative, or friend. He could hardly doubt that the old man had treasure, and counted it at night, either for the King, or for himself.

So now, often when the great moon shone on the cedars, he lay awake and wondered what the old man meant. Had he missed a fortune by his patriotic feeling?

The words, "if he stays with me and is loyal to the King," made him think that the wood-chopper meant himself, or some unknown relative.

But "if he stays with me" suggested himself so strongly, that he often asked himself, if the hard old man really loved him and was carrying out some vision for his welfare in his silent heart.

Peter used to meet Brother Jonathan as the latter crossed the green, which he did almost daily. The Governor was usually so

absorbed in thought that he did not seem to see the shining sun, or to hear the birds singing; he lived in the cause.

But when he met Peter he would stretch out his hand in the Quaker manner, and look pleasant. To see the old man's face light up was a joy to the susceptible boy; it made him so happy as to make him alert the rest of the day.

One day as the two were crossing the green, in near ways, the Governor suddenly said:

"Let us *consider* the matter:

"My young man, for so you are before your time, I must have a clerk in my store, and he must be no common clerk; he must be one that I can trust, for he must do more than sell goods and barter; he must look out for me, when I am in the back room, the war office; and he must be the only one to enter the war-office room when the council is in session. The council has met more than three hundred times now. And, Peter, Peter of the hills, shepherd-boy, night-watch —my heart turns to you. You must be my clerk—that is, to the people; meet customers, barter, trade, sell; but to me, you must be the sentinel of the door of the war office. Peter, I can see your soul; you will be true to me. I am an old man; don't say it, but I forget, when I have so many things to weigh me down. You shall stand between the store and the war office, at the counter, and I will give you the secret keys, and if any one must see me, you must see about the matter. Peter, the Council of Safety is a power behind the destiny of this nation. It is revealed to me so. Will you come?"

"Yes, yes, Governor. I live in my thoughts for you. Yes, yes, and I will be as faithful as I can."

"Of course you will. Come right now. You may sleep in the store at night. The drovers will tell you stories on the barrels. I can trust you for everything. So I dismiss myself now—you are myself. Here is the secret key. Don't feel hurt if I do not speak to you much when you see me. I live for the future, and must think, think, think."

The Governor went into the tavern, and Peter, with the secret key, went to the store. The Governor had considered the matter. He used

the word *consider* often.

The Governor soon began to send almost all people who came to see him, except the members of the council, to Peter. “Go to my clerk,” he would say, “he will do the best he can for you.”

Peter rose in public favor. Two plus two in him made five, as it does in all growing people. He was more than a clerk. He was keen, hearty, true.

Peter received news from couriers for years. What news was reported there—The battle of Long Island, the operations near New York, Trenton, Princeton, Morristown, Burgoyne’s campaign, Brandywine, Germantown, Monmouth, the southern campaign, the exploits of Green, and hundreds, perhaps thousands, of incidents of the varying fortunes of the war!

The couriers, despatchmen, the wagoners, the drovers, came to the war office and went. They multiplied.

But the activity diminished as the army moved South.

People gathered in the front store in the evenings to hear the news, and often to wait for the news. They saw the members of the Council of Safety come and go; and while the things that lay like weights in the balance of the nation were there discussed, the men told tales on the barrels that had come from the West Indies, or on the meal chests and bins of vegetables. What queer tales they were!

Let us spend an evening at the store, and listen to one of the old Connecticut folk tales.

It is a winter night. The ice glares without in the moon, on the ponds and cedars. There is an open fire in the store; in the window are candy-jars; over the counter are candles on rods, and on the counter are snuff-jars and tobacco.

One of the old-time natural story-tellers sits on a rice-barrel; he is a drover and stops at wayside inns, and knows the tales of the inns,

and especially the ghost-stories. Such stories did not frighten Peter as they did Dennis, who was new to the country. Peter had become hardened to them.

Let us give you one of these peculiar old store stories that was told on red settles, and that is like those which passed from settle to settle throughout the colony. The speaker is a “grandfather.”

THE TREASURE DIGGER OF CAPE ANN

“Oh, boys, let me smoke my pipe in peace. How the moon shines on the snow, far, far away, down the sea! That makes me think of Captain Kidd. Ah, he was a hard man, that same Captain Kidd, and he had a hard, hard heart, if he was the son of a Scotch preacher.”

Here the grandfather paused and shook his head.

The pause made an atmosphere. The natural story-teller lowered his voice, and the earth seemed to stand still as he said:

“My name was Captain Kidd,
As I sailed, as I sailed,
My name was Captain Kidd,
As I sailed.

“My name was Captain Kidd,
And wickedly I did,
God’s laws I did forbid,
As I sailed.

“I murdered William Moore,
As I sailed, as I sailed,
And left him in his gore,
As I sailed.

“I’d the Bible in my hand,
’Twas my father’s last command,
But I sunk it in the sand,
As I sailed.”

Here the old man paused, pressed down the tobacco in his pipe with a quick movement of his forefinger, and shook his head twice, leaving the impression that the said Captain Kidd was a very bad sea-rover.

The room was still. You could hear the sparks shoot out; the corn-sheller stopped in his work. The old maiden lady who had come in for snuff touched the pepper pods: the air grew peppery, but no one dared to sneeze.

The old man bobbed up his head, as making an atmosphere for highly wrought work of the imagination.

“There was once an old couple,” he said, “who lived down on Cape Ann, and beyond their cottage was a sandy dune, and on the dune there was a thatch-patch.

“They had grown old and were poor, and both thought that their lot had been hard, and the old woman said to the old man:

“‘It was you who made my life hard. I was once a girl, and what I might have been no one knows. Ah me, ah me!’

“One fall morning the old man got up, and frisked around in an unusual way.

“‘What makes you so spry?’ asked the old woman.

“‘I dreamed a dream last night in the morning.’

“‘And what did you dream?’

“‘I dreamed that Captain Kidd hid his treasure in an iron box under the thatch-patch, right in the middle of the patch, where the shingle goes round.’

“‘Then go out and dig. If you don’t, I will. Think what we might be, if we could find that treasure. We might have a chariot like the Pepperells, and fine horses like the Boston gentry, the Royalls, and the Vassals.’

“‘But I can have the treasure only on one condition.’

“‘What is that?’

“‘I must not speak a word while I am digging.’

“‘That would be hard for you. Your mouth is always open, answering your old wife back. I could dig without a word, now. Well, well, ah-a-me! If you should dream that dream a second time, it would be a sign.’

“The next morning the old man got up spryer than before. He clattered the shovel and the tongs.

“‘Wife, wife, I dreamed the same dream again this morning.’

“‘Well, if you were to dream it a third time, it would be a certainty—that is, if you could dig for the treasure without speaking a word, which a woman of my sense and wit could do. Go and dig.’

“‘But the voice that came to me in my dream told me to dig at midnight, at the rising of the moon.’

“That night as the great moon rose over the waters of Cape Ann, like the sun, the old man took his hoe and hung on to it his clam-basket, and put both of them over his shoulder. He went out of the door over which the dry morning-glory vines were rattling.

“‘Now, husband, you stop and listen to me,’ said the old wife. ‘Remember all the time that you are not to speak a word, else we will have no chariot to ride past the Pepperells, nor cantering horses, leaving the dust all in their eyes. Now, what are you to do?’

“‘Never to speak a word.’

“‘Under no surprise.’

“‘Not if the sea were to roar, nor the sky to fall, nor an earthquake to uproot the hills, nor anything!’

“‘Well, you may go now, and when you return we will be richer than the Governor himself. I have always been dreaming that such a day might come to us as a sort of reward for all that we have suffered. But they say that Captain Kidd tricks those who dig for his treasures. His ghost appears to them. Never you fear if he lays hands on you.’

“The old man went down to the sea. The moon rose so fast that he could see it rising.

“The old couple had a black cat, a very sleek, fat little animal, which lived much on the broken clams that the clam-diggers threw out of their piles of bivalves at low tides.

“When she saw that the old man was going down to the sea, she started after him, with still feet—still, still.

“The old man measured by his eye the center of the thatch-patch, and dug into the tough roots of the thatch lustily. He became exhausted at last and stopped to rest, looking up to the moon that glittered in the autumn sea. He pushed the handle of the hoe down into the sand. It struck something that sounded like iron. He felt sure of the treasure.

“Suddenly he felt something rubbing against his leg. It was like a hand. ‘Captain Kidd came back to disconcert me,’ thought he. ‘But I will never speak a word,’ thought he silently, ‘not for the moon herself, nor for a thousand moons.’

“The supposed hand again rubbed against his leg—still, still.

“He turned his head very slowly and cautiously. He saw something move. It was like a gloved hand. ‘Captain Kidd’s, sure,’ he thought, but did not speak a word. The thing had still feet or hands.

“He turned his head a little more and was humbled to discover that it was not Captain Kidd’s hand at all, but only Tommy, purring and purring—still, still.

“His pride fell. He was disconcerted. No one can tell what he may do when he finds a pirate’s ghost to be only the house cat, all so still.

“There are some situations that take away all one’s senses, little things, too.

“He inclined his head more, so to be certain, when the truth was in an instant revealed to him beyond a possibility of doubt, but everything was still, still, still.

“‘Scat!’”

The story-teller had been talking in a very low tone. He uttered the last word with an explosive voice when he had caused all ears to be strained. His hearers leaped at this electric ending of his Red Settle Tale.

He resumed his pipe, and merely added:

“There are some things that human nature can not stand. When a man finds out something to be nothing, for example, like the treasure digger of Cape Ann.”

After a long time, during which heart-beats became normal, some one might venture to ask:

“And what became of the old woman?”

“Oh, after the old man spoke the sea roared and came rushing into the thatch-patch and over it, and he and the cat ran, and I mind me that that cat didn’t have much peace and comfort in the house after that.”

CHAPTER V

THE WAR OFFICE IN THE CEDARS—AN INDIAN TALE—INCIDENTS

The old war office at Lebanon, Conn., is still to be seen. That war office is a relic room and a library now. The great cedars are gone that once surrounded it, and the old Alden Tavern, which was enlivened by colonial tales, and in later times by the queer Revolutionary tale of the humiliation of the captured Prescott, has now left behind it the borders of the village green. The ground where Washington reviewed the army of Rochambeau is still held sacred, and near by rises the church of the Revolution, and in a wind-swept New England graveyard, on the hillside, in a crumbling tomb, sleeps Governor Trumbull, Washington's "Brother Jonathan," whom the great leader of the soldier commoners used to consult in every stress of the war.

In the same lot of rude, mossy, zigzag headstones rests one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, William Williams, who married Governor Trumbull's daughter.

This place of rare history stands apart from the main traveled roads. To reach it, go to Willimantic, and take a branch railroad to Lebanon, which town of hidden farms was so called from its cedars.

What a wonder to a lover of history this place is! The farms, with orchards, great barns and meadows, rise on the hill-slopes as beautiful as they are thrifty. The town is some two or more miles from the railroad, and the visitor wonders how a place that decided the greatest events of history could have been left to primitive life, simplicity, and country roads, amid all the industrial activities that circle round it in near great factory towns.

There may be seen the New England of old—the same bowery landscapes and walls that the rugged farmers knew, who left their plows for Bunker Hill, after the Lexington alarm. Putnam often rode over these hills, and young John Trumbull, as we have shown, began his historical pictures there.

The little gambrel-roofed house called the war office, where the greatest and most decisive events of the Revolution had their origin, or support, was probably the country store of Governor Trumbull's father, and was erected near the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Why did this little building gain this great importance, an importance greater than any other, except, perhaps, the old State House, Boston, and Independence Hall, Philadelphia? Let us repeat some facts for clearness.

Lebanon of the cedars lay on the direct road to Boston, and was connected with the principal Connecticut towns. There was sounded the Lexington alarm. The Connecticut Assembly delegated great powers to a committee of public safety. Governor Trumbull, who was the leading spirit of it, and three other members, resided in Lebanon, and held the early sessions of the committee there. This committee continued its sessions here during the war.

The house occupied by Governor Trumbull still stands, as we have said, but the tavern is gone.

"Brother Jonathan's" war office and residence in Lebanon, Connecticut.

The writer dined in the house a few months before beginning this story, and was shown the part of the house where the alarm-post, as we call the guard's room, and overlook, were.

We give a picture of this most interesting house, one of the most significant in the country. The spirit of the Revolution dwelt there, and from this place it exercised a wonderful but unseen power.

The Connecticut Society of the Sons of the Revolution in the winter of 1890–'91 made provision for the preservation of the war office, as a notable relic of the Revolution.

The building was repaired. The oak framework was found to be sound, and the decayed sills were replaced by new timber, and the chimney was restored and furnished with colonial firepieces from old houses in Lebanon. Andirons made in the Revolution, old iron cranes, and primitive utensils were brought to the council room, and the place of the meetings of the Committee of Public Safety was thus made to resume the aspect of a bygone age of the farmer heroes.

The celebration of the restoration of the war office by the Sons of the Revolution took place May 14, 1891, on Flag-day, when there waved a flag with the motto of “Brother Jonathan” in company with the Star-Spangled Banner.

On that occasion the modern American flag was raised over the old war office for the first time, where

Jonathan Trumbull never failed
In his store on Lebanon Hill.

Jonathan Trumbull has well been called the Cedar of Lebanon. The story of his early life is that of one of nature’s independent noblemen, than which no title is higher. His own brains and hands caused him to be a powerful influence; he made character, and character made him; he became poor, but nothing lives but righteousness, and character is everything.

The origin of his family name is interesting.

A Scottish king was out hunting, and was attacked by a bull. A young peasant threw himself before the king, twisted the bull’s horns, and saved the king’s life. The king gave him the name of “Turnbull,” with a coat of arms and the motto, *Fortuna favet audaci*. Hence the name Trumbull.

The wife of Trumbull, as we have shown, came from a family equally noble. She was the great-granddaughter of Robinson of Leyden, the patriarch of the church of the Pilgrim Fathers in Holland. It was he who said to the Pilgrims on their departure: “Go ye forth into the wilderness, and new light shall break forth from the Word.”

He had intended to follow the Pilgrims to America, but died in Holland.

Jonathan Trumbull was born in Lebanon, Conn., 1710. He was a successful trader at sea for a time; he then lost his ships and property and became a poor man, when he was called into the public service, and from that time devoted himself to patriotic duties, without any thought of poverty or riches, but only to fulfil the duties into which he had been called. He lived not for himself, but for others; not for the present, but for the future; he forgot himself, and it was fame.

His son, John Trumbull, the famous historical painter, pictures by anecdotes some of the scenes of his early home. Among these incidents is the following story, which carries its own lesson:

AN INDIAN TALE

“At the age of nine or ten a circumstance occurred which deserves to be written on adamant. In the wars of New England with the aborigines, the Mohegan tribe of Indians early became friends of the English. Their favorite ground was on the banks of the river (now the Thames) between New London and Norwich. A small remnant of the Mohegans still exists, and they are sacredly protected in the possession and enjoyment of their favorite domain on the banks of the Thames. The government of this tribe had become hereditary in the family of the celebrated chief Uncas. During the time of my father’s mercantile prosperity he had employed several Indians of this tribe in hunting animals, whose skins were valuable for their fur. Among these hunters was one named Zachary, of the royal race, an excellent hunter, but as drunken and worthless an Indian as ever lived. When he had somewhat passed the age of fifty, several members of the royal family who stood between Zachary and the throne of his tribe died, and he found himself with only one life between him and empire. In this moment his better genius resumed its sway, and he reflected seriously. ‘How can such a drunken wretch as I am aspire to be the chief of this honorable race—what will my people say—and how will the shades of my noble ancestors look

down indignant upon such a base successor? Can I succeed to the great Uncas? I will drink no more!' He solemnly resolved never again to taste any drink but water, and he kept his resolution.

"I had heard this story, and did not entirely believe it; for young as I was, I already partook in the prevailing contempt for Indians. In the beginning of May, the annual election of the principal officers of the (then) colony was held at Hartford, the capital. My father attended officially, and it was customary for the chief of the Mohegans also to attend.

"Zachary had succeeded to the rule of his tribe. My father's house was situated about midway on the road between Mohegan and Hartford, and the old chief was in the habit of coming a few days before the election and dining with his brother governor. One day the mischievous thought struck me, to try the sincerity of the old man's temperance. The family were seated at dinner, and there was excellent home-brewed beer on the table. I addressed the old chief: 'Zachary, this beer is excellent; will you taste it?' The old man dropped his knife and fork, leaning forward with a stern intensity of expression; his black eye, sparkling with indignation, was fixed on me. 'John,' said he, 'you do not know what you are doing. You are serving the devil, boy! Do you not know that I am an Indian? I tell you that I am, and that, if I should but taste your beer, I could never stop until I got to rum, and became again the drunken, contemptible wretch your father remembers me to have been. *John, while you live never again tempt any man to break a good resolution.*'

"Socrates never uttered a more valuable precept; Demosthenes could not have given it in more solemn tones of eloquence. I was thunderstruck. My parents were deeply affected; they looked at each other, at me, and at the venerable old Indian, with deep feelings of awe and respect. They afterward frequently reminded me of the scene, and charged me never to forget it.

"Zachary lived to pass the age of eighty, and sacredly kept his resolution. He lies buried in the royal burial-place of his tribe, near the beautiful falls of the Yantic, the western branch of the Thames, in Norwich, on land now owned by my friend, Calvin Goddard, Esq. I

visited the grave of the old chief lately, and there repeated to myself his inestimable lesson."

Mr. Trumbull, the painter, also thus pictures his own youth, and what a character it presents in the studies he made, and the books he read!

"About this time, when I was nine or ten years old, my father's mercantile failure took place. He had been for years a successful merchant, and looked forward to an old age of ease and affluence; but in one season almost every vessel, and all the property which he had upon the ocean, was swept away, and he was a poor man at so late a period of life as left no hope of retrieving his affairs.

"My eldest brother was involved in the wreck as a partner, which rendered the condition of the family utterly hopeless. My mother and sisters were deeply afflicted, and although I was too young clearly to comprehend the cause, yet sympathy led me too to droop. My bodily health was frail, for the sufferings of early youth had left their impress on my constitution, and although my mind was clear and the body active, it was never strong. I therefore seldom joined my little schoolfellows in plays or exercises of an athletic kind, for there I was almost sure to be vanquished; and by degrees acquired new fondness for drawing, in which I stood unrivaled. Thus I gradually contracted a solitary habit, and after school hours frequently withdrew to my own room to a close study of my favorite pursuit.

"Such was my character at the time of my father's failure, and this added gloomy feelings to my love of solitude. I became silent, diffident, bashful, awkward in society, and took refuge in still closer application to my books and my drawing.

"The want of pocket-money prevented me from joining my young companions in any of those little expensive frolics which often lead to future dissipation, and thus became a blessing; and my good master Tisdale had the wisdom so to vary my studies as to render them rather a pleasure than a task. Thus I went forward, without interruption, and at the age of twelve might have been admitted to enter college; for I had then read Eutropius, Cornelius Nepos, Virgil, Cicero, Horace, and Juvenal in Latin; the Greek Testament and

Homer's Iliad in Greek, and was thoroughly versed in geography, ancient and modern, in studying which I had the advantage (then rare) of a twenty-inch globe. I had also read with care Rollin's History of Ancient Nations; also his History of the Roman Republic; Mr. Crevier's continuation of the History of the Emperors, and Rollin's Arts and Sciences of the Ancient Nations. In arithmetic alone I met an awful stumbling-block. I became puzzled by a sum in division, where the divisor consisted of three figures. I could not comprehend the rule for ascertaining how many times it was contained in the dividend; my mind seemed to come to a dead stand; my master would not assist me, and forbade the boys to do it, so that I well recollect the question stood on my slate unsolved nearly three months, to my extreme mortification.

"At length the solution seemed to flash upon my mind at once, and I went forward without further let or hindrance through the ordinary course of fractions, vulgar and decimal, surveying, trigonometry, geometry, navigation, etc., so that when I had reached the age of fifteen and a half years, it was stated by my good master that he could teach me little more, and that I was fully qualified to enter Harvard College in the middle of the third or junior year. This was approved by my father, and proposed to me. In the meantime my fondness for painting had grown with my growth, and in reading of the arts of antiquity I had become familiar with the names of Phidias and Praxiteles, of Zeuxis and Apelles."

This son, who began his great career as an historical painter by drawing pictures in sand on the floor, after the manner we have shown, as he grew older and had seen Europe, determined to follow his genius. The young man gives us the following view of his father, a lovely picture in itself:

"My father urged me to study the law as the profession which in a republic leads to all emolument and distinction, and for which my early education had well prepared me. My reply was that, so far as I understood the question, law was rendered necessary by the vices of mankind; that I had already seen too much of them willingly to devote my life to a profession which would keep me perpetually involved either in the defense of innocence against fraud and

injustice, or (what was much more revolting to an ingenuous mind) to the protection of guilt against just and merited punishment. In short, I pined for the arts, again entered into an elaborate defense of my predilection, and again dwelt upon the honors paid to artists in the glorious days of Greece and Athens. My father listened patiently, and when I had finished he complimented me upon the able manner in which I had defended what to him still appeared to be a bad cause.

"'I had confirmed his opinion,' he said, 'that with proper study I should make a respectable lawyer; but,' added he, 'you must give me leave to say that you appear to have overlooked, or forgotten, one very important point in your case.' 'Pray, sir,' I rejoined, 'what was that?' 'You appear to forget, sir, that *Connecticut is not Athens*'; and with this pithy remark he bowed and withdrew, and never more opened his lips upon the subject. How often have those few impressive words occurred to my memory—'Connecticut is not Athens!' The decision was made in favor of the arts. I closed all other business, and in December, 1783, embarked at Portsmouth, N. H., for London."

He could begin to make Connecticut like Athens by his own work.

Queer tales they told "grave people" at the ordinaries, and inns, and at the store of the war office.

The New England mind in the colonial period saw no chariots of angels in the air, and heard no rustlings of angels' wings, like the ancient Hebrews, and looked for no goddesses, like the Greeks and Romans. Ugly hags and witches, "grave people" in winding-sheets, scared folks in a cowardly manner in lonely highways and hidden byways; bad people who died with restless consciences came forth from their "earthly beds" to make startling confessions to the living. It was a time of terror, of people fleeing from persecutions, and of Indian hostilities. Let us have another old-time store story, to picture the social life of those decisive times.

It was the beginning of the days of the "drovers," when our tale was told, such drovers as used to go wandering over New England in the fall and spring, selling cattle, or trading in cattle, with the farmers by the way.

It was fall. Maples flamed; the grape-leaves turned yellow around the purple clusters that hung over the walls; the fringed gentians lined the brooks; the cranberries reddened; the birds gathered in flocks; the blue jays trumpeted, and the crows cawed. Great stacks of corn filled the corners of the husking-fields.

The drovers came to the valleys of the Connecticut and to the Berkshire Hills, and rested at last with full purses at the Plainfield Inn.

In the inn lived an aunt of the innkeeper, a Quaker woman by the name of Eunice.

There was a young drover named Mordecai, who was all imagination, eyes and ears. He seemed to be so earnest to learn everything that he attracted the notice of Eunice, and she said to him on one of his annual visits:

“Mordecai, and who may thy father be?”

“Gone—gone with the winds. That’s him.”

“And thy mother?”

“Gone—gone after him. That’s her. Where do you suppose they are?”

“Did they leave anything?”

“Left all they had.”

“And how much was that, Mordecai?”

“The earth—all.”

“And thou wert left all alone. I pity thee, Mordecai.”

Now, Quaker Eunice knit. She not only knit stockings and garters, but comforters for the neck, and gallows, as suspenders for trousers were then called. The latter were called *galluses*. She did not knit these useful and convenient articles for her own people alone, but for those who most needed them.

When serene Aunt Eunice saw how friendless the drover boy Mordecai was, her benevolent heart quickened, and she resolved to

knit for him a comforter of many bright colors, a yard long, and a pair of gallows of stout twine, to give him on his return another year, when the cattle traders should come down from Boston. It took time to fabricate these high-art treasures of many kinds and colors. So when Mordecai was leaving the inn this year, she called after him:

“Mordecai, thee halt in thy goings.”

Mordecai looked back.

“Boy, thee has no mother to look after thee now, except from the spirit-world. I am going to knit a comforter for thee that will go around thy neck three times and hang down at that. I will set the dye-pot and dye the wool—the ash-barrel is almost full now. And thee listen. I am going to knit a pair of gallows for thee——”

The boy’s eyes dilated. He had never heard the word used before except for the cords that hung pirates on the green isle in Boston harbor. Did she expect him to be hung?

“I will knit the gallows stout and strong, so that they will hold. But I must not tell thee all about it now—thee shall know all another year, after killing-time, in the Indian summer, when the wich-hazels that bloom in the fall are in flower.”

Mordecai, who had been filled with New England superstitions by the drovers’ tales in the country inns, stood with open mouth, when Aunt Eunice added:

“I am going to put a new invention on those gallows; it will prove a surprise to thee.”

It did.

The boy Mordecai passed a year in wonder at what the zigzag journey to hill towns at the west of the State would bring him in the holiday or rest seasons of the fall. He wandered with the drovers to the towns around Boston, and on the Charles and “Merrimack,” trading and selling cattle, and “putting up” at the inns by the way, he himself sleeping in the barns, under the swallows’ nests.

They were merry merchantmen, the drovers. Whittier describes them in a poem. Their cattle trades had a dialect of its own, and

there was an unwritten law that “all was fair in trade,” to which “honorable dishonesty” clear-minded Aunt Eunice made objection, and against which she “delivered exhortations.”

Some of these merry rovers used a boy to help them in tricks of trade—to shorten the age of cattle, and the time when the latter were “broke,” and like matters.

One day in the spring tradings a Quaker on one of the Salem farms said to Mordecai:

“Boy, thee must never let thy tongue slip an untruth, or thee will come to the gallows.”

The next year the drovers and Mordecai took their annual journey from Cambridge to Springfield and eastern Connecticut, and stopped at the Plainfield Inn.

The trees flamed with autumnal splendors again; the sun seemed burning in the air, now with a clear flame, now with a smoky haze; there were great corn harvests everywhere. The twilight and early evening hours were still. The voices on the farms echoed—those of the huskers, and of the boys driving the oxen, with carts loaded with corn. The hunters’ moon that rose over the hills like a night sun lengthened out the day.

They went on slowly, and so allowing their cattle to graze on the succulent grasses by the roadside, and to fatten, and become lazy.

They rested at great farmhouses, bartering and selling as long as the light of the day lasted, and telling awful tales of the Indian wars and old Salem witchcraft days later in the evening.

Some of the drovers’ stories were awful indeed. One of them concerned the “Miller of Durham.” The said miller used to remain in his mill late in the evening alone. One night he was startled by the dripping of water inside of the mill-house. He turned from the hopper, and saw there a woman, with five bloody wounds, and wet garments, and wide eyes.

“Miller of Durham,” she said, “you must avenge me, or I will haunt the mill. You will find my body in the well in the abandoned coal-pit.

Mattox killed me—he knows why."

The miller knew Mattox, and he saw that the woman had a familiar look, and had probably been employed on the farm of the accused man, who was a prosperous farmer. He resolved to conceal the appearance of the accusing ghost. But the apparition followed him, and so made his life a terror that he went perforce to a magistrate and made confession. The woman's body, with five wounds, was found in the well of the coal-pit, and Mattox was accused of the murder, tried, condemned, and executed. The story was a true one, but it was an old one. The events occurred in England on a moor.

The boy Mordecai listened to these inn tales at first with a clear conscience, and he felt secure, for he had been taught that innocence renders "apparitions" harmless; but after a time his moral condition changed, and his fears were aroused, and they grew into terrors.

For one day, as the lively cattle-owner was driving a bargain with a rich farmer under some great elms that rose like hills of greenery by the roadside, he declared that a certain cow had given fifteen quarts of milk a day during the summer, and had said, "There is the boy that milked her—the boy Mordecai, he of the Old Testament name. Speak up, Mordecai. You milked her, didn't you, now?"

Mordecai stood silent. The cow had given some eight or ten quarts of milk a day.

"He can't deny that he milked her," said the bantering trader.

"And did she give fifteen quarts of milk regularly during the summer, boy?" asked the farmer.

"I did not measure the milk myself," said the boy. "The boss did that."

"That was I, or rather my wife," said the drover.

Mordecai's conscience began to be disturbed, and disturbed consciences are the stuff out of which ghosts grow.

At the next inn, in the lovely Connecticut valley, a still more terrible story was told. A forest tavern-keeper, after this tale, had trained a

huge mastiff to drown his rich guests in a pond in a wood at the back of the tavern. The strong dog had been bought of a drover named Bonny, who had treated him kindly. Years passed, and the same Mr. Bonny visited the inn, and was recognized by the dog, but not by the tavern-keeper. The latter invited Mr. Bonny to go with him to the trout-pond in the wood, and while they were on the margin of the pond he suddenly whistled to his mastiff as a signal. The dog whined and howled and ran around in a circle.

“Why don’t you do as you always do?” exclaimed the tavern-keeper to the dog in anger.

The dog’s eyes blazed; he leaped upon his master and dragged him into the pond. But his master in his struggles drowned the mastiff. Mr. Bonny witnessed the scene in horror, and seeing what it meant—for several rich drovers had disappeared from the inn and had never been heard of again—he determined to conceal the matter, as the crime could not be repeated. But the dead dog howled nights, and so drew people to the pond, and disclosed the crime.

“Life,” said the story-teller, “is self-revealing: everything is found out at last. The stars in their courses fight against a liar!”

The inward eyes of Mordecai now began to expect to see “sights.” The boy’s conscience burned. He had the ghost atmosphere.

The next time that the lusty drover tried to sell the cow that had given “fifteen quarts of milk a day” he declared that she had given sixteen quarts, and called the milker as before to witness the statement.

“You milked her?” he asked.

“Yes; but you measured the milk,” said Mordecai.

“So I did,” said the drover in an absent tone in which was the usual false note, “so I did. I remember now. But you used to milk her.”

“Yes,” faltered the boy, feeling that the heavens were likely to fall or the earth to cave in.

The story at the next inn, near Pittsfield, on the Albany way, outdid all the rest. A man who had robbed his neighbors by deception, after

this story, had been followed nights by the clanking of an invisible chain. A neighbor whom he had ruined died, and after that the clankings of the “invisible chain” began to be heard in his bedchamber. If he ran down-stairs they followed him, clank, clank, clank, on the oak steps, and out into the garden.

Mordecai could fancy it all: the man running half-crazed down the oak stairs, with the invisible chain clanking behind him.

When the drover next tried to sell that cow he declared that she had given “eighteen quarts of milk a day,” to which he called Mordecai to witness. The boy gasped “Yes” to the question if he had milked her regularly, but he seemed to hear the clanking of the invisible chain as he acted his part for the last time. The wonderful cow was sold.

In this state of mind Mordecai came to the Plainfield Inn, and again met there the serene and truthful Aunt Eunice.

“I’ve kept my promise that I made to thee a year ago,” said the sympathetic woman, “gallows and all. The dyestuff took, and the colors of the comforter are real pretty. Thee looks troubled.”

Near midnight the foresticks in the fireplace broke and fell, and the men went to their rooms.

“Thee will sleep in the cockloft,” said Aunt Eunice to Mordecai, “but before thee goes up let me sew some buttons on thy trousers for the gallows [galluses]. Stand up by me; I have some stout thread for the purpose.”

Mordecai took off his jacket and loosened his belt, and Aunt Eunice sewed on the buttons as he stood beside her. She then attached the gallows to the back buttons, leaving them otherwise free for him to button on in front in the morning.

“See here, Mordecai,” she said. “These are no common gallows. I’ve put buckles on them—buckles that my grandfather wore in the Indian wars. These are wonderful buckles. If the gallows are too long, thee can h’ist them up, so; if they are then too short, thee can let them out again, so.”

Now, when Mordecai saw that the gallows had no connection with hanging he felt happy, and he went up to the cockloft, candle in hand.

“Be careful and not let the buckles drag upon the floor, Mordecai,” were the good woman’s last words as she saw the boy disappear with the light, holding the wonderful suspenders in his hand.

Mordecai could not sleep. The cockloft did not look right, did not fulfil his moral ideal. The great moon rose over the hills and flooded the valley with white light. He began to think of the three acted lies of which he had been a part. The cow that had given “fifteen,” “sixteen,” “seventeen,” “eighteen” quarts of milk a day had been sold—what if the purchaser should commit suicide?

At midnight he heard a cry out in the field.

“Hello! that steer is out and is at the corn-stack!”

The voice was that of a drover. Mordecai felt that he should get up and go to the corn-stack and help impound the steer.

He forgot the gallows, so they hung down to the floor behind him after he had dressed. He tried to light the candle after the old slow way, for the ladder to the cockloft was “poky,” when he heard something clink behind him. He turned around, when an iron hoof seemed to follow him around, clink, clink, clink. The sound was not alarming or vengeful or in a way terrible, but to his imagination it shook the roof.

He whirled around again.

Clink, clink!

Again.

Clink!

His heart seemed bursting, his brain to be on fire. He rushed toward the ladder and the “thing” followed him. He attempted to go down the ladder, but after some steps the “thing” held him back, when he uttered a cry that shook the whole tavern and made the people leap from their beds.

“Hel-up! Hel-up! Let go! Let go!”

The landlord came running, and saw the situation.

“I never thought that you would come to the gallows,” said he, “but you have!”

“All the powers have mercy on me now!” cried Mordecai. “But I’ll confess. Will you let me go if I confess?”

“Yes, yes,” said the landlord. “What have you on your mind?”

The drovers came running in.

“That cow didn’t give no fifteen quarts. I connived. The drover put me up to it—the Lord of massy, what will become of his soul? I’ll never connive again!”

Then said the landlord:

“I’ll have to let you go.”

He unloosened the “galluses,” which had wound around a rung in the ladder, and Mordecai kept his conscience clear even in cattle trade ever after.

CHAPTER VI

THE DECISIVE DAY OF BROTHER JONATHAN'S LIFE

Before we leave this part of our subject we should study the event that made the great character of the Governor.

All lives have decisive days. Such a day determined the great destiny of Jonathan Trumbull.

The stamp act had been passed in Parliament, by which a stamp duty was imposed upon all American paper that should be used to transact business and upon articles essential to life. Persons were to be appointed to sell stamps for the purpose. This was taxation without representation in Parliament, and was regarded as tyranny in America.

All persons holding office under England were required to make oath that they would support the stamp duty. Among these were the Governor of Connecticut and his ten councilors, and one of these councilors at that time was Jonathan Trumbull.

The day arrived on which the Governor, whose name was Fitch, and his councilors assembled to take the oath or to resign their commissions.

"I am ready to be sworn," said the then Governor. "The sovereignty of England demands it. Are you all ready?"

There was a grave silence.

Jonathan Trumbull rose.

"The stamp act," said he, "is a derogation of the chartered rights of the colony. It takes away our freedom. The power that can tax us as

it pleases can govern us as it pleases. The stamp act takes away our liberties and robs us of everything. It makes us slaves and can reduce us to poverty. I can not take the oath."

"But," said the royal Governor, "the officers of his Majesty must obey his commands or not hold his commissions. For you to refuse to be sworn is contempt of Parliament. The King's displeasure is fatal. Gentlemen, I am ready for the oath, and I ask that it be now administered to me."

The Governors of all the provinces except Rhode Island had taken the oath. Even Franklin and Otis and Richard Henry Lee had decided to submit to the act of unrestrained tyranny. They thought it politic to do so.

But Trumbull's conscience rose supreme over every argument and consideration. In conscience he was strong, as any one may be.

"I *can not* take the oath," said Trumbull. "Let Parliament do its worst, and its armies and navies thunder. I will not violate my provincial oath, which I deem to be right. I will be true to Connecticut, and to the liberties of man. You have sworn by the awful name of Almighty God to be true to the rights of this colony. I have so sworn, and that oath will I keep."

It was near the close of the day. The red sun was setting, casting his glimmering splendors over the pines. The oath was about to be administered by the royal Governor.

Jonathan Trumbull rose up among the councilors. His soul had arisen to a sublime height, and despised all human penalties or martyrs' fires.

His intense eyes bespoke the thoughts that were burning within him.

He did not speak. He was about to make his conduct more eloquent than words.

He seized his tricornered hat, and gave back a look that said, "I will not disgrace myself by witnessing such a ceremony of degradation." He moved toward the door.

His every motion betokened his self-command, his soul value, his uncompromising obedience to the law of right. Erect, austere, he retreated from the shadow of the room, into the burning light of the sunset.

He closed the door behind him, and breathed his native air.

Six of the councilors followed him—six patriot seceders.

That was a notable day for liberty: it made Trumbull a power, though he could not see it.

The people upheld Trumbull. At the next election they cast out of office the Governor and those of his councilors who had received the oath, and Connecticut was free.

In a short time the people made Jonathan Trumbull, who risked all by leaving the room at the dusk of that decisive day, their Governor, and they continued him in office until his hair turned white, and he heard the town bells all ringing for the independence and peace of America.

Had his act cost him his life he would have done the same. He would have owned his soul. Honor to him was more than life—

My life and honor both together run;
Take honor from me and my life is done.

When “Brother Jonathan” returned to Lebanon he was greeted by all hearts. The rugged farmers gathered on the green around him with lifted hats. The children hailed him, even the Indian children. The dogs barked, and when the bell rang out, it rang true to his ears; for him forever the bell of life rang true.

But his life was forfeited to the Crown. What of that? His soul was safe in the Almighty, and he slept in peace, lulled to rest by the whispering cedars. So began the great public career of Trumbull. He was chosen Lieutenant-Governor in 1766, and Governor in 1769.

He was made the chairman of the Connecticut Council of Public Safety, which met at his war office, which at first was a protected

room in his little store. His biographer, Stuart, thus gives us glimpses of this busy place:

“Within that ‘war office,’ with its old-fashioned ‘hipped’ roof and central chimney-stack, he met his Council of Safety during almost the entire period of the war. Here he received commissaries and sub-commissaries, many in number, to devise and talk over the means of supply for our armies. From hence started, from time to time during the war, besides those teams to which we have just alluded, numerous other long trains of wagons, loaded with provisions for our forces at the East, the West, the North, and the South; and around this spot—from the fields and farmyards of agricultural Lebanon and its vicinity—was begun the collection of many a herd of fat cattle, that were driven even to the far North around Lake George and Lake Champlain, and to the far distant banks of the Delaware and the Schuylkill, as well as to neighboring Massachusetts and the banks of the Hudson.

“Here was the point of arrival and departure for numberless messengers and expresses that shot, in every direction, to and from the scenes of revolutionary strife. Narragansett ponies, of extraordinary fleetness and astonishing endurance—worthy such governmental post-riders as the tireless Jesse Brown, the ‘alert Samuel Hunt,’ and the ‘flying Fessenden,’ as the latter was called—stood hitched, we have heard, at the posts and palings around, or by the Governor’s house, or at the dwelling of his son-in-law Williams, ready, on any emergency of danger, to fly with advices, in any desired direction, on the wings of the wind. The marks of the spurs of the horsemen thus employed were but a few years back visible within the building—all along upon the sides of the counters upon which they sat, waiting to receive the Governor’s orders.

“So we find him during the period now under consideration (1775), executing in person the business of furnishing troops, and of procuring and forwarding supplies—now flour, particularly from Norwich; now, from various quarters, beef and pork; now blankets; now arms; but especially, at all times, whenever and wherever he could procure it, powder, the manufacture of which vital commodity he stimulated through committees appointed to collect saltpeter in

every part of the State. ‘The necessities of the army are so great’ for this article, wrote Washington to him almost constantly at this time, ‘that all that can be spared should be forwarded with the utmost expedition.’—‘Soon as your expected supply of powder arrives,’ wrote his son-in-law, Colonel Huntington, from Cambridge, August 14th, ‘I imagine General Putnam will kick up a dust. He has got one floating battery launched, and another on the stocks.’ The powder was sent—at one time six large wagon-loads, and at the same time two more for New York, on account of an expected attack in that direction. ‘Our medicine-chests will soon be exhausted,’ wrote Huntington at the same time. The medicine-chests were replenished. And before September Trumbull had so completely drained his own State of the materials for war that he was obliged to write to Washington and inform him that he could not then afford any more.”

In these thrilling days the people awaited the news upon the village green.

The village green of Lebanon! Across it the old war Governor walked a thousand times to attend meetings at the office in the interests of the State and the welfare of man. A monument to him should arise there.

The village greens of New England were fields of the highest patriotism, and their history would be a glorious record. The church spires rose over them; the schoolhouse bells; and on them or in a hall near them the folkmotes were held. These town meetings were the suggestions of republican government and the patterns of the great republic.

How the words “Brother Jonathan,” that became the characteristic name of the nation, reached the ears of Washington at Cambridge we do not know. It became the nickname—the name that bespoke character to the army through Washington. It will always live.

How did the people of Lebanon among the cedars come to give that name to the great judge, assistant, and governor that rose among them? In his official life he was so dignified and used such strong Latin-derived words to express his thoughts that one could hardly have suspected a Roger de Coverley behind the courtly

dressed man and his well-weighed speech. He was an American knight.

But in his private life he was as delightful as a veritable Roger de Coverley, even if he did not fall asleep in church. The true character of an old New Englander was in him. He loved his neighbors as his own self with a most generous and sympathetic love. No tale of knight-errantry could be more charming than that of the life he led among his own folk in Lebanon.

He probably studied medicine that he might doctor the poor. Were any poor man sick, he sent another in haste to consult Brother Jonathan; and Brother Jonathan, in gig, and possibly in wig, with his greatcoat in winter, and vials, and probably snuff-box, and all, hurried to the sick-bed.

He carried the medicine of medicine with him in his heart, which was that of hope and cheer. Whatever other doctors might say, he often said: “I have seen sicker men than you recover; you may get well if you only look up; it is the spiritual that heals, and the Lord is good to all.”

He always asserted that the unspiritual perishes; that that truth was not only the Bible and the sermon, but that it was law. He had charity for all men, and he made it the first condition of healing that one should repent of his sins. So he prayed with the sick, and the sick people whom he visited often found a new nature rising up within them. The sick poor always remembered the prescriptions of Brother Jonathan.

He was an astronomer and made his own almanacs. If any one was in doubt as to what the weather was likely to be, he went to Brother Jonathan.

The cattlemen and sheep-raisers came to him for advice. Did a poor cow fall sick, she too found a friend in Brother Jonathan.

He would have given away his hat off his head had it not been a cocked one, had he found a poor man with his head uncovered.

He gave his fire to those who needed it on cold days.

There had been established a school in Lebanon for the education of Indian children for missionaries. His heart went into it; of course it did. When he was yet rich—a merchant worth nearly $100,000 (£18,000)—he made a subscription to schools; but when ship after ship was lost by the stress of war and other causes, and he became poor, he hardly knew how to pay his school subscriptions, so he mortgaged two of his farms.

“I will pay my debts,” he said, “if it takes a lifetime.” And none doubted the word of Brother Jonathan.

The people all pitied him when he lost his property, and came to say that they were sorry for him when he partly failed, and their hearts showed him a new world, and made him love every one more than before.

Great thanksgivings they used to have in his perpendicular house among the green cedars, and the stories that were told by Madam Trumbull and her friends expressed the very heart of old New England days.

What people may have been there that afterward came to tower aloft, and some of them to move the world! Samuel Occum may have been there, the Indian who moved London; Brant may have been there, whose name became a terror in the Connecticut Colony in the Wyoming Valley, and whom the poet Campbell falsely associates with the tragedies of Wyoming.

The old church stood by the green; it stands there now. In it Governor Trumbull’s stately proclamations were read; there probably the Declaration of Independence was proclaimed.

Thanksgiving—what stories like Christmas tales of to-day used to be told by long log fires after the church and the dinner, which latter exhibited all the products of the fields and woods! A favorite story concerned people who were frightened by ghosts that were not ghosts.

Let us give one of these stories that pictures the heart and superstition of old New England and also one of Connecticut’s handicrafts. For the clock-cleaner was a notable story-teller in those

old days. He cleaned family clocks and oiled them, sometimes with walnut oil. He usually remained overnight at a farmhouse or inn, and related stories of clocks wherever he found a clock to clean.

These Connecticut clock stories in Brother Jonathan's day were peculiar, for clocks were supposed to be family oracles—to stop to give warning of danger, and to stop, as arrested by an invisible hand, on the approach of death.

Curious people would gather at the war office when the wandering clock-cleaner appeared upon the green. The time-regulator was sure to tell stories at the Alden Tavern or at the war office, and usually at the latter. Men with spurs would sit along the counter, and dig their spurs into the wood, under excitement, as the clock tale was unfolded: how that the family clock stopped and the Nestor of the family died, and the oldest son went out and told the bees in their straw hives.

Peter the outcast had an ear for these many tales while about his work, and Dennis O'Hay was often found on the top of a barrel at these gatherings.

Dennis heard these New England tales with increasing terror. There were supposed to be fairies in the land from which he came—fairy shoemakers, who brought good to people and eluded their hand-grasp. He became so filled with the "signs" and superstitions of the people that once, when he met a white rabbit, he thought it was a rabbit turned into a ghost, and he ran back from the woods to the tavern to ask what the "sign" meant, when one saw the ghost of "bunny." A nimble little rabbit once turned its white cotton-like tail to him, and darted into a burrow. He ran home to ask what meant the sign, and the good taverner said that was a sign that he had lost the rabbit, which was usually the case when a white tail so vanished from sight.

There was one story of the clock that was associated with early revolutionary days that pictures the times as well as superstitions vividly, and we will tell it and place it in the war office on a long evening when the Governor was busy with his council in the back room.

The clock-cleaner has come, the farmers sit on boxes and barrels, some “cavalry” men hang over the “counter,” and swing their feet and spurs. The candles sputter and the light is dim, and the Connecticut clock-cleaner, amid increasing stillness and darkness, relates his tale slowly, which was like this:

THE LIFTED LATCH

An old house on the Connecticut way to Boston stood high on the windy hill. I have ridden past it at night when the dark savins lifted their conical forms on the hillside by the decrepit orchards and the clouds scudded over the moon. It had two chimneys that seemed to stand against the sky, and I saw it once at night when one of those chimneys was on fire, which caused my simple heart to beat fast in those uneventful days. I had heard say that the minutemen stopped there on their march from Worcester to Bunker Hill and were fed with bread from out of the great brick oven.

My father told me another thing which greatly awakened my curiosity. When the minutemen stopped there on their march to meet the “regulars,” they were in need of lead for bullets. They carried with them molds in which to make bullets, but they could not obtain the lead.

The good woman of the house was named Overfield, Farmer Overfield’s wife. She was called Mis’ Overfield. She had one daughter, a lithe, diminutive, beautiful girl, with large blue eyes and lips winsome and red, of such singular beauty that one’s eyes could hardly be diverted from following her. When she had anything to say in company, there was silence. She was the “prettiest girl in all the country around,” people used to say. And she was as good in these early days as she was pretty.

Her name was Annie—“sweet Annie Overfield” some people named her.

When she saw that the minutemen were perplexed about lead, she left her baking, wiped the meal from her nose that had been

itching as a sign “that company was coming,” and, waving her white apron, approached the captain and said:

“Captain, I could tell you where there is lead if I had a mind to. But what would father say if I should? And my grandfather and grandmother, who are in their graves—they might rise up and shake the valances o’ nights, and that would be scary, O Captain!”

Annie’s father came stalking in in a blue blouse, a New England guard, ready for any duty.

“Father, I know where there is lead. May I tell?”

“Yes, girl, and the men shall have it wherever it be. Where is it, Annie? I have no lead, else I would have given it up at once.”

“In the clock weights, father.”

“Stop the clock!” cried the father. “Oh, Annie, ’tis a marvel you are!”

The old clock, with an oak frame, stood in the corner of the “living room,” as the common room was called, whose doors faced the parlor and the kitchen. It had stood there for a generation. It was some eight feet high and two broad in its upper part and two in its lower. It had a brass ornament on the top, and it ticked steadily and solemnly always and so loud as to be heard in the upper rooms at night. On its face were figures of the sun and moon. Annie’s hand had for several years wound the clock.

The great clock was stopped, the heavy weights were removed, and the minutemen carried them to the forge of Baldwin, the blacksmith, where they were speedily melted and poured into the molds.

The company went joyfully away, and as they marched down the hill the captain ordered the men to give three cheers for Annie Overfield. That that lead did much for the history of our country there can be no doubt. How much one can not tell.

One day, shortly after these events, a clock-cleaner came to the house on the hill. The maple leaves were flying and the migrating birds gathering in the rowen meadows. He said:

“I can not regulate the clock now, but I will be around again another year.”

When he came back, the sylph-like Annie was gone—where, none knew. She had been gone a long time.

Why had she gone? It was the old tale. A common English sailor from the provinces came to work on the farm. He received his pay in the fall and disappeared, and the day after he went Annie went too. It was very mysterious. She had been “her mother’s girl.”

She had spent her evenings with the sailor after the mowing days by the grindstone under the great maple-trees. He had sung to her English sailor songs and told her stories of the Spanish main and of his cottage at St. John’s. He was a homely man, but merry-hearted, and Annie had listened to him as to one enchanted. She carried him cold drinks “right from the well” in the field. She watched by the bars for him to come in from the meadows and fields. She grew thin, had “crying spells,” thought she was going “into a decline.” She was not like herself. The love stronger than that for a mother had found Annie amid the clover-fields when the west winds were blowing. The common sailor had become to her more than life. She felt that she could live better without others than without him.

She had said to her mother one day:

“Malone”—the sailor’s name—“has a good heart. I find my own in it. I wish we could give him a better chance in life.”

“He is an adventurer, thrown upon the world like a hulk of driftwood, hither and thither,” said her mother.

“I pity him. His heart deserves better friends than he has found. I want to be his friend. Why may I not?”

“If you were ever to marry a common sailor, Annie, I would strew salt on your grave. I married a common man, but he has been good to me. I have no respect whatever for those who marry beneath them and shame their own kin. But, Annie, that rover is worse than a common sailor—he is a Tory; think of that—a Tory!”

Such was the condition of the family when the old clock-cleaner returned.

He heard the story and said:

“I can hardly trust my ears. Annie was such a good girl. But the heart must wed its own. I pity her. She will come back again, for Annie is Annie.”

Then he turned to the clock and said:

“Now I’m going to examine it again and see what I can do. I will try to set it going till Annie comes back.”

“I shall never take any interest in such things any more,” said Mis’ Overfield. “It is all the same to me whether the clock goes or stands still, or whether life goes or stands still, for that matter. I loved Annie, and that is what makes it so hard. She used to watch over me when I was sick, oh, so faithfully, but I shall never feel the touch of her hand again, Annie’s hand. I would weep, but I have no tears to shed. Life is all a blank since this came upon me. The burying lot, as it looks to me, is the pleasantest place on earth. I look out of the pantry window sometimes and say, ‘Annie, come back.’ Then I shut my heart. Oh, that this should come to me!”

She seemed to be listening.

“How I used to wait for Annie evenings—conference meeting and candle-light meeting nights and singing-school evenings! How my heart used to beat hard when she lifted the latch of the porch door in the night!

“She came home like an angel then. I wonder if Annie’s hand will ever again lift the latch in the night. Trouble brings the heart home and sends us back to God. But I wouldn’t speak to her—lud, no, no, no!”

The tenderness went out of her face, and a strange, foreign light came into her blue-gray eyes.

She sat looking fixedly toward the hill. The old graves were there.

Farmer Overfield came in.

“Thinking?” said he.

“I was thinking of how Annie used to lift the latch evenings. I wish it could be so again. But it can’t.”

“Why not? There can be no true life in any household where it is forbidden to any to lift the latch.”

The clock-cleaner could not find the key of the clock. It had disappeared. He pounded on the case and said:

“It sounds hollow.”

Thanksgiving day came, and that day was supposed to bring all of the family home.

Mis’ Overfield watched the people coming, and she said to her little nurse Liddy as she waited:

“Have they all come, Liddy?”

“No, mum; not all.”

“Who is there to come?”

“Annie, mum.”

“She’s dead—dead here. I sometimes wish she would come, Liddy. But I wouldn’t speak to her if she were to come—that common sailor’s wife—and he a Tory! I wouldn’t—would you, Liddy?”

“Yes, mum.”

“You would? Tell me why now.”

“Because she is Annie. You would too.”

Mis’ Overfield gave a great sob and threw her apron over her head, and said in a muffled voice:

“What made you say that, Liddy?”

“There may come a day when Annie can not come back. The earth binds fast—the grave does. Think what you might have to reflect upon.”

“I, Liddy—I?”

“Yes. And there are more folks in some old houses than one can see always. They come back. There’s been a dead soldier here already. I saw him. And last night I heard the latch of the back door lift up three times.”

“Oh, Liddy! Nothing can ever harm us if we do just right. It was Annie that went wrong, not I. What do you suppose made the latch lift up?”

She stood silent, then said, with sudden resolution:

“Liddy, you go straight to your duties and never answer your mistress back again, not on Thanksgiving day nor on any other day.”

The rooms filled. Brothers and sisters, nephews and nieces, came, and some of the guests offered to help the women folks about.

The hand of the new brass clock was moving around toward 12. A savory odor filled the room. Little Liddy flitted to and fro, handling hot dishes briskly so as not to get “scalded.”

Those who were voluntarily helping the women folks carried hot dishes in wrong directions. For twenty minutes or more everything went wrong in the usual way of the country kitchen at that hour of the day.

There was a jingle in the new brass clock. Then it struck, and the farmer raised his hand, and everybody stood still.

Twelve!

“Now, if you will all be seated at the tables,” said Farmer Overfield, “I will supplicate a blessing.”

He did. Prayer has a long journey around the world on Thanksgiving day. He arrived at last at “all who have gone astray but are still a part of the visible creation”—his mind wavered here —“grant ’em all repentance and make us charitable,” he said in a lower voice.

The room was very still. One could almost hear the dishes steam.

There was a sound in the corner of the room. The old clock-case quivered. Farmer Overfield became nervous in this part of his long

prayer, opened his eyes and said:

“Oh, I thought I heard something somewhere. Where was I? Liddy, she says that she heard the latch lift in the night. I didn’t know——”

Just here there was a crash of dishes. Little Liddy had seen the old clock-case shake, which caused her to lose nerve power just as she was very carefully moving some dishes when she thought all other eyes were shut. The guests started.

“Accidents will happen,” said Farmer Overfield. “Now, all fall to and help yourselves. It seems like old times to find all the family here again just as it used to be—all except Annie, Annie, Annie. Her name has not been spoken to-day. I shall keep this plate and seat for her here close by my side. Annie’s heart is true to me still. I seem to feel that. I wish she were here to-day. The true note of Thanksgiving is lacking in a broken family. There can be no true Thanksgiving where there is an empty chair that might be filled. I shall always take Annie’s part. A father is always true to his daughter. I will yet die in her arms. A daughter is the angel for the father’s room when the great shadow falls.”

He stood, knife and fork in hand, the tears running down his face.

There was a little shriek in the door leading to the pantry.

“What now, Liddy?” asked the farmer.

“I saw something,” said Liddy, with shuttling eyes.

“What did you see, Liddy?”

“The sun and moon moving.”

“Massy! Where, Liddy?”

“On the face of the clock. Something is in there. That clock comes to life sometimes,” she added, going out.

All eyes were turned toward the clock. Knives, forks, and spoons were laid down, clicking on the many dishes.

The top of the clock, which was uncovered, seemed animated. Some said that they could see it move, others that the supposed

movement was merely a matter of the imagination.

Liddy came into the room again with more dishes.

“I think,” said she, “that the clock-case is haunted.”

“Pshaw, Liddy!” said the farmer. “And what makes you say that? Who is it that would haunt that old eight-day clock?”

“One of the Britishers who was shot by a bullet made from the lead weights. That’s my way of thinking. I’ve known about it for a long time.”

“Liddy, you’re a little bit off—touched in mind—that’s what you are, Liddy. You never was quite all there.”

There arose another nervous shriek. Knives and forks dropped.

“What now, Liddy?” asked the farmer. “You set things all into agitation.”

The house dog joined Liddy in the new excitement. He ran under the table and to the clock and began to paw the case and to bark. There was a very happy, lively tone in his bark. He then sat down and watched the clock in a human way.

The guests waited for the farmer to speak.

“What did you see, Liddy?” asked Mis’ Overfield.

“The planets turned. Look there, now—now—there—there!”

The sun and moon on the clock face were indeed agitated. The old dog gave a leap into the air and barked more joyously than before.

“The valley of Ajalon!” said the farmer. “That old timepiece is bewitched. These things are mightily peculiarsome. I’m not inclined to be superstitious, but what am I to think, the planets turning around in that way? They say dogs do see apparitions first and start up. What would Annie say if she were here now? You don’t believe in signs, any of you, do you? I’m not superstitious, as I said, and I say it again. But what can be the matter with that there old clock-case? I

hope that nothing has happened to Annie. She used to wind that clock. What do you suppose is the matter?”

The farmer’s eyes rolled like the planets on the clock face.

“Let me go and see,” said Mis’ Overfield, rising slowly and going toward the case, which seemed to quiver as she advanced, supporting herself by the backs of the chairs.

The nervous fancies of little Liddy could not be repressed. She called in an atmospheric voice:

“Mis’ Overfield, be careful how you open that clock door.”

Mis’ Overfield stopped.

“Why, Liddy, you distress me. The things that you say go to my nerves. Why, Liddy, should I be afraid to open the clock door?”

“Suppose, Mis’ Overfield—dare I say it—suppose you should find a dead body there?”

Mis’ Overfield leaned on the back of a chair, and Liddy added in an awesome tone:

“A girl’s—your own flesh and blood, Mis’ Overfield.”

Farmer Overfield leaned back in his chair.

The table was as silent as though it had been bare in an empty room.

The dog gave a quick, sharp bark.

Mis’ Overfield stood trembling.

“Heaven forgive me!” she said. “My heart and Annie’s are the same. We should be good to our own.”

She shook. “If I only knew that Annie was alive, I would forgive her everything. I would take her home to my bosom, her Tory husband and all. I never would have one hour of peace if she were to die. I never knew my heart before. Her cradle was here, and here should be her last rest. Annie was a good girl, and I am blind and hard.

Annie, Annie! Oh, I would not have anything befall Annie. Albert, where is the key of the clock?”

The boy gave his mother the key.

“Here, mother, and it is a jolly time we’ll have.”

“Albert, how can you smile at a time like this! Didn’t you hear what she suggested? Don’t you sense it? You go with me now slowly, for I am all nerves, and my heart is weak.”

“That I will, mother.”

He gave her his arm and looked back with smiling eyes on the terrified guests.

“Dast that boy, he knows!” cried Liddy in almost profane excitement. “Hold up your hands. The house is going to fall.”

“Be quiet, Liddy,” said the farmer. “All be quiet now. We can not tell what is before us. Be still. It seems as though I can hear the steps of Providence. Something awaits us. I can feel it in my bones.”

The guests arose, and all stood silent.

Mis’ Overfield stopped before the clock door.

“Annie’s hand used to wind the clock,” she said. “Oh, what would I give to hear her wind the clock once more! I would be willing to lie down and give up all to know that she was alive. Liddy’s words do so chill me.”

She knocked on the clock door.

“Mother!”

The voice was the music-like tone of old. “Mother, you will forgive me if I did marry a Tory, for Annie is Annie—always Annie!”

The guests stood with intent faces.

The clock shook again. The old woman moved back.

“That was Annie’s voice. Husband, you go and see. If that is not Annie, then my heart is dead forever, and I hope there may be no hereafter for me.”

Farmer Overfield took the keys and slowly opened the clock door.

The guests stood with motionless eyes. The opening door revealed at first a dress, then a hand. The old woman threw up her arms.

“That’s Annie’s hand. There is no ring on it. Annie was too poor to have a wedding-ring. Open it slowly, husband. If she is not living, I am dead.”

The door was moved slowly by a trembling hand. A form appeared.

“That’s Annie,” said the old woman.

A face. The lips parted.

“Father, may I come out and sit beside you in the chair at the table?”

The dog whirled around with delight.

“Annie, my own Annie, life of my life, heart of my heart! Annie, how came you here?” exclaimed the farmer.

“I wished to see you, father, and all of my kin on this day, and mother—poor mother——”

“Don’t say that. I’m not worthy that you should say that, but my hard heart is gone,” faltered Mis’ Overfield.

“I got Albert to prepare the clock-case so I could stand here and move the planets around so that I could see you through the circles made for the planets. You can never dream how I felt here. My heart ached to know if any one to-day would think of me, and when you talked of me my heart made the old case tremble.”

“Annie, come here,” said Farmer Overfield.

“But I was not invited, father. I did not intend to make myself known to any one but Albert. I have been here before in the disguise of a soldier.”

“Annie, you are Annie, if you did marry a Tory sailor!” and the family heart was one again.

The story illustrates the family feeling of the time both as regards patriots and Tories.

CHAPTER VII

WASHINGTON SPEAKS A NAME WHICH NAMES THE REPUBLIC

When Washington was at Cambridge his headquarters were at the Craigie House, now known as the “home of Longfellow,” as that poet of the world’s heart lived and wrote there for nearly a generation. Go to Cambridge, my young people who visit Boston, and you may see the past of the Revolutionary days there, if you will close your eyes to the present. The old tree is there under which Washington took command of the army; a memorial stone with an inscription marks the place. The old buildings of Harvard College are there much as they were in Washington’s days. The Episcopal church where Washington worshiped still stands, and one may sit down in the pew that the general-in-chief occupied as in the Old North Church, Boston.

The tree under which Washington took command of the army is decayed and is rapidly falling away. It was once a magnificent elm, and Washington caused a lookout to be made in the top, which overlooked Boston and the British defenses. We can easily imagine him with his glass, hidden among the green boughs of this lofty and bowery tree, watching the movements of the enemy. Such an incident of the Revolution would seem to invite a national picture like one of young John Trumbull’s.

Washington held his councils of war at the Craigie House. It was doubtless from there that he sent his courier flying to Jonathan Trumbull for help. His message was that the army must have food.

It was then that the Connecticut Governor called together the Committee of Public Safety and sent his men of the secret service

into the farm-ways of Connecticut and gathered cattle and stores from the farms, and forwarded the supplies on their way to Boston, and Dennis O'Hay went with them.

Boston was to be evacuated. Where were the British going? What was next to be done?

Washington called a council of his generals, and they deliberated the question of the hour.

The help that had given strength to the army investing Boston during the siege had come from Connecticut; the great heart-beat of Jonathan Trumbull had sent the British fleet out on the sea and away from Castle William (now the water-park of South Boston).

What should be done next? Officer after officer gave his views, without conclusion. The Brighton meadows, afterward made famous by the pen of Longfellow, glimmered in the light of early spring over which the happy wings of birds were rising in song. The great trees rustled in the spring winds. The officers paced the floor. What was to be done next? The officers waited for Washington to speak.

He had deliberated, but was not sure as to the wisest course to pursue.

He lifted his face at last, and said:

"We will have to consult *Brother Jonathan*."

The name had been used before in the army, but not in this official way at a council.

It was at this council, or one like this, that he began to impress the worth of the judgment of the Connecticut Governor upon his generals.

Washington had unconsciously named the republic.

The Connecticut Governor's home name began to rise to fame.

These officers repeated it to others.

Dennis O'Hay heard it. He was told that Washington had spoken it, probably at a council in the Craigie House, possibly at some out-of-

door consultation. However this may be, the word had passed from the lips of the man of destiny.

“Cracky,” said Dennis, using the Yankee term of resolution, “and I will fly back to Connecticut, I will, on the wings of me horse, and I will, and tell the Governor of that, and I will, and all the people on the green, and I will, and set the children to clapping their hands, and the birds all a-singing in the green tree-tops, and I will.”

Dennis leaped on his horse as with wings. He slapped the horse’s neck with his bridle-rein and flew down the turnpike to Norwich, and did not so much as stop to rest at the Plainfield Tavern. That horse had the swiftness of wings, and Dennis seemed to be a kind of centaur.

The people saw him coming, and swung their hats, but only to say, “Who passed with the wind?”

The people of the cedars saw him coming up the hill and gathered on the green to ask:

“What is it, Dennis?”

“Great news! Great news!”

It was a day at the brightening of spring among the cedars. The people of the country around had heard of Dennis’s return and they gathered upon the green, which was growing green. The buds on the trees were swelling, the blue air was brightening, and nature was budding and seemed everywhere to be singing in the songs of birds.

All the world was full of joy, as the people gathered that day on the green. The Governor came out of his war office to hear Dennis speak; the schools were there, and William Williams, afterward a signer of the Declaration of Independence, honored the occasion with his presence.

Williams stood beside the Whig Governor under the glowing trees.

Dennis came out on the green, full of honorable pride.

His first words were characteristic:

“Oh, all ye people, all of the cedars, you well may gather together —now. Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye, for it is good news that I bring to ye all. Boston has fallen; it has tumbled into our hands, and Castle William has gone down into the sea, to the Britisher, and the same will never play Yankee Doodle there any more.

“Oh, but you should have seen him, as your brothers and I did—General Washington. He looked as though he had been born to lead the world. And what did he call our Governor—now, that is what I am bursting to tell you—what did he call our Governor?”

“The first patriot in America,” answered a merry farmer.

“Not that, now, but something better than that. Hear ye, open the mouths of your ears, now, and prepare to shout; all shout. He called —so the officers all say—he called him what you call him now. Colonel? No, no; not that. Judge? No, no; not that. Governor? No, no; not that. He called him what the heroes here who ran from the fields with their guns call him; what the good wives all call him; what the old men call him; what the children call him; what the dogs, cats, and all the birds call him; no, no; not that, but all nature here catches the spirit of what we called him. He called him *Brother Jonathan*! Shout, boys! Shout, girls! Shout, old men! Shout all! The world will call him that some day. My soul prophesies that. Shout, shout, shout! with the rising sun over the cedars—all shout for the long life and happiness of BROTHER JONATHAN!”

Lebanon shouted, and birds flew up from the trees and clapped their wings, and the modest old Governor said:

“I love the soul of the man who delights to bring the people good news. I wrote to Washington, when he took command of the army at Cambridge, these words:

“‘Be strong and very courageous. May the God of the armies of Israel shower down his blessings upon you; may he give you wisdom and fortitude; may he cover your head in the day of battle, and convince our enemies of their mistake in attempting to deprive us of our liberties.’ And, my neighbors, what did he answer me? He wrote to me, saying: ‘My confidence is in Almighty God.’ So we are

brothers. And my neighbor Dennis brings good tidings of joy out of his great heart. His heart is ours. What will we do for such a man as Dennis O'Hay?"

"Make him an ensign, the ensign of the alarm-post," said one.

So Dennis O'Hay became known as Ensign Dennis O'Hay.

The Governor saw that in Dennis he had a messenger to send out on horses with wings, to bring back to Lebanon green the tidings of the events of the war.

The old Governor turned aside when the shouting was over.

"Dennis?"

"Your Honor?"

"You have been by the cabin of old Wetmore, the wood-chopper of the lane."

"Yes, your Honor."

"Well, I am afraid that the old man is a Tory. You have heard how he turned tall Peter, his nephew, out of doors? He said to the boy: 'Out you go!' The boy came to me; my mind is taken up by the correspondences, so I made him my clerk. I want you to put your arms around him—for me."

"Why did the old man say to the boy that?"

"The boy rejoiced over the Concord fight—you see! Put your arms around him. I want you two should be friends."

"I will put my arms around him, for your sake and for the sake of Dennis O'Hay. He shall be my heart's own."

Peter had found friends—hearts.

He used to think of his old uncle as he slept under the cedars out of doors, on guard after his duties in the store, amid the fireflies, the night animals and birds.

He would seem to hear the old wood-chopper counting:

"One—

“Two—

“Three!”

He would wonder if the old man were counting for him, or if that which was counted would go to the King. If the patriots won their cause, the counted gold, if such it were, could not go to the King. What were the old man’s thoughts and purposes when he counted nights?

At the corner of the Trumbull house, overlooking the hills and roads in the country of the cedars, was a passageway that connected with the high roof. From this passageway the approach of an enemy could be signaled by a guard, and there was no point in the movements of the army more important than this.

Governor Trumbull became recognized as a power that stood behind the American armies. Lebanon of the cedars was the secret capital of the colonies. Here gathered the reserves of the war.

The common enemy everywhere began to plot against the iron Governor. Spies continued to come to Lebanon in many disguises and went away.

The people of Lebanon warned the Governor against these plots and spies, but he believed in Providence; that some good angel of protection attended him. When they told him that his life was in constant peril, he would say, like one who commanded hosts invisible, that “the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him.”

Dennis was in terror when he came to see the Governor’s danger. He had a bed in the garret, or “cockloft,” overlooking the cedars. From his room he watched the roads that led up to the hill.

One day some men of mystery came to the war office on horseback. Dennis saw them coming, from the garret or upper room. He hastened to the Governor at the war office, and gave the alarm. The men had their story, but Dennis saw that they were spies, and thought that they intended to return again.

Dennis had gained the confidence of the Governor and of the good man's family perfectly now. He had become a shadow of the Governor, as it were.

After these mysterious men went away, the Governor called Dennis into his war office, and said:

"Dennis, you know a tremendous secret, and you warned me against these men. Why do you suspect them?"

"Because a conniving man carries an air of suspicion about him, your Honor. I can see it; I have second sight; some folks have, your Honor."

"Dennis, you may be right. A pure heart sees clear, and you are an honest man, else there are none. Why do you think these men came? What was their hidden motive?"

"To find out where you hid your powder, your Honor. They are powder finders. In powder lies the hope of the cause, Governor. I have a thing on my mind, if I have a mind."

"Well, Dennis, what have you on your mind?"

"There must be a military alarm-post in the cedars. It must be connected with hiding-places all along the way from Putnam to Norwich. And it is a man that you can trust that you must set in charge of the same alarm-post. As you said, I do know a tremendous secret."

"You are a man that I can trust, Dennis; if not, who?"

"Your Honor," said Dennis, bowing.

"Your heart is as true to liberty as that of Washington himself. To be true-hearted is the greatest thing in the world; hearts are more than rank."

"Your Honor," said Dennis, bowing again lower, "I would rather hear you say that than be a king."

"Good, Dennis. Samuel Adams replied to the agent of General Gage who said to him, 'It is time for you to make your peace with the King,' and who then offered him bribes: 'I trust that I have long ago

made my peace with the King of kings, and no power on earth shall make me recreant to my duties to my country.'"

"Samuel Adams is a glorious man, your Honor, and has a heart true to your own. I would die for liberty, and be willing to be forgotten for the cause. What matters what becomes of Dennis O'Hay—but the cause, the cause!"

"Then, Dennis, you are the one of all others to take charge of the alarm-post that you propose to establish permanently." Many are willing to die in a cause that would not be willing to be forgotten, the old man thought, and walked about with his hands behind him.

"Forgotten, Dennis, what is it to be forgotten? The winds of the desert blow over the Persepolis, but where is the Persepolis? Babylon, where are thy sixty miles of walls, and the chariots that rolled on their lofty ways? Gone with the wind. Egypt, where are all the kings that raised thy pyramids? Gone with the wind. Solomon, where is thy throne of the gold and gems of the Ind? Gone with the wind. We all shall be forgotten, or only live in the good that we do. I like that word which you spoke, willing to be *forgotten* for the welfare of mankind. Dennis, I would be willing to be forgotten. I live for the cause. I seek neither money nor fame, but only to do the will of the everlasting God, to which I surrender all. To live for good influence is the whole of life. Soul value is everything. How will you establish the alarm-post?"

"I will watch the roads from the top of the second stairs as I have done before. I will have trusty men in the cedars who will set up signal lights at night. One of these men shall live in the rocks so that he may guard the place where the powder is stored. He shall ride a swift horse, and set up fire-signals at night. The secret shall be known to but few, if you will trust it to me to pick my men. And Peter—nimble Peter—your trusty clerk—who was sent out—he shall be my heart's own."

"I leave it all to you, Dennis. Establish the alarm-post. Select you hidden men. As for me, I believe like the men in the camp of the Hebrews, in helpers invisible. An angel stayed the hand of Abraham, and went before the tribes on their march out of Egypt, and led the

feet of Abraham's servant to find Rebecca; and when the young king was afraid to encounter so great a host, the prophet opened his spiritual eyes, and lo! the mountain was full of chariots and horsemen. The angel of Providence protects me; I know it, I feel it; it is my mission to reenforce the American army when it is in straits. Faith walks with the heavens, and I live by faith."

Dennis went out. He felt free, like one commissioned by a higher power. Yes, he did know a tremendous secret. He knew where the powder was hidden.

When he had come to share with the Governor the secrets of collecting saltpeter and powder, he learned all the ways of this secret service. There must be found a place where this powder could be hidden, so as to be safely guarded. It was a necessity.

Lebanon abounded in rocky hills in which were caves. These caves could be guarded, and yet they would not be secure against spies. Dennis began to put his Irish wits at work to devise a way to protect a storage of powder against spies.

The tall, nimble boy who had been in the service of William Williams came first into Dennis's mind and heart. Mr. Williams, for whom the boy had kept sheep, was a graduate of Harvard College, and had been a member of the Committee of Correspondence for the Union and Safety of the Colonies. This man had written several pamphlets to awaken the spirit of the colonies to resist aggression, and the nimble boy to whom we have referred, now the clerk, had listened at doors to the reading of these pamphlets, and drank in the spirit of them until he had become so full of patriotic feeling that he thought of little but the cause.

Dennis's intuitive eye fixed itself upon this boy for secret service.

"Peter Nimble," said Dennis to the young farmhand one day, as the latter was resting under the trees after the planting of pumpkin-seeds among the corn, while the sheep grazed, "I have come over here to have a secret talk with you. I have long had my eye on you. You are full of the new fire; you see things quick; you have long legs, and you are all brain, heart, and legs. You are just the lad I want."

“For what, Dennis?”

“For the secret service. Will you promise me never to tell what I am about to tell you now?”

“Never, Dennis.”

“Though the sky fall?”

“Though the sky fall, and the earth cave in, and the waters cover the land. Never, Dennis, if it be for the cause.”

“It is for the cause, Peter. Hark ye, boy. We must store powder here. Powder is the life of the war. We must store it in a cave, and we must have some one to guard the cave, and to give an alarm if spies shall come.”

“I can run,” said Peter.

“Yes, Peter, you can run, and run the right way, too. You will never turn your heels against the country. You can outrun all the boys. But it is not for your heels that I come to you. I want a guard with nimble thoughts as well as legs. You could run to me quickly by day, as on feet of air, but it is for the night that I want you; for a curious service, a queer service.”

“What would you have me do?”

“Hold a window before your face, with a light in the window, and stand back by the roadside in the cedars.”

“That would be a strange thing for me to do, Dennis. How would that help the cause?”

“You know all the people of the town. You would know a stranger to be a stranger. Now, no stranger can pass down the turnpike at night without a passport. If he does, he is an enemy or a spy.

“You are to stand behind the lighted window at night back in the cedars, some distance from the road. If you see a stranger coming down the road at night, or hear him, you are to leave the window and light on a post and demand his passport. The window and light at a distance will look like a house. If the traveler have no passport, you

must ask him to follow you at a distance toward the light in the window. Hear: ‘at a distance.’

“Then you are to take the window and the light and move up the hill, by the brook ways, so that I can see the light at the alarm-post. Then you may put out the light, and run for the war office: run like the wind. That will detain the spy, should he be one, and we will be warned and thwart his design. Do you see?”

“I see, but am I to be stationed near a cave where the powder is hidden?”

“No—tish, tish—but at a place that would turn a night traveler from the place where the powder is concealed. You yourself are not to know, or to seek to know, where the powder is hidden. No, no—tish, tish. If you were to be overpowered, you must be able to say that you do not know where the saltpeter is. Tish, tish!”

“That is a strange service, Dennis, but I will do as you say. I will watch by the window in the heat and cold, in the rain and snow, and I will never desert my post.”

“That you will, my boy. The true heart never deserts its post. You may save an army by this strange service. You are no longer to be Peter Nimble, but a window in the cedars. Ah, Peter, Peter, not in vain did the old man send you out. Boy, the Governor likes you, and you are my heart’s own!”

“But I will have to give up my place in the store?”

“I will talk with the Governor about that.”

One day Dennis O’Hay stood by the high window, looking down the turnpike road. A horseman seemed to leap on his flying steed into the way. Dennis ran down the stairs to give an alarm, and found the Governor in the great room, thinking as always.

“A man is coming on horseback, riding like mad. He looks like a general.”

“Spencer—I am expecting him—I sent for him. Sit down; your presence may make a clearer atmosphere.”

Dennis did not comprehend the Governor, but his curiosity was excited, and he sat down by the stairway.

A horse dashed up to the door. A man in uniform knocked, and entered with little ceremony.

“Governor, I am dishonored. Let me say at once that I am about to resign my commission in the army.”

“You have been superseded by General Putnam.”

“Yes; I who offered my life and all in the north in the service of my country, have been superseded. Congress little esteems such service as mine. Governor, I am undone.”

“General Spencer, Congress is seeking to place the best leaders in the field. It has done so now. It has not dishonored you; it honors you; it wants your service under Putnam.”

“Under! You may well say under. Would you, with a record like mine, serve *under* any man?”

“I would. My only thought is for the good of the people and the success of the cause. I have given up making money, for the cause. I have given up seeking position of popularity, for the cause. I am seeking to be neither a general, nor a congressman, nor a diplomat, for the cause. Whatever a man be or have, his influence is all that he is. I would do anything that would tend to make my influence powerful for the cause. I have snuffed out ambition, for the cause.”

General Spencer dropped his hands on his knees.

“Governor Trumbull, what would you have me do?”

“Serve your country under Putnam—as Congress wills—and never hinder the cause by any personal consideration. Be the cause.”

“Governor, I will; for your sake, I will. I see my way clear. I was not myself when I came—I am myself now.”

“Not for my sake, General, but for the cause!”

Dennis had seen the Governor’s soul. Giant that he was, tears ran down his face. He went out into the open air.

It was evening at Lebanon. He looked up to the hills and saw the clerk, who had again become a shepherd-boy, there in the dusk guiding the sheep to sheltered pastures among the savins.

Dennis was lonesome for companionship. He was but a common laborer, with no family or fortune, nothing but his honest soul.

He longed to talk with one like himself. He walked up the hills, and hailed the shepherd-boy, who had become a guard in the new secret service.

“Nimble,” he said, “you believe in the Governor, don’t you? I do, more and more.”

“’Fore the Lord, I do,” said the shepherd in an awesome tone.

“I have just seen the soul of that man. He is more of a god than a man. But, Nimble, Nimble, my heart’s own boy, he is surrounded more and more by spies, and think of it, wagons of powder are coming here and going away. What havoc a spy could make!

“Boy, my heart goes out to that man. I would die for him. So would you. I am going to act as a guard for him, not only openly—I do that now—but secretly. You will act with me.”

“Yes, yes, Dennis. But what more can I do?”

“Keep your eyes open on the hills against surprise, and guard the magazines.”

“That I am doing, but where are the magazines?”

“Where are the magazines?”

“Oh, boy, boy, do not seek to know. Tish, tish! Have an eye on the covered ways that are still. You watch nights by *the window*?”

“Yes, and I can watch days.”

The sheep lay down in the sheltered ways of the high hill, and the two talked together as brothers. They had become a part of the cause.

And Dennis found in his heart a new and unexpected delight. It was when he said to the shepherd-boy of the green cedars, as he

did almost daily, “You are my heart’s own; we serve one cause, and look for nothing more!”

So these two patriots became to Brother Jonathan “helpers invisible.”

The Governor now hurried levies. Lebanon was a scene of excitement. Connecticut forgot her own perils, for the greater need.

Dennis was ordered away with the men. He was to drive a powder-wagon. The young shepherd was to leave for a time his place as a watchman and to go with him.

In the midst of these preparations a beautiful, anxious face flitted to and fro. It was that of Madam Trumbull.

“You must not go,” said she to Dennis. “We need you here.”

“Who?”

“I—spies swarm; the Governor is all of the time in peril. I can trust your heart.”

“He must go,” said the Governor. “The powder-wagon needs him more than I do. I shall be guarded. I can hear the wings; the rocks of Lebanon are not firmer than my faith. Powder is the battle. Go, Dennis, go. Our powder told at Bunker Hill; they will need it again.”

Dennis and the shepherd-boy went, guarding the powder.

“Good-by, Governor,” said Dennis. “We leave the heavens behind us still.”

What a time that was! Every Whig forgot his own self and interests in the cause. No one looked for any pay for anything. The cattle, the sheep, the corn and grain, all belonged to the cause. Everything followed the suggestion of the great Governor’s heart.

Tories and spies came to Lebanon with plots in their hearts, but they went away again. Ships down the river landed men, who came to Lebanon with evil intents; but they looked at the Governor from the tavern window, as he crossed the green, and went away again.

The school for the training of Indian missionaries, that had been founded in Lebanon and that had trained Occum, who became the marvelous Indian preacher, had been removed to a log-house college on the upper Connecticut now, where it was to become Dartmouth College. But Indians still came to the green, and heard the cannon thunder with wonder.

The Governor’s house, the alarm-post, was to become the head of a long line of signal-stations.

CHAPTER VIII

PETER NIMBLE AND DENNIS IN THE ALARM-POST

Peter, after being entrusted with Dennis's secret of the hidden powder, walked about like one whose head was in the air. If he stuck pumpkin-seeds into corn-hills, he did so with a machine-like motion. He had listened to the singing of the birds in the cedars, but he forgot the bird-singing now; though he loved rare wild flowers, a white orchid bloomed among the wintergreens by the ferny brookside, but he did not see it now; the sky, the forests, and everything seemed to have vanished away.

He watched Dennis after their return as the latter came out of the alarm-post over the way and went to the tavern or the war office.

Dennis for a time merely bowed to him and passed him by, day by day, when on duty; and the corn grew, and the orioles flamed in the air. But one thought held him—a picture of the light in the window in the cedars, guarding some unknown cave that contained the lightnings and the thunder of the battle-field. What would come of that service?

He at last felt that he must see Dennis. He could stand the suspense no longer.

So one night he crept up to Dennis's chamber under the rafters.

"I could stay away from you no longer, after what you told me," said he. "Strange things are going on—horsemen coming and going; queer people haunt the Colchester road; knife-grinders, clock-cleaners, going into the forest to get walnut-oil; men calling out 'Old brass to mend'; and I seem to see spies in them, and I fear for *him*."

“Boy, I fear for him. He is an old man now, but he walks erect, and seems to think that some host unseen is guarding him. He wears the armor of faith. I can see it, other people do not; and he does not fear the face of clay.”

“Dennis, when are you going to set me behind the window and the light in the cedars, at night?”

“Soon, boy, soon. Let us look out of the window.”

It was a June night. Below them was the war office, the Alden Tavern, the house of William Williams—the boy’s home. Afar stretched the intervales, now full of fireflies and glowing with the silvery light of the half-moon. Night-hawks made lively the still air, and the lonely notes of the whippoorwills rang out from the cedars and savins in nature’s own sad cadences. The roads were full of the odors of wild roses and sweetbrier, but were silent.

“Dennis,” said Peter, “I have been thinking. Suppose I were to watch in the cedars, and an unknown man were to come down the open road toward the light in the window. And suppose I were to say, ‘Halt, and give the countersign,’ and he were to have no countersign. Then I would say, ‘Follow me, but do not come near me, or I will discharge my duty upon you.’ And suppose he were to follow, and I move back, back, back with the window and light, and he were to think that I were a house, and that I were to draw him into a trap and lose him, and put out the light and run for you—what would you do then?”

“I would hunt for him in the ravine where you left him—in the wood trap—and would find him, and wring from him the cause of his being on the highway without a passport.”

“Dennis, do you think that such a thing as that will ever happen?”

“Yes; my instincts tell me that it will. Boy, there is one man whom Washington trusts, whom the Governor relies upon, but in whom I can see a false heart. He was born only a few miles from here. He is famous. If he were to turn traitor to our cause, as I believe he will, he would send spies to Lebanon. He would seek to destroy the hiding-

places of powder, and he knows where they are to be found. Then, boy, your time to thwart such designs would come."

"What is that man's name?"

"I hardly dare to breathe it even to you, with a heart of truth."

"I will never break your confidence. What is the name?"

"Benedict Arnold!"

It now began to be seen in the army that the Governor was in peril. The Tories plotted a secret warfare against the leading patriots.

One day Governor Trumbull met the Council of Public Safety with the alarming declaration:

"They have put a price upon my head."

A reward had been secretly offered for his capture.

"I must have a guard," he said, and a guard was granted him of four sturdy, loyal men—a public guard, who examined all strangers who came by day to Lebanon.

The plots of the Tories filled the country with alarm. One of these plots was to assassinate Washington. Others were to abduct the royal Governors.

These plotters tried to seize Governor Clinton of New York, and William Livingston, the patriotic Governor of New Jersey. They did seize General Stillman at Fairfield and carried him away as a prisoner.

Lebanon was exposed to such incursions from the sea. Spy boats were on the waters, and these might land men on the highway to Lebanon and seize the Governor and bear him away.

The biographer of Governor Trumbull (Stuart) thus relates an incident that illustrates the perils to which the Governor was exposed:

"A traveler, in the garb of a mendicant—of exceedingly suspicious appearance—came into his house one evening when he was unwell and had retired to bed. The stranger, though denied the opportunity

of seeing him, yet insisted upon an interview so pertinaciously that at last the Governor's wary housekeeper—Mrs. Hyde—alarmed and disgusted at his conduct, seized the shovel and tongs from the fireplace and drove him out of the house. At the same time she called loudly for the guard; but the intruder suddenly disappeared, and, though careful search was made, eluded pursuit, and never appeared in that quarter again."

One of the reasons that made Lebanon a perilous place and that invited plots and spies was that magazines of powder from the West Indies were thought to be hidden here, as well as at New London and along the Connecticut main and river. Powder was the necessity of the war; to explode a powder magazine was to retard the cause.

Lebanon was like a secret fortress to the cause. Prisoners of war were sent to Governor Trumbull. It was thought that they could not be rescued here. But their detention here by the wise, firm Governor invited new plots. The thirteen colonies sent their State prisoners here. Among these prisoners was the Tory son of Benjamin Franklin, a disgrace to the great patriot, that led him to carry a heavy heart amid all of his honors as the ambassador to the French court. Dr. Benjamin Church, a classmate of Trumbull at college, was sent to him among these prisoners.

Trumbull became universally hated by the Tories. They saw in him the silent captain of the world's movement for liberty. The condition became so alarming that in November, 1779, Washington sent a message to him to seize all Tories. "They are preying upon the vitals of the country," he said. The Continental Congress demanded of him to "arrest every person that endangered the safety of the colony." The condition that became so alarming, then, was beginning now.

What a position was that that was held by this brave, clear-headed, conscience-free man!

Strangers were coming and going; any one of them might have a cunning plot against the Governor in his heart. The way to him was easy. Express-wagons with provisions started from Lebanon; drivers of cattle came there; people who had cases of casuistry; men

desiring public appointment in the army; peddlers, wayfarers, seamen, the captains of privateers.

But he walked among them—amid these accumulating perils—as one who had a “guard invisible.” He had. He knew that his own people were loyal to him, that they believed him as one directed by the Supreme Power for the supreme good, and that they loved him as a father.

Dennis guarded the good old man as though he had had a commission from the skies to do so. He gave to him the strength of his great heart. He caused a tower—“the alarm-post”—over his head, one secret room, to protect him—“a room over the gate”—and the room must have seemed to the man whose brain directed all like the outstretched wing of a guardian divine. The Governor was an old man when the war began. Born in 1710, he was at the time of the Declaration of Independence sixty-six years old.

Dennis was like a guardian sent to him, and Peter like a messenger sent to Dennis. There was something in the glances of each to the other that was out of the common of life—it was the cause.

One day there was a shout in the alarm-post.

A man was riding up the Colchester road, dashing, as it were, as if his own body and that of his horse were only agents of this thought. He was an Irishman. When the Lexington alarm came, he had heard the clock of liberty strike; his hour had come.

“A man is coming like mad, riding with the wind,” said the sentinel in common terms.

The man came rushing up to the store, and drew his rein. The Governor met him there.

“Knox, your Honor, Knox of the artillery. I was at Bunker Hill.”

“I know you by your good name,” said the Governor. “You know how to put your shoulder to the wheel.”

Knox of the artillery smiled.

He had won the reputation of knowing how to put his shoulder to the wheel in a queer way. There was a rivalry between the Northenders and Southenders in Boston, and both parties celebrated Guy Fawkes's day with grotesque processions, in which were effigies of Guy Fawkes and the devil. In an evening procession of the party to which young Knox belonged on Guy Fawkes's day the wheel of the wagon or float bearing an effigy, possibly of Guy Fawkes, broke, and that the rival party might not know it and ridicule his party, he said:

"I will put my shoulder to the wheel."

He did this, and the float moved on, and the pride of his party was saved.

Knox of the artillery had kept a bookstore in Boston. It was like the New Corner Bookstore before the famous Old Corner Bookstore. When the war broke out he was attached to the artillery. There was a great need of powder, and he had a scent for it. He found it, he hid it; he was the "powder-monkey" of the great campaigns.

Like Paul Revere, he caught the spirit of the minutemen. He could ride for liberty! He was riding for liberty now!

"Washington recommended you to volunteer for the artillery service," said the Governor. "I could have no more favorable introduction to you. You do not ride for nothing, my young friend. May I ask what brings you here? Your horse foams."

"There is no time to be lost in days like these," said the young artilleryman. "These are days of destiny, and we must make the success of our cause sure. I went to Washington for permission to bring the siege-guns and powder from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston. I have come to you for a like reason. I am sure, in my soul, of ultimate victory; I know it will come, but preparation is victory. Boston is evacuated, and to defend New York we must protect the coast of Connecticut. I have conferred with Washington, and I must have a word with you."

"To the tavern with the horse," said the Governor. "Into the store, or war office, as I call my place here, we will go and shut the

weather-door, and I will answer ‘Go’ if any call. We will consider the matter.”

They went into the store and the door was shut.

Without sighed the cedars in the April or May winds. It was the coming of summer; the bright wings of southern birds were blooming in the air. The cedars were dressing in green, and the elms flaming in the glowing suns of the long days.

They talked, as we may fancy, of the sons of liberty, the siege of Boston, and the outlook, and here young Knox gained strength to face the strenuous campaigns of New York and the Jerseys, and to cause the cannon of liberty to thunder as never before.

They talked of Rhode Island. Strange things were happening there.

Then the Committee of Safety came. And they considered the matter.

The Governor had a habit of saying, “Let us consider the matter”; after a time he added, “and bring it before the council.”

He walked about like a visitor to the world. He was always “considering” some matter.

He would stand before the church, considering; cross the green, considering; the public men who came to visit him usually found him considering.

Why had Knox come to Lebanon?

It was to talk of powder. How could saltpeter be found? Where could it be stored?

There might be a powder magazine at New London, or near it, or in covert in a place on the Connecticut, or right here among the rocky caves of the hills. Where?

The Governor would “consider.” He did, and the secret hiding-places of powder were known to few besides him. The Governor knew the guards of the magazines. So Connecticut stored powder.

“Powder, powder, ye gods, send us powder!” cried General Putnam at the battle of Bunker Hill.

The battle of Bunker Hill.

There was a powder famine. The whole army needed powder.

One day the Governor sat before his door on the green, waiting the return of Dennis. The latter came back from a commission which he had executed quickly, and dropped from his horse on the green.

“You have made short time, Dennis.”

“Yes, Governor; I never think of myself, but only of the cause.”

“You may well say that, and I know it to be true. Such a spirit as that in these testing times is invaluable. I have a new commission for you.”

“Let me have it. I will die for it; I am in for liberty now—head, heart, and heels.”

He sunk down on the green.

“Let us consider,” the Governor said; “let us consider. You have heard me speak of Salisbury, the hidden town in the northwest corner of the State, on the Housatonic. The world knows little of that town, but it hears much. There has been a foundry there since ’62. I am going to make an arsenal there, and manufacture guns there, and make it a powder-post. I must have post-riders who can lead teamsters and who can be trusted, and move quickly, to go from Lebanon green to Salisbury with my orders. No spot in America can be made more useful to our army than this. I am going to appoint you as an officer for this business, as a special messenger to Salisbury in the secret service.

“Dennis, no one can do so much as when he is doing many things. When I am doing two things well, I can do three. I never undertake anything that I can not do well, but experience enables us to do many things well, as you are learning yourself, Dennis O’Hay.”

Dennis bowed.

Salisbury was a hidden place, but rich in nature. It was a place of iron-mines, with limestone and granite at the foot of the mountains. Here the United States began to cast cannon and gather saltpeter. The works grew. Cannon-balls, bombs, shells, grape-shot, anchors, hand-grenades, swivels, mess-pots and kettles, all implements of war were made and stored here. The armaments of ships were furnished here by skilled hands. Here the furnaces blazed night and day. Here the ore-diggers, founders, molders, and guards were constantly at work. There came here an army of teamsters for transportation. The Governor wished one whom he could trust to bear his orders to this town hidden among the mountains, and Dennis was such a man. Dennis could be spared, as there was a regular guard at the alarm-post now, and the church afforded it a shelter.

The reader who makes a pilgrimage to Lebanon to visit the “war office” should note the old church and recall the habits of a stately past, when men lived less for money-making and more for the things that live.

The solemn bell rings out as of old, but it is over the graves of people who were the empire builders, but who knew it not except by faith. The gray stones are crumbling where they lie. The engine-whistle sounds afar, and Willimantic reflects the life of new times. Here New England of old lives on—apart from the hurrying world of steam and electricity.

The great cedars are gone, though cedar swamps are near. Night settles down over all in silence, and one feels here that this is a lonely world.

The lights have gone out in the old Alden Tavern, and the tavern itself is gone, but nature here is beautiful among the hills, and to the susceptible eye the hills are touched by the spirit of the patriots of old.

CHAPTER IX

A MAN WITH A CANE—“OFF WITH YOUR HAT”

Dennis O’Hay, who had created for the cause the alarm-post in the cedars, learned all the ways and byways of the Connecticut colonies, and the ways leading to and out of Boston. He was, as we have said, a giant in form, and his usual salutation—“The top of the morning to everybody,” or “The top of the morning to everybody on this green earth”—won the hearts of people, and as much by the tone in which it was spoken as by the whole-hearted expression itself. He came to be known as the Irish giant of the hill country.

He traveled much in the secret service from Lebanon to Plainfield and Providence, which was a part of the turnpike road to Norwich. The children and dogs seemed to know him, and the very geese along the way to salute him with honks of wonder quite uncommon.

He greeted titled people and laborers in the same common way, and he one day said to the Governor:

“If I were to meet General Prescott himself, I would not take off my hat to him unless he met me civil.”

Who was General Prescott? Not the patriot hero of Bunker Hill. He was a British general that had been sent to Rhode Island, and had made himself a terror there. The women, children, dogs, and perhaps the farmhouse geese, ran *from* him when he appeared; even the Rhode Island Quakers moved aside when he was seen in a highway.

He carried a cane.

When he met a person in the highway he used to say:

“Off with your hat! Don’t you know who I am?”

If the person so accosted did not doff his hat, the pompous General gave the hat a vigorous whack with his stout cane, and the wearer's head rung, and the latter did not soon again forget his manners.

He once met an aged Quaker on the way—and these incidents are largely traditional—who approached him respectfully, after the usual way, with his broad-brimmed hat covering his curly locks.

"Yea, verily, one day outshines another, and to goodly people this is a goodly world."

"Who are you?" said the testy General.

"A servant of the Lord, as I hope."

"A servant of the Lord? Off with your hat! Haven't you any reverence for me, nor the Lord either? Don't you know who *I* am?"

"Nay, nay, softly; speak not thus, my friend."

"Off with your hat!" said the irate General. "None of your yea says and nay says in my presence."

"I never unhat or unbonnet, my friend, in the presence of any man. I could not do it if I were to meet the King himself."

The General grew red in the face.

"There, you Pharisee, take that," and here he applied his cane to the good Quaker's hat, "and that, and *that*, and THAT!"

The Quaker strode away, and would need a new hat when next he went abroad on the highway of the orchards and gardens.

General Prescott, while at Newport, desired to have a sidewalk in front of his house, so he ordered all of his neighbors' door-stones to be removed for the purpose.

He was a petty tyrant, and he liked nothing so much as to make the people—"rebels," as he called them—feel his power. He would order any one whom he disliked to be sent to the military prison without assigning any reason.

He once sent a greatly respected citizen to prison and forbade that the latter should have any verbal communication with his friends or family. The wife of the prisoner used to send him notes in loaves of bread.

One day she appeared before Prescott, and desired him to allow her to make one visit to her husband.

“Who do you think I am?” said the General, or words in this spirit. “Instead of allowing you to visit him, I will have him hanged before the end of the week.”

Under the petty tyranny of Prescott no one seemed safe on the island.

The stories of Prescott’s insults to worthy people roused the spirit of Dennis.

“An’ sure it is, now,” he said to the Governor, “if I were to meet that big-feeling Britisher, I would make him take off his own hat. Look at me now.”

Dennis stretched himself up to a height of nearly seven feet.

“If he sassed me back, I’d give him one box on the ear with this shovel of a hand, and he would never speak one word after he felt its swoop; and it will be a sorry day if he ever says ‘Off with your hat’ to me, now!”

He repeated these things to Peter on the green.

Dennis had met a man in Providence by the name of Barton—Colonel Barton. This man was a native of Warren, R. I., and the son of a thrifty farmer who owned a beautiful estate on Touisset Neck. The farm and the family burying-ground are still to be seen there, much as they were in the Revolutionary days. The place is now owned by Elmer Cole.

Barton was a brave, bold man. He conceived a plan to capture the tyrannical Prescott and humiliate the testy Britisher. For this enterprise he desired to enlist strong, fearless, seafaring men.

He had met Dennis and had said to himself that he must have the rugged Irishman's assistance.

He met Dennis again one day in Providence.

"Dennis O'Hay, can you keep a secret?"

"Sure I can, if anybody. Dennis O'Hay would not betray a secret if the earth were to quake and the heavens were all to come tumbling down, sure as you are living—never that would Dennis O'Hay."

"Then close your mouth and open your ears. I have a plan to capture General Prescott."

"An' I am with ye. I'll like to make that man feel the wake of my two fists, and he wouldn't dare to cane me after that."

"I want to secure twenty men or more that I can trust, seafaring men. You must be one of them," he continued.

"I plan to go down to Warwick Neck, and to go over to the island with my picked men in the night on whale-boats. The General and his guard are at the Overing House on the north end of the island, down by the sea.

"I plan to pass through the British fleet in the night with muffled oars, to land near Prescott's headquarters, and——"

"Whoop!" said Dennis rudely, "to carry him off before he has time to put on his clothes. You hand him over to me, and I would get him back down to the boats as easy as a chicken-hawk with a chicken. He would not even ask me to take off my hat. Put me down as one of the picked men."

"You will meet me at the wharf on Warwick Neck on the afternoon of July 10th."

"That I will. You are a brave man and have the spirit of the times. That man will know what are the rights of men if I ever get him between these two fists. What did Providence make these hands for?"

Dennis opened them and swung them around like a windmill.

Dennis hurried back to Lebanon. He found the Governor there, and said:

“I am going on an adventure with Colonel Barton; and when I return perhaps I will bring a stranger with me. Mum is the word, your Honor.”

“Barton, who is he?” asked the Governor.

“A man with a stout heart, who can see in the dark.”

“Go, Dennis, I have confidence in you.”

Then Dennis went to Peter. He did not tell him the plot, not all of it, but he said:

“I am going to attempt something that will tip over the world. I want you to watch for my coming back. I will signal to you from the Plainfield Hills, and when you see the signal, run to the Governor and say: ‘They’ve got him!’ Oh, Peter, it is a foine lad that you are now.” Dennis slapped both hands on his knees, and laughed in a strange way.

When the evening of the 10th of July came and Warwick Point, with its green sea meadows and great trees, faded in the long cloudy twilight, off the new wharfage lay three whale-boats, strong ribbed, and ample enough to hold immense storage of blubber.

In the shadows of the waving trees were Colonel Barton and some forty men. The old ballad says:

’Twas on that dark and stormy night,
The winds and waves did roar,
Bold Barton then with twenty men
Went down upon the shore.

There were more than twenty men who gathered at Warwick Point on that eventful evening.

It had been a windy day, a July storm, and the bay, usually so blue and placid, was ruffled.

Dennis was on hand at the appointed hour.

“This is a good night for our enterprise,” said Barton. “This is a night of darkness, and it favors us; let it be one of silence.”

“Aye, aye,” said Dennis. “Oh, General Prescott, how I long to fold you in my arms and give you a pat, pat on your face!”

“Stop your joking,” said Barton. “We face serious work now.”

Darkness fell on the waters. The men were mostly sailors, or used to seafaring life.

They heard the boom of the sunset gun from the British war-ships lying between them and Rhode Island.

The boats started toward Rhode Island in the darkness with silent men and muffled oars.

They passed between the ships that were guarding the British camp.

“All is well,” called a sentinel on one of the ships whose lights glimmered in the mist.

“Much you know about it,” said Dennis.

“Silence!” said Barton, as the oars dipped in the waters in which lay the cloud.

As silent as sea-birds and as unseen as birds in the cloud the boats passed on and reached the shores of Rhode Island, beyond the two islands of Prudence and Patience.

There were lights in the Overing House. They glimmered in the mist through the wet and dripping trees.

The clouds were breaking and the moon was rolling through them.

Barton summoned to him four trusty men. Among them was the giant Dennis, and a powerful negro called Sile Sisson.

This party stole through the side ways to the house.

A guard was there.

“Halt and give the countersign!” said the sentinel.

“We need no countersign,” said the leader. “Are there any deserters here?”

The sentinel was thrown off his guard.

Suddenly he found his gun wrenched from him, and he himself, poor man, in the hands of the giant Dennis. He was greatly astonished.

Colonel Barton entered the house, and found Mr. Overton, a Quaker, reading in one of the lower rooms.

“Is General Prescott here?” asked Colonel Barton.

The Quaker’s eyes rounded.

“He has retired.”

“Where is his room?”

“At the head of the stairs.”

Colonel Barton ascended the stairs and stood before Prescott’s door.

He gave a startling rap.

There was no response.

He tried the door. It was locked. He endeavored to force open the door, but it was firm.

“I will open the door,” said the giant negro. “Stand back.”

His head was like a battering ram. He drew back, bent forward, and struck the door with the top of his head.

Crash!

An old gentleman jumped out of bed, all astonished and excited.

“Thieves! help!” cried the terrified man; but the sentry was in charge of Dennis.

Colonel Barton laid his hand on General Prescott’s shoulder.

“General Prescott, you are my prisoner, and you must go immediately to my boats.”

“The dragon I am! Give me time to dress.”

“No, you can have no time to dress. I will take your clothes with you; march right on, just as you are.”

The proud General was pushed down-stairs, greatly to the amazement of the good Quaker, Mr. Overton, and was led out into fields which were full of briers, partly naked as he was. He was so filled with terror that he did not greatly mind the briers. He was hurried over the rough ways, gasping and trembling, and found himself on a whale-boat, with two other boats near him. The three boats moved away.

“All is well!” said the sentinels on the ships.

The noon of night passed, the clouds scudding over the moon; and the silent boats, amid the British assurances that all was well, landed near Providence, and horses with couriers ran hither and thither to carry the news that Colonel Barton had captured General Prescott.

It was decided to send Prescott to Washington’s headquarters, and he would pass through Lebanon.

Dennis rode swiftly toward Lebanon to tell the people the great news. He raised the signal at Plainfield, and Peter ran to the Governor’s office.

“Raree show! raree show!” shouted Dennis as he entered the town, and met the open-mouthed people on the green. “Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, and all good people shout now. Colonel Barton has captured General Prescott, and they are bringing him here!”

General Prescott, with his spirit unbroken, was brought to Lebanon. The carriage in which he was held as a prisoner rolled up to the door of the old Alden Tavern, and Prescott was led into the office.

“I must have something to eat,” said Prescott.

The good woman of the tavern bustled about, and brought out her bean-pot and set it down on the dining-table. She had stewed corn,

too, and of the two one might make the old-time luxury called succotash.

The beans and corn steamed, and the good woman, loyal as she was, was glad that she could present so fine a supper to such a notable man.

But General Prescott had been used to the dining-halls of castles.

“Do you call that a supper?” said he angrily. “It is not fit for hogs to eat. Take it away!”

Dennis had come upon the scene.

“Take it away!” demanded Prescott haughtily.

“I’ll take you away for insulting my wife,” said the tavern-keeper. “Dennis, take down the cowhide and I will make this Britisher dance.”

The tavern-keeper applied the cowhide to the leaping General as an old-fashioned schoolmaster might have used a birch switch on an unruly boy.

It was a terrible chastisement that the General received, and he always remembered it. One day, in the course of the war, after he had been exchanged for General Lee, he met a man who looked like the tavern-keeper, and he shrunk back in alarm and said: “Oh, but I thought that was the man who cowhided me.”

These incidents are mainly true, and have but a thread of fiction.

Dennis became a local hero among the friends of Brother Jonathan, and took his place as the keeper of the alarm-post again.

“Dennis,” said the Governor to him one day, “our hearts are one; I can trust you anywhere. I will have important service for you some day. When there shall come some great emergency, I will know whom I can trust. General Washington trusts me, and I can trust you.”

What a compliment! Dennis threw up his arms, and leaped.

“I feel as though I could shake the heavens now. After General Washington, you, and after you—hurrah for Dennis O’Hay! I wish my

old mother in Ireland could hear that, now. You shall never trust the heart of Dennis O'Hay to your sorrow. These times make men, and one does not get acquainted with himself until he is tried."

Dennis had grown. He felt that something noble in the secret service awaited him. If he could not make himself famous, he could be a cause of success in others. That he would be, and this sense of manhood filled his ambition.

"It is only a matter of time," he said, "between Shakespeare and the King and Dennis O'Hay. We will all go into oblivion at last, like the kings of the pyramids of Egypt. It is only what we do that lasts."

So our shipwrecked mariner and rustic philosopher night after night mounted the stairs to the outlook window, and saw the stars rise and set, and was glad that he was living.

He shared his life with the shepherd-boy. He lived outside of himself, as it were—all did then.

Dennis often joined the story-tellers on the Alden green and in the war-office store. At the store the wayfarers bartered in a curious way: they swapped stories. The drovers were a pack of clever story-tellers, but also the wayfarers from the sea.

Dennis O'Hay, who had been used to the docks of Belfast, Liverpool, and London, saw some strange sights on his rides to secure stores for the army, and saltpeter among the hill towns.

One cold March day he stopped before the fence of a hillside farmhouse, and his eye rested upon the most curious object that he had ever beheld in his life. It seemed to be a sheep dressed in man's clothing, eating old sprouts from cabbage stumps.

He sat on his horse and watched the man, or sheepman, as the case might be.

"Ye saints and sinners," said he, "and did any one ever see the like o' that before? Not a man in sheep's clothing, but a sheep in a man's clothing, browsing on last year's second growth of cabbage. I must call at the door and find out the meaning o' that."

He called to the sheep:

“You there, baa, baa, baa!”

The sheep in his jacket answered him, “Baa-baa,” and came running to the gate as if to welcome him.

Dennis dismounted and pulled the strap of the door.

The sheep followed him to the door, and when the latter was opened, announced the arrival of a stranger by a baa.

A tall, elderly man stood at the door, dressed in a new woolen suit. He had a high neck-stock, and bowed in a very stately way. He had manners.

“An’ I am out on business for the Governor,” said Dennis.

“You are welcome,” said the tall man. “Any one in the service of the Governor is welcome to my home, and to the best of my scanty fare.” He bowed again.

Dennis walked in, so did the sheep, with many baas.

“Take a place before the fire,” said the tall old man. “I feel the snows of age falling upon me,” he continued. “The sun and the light of the moon will soon be darkened to me, and the clouds already return after the rain.

“The keepers of the house tremble,” here he lifted his hands, which shook with a slight palsy; “and the grinders cease because they are few,” here he pointed to his almost toothless gums; “and those that look out of the windows be darkened,” here he took a pair of spectacles from his eyes. He talked almost wholly in scriptural language.

The sheltered sheep said baa, and dropped down before the fire. Dennis knew not what to say, but uttered a yum, when the tall man broke out again: “The sound of the grinding is low, and I fear when I walk on the places that are high, and the grasshopper is a burden. Yes, my friend, the silver cord will soon be loosed, and the golden bowl broken and the pitcher at the fountain and wheel at the cistern. You find me a reed shaken by the wind, a trembling old man; but I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

I am at your service; my house, such as it is, is yours." He bowed, and turned around and bowed.

"I am out and about collecting saltpeter," said Dennis, "and all that I ask is to warm myself by your fire, except, except—well, that shorn sheep puzzles my wits. Pardon me, I beg a thousand pardons if I seem uncivil, but why is it dressed up in that way?"

"I will explain and enlighten your curiosity, my friendly traveler. The sheep has on my old clothing, and I have on his."

He continued: "I am the teacher here, and my pay is small, and the war taxes take all I can save. My old clothes became very worn, as you can see there, and I had to maintain my dignity. I am a graduate of Yale, and so I exchanged clothing with my one sheep.

"My noble wife brought it about; she is at her wheel now. Let me call her and introduce her."

He opened a door to a room where a wheel was whirling and buzzing like a northern wind.

"May, my dear!"

May appeared. The withered man bowed, holding his right hand in air on a level with his forehead. May made a courtesy.

"Behold a virtuous woman," said the tall man, with manners. "Her price is above rubies.

"The heart of her husband does safely trust in her, that he shall have no need of spoil.

"She seeketh wool and flax."

Here the sheep seemed to be in a familiar atmosphere, and responded in his one word, baa.

"She layeth hands on the spindle, and holds the distaff. Her household are clothed in scarlet. Her children rise up and call her blessed, and her husband praiseth her."

Dennis had seen many parts of the world, but he had never been introduced to any one in that way before.

The old man added, much to the wonder and amusement of his guest:

“I sheared the sheep and *she* carded the wool, and she spun the wool and wove it into strong cloth, and dyed the cloth, and here I am clothed against the storm. You see what a wife I have got.”

“And what a sheep you have got, too,” said Dennis. “But may the Lord protect you both. You have a heart to let the sheep warm himself by your fire, and that is why you give me a place here.”

“And now, wife,” said the tall man, “place the best that you have on the table for the stranger. ‘Be not forgetful to entertain strangers.’”

“But, my dear consort, we have only one cake left for us two.”

“Well, give that to him, and we will go supperless to Him who owns the cattle upon a thousand hills. He is riding in the cause of liberty, and needs the cake more than we. God will give us the white stone and the hidden manna, and to serve the patriots we have gone supperless before.”

Queer as it may seem, this story pictures the time. This man plowed with a cow, but treated the animal as if she was a member of the household; men and animals suffered together then in those hard, sturdy, and glorious old New England days.

“This is a queer country,” said Dennis, “but what men it makes! What will they be when they are free!”

But now came the disastrous battle of Long Island. New York was taken, and the fall winds began to blow.

There was sadness in every true American’s heart. England was rejoicing, and felt secure in the rising success of her arms.

Washington appealed to Trumbull. A former appeal had come in spring-time, when Putnam left his plow in the furrow.

The appeal now came in harvest-time. What were the farmers to do?

“The wives and boys and old men will harvest the crops,” was the public answer. “Save Washington *again*, Brother Jonathan!”

It was in 1777. Disaster had again befallen the American army, and Lord Howe was on the sea.

Where was the British commander going? Some thought to the Hudson River, some to Philadelphia. No patriot could know.

Washington was in great distress and perplexity.

Putnam commanded Philadelphia. In this crisis a young man presented himself to General Putnam.

“I am a patriot at heart,” he said, “but have been with Lord Howe. I have been commanded by Lord Howe to bear a letter to General Burgoyne, but, true to the American cause, I have brought the letter to you.”

The letter was, or seemed to be, in the handwriting of Lord Howe. It was sent to Washington. It informed Burgoyne that the fleet was about to proceed against Boston.

“The letter is a feint,” said Washington. But he read into it the real design of Lord Howe, which was to proceed against him, and he was thrown by it into the greatest perplexity.

He must have more troops, and at once. He consulted Putnam, and said: “I want you to send an express to Governor Trumbull at once. Tell him to send the State militia without delay. He will not fail me.” He added: “Connecticut can not be in more danger than this. Governor Trumbull will, I trust, be sensible to this. I must appeal again to Brother Jonathan.”

These were nearly Washington’s own words to Connecticut Putnam, of the fearless heart.

Putnam sent a courier to Connecticut, a man on a winged horse, as it were, who “flew” as Dennis had done.

“If you ever rode, ride now,” was the probable order. “If we ever had need of Brother Jonathan, it is now.”

Still Brother Jonathan, whose heart was like a hammer and head like a castle. This courier was destined to startle indeed the people of the cedars.

The American army was in dire distress and Lord Howe was on the sea!

Brother Jonathan! He had grown now in reputation so that the hearts of the people beyond his own State were his. If he could save the situation he would indeed be the first of patriots.

The messenger came, and said: “I am sent to you from Washington.”

The Governor turned to the courier:

“Go to the tavern; take your horse and yourself, and say to your chief, ‘It shall be done!’”

What was it that should be done?

The Council of Safety assembled in the back store.

“Washington waits another regiment,” said one of the members in the back store.

“Yes, so it seems,” said another. “Every point seems to be threatened.”

“We may find it hard to raise another regiment,” said a third member.

“One,” said the Governor, “one regiment? We must raise NİNE! We can do it.”

“Will the men descend from the sky?” questioned one. “We can not create men.”

“He can who thinks he can,” said the Governor. “Nine regiments he needs, and nine regiments he shall have. Shall he not?”

“Yes,” said all, “if you can find the men.”

“I can find the men. Dennis?”

There was no response.

The shell was blown. The latch-string bobbed.

“Dennis, Washington must have NİNE regiments for the defense of New York. That means work for you. Go to the towns—fly! Tell the

selectmen that Washington wants men. He has sent his appeal to me; he has put confidence in my heart, notwithstanding my weak hands. He shall not appeal in vain. Go, Dennis; these days are to live again. I feel the divinity of the times; I must act, though I myself am nothing. Go to Norwich, Hartford, New Haven—fly, Dennis, fly!"

"I am not a bird, your Honor."

"Yes, Dennis, you are. Fly!" That word was the order now.

Then the Governor talked with the Committee of Safety in the back store until midnight.

The candles went out, and the men slept there.

The nine regiments of three hundred and fifty men each were raised.

Men were few in old Windham County now. "Gone to the war," answered many inquiries.

The women led the teams to the field; the old men, old women, and the boys went to the husk-heap and husked corn. The boys learned to use the threshing flails and winnowing sieves in the barns with open doors.

The young and old filled the potato bins in the cellar and stored the apples there. They banked the houses with thatch.

Governor Trumbull was now at the full age when the vital powers ripen, and when many men begin to abate their activities. But he seemed to forget his age; he was never so active as now.

Jonathan Trumbull.

Washington noted this activity of age with wonder, and he wrote to him: "I observe with great pleasure that you have ordered the remaining regiments of militia that can be spared from the immediate defense of the seacoast to march toward New York with all expedition. I can not sufficiently express my thanks." To which Brother Jonathan replied:

"When your Excellency was pleased to request the militia of our State to be sent forward with all possible expedition to reenforce the

army at New York, no time was lost to expedite the march; and I am happy to find the spirit and zeal that appeared in the people of this State, to yield every assistance in their power in the present critical situation of our affairs. The season, indeed, was most unfavorable for so many of our farmers and laborers to leave home. Many had not even secured their harvest; the greater part had secured but a small part even of their hay, and the preparation of the crop of winter's grain for the ensuing year was totally omitted; but they, the most of them, left all to afford their help in protecting and defending their just rights and liberties against the attempt of a numerous army sent to invade them. The suddenness of the requisition, the haste and expedition required in the raising, equipping, and marching such a number of men after the large drafts before made on this State, engrossed all our time and attention."

The people forgot themselves for the cause. When Washington and Trumbull made a call upon them for help it was like Moses and Aaron. They did not argue or question; they hurried to the village greens, there to receive their orders as from the Deity.

That autumn the Governor issued a wonderful proclamation for a day of fasting and prayer.

The bell rang; the people assembled. Trumbull always attended church, and the chair in which he used to sit is still shown in Lebanon. The people followed his example. They felt that what was best for them would be best for their children, and that whether they left them rich estates or not, they must bequeath them liberty and the examples of virtue. So they lived *mightily* in "Brother Jonathan's day."

CHAPTER X

BEACONS

There is one history of the Revolution that has never been written; it is that of *beacons*. The beacon, in the sense of a signal, was the night alarm, the night order. The hills on which beacons were set were those that could be seen from afar, and those who planted these far angles of communications of light were patriots, like the rest.

There was a beacon at Mt. Hope, R. I. It probably signaled to a beacon on King's Rocks, Swansea, which picturesque rocks are near to the Garrison House at Myles Bridge, and the Swansea church, founded in the spirit of liberty and learning by the famous John Myles, a learned exile from Wales, who came to Swansea, Mass., for religious liberty, bringing his church records from Swansea, Wales, with him. The old Hessian burying-ground is near the place. Here John Myles founded education in the spirit of the education of all. He made every house a schoolhouse by becoming a traveling teacher.

The King's Rocks beacon communicated with Providence, and Providence probably with Boston.

In Boston was the beacon of beacons. Beacon Hill now bears its name. A book might be written in regard to this famous beacon. It stood on Sentry Hill, a tall mast overlooking city and harbor, not at first with a globe on the top and an eagle on the globe, as is represented on the monument. Sentry Hill was the highest of the hills of Trimountain. The golden dome of the State-house marks the place now.

The first beacon in Boston was erected here in 1635. It was an odd-looking object.

The general court of Massachusetts thus gave the order for the erection of the beacon:

“It is ordered that there shall be a beacon set on Sentry Hill, to give notice to the country of danger.”

The beacon had a peg ladder and a crane, on which was hung an iron pot.

This beacon seems to have remained for nearly one hundred and fifty years. It was the suggestion of beacons in many places, and these were the telegraph stations of the Revolutionary War. A history of the beacons would be a history of the war.

What a signal it made as it blazed in the heavens! What eyes were turned toward it in the nights of alarm of the Indian wars, and again in the strenuous times of the expedition against Louisburg, and in all the years of the great Revolution! A tar-barrel was placed on the beacon-mast in perilous times, and it flamed in the sky like a comet when the country was in danger.

Beacon (or Sentry) Hill was almost a mountain then. The owners lowered it for the sake of gravel for private and public improvements. It filled hollows and lengthened wharves, and at last the beacon gave place to the monument of its usefulness.

In New York beacons were set along the highlands whose tops fired the night sky in times of danger.

These beacons or signals probably suggested the semaphore—a system of signals with shutters and flags used in France during the wars of Napoleon.

Governor Trumbull said one day to Dennis: “We must consider the matter of beacons.”

The two went into the war office to consider.

“I will bring the subject before the Committee,” said the Governor after they had “considered” the matter for a time, “and you may get Peter to point out to you the longest lookouts on the high hills. The sky must be made to speak for the cause in tongues of fire.”

The Tories more and more hated the war Governor.

“I would kill him as I would a rattlesnake,” said one of these.

There were new plots everywhere among Tory people to destroy him and his great influence.

Peter Nimble, though really a guard on secret service, still herded sheep and roamed after his flocks and guided them in the pleasant seasons of pasturage. He went up on the hills of the savins above the cedar swamps. He knew the hills better than many of the people of Lebanon.

One day he met the Governor on the green.

“Governor,” he said, “I watch at nights. You know all. I watch for spies that are looking for the magazines. You know, Governor. I can do you a greater service than that.”

“Well, boy, you speak well. What can you do?”

“I can think and talk with the skies.”

“That is bravely said, but what do you mean?”

“I can set beacons on the hills. I have studied the hilltops, and how to look far. I can see how I could flash a signal from one hill to Plainfield, and to Providence, and to New London.”

“Boy, boy, you see. I can trust you. Have you told Mr. Williams of this? Shepherd-boy, shepherd-boy, you are one after my own heart. Find out the way to set beacons. Set signals. How did this knowledge come to you?”

“My heart is full of my country, when I am among the flocks on the hills.”

“You are like another David. Talk with Dennis about these things.”

“Governor?”

“Well, my shepherd-boy?”

“One day, it may be, I will see something.”

The Governor went to his war office. People were coming from four different ways, all to consult with the Governor: horsemen, men in gigs, men from the ships, people with provisions, all with something special to say to the Governor.

The Governor met William Williams, “the signer,” at the door of the war office.

“That is a bright boy that you keep to herd sheep,” said he.

“Peter?”

“Yes. He has just said something to me that I think remarkable. Give him freedom to do much as he pleases. He is carrying out secret instructions of mine.”

Peter studied hilltops, and told Dennis of all the curious angles that he discerned on the far and near hills. He set beacons and found out how he could communicate with Plainfield, Providence, and Groton.

In the meantime he watched in the midnight hours at an angle in the turnpike road behind the curious window. He knew that the magazine was near; he did not seek to learn where. While the young patriot’s mind was employed in these things there came to him one night a very strange adventure, which led him to see to how great peril the Governor’s person was exposed.

Peter thought much of his aged uncle, the wood-chopper, who had said to him, “Out you go!” The boy had a forgiving heart. “He did it on account of his love for the King, and he thinks that a king is appointed by God,” he would say to the Governor. “Do not disturb him.”

The Governor would not disturb him. He, too, had a forgiving heart.

Peter’s heart was true to the old man. He sometimes wondered as to where would fall the old man’s gold at last—to the King, or him. But he had no selfish schemes in the matter—for him to do right was to live. In his midnight watches, and with his most curious means of communication with the alarm-post in the cedars, he held one purpose uppermost: it was, to protect from harm the unselfish

Governor who had spoken so kindly to him when his heart was hungry, and whom all the people loved.

The Governor still went about with apparent unconcern; he would talk here and there with those who detained him and needed him, now at the tavern, now upon the village green. But the people all knew that dangerous people were coming and going to and from the green-walled town.

Peter saw something suspicious in the conduct of several sailors who visited the place from the ports, and who called the inland province the Connecticut main.

“I would sooner die myself,” he said to Dennis, “than to see any harm befall the Governor. ‘Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.’” He had learned to quote Scripture from the Governor.

One night as he was watching with his window at the elbow of the turnpike, he was surprised to hear a soft, slow, cautious footfall, and to see a curious stranger in a blanket approaching in the dim light. He turned up the hill behind the window and light to see if the man in the blanket would follow him.

The man in the blanket turned when Peter set down the window, and went down the hill as from a house to meet the traveler.

Peter stopped the stranger, whom he saw to be dark and tall, and who held under his blanket some weapon which seemed to be a hatchet.

“Do you live in yonder house?” the man asked.

“No,” said the boy, “that is not my house. Whom are you seeking?”

“Does an old man live there?” asked the stranger. “An old man who used to live with a boy—his brother’s boy?”

“No, no,” answered Peter in much surprise.

“Do you know of any old man that lives all alone? They say that the boy has left him.”

“I have in mind such an old man, stranger.”

“What became of the boy?”

“He tends sheep during the days.”

“Can you direct me to the place where the old man lives?”

“What would you have of him?”

“I would have him help me. I need help.”

“Did you ever meet him?”

“No.”

“How did you hear of him?”

“I am partly an Indian. The scholars of the Indian school that were once here used to meet him on the road in front of his woodpile. They heard that he had concealed money. Indian need heap money. Indian must have help.”

The last sentence showed that the Indian spoke true in regard to his nationality.

A suspicion flashed across Peter’s mind; this stray Indian was out in the forest at this time with no honest purpose.

He simply said: “Follow me.”

He led the Indian to the alarm-post. The Indian thought that he was going to the wood-chopper’s cabin. Dennis received the night wanderer and detained him.

“I must go and alarm my uncle,” said Peter to Dennis, privately.

He hurried away toward the old wood-chopper’s cabin.

He beat on the door, and cried:

“Lift the latch!”

There was a noise within, and presently the latch was lifted.

“You, boy? You? What brings you here at this time of night?”

“To warn you of danger. There has been a man in the cedar swamp who is seeking you, and he has no honest purpose in his

heart, as I could see. He is a half-breed. He says that you have money concealed."

The old man's face took on a look of terror.

He began to dance around.

"Who—ah—says that I have money concealed?" he said, lighting a candle—"who—who—who?" He lit another light.

"Boy, you are not deceiving me? You never deceived anybody. And what a heart you must have to come here to protect an old man like me, who said to you, 'Out you go!' And you have held no hardness against me—I have cursed you—because you have turned against the King. Come in—sit down—I am afraid. You don't think that the Indian meant to rob me, do you?"

"I think he intended to find you in the night and beg money, and if you refused him to demand money, and if you refused him, then to find out where you hid money. If I had not turned him aside, I don't believe that you would have been living in the morning. Bad Indians murder lone men by lonely ways. There was crime in his eye."

"Boy, let me bar the door. I know your heart. You had a mother who had a true heart, and a boy's heart is his mother's heart. You only come here for a good purpose. I know that. And you have come in to-night to protect me, who turned you out.

"Boy, I have money. I am willing to tell you now where it is!"

"But, uncle, I am not seeking your money—I do not wish to know where it is."

"But you must—you must; you are the only friend that I have on earth. What made me say, 'Out you go!' when I needed you?

"The money—if ever I should die, do you come back here and take all I leave, and wash and wash and wash until you find the bottom of the soap-barrel. There, I haven't told you anything. People don't hide money in the soap-barrel—no, no; lye eats—no, no. You know enough now. Will you stay with me until morning?"

“No; I have come to take you to the war office, for protection—to the store. One room there is almost always open.”

“To the Governor’s! He suspects me of being a Tory. What would the King say, if he were to know that I went to the rebel Governor for protection? No, no, no, no. Let the Indians kill me—I will die true to my king. You may go—you will not betray me.”

“I can not leave you until morning, and then I will see that you are guarded.”

“Who will guard me?”

“The Governor will see that you are kept from harm.”

“No, no, no. Go, Peter, go—out into the night. I want the King to know that he has one heart that is true to him in the land of the cedars. Go! I will bolt my door nights—and will chop wood. That is what I tell people who come to visit me—I chop wood—and I will say no more.

“You would die for the Governor, and I am willing to suffer any danger for my king—for King George of Hanover. Go!”

Peter went out into the night. There was something in his grim uncle’s loyalty that kindled his admiration, and there was a touch in the old man’s desire that he should possess his property that really awakened a chord of love in his heart. He resolved that he would be as true to the old man as ever his duties to the cause would allow, although the rugged Tory had said to him a second time, “Out you go!” The heart knows its own.

Peter could ride like the wind. So the people said “that he streaked it through the air.” With his night service, and his placing of beacons on the hills, and his place at the door of the war office in the store, which he yet sometimes filled, and the spirit that he had shown toward his unhappy old uncle, the wood-chopper, he was making for himself a personality.

The Governor entrusted him with a message to the army at Valley Forge.

The Governor's wife was a noble woman, as we have seen. She was true to her own. Her family were very tender-hearted and affectionate. Her daughter Faith, who could paint and who had inspired her brother, the great historic painter, in his boyhood, died of insanity after hearing the thunders of Bunker Hill. She had married Colonel Huntington, who went to the camps around Boston. She hoped to meet him there, but arrived just as the battle of Bunker Hill was rending the air.

When she thought of what war might mean to her father, her husband, and her brother, who was an officer, her mind could not withstand the dark vision that arose before her, and it went out. She died at Dedham. One of her brothers, too, had so much of the human and elemental nature as to have become greatly depressed by disappointment. The Trumbulls were a marvelous family, with a divine spark in them all, but not all the children had the rugged nerve of their father.

The wife of Governor Trumbull guarded her family when the Governor was absent on official duties at Hartford.

The family now were like so many listeners—to get tidings from the war was their life, and anxiety filled their faces as messengers from Boston, Providence, New London, and Hartford, and the great powder-mills and ordnance works of hidden Salisbury came to them.

One evening, when the Governor was away, a messenger came to the green, and stopped before the tavern. It was dark and rainy.

"It is the shepherd-boy!" said Faith Trumbull, standing in the door, with a lantern in her hand. "He has returned from Valley Forge. I almost shut my heart against the news. His face is white."

The boy came to the house and Madam Trumbull received him by laying her hand on his shoulders.

Dennis came running in.

"You, my boy Nimble? You made a quick journey."

The family sat down by the broad, open fire. Their anxiety was shown by their silence.

“Well,” said madam, “the time has come to speak. What news?”

“Oh, could you see,” said the shepherd-boy, “shoeless men, foodless men—snow and blood. When the men move, the snow lies red behind them. Oh, it makes my heart sick to tell it. I would think that the stars would look down in pity.”

“Dennis,” said madam, “call the women of the Relief Committee here to-night, all of them—now.”

“Let us hear what more the boy has to say.”

“No; suffering has no right to be delayed one moment of relief. Go now.”

Dennis went out into the night. He returned with the women, who began to knit stockings for the barefoot soldiers of Valley Forge.

Madam addressed the women.

“I belong to the Pilgrim Colony,” said she, “but of that I would not boast. Hear the rain, hear the sleet, and the wind rising! You have met here in the rain. The fire burns warm.

“Let me tell you my thoughts—something that comes to me. It was such a night as this when John Howland with a band of Pilgrims sailed in the deep darkness, near the coast, on the shallop of the Mayflower, and he knew not where he was.”

“What did he do?” asked one of the knitters.

“He sang in the storm. Darkness covered him—there was ice on the oars as they lifted and fell. There was no light on the coast. The wind rose and the seas were pitiless, but he sang—John Howland.”

“What did he sing?”

“That I can not tell. I think that he sang the Psalm that we sing to the words

‘God is the refuge of his saints,
  Though storms of sharp distress invade.’

Let us sing that now. The storm that tossed the shallop of the Mayflower broke; the clouds lifted. So it will be at Valley Forge. Knit and sing."

And the knitters sang. The storm rose to a gale. Shutters banged, and there was only the tavern lights to be seen across the black green.

Suddenly a strange thing happened.

Peter opened the door, hat in hand.

"Madam Trumbull," said he, "may I speak to you?"

"Yes, Peter, boy; what have you to say?"

"I saw a strange man at Valley Forge. He was young—a Frenchman.

"One cold night he was standing near Washington in the marquee, and Washington, the great Washington, put his own cloak about him, and the two stood under the same cloak, and some officers gathered around him. And I heard him say, the young Frenchman: 'When you shall hear the *bugles of Auvergne*, the cause of liberty will have won the battle of the world.' What did he mean?"

"I do not know," said Madam Robinson; "it seems like a prophecy; like John Howland, the pilgrim, singing in the night-storm on the shallop of the Mayflower. The bugles of Auvergne!—the words seem to ring in my ears. What was the young Frenchman's name?"

"Lafayette."

The next day Peter went to Dennis and related the same story, and said:

"America will be free when she shall hear the bugles of Auvergne."

"So she will; I feel it in my soul she will—the bugles of Auvergne! That sounds like a silver trumpet from the skies. But where are the bugles of Auvergne?"

"I do not know, but we will hear them—Lafayette said so."

"But who is that same Lafayette?"

CHAPTER XI

THE SECRET OF LAFAYETTE

THE STORY OF THE WHITE HORSE

Lafayette was born on September 6, 1757, in the province of Auvergne, now Cantal, Puy-de-Dôme, and Haute-Loire. His birthplace was the Château de Chavagnac, situated some six miles from ancient Brionde.

Auvergne was celebrated for men of character and honor rather than wealth and distinction—men who deserved to outlive kings, and whose jewels were virtues. It became a proverb that the men of Auvergne knew no stain, and hence the ensigns and escutcheons of the rugged soldiers of the mountain towns were associated with the motto, “Auvergne sans tache.”

These soldiers kept this motto of their mountain homes ever in view; they would die rather than violate the spirit of it.

Lafayette was of noble family, and appeared at court when a boy. But the gay court did not repress the spirit of Auvergne which lived in him, and grew. He was of noble family, and his father fell at the battle of Minden. The battery that caused his father’s death was commanded by General Phillips, against whom Lafayette fought in the great Virginia campaign.

At the age of sixteen, the spirit of the mountaineers of Auvergne rose within him. He became an ardent advocate of the liberties of men, and he seemed to see the star of liberty rising in the Western world, and he was restless to follow it. He heard of the American Congress as an assembly of heroes of a new era—the new Senate of God and human rights. Princes, after his view, should not violate the law of the people.

The heart of the King of France, while France at first professed neutrality in the American struggle, was with the patriots; so was the sympathy of the gay French court. The boy Lafayette knew this; he longed to carry this secret news to America.

He came to America, as we have described, with this secret in his heart.

The capture of Burgoyne in October, 1777, delighted France. The clock of liberty had struck; it only needed the aid of France to give independence to the Americans.

Lafayette became more restless. He had married into a noble family, but the companionship of a beautiful and true woman could not stifle this patriotic restlessness. He saw that he might be an influence in bringing France to the aid of America. To do this became his life.

The Queen espoused the cause of America; let us ever remember this, notwithstanding that there are so many unpleasant things about her to remember. Then the American cause seemed to fail in the Jerseys and France to lose her interest in it.

Young Lafayette's heart was true to America in these dark hours. He knew that France could be aroused to action. He espoused the cause of America in her darkness, and doubtless dreamed of being able to convey to Washington a secret, that few other men so clearly saw. France would espouse the cause of America when events should open the way.

Never such a secret crossed the sea as young Lafayette bore in his bosom to Washington. It came, as it were, out of Auvergne; it was borne against every allurement of luxury and self; it was an inborn imperative. When a new world was to be revealed, Columbus had to sail; when liberty was to be established among men, Lafayette, the child of destiny, had to face the west; where was there another race of liberty-loving men like those of the Connecticut farmers? In Auvergne. Who of all men could represent this spirit of liberty in America? Lafayette.

He won the heart of America; even the British respected him. His true sympathy was the cause of his great popularity; his heart won all hearts.

In the terrible winter of 1778 the American army with Washington and Lafayette were at Valley Forge; the British were in Philadelphia, spending a gay winter reveling.

No pen can describe the destitution and suffering of the 5,000 or more patriots at Valley Forge. The white snows of that winter in the wilderness were stained with the blood of naked feet. Famine came with the cold.

The men were “hutted” in log cabins. “The general’s apartment is very small,” wrote Mrs. Washington; “he has a log cabin built to dine in, which has made our quarters much more tolerable than they were at first.”

There was no fresh meat there; no sufficient salted provisions. There were no cattle in the neighboring towns or States that could be spared for the army.

But they suffered in silence. They went half-clothed and hungry, but they did not desert.

“Nothing can equal their sufferings,” wrote one of an examining committee. Even the cannon was frozen in, and bitten by the frost were the limbs of those who were commissioned to handle them.

Had General Howe, whose army was dissipating at Philadelphia, led out his troops against the famine-stricken army in the Valley, what might have been the fate of the American cause?

The dissipations of the English army was one cause of its overthrow. That army had been reveling when surprised at Trenton.

With his men wasting and dying around him, shoeless, coatless, foodless, what was Washington to do?

At one of the dismal councils of his generals there came a counsel that made the hearts all quicken.

“Send to Connecticut for cattle. Let us appeal to Brother Jonathan again; he has never failed us.”

“I never made an appeal to Brother Jonathan but to receive help,” said the great commander.

The appeal was made. In his letter to Governor Trumbull, Washington said:

“What is still more distressing, I am assured by Colonel Blaine, deputy purchasing commissary for the middle district, comprehending the States of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, that they are nearly exhausted, and the most vigorous and active exertions on his part will not procure more than sufficient to supply the army during this month, if so long. This being the case, and as any relief that can be obtained from the more southern States will be but partial, trifling, and of a day, we must turn our eyes to the eastward, and lay our account of support from thence. Without it, we can not but disband. I must, therefore, sir, entreat you in the most earnest terms, and by that zeal which has eminently distinguished your character in the present arduous struggle, to give every countenance to the person or persons employed in the purchasing line in your State, and to urge them to the most vigorous efforts to forward supplies of cattle from time to time, and thereby prevent such a melancholy and alarming catastrophe.”

Read these words twice: “Without it the army must disband.”

As soon as Governor Trumbull had received the letter he called together the Council of Safety. He read it to them. They wept.

“An army of cattle might save the cause,” said one.

“Our suffering brothers shall have the army of cattle,” said Brother Jonathan.

He at once aroused the farmers of Connecticut. Horsemen dashed hither and thither, away from Hartford and from the war office to the hillside farms.

“Cattle! cattle!” they cried. “Our army is perishing. Washington has appealed to Brother Jonathan!”

At the head of these alarmists rode Dennis O'Hay, awakening the villages with his resonant brogue:

"It is cattle, an army of cattle, that Washington must have now! His men are going barefooted in the snow. Oh, the shame of it! His men have no meat to warm their veins in the cold. Oh, the shame of it! They fever, they wither, they are buried in clumps and clods. Oh, the shame of it! Arouse, or the heavens will fall down on you! Cattle! Cattle!"

The thrifty hillside farmers had made many sacrifices already, but they responded.

An army of cattle began to form. It increased. Nearly every farm could spare one or more beeves, armed with fat flesh and warm hides.

So it started, armed, as it were, with horns, Dennis leading them under officers.

Three hundred miles it marched, gathering force along the way.

It entered at last the dreary wilderness of the suffering camp. The men saw it coming. There went up a great shout, which ran along the camp, and went up from even the hospital huts:

"The Lord bless Brother Jonathan!"

The officers hailed the cattle-drivers.

"Should we win our independence," said an officer, "what will we not owe to Brother Jonathan and his army of cattle from the provision State!"

Dennis froze with the others that winter.

In the spring he returned, moneyless, fameless. Half of his face was black, and one hand had gone. The explosion of a powder-wagon which he had been forcing on toward Washington's army had caused the change in his appearance, but it was rugged work that Dennis O'Hay had done during that past winter for the army.

The Governor heard his story.

“Dennis O’Hay,” said he, “when America achieves her liberty, and her true history shall be written, the inspired historian will see in such as you the cause of the mighty event. It is men who are willing to suffer and be forgotten that advance the welfare of mankind; it is not wealth or fame that lifts the world: it is sacrifice, sacrifice, sacrifice! That means you, Dennis O’Hay.

“Dennis, did you know that they once offered me the place of the colonial agent to London? They did, and I refused for the good of my own people at home. That is a sweet thing for me to remember. The only thing that a man can have in this world to last is righteous life. This is true, Dennis: that the private soldier who seeks all for his cause and nothing for himself is the noblest man in the annals of war, unless it be a Washington.”

“And you, Governor Trumbull.”

Dennis took off his hat and bowed low.

The Governor also took off his hat and bowed twice, and the people who had gathered around took off their hats and shouted.

“The stars will hear ye when ye shout for Brother Jonathan,” said Dennis O’Hay. “I have brought home a secret with me.”

“What may it be?” asked many.

“It would not be a secret were I to tell it.”

Dennis, after driving his army of cattle, with underdrivers, had entered lustily the place of the halted army of desolation. He had remained there until spring. He was greeted there one day by two men, one a tower of majestic manhood, the other a glittering young man of warm heart and enthusiasm; they were Washington and Lafayette.

“Your army will save us, my good friend,” said the man of majestic presence.

“This army will save the cause,” said the younger officer.

There was a look of hope in his face that revealed to Dennis that he had some secret ground for this confidence.

Washington moved away to his marquee.

Dennis, hat in hand, said to Lafayette:

“May I detain you a moment, your Honor?”

“Yes, my honest man; what would you have? I hope that it may be something that I can grant.”

“Do you remember that day when you spoke of a body of men as the bugles of Auvergne?”

“Yes, my good friend, and how do those words impress you?”

“I can never tell. They are words within words. What I want to ask of you is—pardon my bluntness, I was not bred in courts, as you see—couldn’t you induce those men who blow the bugles of Ovan to come here and give us a lift? My heart tells me that they would be just the men we would need. I don’t so much hear words as the spirit of things, and the heart knows its own.”

“I will think of these things, my good friend of the honest heart. I do think of them now. I will entrust you, a stranger, with a secret. Will you never tell it until the day that makes it clear arrives?”

“Never, never, never—oh, my heart dances when I hear good things of the cause of these people struggling so mightily for their liberties—no, no, the tail goes with the kite; I will never tell.”

“I am now writing to the court of France. If I get good news, I will ask for the French mountaineers whose banner is *Auvergne sans tache*!”

“May the heavens all take off their hats to ye and the evil one never get ye. I can see them coming now, a kind o’ vision, with their banners flying. I have second sight, and see good things. Why do not people see good things now, like the prophets of old, and not witches and ghosts? To Dennis O’Hay the passing clouds are angels’ chariots. Oh, I will never forget you, and I would deem it an honor above honors if you will not forget Dennis O’Hay.”

“One thing more, good Dennis, I have to say to you before we part. If a French ship should come to Norwich from Lyons, you may

learn more about Auvergne, which is the Connecticut of France."

"Then you must be like the Governor, who is so all wrapped up in the cause that he has forgotten to grow old."

The young French officer drew his cloak about him, and touched his hat and went to the marquee.

Dennis laid down to rest among some wasted men of the army by a fire of fagots. He dreamed, and he saw French ships sailing in the air. He had read the success of the cause amid all these miseries in the heart of young Lafayette.

"That boy general has the vision of it all," said he.

The Irishman as a bearer of despatches from Governor Trumbull was not without importance.

Dennis lingered to rest by the marquees of the officers under the moon and stars. He listened for words of hope. One night Lafayette talked. He engaged all ears.

"I was born at Auvergne, in the mountain district of France," said he, "and the soldiers of Auvergne are sons of liberty. They are mountaineers. I would that I could induce France to send an army of those mountaineers to America. They are rugged men; they believe in justice, and equal rights, and equal laws, and for this cause they are willing to die. They have a grand motto, to which they have always been true. It is 'Auvergne sans tache'—Auvergne without a stain. I love a soldier of Auvergne, a mountaineer of the glorious air in which I was born."

His mind seemed to wander back to the past.

"'Auvergne sans tache,'" said he. "'Auvergne sans tache'—these words command me, they have entered into my soul. Would these men were here, and that I could lead them to victory!"

Dennis caught the atmosphere.

"And sure, your Honor, people find what they seek, and all good dreams come true sometime, and you will bring them here some day. I seem to feel it in my soul."

The officers shouted.

“And it is from Connecticut I am.”

The young Frenchman may never have heard of the place before.

“And brought despatches to General Putnam from Brother Jonathan.

“May I ask what were these words of the French mountaineers who are just like us—‘Auvergne sans tache’? I wonder if this poor head can carry those words back to Lebanon green—*Ovan-saan-tarche*! The words ring true, like a bell that rings for the future. I somehow feel that I will hear them again somewhere. *Ovan-saan-tarche, Ovan-saan-tarche!* I will go now. I must tell the Governor and all the people about it on the green—*Ovan-saan-tarche*! What shall I tell the people of the cedars?”

“Tell the people of the cedars that there is a young French officer in the camp here that thinks that he carries in his heart a secret that will give liberty to America; that aid will come from a district in France that grows men like the cedars.”

Now the secret of Lafayette haunted the mind of Dennis.

“A spandy-dandy boy told me something strange,” said he to the Governor, on his return. “He was a Frenchman, with a shelving forehead and red hair, and Washington seemed to be hugging his company, as it were; the General saw something in him that others did not see. I think he has what you would call a discerning of spirits. I thought I saw the same thing.”

“Washington, it is likely, relies on this officer, because the young Frenchman believes in him and in the cause,” said the Governor. “Washington is human, and he must have a lonesome heart, and he must like to have near him those who believe in him and in the cause. That is natural.”

There was to be a corn-roast in the cedars—a popular gathering where green corn was roasted on the ear by a great fire and distributed among the people.

Had Lebanon been nearer the sea there would have been a clambake, as the occasion of bringing together the people, instead of a corn-roast.

At the clambakes bivalves and fish were roasted on heated stones under rock-weed, sea-weed, and a covering of sail-cloth, the latter to keep down the steam.

The people gathered for the corn-roast, bringing luscious corn in the green husks, new potatoes, apples, and fruit. The women brought pandowdy, or pot-pies, made of apples baked in dough, which candied in baking, and also brown bread, and rye and Indian bread, and perhaps “no cake,” all of which was to be eaten on the carpet of the dry needles of the great pines that mingled among the cedars.

This was to be a lively gathering, for a report had gone abroad that Dennis had seen a prophet and had received great news from a young French officer, and that he would tell his story among the speeches on that day.

It was in the serene and sunny days of September. The locusts made a silvery, continuous music in the trees. The birds were gathering for migrations. The fields were full of goldenrod and wild asters, and the oaks by the wayside were here and there loaded with purple grapes.

The people came to the cedar grove from near and from far, and every one seemed interested in Dennis.

The Irishman towered above them all, bringing deadwood for the fires.

The feast was eaten on the ground, and the people were merry, all wondering what story Dennis, who had been to the army and seen the great Washington himself, would have to tell.

The people watched him as he brought great logs on his shoulders to feed the fire where the corn was roasted.

Brother Jonathan and his good wife came to the goodly gathering. The people arose to greet him, and the children gathered around

him, and looked up to him as a patriarch. He was then some sixty-seven years old.

After the feast he lifted his hands and spoke to the people. The cedar birds gathered around him in the trees, and one adventurous crow came near and cawed. Dennis threw a stick at the crow, and said:

“Be civil now, and listen to the Governor!”

After the Governor had spoken, “Elder” Williams spoke. But it was from Dennis that the people most wished to hear.

They called upon the village esquire to speak.

He was a portly man. He arose and said:

“I will not detain you long. It is Dennis for whom you are waiting.”

He said a few words, and then called:

“Dennis? Dennis O’Hay?”

“At your service,” said Dennis, drawing near, hat in hand.

“Dennis, they say that you met a prophet in the army.”

“That I did, sir, and I mind me the secret of the skies is in his heart.”

“How did he look?”

“Oh, he was a skit of a man, with a slanting roof to his forehead, and lean-to at the back of it. He was all covered with spangles and bangles, and he followed the great Washington here and there, like as if he was his own son. That is how it was, sir.”

The people wondered. This was not the kind of a prophet that Elder Williams had preached about in the Lebanon pulpit for twoscore years.

The elder stood up, and said: “Be reverent, my young man.”

“That I am, sir. I answered the esquire after the truth, sir.”

“And what made you think that such a frivolous-looking man as that could be a prophet? Prophets are elderly men, and plain in their

dress and habits, and grave in face. Why did you think that this gay young man was a prophet?”

“Because, your reverence, I could see that Washington believed in him—the great Washington, and the man prophesied, too.”

“To whom did he prophesy?”

“To me, to your humble servant, sir.”

The people laughed in a suppressive way, but wondered more than ever.

“What did he say, Dennis?”

“That I can never tell, sir. He has a woman’s heart, sir, and she has a man’s heart, sir, and both have the people’s heart, sir; and one day there will be fleets on the sea, sir, and strange armies will appear on our shores, sir. They may come here, sir, and encamp in the cedars, sir. Oh, I am an honest man, and seem to see it all, sir.”

“How old is your prophet, Dennis?”

“I would think that he might be twenty, sir; no, a hundred; no, as old as liberty, sir, with all his bangles and spangles.”

“That is very strange,” said the esquire. “I fear that you may have wheels in your head, Dennis—were any of your people ever a little touched in mind?”

“No, never; they had clear heads. An’ why do I believe that this young man carries a secret in his heart that will deliver America? Because he has the heart of the mountaineers of God. He belongs to the sons of liberty in France, and little he cares for his bangles and spangles.”

“But he is too young.”

“No, no; pardon me, sir, he has an ardent heart, that he has. It is all on fire. Wasn’t David young when he took up a little pebbly rock and sent the giant sprawling? Wasn’t King Alfred young when he put down his foot and planted England? Wasn’t Samuel young when he heard a voice?”

The people began to cheer Dennis.

“The true heart knows its own. Washington’s heart does.

“You may laugh, but I have met a prophet. The gold lace on him does not spoil his heart. He comes out of the past, he is going into the future; he loves everybody, and everybody that meets him loves him. Laugh if you will, but Dennis O’Hay has seen a prophet, and you will see what is in his heart some day.

“He has a motto. What is his motto, do you ask? *Ovan-saan-tarche*!—Ovan without a stain. That is the motto of the soldiers of the place where he was born. That place is like this place, I mind me. He says: ‘America will be free when she shall hear the bugles of Ovan.’”

“What is his name?” asked the esquire.

“His name? Bother me if I can remember it now. It is the same as the boy said. But you will come to know it some day, now heed you this word in the cedars. Lafayette—yes, Lafayette—that is his name. It is written in the stars, but bother me, it flies away from me now like a bird from a wicker-cage. But, but, hear me, ye good folks all, receive it, Governor, believe it, esquire—that young man’s heart holds the secret of America. There are helpers invisible in this world, and the heavens elect men for their work, not from any outward appearance, but from the heart. This is the way God elected David of old.”

A blue jay had been listening on a long cedar bough stretched out like an arm.

She archly turned her head, raised her crown and gave a trumpet-call, and flew over the people.

The men shouted, and the women and children cheered Dennis, and the grave Governor said:

“Life is self-revealing, time makes clear all things, and if our good man Dennis has indeed discovered a prophet, it will all be revealed to us some day. Elder Williams, pray!”

The old man stood up under the cedars; the women bowed. Then the people went home to talk of the strange tidings that Dennis had

brought them.

Was there, indeed, some hidden secret of personal power in the heart of this young companion of Washington, who had made honor his motto and liberty his star?

CHAPTER XII

LAFAYETTE TELLS HIS SECRET

There is one part of the career of young Lafayette that has never been brought into clear light, and that part was decisive in the destinies of America. It was his letters home. From the time of his commission as an officer in the American army he was constantly writing to French ministers, asking them to use their influence to send aid to America.

He had the favor of the court, and the heart of the popular and almost adored Queen. He felt that his letters must bring to America a fleet. He poured his heart into them.

The surrender of Burgoyne brought about a treaty between France and the United States. It was one of alliance and amity. France recognized the United States among the powers of the world, and received Dr. Benjamin Franklin as minister plenipotentiary to the court.

The surrender of Burgoyne.

For this great movement the letters of Lafayette had helped to prepare the way.

His heart rejoiced when he found that this point of vantage had been gained.

He was the first to receive the news of the treaty.

He went with the tidings to Washington. It revealed to the strong leader the future.

Washington was a man of silence, but his heart was touched; a sense of gratitude to Heaven seemed to inspire him.

“Let public thanksgivings of gratitude ascend to Heaven,” he said. “Assemble the brigades, and let us return thanks to God.”

The brigades were assembled. The cannon boomed! Songs of joy arose and prayers were said.

Then a great shout went up that thrilled the young heart of Lafayette.

“*Vive le roi!*—Long live the King of France!”

That thanksgiving set the bells of New England to ringing, and was a means of recruiting the army everywhere.

Lafayette heard the news with a full heart, and he himself only knew how much he had done silently to renew the contest for liberty.

Congress began to see his value. They honored him, and that gave him the influence to say:

“I came here for the cause. I must return to France for the cause.”

He said of this crisis, and we use his own words here:

“From the moment I first heard the name of America, I began to love her; from the moment I understood that she was struggling for her liberties, I burned to shed my best blood in her cause, and the days I shall devote to the service of America, whatever and wherever it may be, will constitute the happiest of my life. I never so ardently desired as I do now to deserve the generous sentiments with which these States and their representatives have honored me.”

He obtained from Congress permission to return to France in the interest of the cause of liberty.

It was 1778. He had arrived on the American shores a mere boy and a stranger. Now that he returned to France, the hearts of all Americans followed him. He was twenty-two years of age. He was carrying a secret with him that he was beginning to reveal and that the world was beginning to see.

In serving the cause of the States he felt that he was promoting the cause of the liberty of mankind. France might one day feel its reaction, burst her old bonds, and become a giant republic.

France arose to meet him on his return. Havre threw out her banners to welcome his ship. He was acclaimed, feasted, and lauded everywhere, until he longed to fly to some retreat from all of this adoration of a simple young general.

The Queen, Marie Antoinette, admired him, and became his patron. She received him and delighted to hear from him about America and the character of Washington. Lafayette delighted the Queen with his story of Washington.

After these interviews, in which Lafayette saw that he had secured her favor for the American cause, the Queen had an interview with Dr. Franklin.

“Do you know,” said the Queen to Franklin, “that Lafayette has really made me fall in love with your General Washington. What a man he must be, and what a friend he has in the Marquis!”

The court opened its doors to meet him. The King welcomed him. All Paris acclaimed him. The people of France were all eager to hear of him.

What an opportunity! Lafayette seized upon it. He was not moved by the flattery of France. Every heart-beat was full of his purposes to secure aid for America.

This he did.

“I will send a fleet to America,” said the King.

The young King was popular then, and this decision won for him the heart of liberty-enkindled France.

Lafayette’s heart turned home to the heroic mountaineers.

“If it can be done,” he said to the military department, “let there be sent to America the soldiers of Auvergne, they of the banners of ‘Auvergne sans tache.’”

Two hundred young noblemen offered their services to Lafayette.

He left France for America. Banquet-halls vied with each other in farewells.

But the night glitter of the palaces were as nothing to the words of the young King: “You can not better serve your King than by serving the cause of America!”

He left France in tears, to be welcomed by shouts of joy in America.

He brought back the news to Washington that henceforth the cause of America and France were one, and that he hoped soon to welcome here the grenadiers of Auvergne—“Auvergne sans tache!”—the bugles of Auvergne!

Peter brought the message that announced this great news to the war office.

The Governor’s face lighted when the boy appeared at the door.

“What is it now?” he asked. “You always bring joy to my heart!”

“France in alliance,” said the Governor. “May France herself live to become a republic. And the Queen has espoused our cause!”

Peter went from the office with heart full of joy. Good news from the seat of war made his heart as light as a bird—it made him whittle and whistle.

Out in the cold, watching nights, Peter’s heart turned to the wood-chopper, who had seemed to love the King more than him. He felt that the old man must be lonely in his cabin, with only the blue jays and the squirrels, and the like to cheer him. Peter could seem to hear him chop, chop, chopping wood.

He met him once in the way, and the old man talked of the King —“my king.”

“He is only a man,” said Peter, in defense of the cause.

“Only a man?” said the wood-chopper. “His arms are like the lion and unicorn—and they have taken down the King’s arms in Philadelphia and overturned his statue in New York. But the lion and the unicorn still stand on the old State-house, Boston. Hurrah for King George III! They may do what they will with me, but my heart will still say: ‘Long live the King!’”

He seemed to think that the King wore a real lion and unicorn on his arms, or to so imagine him.

Poor old man on the by-way of the Lebanon cedars! Peter pitied him, for he felt that he had, after all, a very human heart.

Dennis went again to the camp of Washington to confer with the General in regard to movements of powder, and there he saw Lafayette.

The Frenchman, indeed, did not look like a prophet now, nor like one of the yeomen of the hill-towns of Connecticut.

He was in command of the advance guard of Washington's army (1780), composed of six battalions of light artillery. These men glittered in the sun. They did not look like Connecticut volunteers. The officers were armed with spontoons and fuses; they wore sabres —French sabres, presented them by Lafayette. Their banners shone. Their horses were proud.

"An' I fear I have missed my prophet that I calculated him to be," said Dennis, "and that the cedar folks will all laugh at me. Prophets do not dash about in such finery as this. There he comes, sure, on a spanking horse. I wonder if he would speak to me now."

The young Frenchman came dashing by in his regalia.

Dennis lifted his hat.

Lafayette halted.

"I came from the cedars—Brother Jonathan's man, that I am. You remember *Ovan-saan-tarche*."

"Yes, yes, my hearty friend," said the Frenchman, bowing.

"How is his Excellency?"

"Sound in head and heart, and firm in his heels, which he never turns to his country's enemies."

"Have you a wife, my friend?" bowing.

"No, no, but I've a sweetheart in old Ireland."

“Happy man!” bowing.

“But I go my way alone now.”

“Lucky dog!” said the Marquis, with provincial rudeness, bowing and bowing.

“And there is one question which I wish to ask you. I have been telling the home people that you are a prophet, and not much like an old prophet do you look now—pardon me, your Honor. You once told me that you carried a secret in your heart that was to free America. Do you carry that secret now?”

“Yes, yes, my friend, from the cedars. The French fleet came; that was a part of my secret. But I am carrying a greater one. You will soon hear the bugles of Auvergne. When you hear the bugles of Auvergne, then you will believe that my soul is true to America. Dennis, let me take your hand.”

He took the Irishman’s hand, bowing.

“There is true blood in that hand,” bowing.

“There is true blood in yours,” said Dennis, “and the secret of the skies is in your soul.”

“And there are two crowns in that secret and the heart of France. And one of the crowns is a woman’s—a glorious woman’s. Oh, Dennis, you should see our Queen! She admires Washington, she loves America!”

Dennis dropped down on his knees.

The glittering Frenchman rode away, bowing to the prostrate man.

“An’ I do believe he is a prophet, after all,” said Dennis.

It would be great news that he would have to take back to Lebanon now. How that French prophet bowed and bowed to him.

His heart rejoiced to bear good news to the Governor.

Peter, as we have said, delighted in bringing the Governor good news. One day he was sent to Boston for letters which were expected to arrive from England. One was given him for the

Governor which was marked “Important.” He hurried back to the war office with it, running his spirited horse much of the way.

He delivered the letter to the Governor, in the war office.

“Wait!” said the Governor, as he was about to go.

The Governor read the letter, and then walked around and around in the little room.

“It is from my son John,” said he. “He has been arrested in London, and is in prison.” The Governor continued to walk in the room.

John Trumbull had gone abroad in 1780, to study painting under the great master, Benjamin West. The British Secretary for American Affairs had assured him that he would be protected as an artist if he did not interfere in political affairs.

Colonel Trumbull once thus related the story of his arrest in a vivid way:

“A thunderbolt falling at my feet would not have been more astounding; for, conscious of having done nothing politically wrong, I had become as confident of safety in London as I should have been in Lebanon. For a few moments I was perfectly disconcerted, and must have looked very like a guilty man. I saw, in all its force, the folly and the audacity of having placed myself at ease in the lion’s den; but by degrees I recovered my self-possession, and conversed with Mr. Bond, who waited for the return of Mr. Tyler until past one o’clock. He then asked for my papers, put them carefully under cover, which he sealed, and desired me also to seal; having done this, he conducted me to a lock-up house, the Brown Bear in Drury Lane, opposite to the (then) police office. Here I was locked into a room, in which was a bed, and a strong, well-armed officer, for the companion of my night’s meditations or rest. The windows, as well as the door, were strongly secured by iron bars and bolts, and seeing no possible means of making my retreat, I yielded to my fate, threw myself upon the bed, and endeavored to rest.

“At eleven o’clock the next morning I was guarded across the street, through a crowd of curious idlers, to the office, and placed in

the presence of the three police magistrates—Sir Sampson Wright, Mr. Addington, and another. The examination began, and was at first conducted in a style so offensive to my feelings that it soon roused me from my momentary weakness, and I suddenly exclaimed: 'You appear to have been much more habituated to the society of highwaymen and pickpockets than to that of gentlemen. I will put an end to all this insolent folly by telling you frankly who and what I am. I am an American—my name is Trumbull; I am a son of him whom you call the rebel Governor of Connecticut; I have served in the rebel American army; I have had the honor of being an aide-de-camp to him whom you call the rebel General Washington.'"

He had said too much; he slept that night "in a bed with a highwayman."

"This is not your accustomed good news, my boy," said the Governor.

"Another ship with letters is soon expected in the fort," said Peter. "That may bring good news."

"Peter, I love the bearer of good news. Go back to Boston, and if you bring me news to comfort me, it is well; if not, you will have done your duty. Ride with the wind!" These were common words of hurry.

Peter rode with the wind. In a few days he returned on a foaming horse to the war office.

The Governor met him.

"He is released!" said the boy.

The Governor stood with beaming face.

Presently an old man came hobbling up to the door. It was the wood-chopper.

He looked up to Peter helplessly and yet with a glow of pride and gratitude.

"Boy," he said, "I turned you out, but you came back in my hour of danger. Is there any news from the King?"

"Yes, uncle."

“What may it be?”

“He is going to spare John Trumbull’s life and set him free.”

The old man staggered.

“Hurrah for King George!” he said. “My king! my king!”

He sunk down on the grass. “My king! my king!”

That the reader may have the exact truth of this bit of fact-fiction, let me give you the anecdote from history, that so finely reveals the better side of the character of the half-insane old King.

Benjamin West, on hearing of the arrest of his pupil, went directly to the King in Buckingham Palace, and asked for the young American painter’s release.

“I am sorry for the young man,” said his Majesty George III, “but he is in the hands of the law, and must abide the result; I can not interpose. Do you know whether his parents are living?”

“I think I have heard him say,” replied Mr. West, “that he has very lately received news of the death of his mother; I believe his father is living.”

“I pity him from my soul!” exclaimed the King. “But, West,” said he, after musing for a few moments, “go to Mr. Trumbull immediately, and pledge to him my royal promise, that, *in the worst possible event of the law, his life shall be safe*!”

“I pity him from my soul!” The poor King had a heart to feel. This is the most beautiful anecdote of King George that we have ever found.

CHAPTER XIII

THE BUGLES BLOW

A high sound of bugles rang out in the still summer air.

It stopped all feet in the country of the cedars—it seemed as though the world stopped to listen.

Again the tone filled the summer air—nearer.

The ospreys and crows were flying high in air, down the odorous way where the bugles were blowing.

Again, and nearer.

Were the bugles those of Rochambeau, who had landed at Newport, or of a troop of the enemy coming to surprise the town?

It was a time of expectancy, and also of terror.

Why of terror?

It was known that Rochambeau had landed at Newport, and was coming to Lebanon—it was in the air. He would stop at Newport, and it was believed that Washington would go there to meet him. Washington might go by way of New London and Lebanon or over the great turnpike road of Massachusetts and Connecticut; but whatever way he might take, it was believed that he would stop in the hidden Connecticut town.

One day a courier had come to the alarm-post.

“Are the ways guarded?” he asked. “There is a plot to capture Washington if he makes a progress to meet Rochambeau.”

“Let us go to the war office and consider the matter,” said the Governor.

“If the matter is serious, I will bring it before the Committee of Safety.”

They considered the matter. The Governor was alarmed, and he said to Peter:

“Leave the store and go back to your post on the by-road.”

The danger at this time is thus treated in Sparks’s Life of Trumbull:

“Intelligence had come from New York that three hundred horsemen had crossed over to Long Island and proceeded eastward, and that boats at the same time had been sent up the Sound. It was inferred that the party would pass from Long Island to Connecticut and attempt to intercept General Washington on his way to Newport, as it was supposed his intended journey was known to the enemy. Lafayette suggested that the Duke de Lauzun should be informed of this movement as soon as possible, that he might be prepared with his cavalry, then stationed at Lebanon, to repel the invaders.”

There had landed at Newport with Rochambeau a most brilliant French officer of cavalry, who was destined to become the general-in-chief of the Army of the Rhine, and to lose his head in the French Revolution. It was the Duke de Lauzun, born in Paris, 1747. He commanded a force known as Lauzun’s Legion, which consisted of some six hundred Hussars, with the French enthusiasm for liberty. They were well equipped, wore brilliant uniforms, and bore the banners of heroes.

The alarm-post became the seat of numerous orders; the roads were dusty with hurrying feet.

The people met on the green as soon as the bugles were heard.

Peter was there. He heard the bugles ring out, and cried:

“Auvergne! They are the bugles of Auvergne!”

Dennis listened as the air rung merrily.

“Yes, Peter, those are the bugles of Auvergne.”

Faith Trumbull came out and stood on the green beside Peter.

“Do you think those are the French bugles?” she asked. “If so, the cause is saved.”

An advance horseman, a Hussar, came riding up the hill. The bugles blew behind him, now near to the town.

“The Duke is at hand,” said he in French.

The people sank upon their knees.

The Governor heard and stood like a statue on the green.

“They are coming!” he said. “They are on the way of victory!”

Six hundred horsemen, glittering in insignia, banners, and trappings, swept into the town, and their dashing leader, the Duke de Lauzun, threw up his hand and took off his hat before the war office. No one had ever dreamed of a scene like that.

The people gathered around him uncovered. The farmers shouted. Children danced in the natural way; old men wept.

Dennis approached a French officer who could speak English.

“An’ have you been blowing the bugles of Auvergne?” asked he, hat in hand.

“You may well call them so,” said the courtly officer. “The bugles of Auvergne are the heralds of victory!”

“The cause of liberty in America is won,” said Dennis. “Lafayette said it would be so when the French bugles should blow.”

Peter fell down on the green and wept like a child, saying, over and over: “The bugles of Auvergne! The bugles of Auvergne!”

It was a glorious day. The very earth seemed to be glad.

The Hussars sat for a time on their restless horses, surveying a scene unusual to their eyes. That simple church was not Notre Dame; the Governor’s house was not the Tuileries, nor Versailles, nor Marley, nor Saint Cloud. The green was not the Saint Cloud garden, the people were not courtiers. Yet their hearts glowed. They saluted the simple Governor.

Then the bugles blew again—the bugles of Auvergne, and a great sound rent the air.

The Hussars went to the fields for quarters, and the Duke followed the Governor into the war office to “consider.”

Washington came to Connecticut in safety. He reviewed the army on Lebanon green and at Hartford. Near Hartford he planned the campaign in Virginia that was to end the war.

“AUVERGNE SANS TACHE”—AUVERGNE WITHOUT A STAIN

This motto a part of the French soldiers bore proudly wherever they went. They carried it out of France with shoutings, and trailed it across the sea. They bore it into Newport amid booming guns, and to Lebanon amid the shouts of the heroic farmers. They planted it on Lebanon green. It should be put to-day among the mottoes of schools for Flag days and Independence days.

That day of review—it may well rise again in our fancy!

Spring is in the air. The birds in the woods are appearing again. There is new light and odors in the cedars.

The French heroes of Auvergne, the mountaineers, whose aid Lafayette had sought, assembled on the green. On one side of the green was the tavern, and on the other side rose the country village church. The hills everywhere were renewing their circle of green.

Rochambeau was there with the escutcheon. The Marquis de Chastellux was probably there—a man of genius, who wielded the pen of a painter. The gay, and perhaps profane, Duke de Lauzun was there—he who laughed at the Governor’s prayers at the table, and who died many years afterward on the guillotine. Men were there who had sought the animal delights of the glittering palaces of Versailles, Marley, and Saint Cloud. The heroes were there whose descendants made France a republic.

The sun rose high on the glittering hills. The bugles sounded again, horses neighed and pranced, uniforms glittered, and the band filled the air with choral strains.

The simple country folks gathered about the green, bringing “training-day” ginger-bread, women with knitted hoods, boys and girls in homespun.

The cedar of Lebanon was there—Governor Trumbull—and his wife, also, more noble than most of the stately dames of Trianon.

The American flag arose, and was hailed as the flag of the future.

A shout for honor went up in which all joined. The hearts of the French heroes and American heroes were one. Honor and liberty was the sentiment that ruled the hour, and here the pioneers of liberty of the two republics of the future clasped hands.

A glorious day, indeed, was that! Keep it in eternal memory, O Lebanon hills! Make your old graves a place of pilgrimages. Sons of the Revolution, have you ever visited Lebanon?

There came an August night, misty and still. A cloud covered the hills, and seemed to fall down like a lake on the cedar swamp. The few distant stars went out.

It lightened—“heat lightning,” as the lightning without thunder was called in the old New England villages.

The turnpike road was silent. There were no sounds of night-birds in the deep cedar swamps.

Peter, the shepherd-boy, stood behind his window light in silence under a cedar that spread itself like a tent. The tree gathered mist and shed it like rain. He had put a mask in the window, for fear of a shot, in case of danger.

“Nothing to-night,” he said.

But what was that?

A dead twig of a tree broke under a foot.

He started and moved behind the window toward the highway.

Another twig snapped.

“Who goes there?” he called.

“A friend.”

“Give the countersign.”

“Groton,” said the voice.

“Wrong,” said the lad. “Follow the window, but keep at a distance, for you are my prisoner.”

It lightened. The lad saw the man, and that he was no ordinary traveler.

The lad moved back. The traveler followed, and presently said:

“Hello! where am I?”

“A prisoner; follow me.”

“But the house moves.”

“Follow me—you are in my power.”

It lightened again.

The flash disclosed that the traveler had drawn a pistol.

“It is useless for you to use weapons,” said Peter; “you are in my power.”

There was a crack in the air. A pistol-shot struck the mask in the window and broke it. Then all was darkness and silence.

“Follow me,” said the lad. “Your shot was vain. You are a traitor, and you are in my power. I could take your life in a minute. Follow me.”

“But your house moves,” said the man in a voice that trembled.

He may have had a brave heart, but few brave men at that time were proof against the terrors of superstition. The man evidently believed that he was in the power of some evil spirit.

There was another lightning flash. The man had turned.

“Follow me,” said the lad, “or you are a dead man.”

“Will you spare me if I will follow?” asked the adventurer.

“Follow me until I tell you to stop, and I will be your friend if you speak fair.”

The steps followed the moving window at a distance. Suddenly they went down, and there arose a cry as of a penned animal. The man had fallen into a cave.

The moving window went up the hill in sight of the alarm-post, and then the light went out.

Peter went down in the darkness to the rescue of the fallen stranger.

“Where am I?” asked the stranger.

“In the cave.”

“In the cave of the magazine?”

The stranger had asked the question in an unguarded moment of terror.

“You are a spy, and were seeking for the magazines,” said the boy. “I know your heart. Let me help you out, and come with me to the shelter of the cedars.”

Peter took the stranger’s hand, and led him by flashes of lightning to a covert under the cedars. Some crows cawed in the darkness above.

The two sat down.

“You are in my power,” said Peter.

“Then you must be the Evil One. Why am I in your power more than you in mine? Do you live in a house that travels? Where has your house gone?”

“Tell me, now, who you are,” said Peter.

“I am a traveler.”

“Why did you give me a false countersign?”

“To put you off so that I might go on.”

“Who are you seeking?”

“I was going to the war office.”

“For what?”

“To see the Governor.”

“But why did you say ‘magazine’?”

“I deal in saltpeter.”

The clouds were lifting. The great cedars seemed to shudder now and then as a faint breeze stole through them. Then the full moon rolled out. The crows flapped away from the place when they heard voices.

“Let us go,” said the man. “For what are you waiting?”

There was a sound of horses’ feet. Dennis had seen the signal.

“Who is coming?” asked the man.

“The guard.”

“So you have entrapped me. Where is the house?”

“There was none.”

Dennis and two men rode up.

“This man,” said Peter, “is a spy; he has given a false countersign, and is looking for magazines.”

“Who are you?” demanded Dennis, with a leveled musket.

“I am your prisoner,” said the man, “and more is the pity. I have been tricked. I followed a window; it is gone.”

“Stranger, no trifling,” said Dennis. “What brought you here? If you will tell me the truth, I will befriend you as far as I can. But listen: you have no hope of anything outside of my friendly heart, and I am one of the guard of the first of patriots in the land. I am an Irishman, but I am loyal to America. Tell me the truth—what brought you here?”

“You speak true when you say that I have no hope but in your heart, and I am inclined to tell you all.”

Dennis and the two men whom he had brought with him dismounted, and sat down under the cedars, through which the moon shone.

“I was led here through the suggestion of a bad example. We are led by the imagination. Imagination follows suggestion. Benedict Arnold went over to the cause of the King, and he is a power now. I once served under Arnold. It was in the northern campaign. I will acknowledge all. I am seeking to do him a service—to find out where your powder magazines are stored. Arnold will soon be thundering off this coast!”

Dennis started.

“What! in Connecticut?”

“Yes, in Connecticut.”

“Among his own kin?”

“Among his own kin.”

“Black must be the heart of a man that would fall upon his own neighborhood. Such a heart must be born wrong. They say that he liked to torture animals when he was a boy. Man, what do you know? Remember the fate of André.”

The man suddenly recollected it. He began to shake, for with the rising of the moon and the clearing of the air it was cool.

“I know not where I am,” said he. “Everything is strange. But let me talk to you in confidence.

“I have money.”

He took out a purse, and jingled some coin.

“Let me go and I will pay you. Here, take this.” He extended the purse toward Dennis. “Let me go back and you shall have it all.”

“Man,” said Dennis, “André offered gold to his captors, and tried to bribe them to let him go. Put up thy gold. There is money that does

not enrich. I would not betray the cause of liberty in America and the great heart of Jonathan Trumbull for all the gold of Peru. Tell me now your whole heart, or I take you to the alarm-post, to be shot as a spy."

The man shook.

"Well, here is my confession. I hoped to find the secret places of the magazines where the powder that supplies the army is hidden, and to report to Arnold. This is the whole truth. I am sorry for what I planned. I would not do so again. Now I ask your mercy."

"To Arnold, did you say? Where did you expect to meet Arnold?"

"On the coast—it might be at New London or Groton."

"When?"

"Soon."

"Soon, soon. Peter, set the beacon on the hill!"

The boy ran; a light streamed up. Dennis hurried with his prisoner to the alarm-post.

The prisoner knew not what to make of that night when windows moved and a shot that shattered a head did not kill, and the heavens flamed before the nimble feet of a boy.

Had he been drawn into a witch's cave? What had led him to disclose the secret? He thought of André, and when he was led into the guard-house he sat down, wondered, and wept.

But he hoped Dennis, his captor, had a human heart. Was he a second André?

Dennis went to the guard-house the next day to visit a new prisoner. The suggestions that the latter made were most alarming.

If Benedict Arnold was to make attack along the coast his object was to divide the American army, which was now moving south for the great Virginia campaign against Cornwallis.

"It would be like the British to strike us now upon the coast," said the Governor, "but he would be more than a traitor who would

slaughter his own kin on the soil where he was born and bred."

The man gave his name as Ayre; probably from the suggestion of the name of the British colonel who was under Arnold.

He was despondent, and sat in the guard-house with drooping head.

"Of what are you thinking?" asked Dennis. "You may give me your thoughts with safety. The Governor is the soul of honor, and he will not cause me to violate the spirit of my promise that I have made."

"I am thinking of the moment when the captors of André said to him, 'We must take off your boots.'"

For in the boots of the unfortunate officer were the despatches from Arnold offering to treacherously surrender West Point.

"That moment must have stricken terror to André's heart," said the man. "Then it was that he saw the whole of life. Your Governor seems to be a very kind-hearted man—the people love him. I am sorry that I ever had evil thoughts of him. But, my friend, send me away; for should a fleet descend upon the coast, the hatred of all these people will fall upon me. The man who suggests an evil that comes is held in detestation. I would not be safe here."

"You are right, and you shall be sent to Boston."

It was in the air that the Connecticut coast was to be attacked again. Connecticut must be defended by her own people, should it come, for it would not do to divide the American army in its great movement to crush the main army of the British of the south.

"I will send you, with the Governor's approval, to Fort Trumbull, at New London, and I will accompany you there myself," decided Dennis.

It was the 6th of November when the two set out on horseback for New London and Groton—a bright, glimmering day, the wayside bordered with goldenrod. The meadows were clouded with the aftermath and webby wild grasses, and seemed to sing with insects.

Boom!

What was that?

Boom! Boom!

“There is a cannonade going on at New London,” said Dennis.

They hurried on.

The air thundered.

“It is Arnold!” said the prisoner.

As they passed down their way amid cidery orchards, they began to meet people flying with terror.

“What has happened?” asked Dennis.

“Arnold!” was the answer of one. “He is burning everything—the streets that he trod in his boyhood, the very houses that sheltered him. He is standing on the hill, glass in hand, gloating in the power to kill his own neighbors’ sons. Oh, is it possible that one should come to kill his own!”

As they went on, the cannonading grew louder and the roads presented a scene such as had hardly ever been witnessed in America before.

The people were flying with their goods: women on beds on the backs of horses; old women driving cows before them; boys with sheep; men in carts, with valuables; dogs who had lost their masters.

They met one scene that was indeed pitiful. It was a man hurrying with the coffin of a child on his back toward the burying-ground. He must bury the little one as he fled.

The farmhouses were full of people with white faces, people who crowded upon each other.

It was a terrible story that they had to tell. Arnold had surprised New London by the sea, and had burned down every house, even the houses that sheltered him in his boyhood.

But the destruction of New London was a light event compared to the horrors of Groton, across the river.

They found that Colonel Ayre had attacked Fort Griswold, and was slaughtering the men after they had surrendered. Arnold had sent a messenger to arrest this slaughter, but the latter had arrived too late. The garrison had refused to surrender. When, at last, they were compelled to yield, they were put to the sword without mercy, and the wounded were killed, and even the dead were maltreated. The men under Colonel Ayre had become human fiends. They had gone mad with the passion for killing.

One of the British officers ran from place to place to restrain the soldiers.

“Stop! stop!” said he. “In the name of heaven, I say stop—I can not endure it!”

But the work of killing went on, and of killing the wounded and stabbing the dead.

Night fell. The British set a bomb to the magazine and passed up the river, expecting to see a terrible explosion that would fire the heavens. But the explosion did not come. A brave band of Americans had extinguished the fuse.

“There is no Fort Trumbull to which I can take you now,” said Dennis to his prisoner. “You may go to your own.”

“Then I will return with you, and you will never find a heart more true to your Governor than mine will be. Christ forgave Peter, and was not Peter true? Our truest friends are those whom we forgive. To know all is to forgive all. I know your Governor now. I once hated him; he is led by the spirit of the living God, and I would die for a man like that. It is better to change the heart of an enemy than to kill him. Let me follow you back, and the people will receive my repentance even at this awful hour.”

Dennis, through fear of his safety, left him outside of Lebanon at a farmhouse, but when he had told his tale to the people, they said:

“Bring him back; he is another man now.”

CHAPTER XIV

A DAUGHTER OF THE PILGRIMS

It was past midsummer—the shadow of change was in the year. The birds were gathering in flocks in the rowened meadows, and the woods were displaying their purple grapes and first red leaves.

Rochambeau had been receiving the hospitalities of the Governor, and had also received lessons in the new school of liberty from Faith Robinson Trumbull, the wife of the Governor. The hero of Minden had come to see this grand woman, and wished to make her a present before he marched on to join the army of Washington against Clinton, with his six thousand heroes.

What should his present to this noble woman be?

He had among his effects a scarlet cloak. It was suitable for a woman or for a man. It covered the whole form, and made the wearer conspicuous, for it was made of fine fabric, and represented the habit of the battle-field.

He took the cloak out of his treasures one evening and came down into the public room of the forest inn, where some of the French officers of the regiment of *Auvergne sans tache* were seated in a merry mood before the newly kindled fire.

He held up the scarlet cloak. “Here,” said he, “is a garment to be worn after the war for liberty is over. A field-marshal might wear it after the day of victory. This war will soon end; I am going to present this cloak to one of the most patriotic souls that I have ever met. Who do you think it is?”

“The Governor,” said an officer, a colonel; “Washington’s own ‘Brother Jonathan.’ He has made himself poor by the war, but has been the inspiration of every battle-field, so they say. Well, you do

well to honor the rustic Governor. The world is richer for him. That is a good thought, General. You honor the soldiers of *Auvergne sans tache*."

The General, the hero of Lafeldt, held up the cloak before the cooling summer fire. A soldier turned a burning stick with iron tongs, and flames with sparks like a little volcano shot up and threw a red gleam on the scarlet cloak with its gold thread.

"You have made a wrong guess, Colonel," said Rochambeau. "This cloak is for Madam Faith Trumbull, who has the blood of Robinson of Leyden in her veins, and who is the very spirit of liberty."

Immediately the officers leaped to their feet.

"Cheers!" said the Colonel. "Cheers for Madam Faith—may she soon wear the cloak—after the war!"

The soldiers of *Auvergne sans tache* were chivalrous, and they swung their arms in wheel-like circles and cheered for the wife of the self-forgetful Governor.

In the midst of this enthusiastic outpouring of feeling the Governor himself appeared in the reception-room of the forest inn with madam, smiling and stately, on his arm.

"You came at a happy moment, Governor," said Rochambeau. "I am showing my men this scarlet cloak."

"It is a fine garment," said the Governor. "It were worthy of a field-marshal of France."

"Would it be worthy of the wife of a marshal of a regiment of *Auvergne sans tache*?" asked the courtly Frenchman.

"It would," said the Governor in a New England tone.

"Then it would be worthy of *your* wife, Governor."

Rochambeau approached Madam Faith. "Will you allow me, madam, to honor you, if it be an honor, with the scarlet cloak? I wish you to wear it in memory of the soldiers of Auvergne, and of your humble servant, until you shall find some one who is more worthy of it—and I do not believe, madam, if you will allow me to say it, that

any heart truer than yours to the principles of liberty and to all mankind beats in these provinces."

He placed the scarlet cloak over her shoulders, and the officers shouted for madam, for the Governor, for Rochambeau, and for the soldiers of the banner of *Auvergne sans tache*.

How noble, indeed, Madam Faith looked as she stood there in the scarlet cloak, its gold threads glimmering in the first firelight!

Her face glowed. She tried to speak, but could only say: "My heart is full, General. But any soldier who sleeps to-night on the battle-field is nobler than I—my heart would cover him with this cloak."

The officers shouted enthusiastically: "Auvergne!"

The Governor stood off from his wife and her dazzling garment.

"You do look real pretty, Faith—wear it in memory of the French—wear it to church—your wearing it will honor the cause, and be a service to liberty. I wish Washington could see you now."

"I will wear it," said Madam Faith. "My heart thanks you!" she said to Rochambeau. She began to retreat from the room, her face almost as red as the cloak, and her eyes bright with tears. "I thank you in the name of Liberty!" She moved farther away and out of the door.

"Going, Faith?" asked the Governor.

There came back a voice—"God bless you!"—the scarlet cloak had gone. She thought that it was unworthy of her to remain where she would secure homage, when the Connecticut soldiers had had scarcely clothes to wear in their march against Clinton in the midst of the poverty that had befallen the colonies during the war.

She became greatly distressed. In her enthusiasm for the French deliverers she had promised to wear the cloak until some one more worthy of it could be found, some one who needed it more.

She took off the garment in her own room and sat down. She thought of the past. She saw in her vision her godly ancestor, Robinson, addressing the Pilgrim Fathers for the last time.

“Go ye into the wilderness,” he had said, “and new light shall break out from the word. I will follow you.”

She saw in fancy the Mayflower sail away, lifting new horizons. She saw the many Pilgrims’ graves amid the May flowers after the first winter at Plymouth.

She rose and put on the cloak and stood before the glass.

“I can not wear it,” she said. “I must wear only the clothes made with my own hands, in times like these.”

She looked into the glass again.

“But my promise?” she asked. “I must keep that—I must be worthy of the confidence that these soldiers of liberty have given me. I must honor Rochambeau and the soldiers of the land of Pascal. How shall I do it? I will wear it once and then seek some one more worthy to wear it; he will not be hard to find.”

Governor Trumbull had become famous for his Fast-Day and Thanksgiving proclamations. His words in these documents had the fire of an ancient prophet.

This year his proclamation sang and rang. He called upon the people to assemble in their meeting-house, and to bring with them everything that they could spare that could be made useful to the soldiers on the battle-field and be laid upon the altar of sacrifice.

Madam Faith heard his message as the pastor read it from the tall pulpit under the sounding-board.

She thought of the scarlet cloak. She must wear it to the church on that great day to honor Rochambeau and the soldiers of Auvergne. But of what use could her garment be to the soldiers in the stress of war?

It was a bright mid-autumn day. The people were gathering on the harvest-laden plateau on Lebanon Hill. The church on the high green, founded some eighty years before, opened its doors to the sun. The yeomen gathered on its steps and looked down on the orchards and harvest fields. The men of the great farms assembled in groups about the inn and talked of the fortunes of the war. They

were rugged men in homespun dress, with the purpose of the time in their faces. The women, too, were in homespun.

While groups of people were gathering here and there the door of the Governor's plain house opened, and in it appeared Madam Faith in her scarlet cloak. All eyes were turned upon her. She stepped out on to the green. She did not look like the true daughter of the Pilgrims that she was! The gay and glittering garment did not become the serious purpose in her face.

She waited outside the door, and was soon joined by the Governor. The two approached the church under the gaze of many eyes, and entered the building, which is to-day in appearance much as it was then, and the people followed them. The chair in which Governor Trumbull sat in church is still to be seen in the old Trumbull house. A colored picture of the church as it then appeared, with its high pulpit, sounding-board and galleries, may be seen in Stuart's "Life of Trumbull."

A silence fell upon the assembly. The people felt that the crisis of the war had passed with the coming of Rochambeau, but the manner of the issue was yet doubtful.

The minister arose—"Be still, and know that I am the Lord."

"God is the refuge of His saints,
Though storms of sharp distress invade;
Before they utter their complaints
Behold Him present with their aid!"

The stanza, or a like one, was sung in a firm tone, such as only times like these could inspire. The heroic quality sank into tuneful reverence with the lines:

"There is a stream whose gentle flow
Supplies the city of our God,"

or a like paraphrase. A long prayer followed; the hour-glass was turned—silence in the full pews!

The sermon followed in the silence. Then the minister made an appeal which went to every heart.

“The nation stands waiting the Divine will. We have given to the cause our sons, our harvests, the increase of our flocks. We have sent of our substance, our best, to every northern battle-field. We have seen our men go forth, and they come not back. We have seen our cattle driven away, and our cribs and cellars left empty; we have heard our Governor called a ‘brother’ by the noble Washington, and the glorious regiment of France’s honor has sung amid these cedars the songs of Auvergne.

“But the trumpets of the northern winds are sounding, and our army faces winter again, cloakless and some of them shoeless, in tatters. We are making new garments for the soldiers, but we have no red stripes to put upon them; we may not honor the noblest soldier in the world with any uniform, or insignia of his calling. He goes forth in homespun, and in homespun he faces the glittering foe, and falls. His honor is in himself, and not in his garments. He courageously goes down to the chambers of silence without stripe or star.”

At the words *red stripes*, all eyes, as by one impulse, turned to the scarlet cloak. It would furnish the ornament of dignity and honor to a score of uniforms.

“Women of Lebanon, you have with willing hands laid much on the altar of liberty. Under the pulpit stands a rail that guards holy things. I appeal to you once more—I hope that it may be for the last time—to spare all you can for the help and comfort of the soldier. Come up to the altar one by one and put your offerings inside of the rail, and I will lift my hands over your sacrifices in prayer and benediction.”

Silence. A few women began to remove the rings from their fingers and ears. One woman was seen to loosen her Rob Roy shawl. Two Indian girls removed strings of wampum from their necks. But no one rose. All seemed waiting.

The Governor sat in his chair, and beside him his good wife in the red Rochambeau cloak. They were in the middle aisle.

Madam Trumbull was thinking. Could she offer the scarlet garment to the cause without implying a want of gratitude toward the noble Rochambeau?

Would she not *honor* Rochambeau by offering the gift to the camp and battle-field?

“Stripes on the soldiers’ garments are inspirations,” she may have whispered to her husband. “I am going to give my cloak—it shall follow Rochambeau—I am going to make it live and march—*he* shall see it again in the lines that dare death. Shall I go to the altar?”

“Yes, go. Send your cloak to Rochambeau again. Let it move on the march. You will honor the regiment of Auvergne—*Auvergne sans tache*.”

She rose, almost trembling. Every eye was fixed upon her. Madam Faith was held in more than common esteem, not only because she was the wife of the Governor, but also because she was a descendant of the *Prophet* of the Pilgrims of Leyden and Plymouth.

She stood by the Governor’s chair, unfastening the red garment. The people saw what she was about to do. Some of them bowed their heads; some wept.

The pastor spoke: “I would that the Pilgrim, John Robinson, were here to-day!”

Madam Faith removed the cloak and laid it over her arm. She bent her face on the floor, and slowly walked toward the rail that guarded the sacred things of the simple altar.

The pastor lifted his hands.

“Pray ye all for the principle of the right, for the cause of the soldier of liberty.”

She laid the scarlet cloak on the altar, and turned to the people and lifted her eyes to God.

Madam Faith Trumbull contributing her scarlet cloak to the soldiers of the Revolution.

She looked like a divinity as she stood forth there that day, like a spirit that had come forth from the Mayflower.

That Thanksgiving was long remembered in Lebanon. That cloak was turned into stripes on soldiers' uniforms and made history, and some of the uniforms bearing them are yet to be seen.

To Dennis and Peter was entrusted the sending of the new uniforms with the red stripes to the army gathering around Yorktown. The faithful Irishman and the lad rode away from the alarm-post in the cedars amid the cheers of the people. What news would they bring back when they should return?

It was an anxious time in the cedars. In the evenings the people gathered about the war office and at the Alden Inn. A stage-driver, who was a natural story-teller, used to relate curious stories at the latter place, on the red settle there, and in these silent days of moment the people hugged the fire to hear him: it was their only amusement.

One evening a country elder, who had done a noble work in his day, stopped at the tavern. This event brought the Governor over to the place, and the elder was asked to relate a story of his parish on the red settle. He had a sense of humor as keen as Peters, who was still telling strange tales in England of the people that he had found in the "new parts."

Let us give you one of the parson's queer stories: it pictures the times.

THE COURTING STICK

Asenath Short—I seem to see her now (said the elder). One day she said to her husband:

"Kalub, now look here; we've got near upon everything so far as this world's goods go—spinnin' wheels and hatchels, and looms and a mahogany table, and even a board to be used to lay us out on when the final time shall come. The last thing that you bought was a dinner-horn, and then I put away the conch shell from the Indies

along with the cradle and the baby chair. But, Kalub, there's one thing more that we will have to have. The families down at Longmeadow have all got them; they save fire and fuel, and they enable the young folks and their elders all to talk together at the same time, respectfully in the same room, and when the young folks have a word to say to each other in private it encourages them. Now I'm kind o' sociable-like myself, and I like to encourage young people; that's why I wanted you to buy a spinet for Mandy. I don't like to see young folks go apart by themselves, especially in winter; there is no need of extra lights or fires, if one only has one of *them* things."

"One of them things? Massy sakes alive, what is it, Asenath?"

"Why, haven't you never seen one, Kalub? It is a courtin' stick. They didn't used to have such things when we were young. A courtin' stick is like Aaron's rod that budded."

"A courtin' stick! Conquiddles! Do I hear my ears? There don't need to be any machinery for courtin' in this world no more than there does to make the avens bloom, or the corn cockles to come up in the corn. What is a courtin' stick, Asenath?"

"Well, Kalub, a courtin' stick is a long, hollow wooden tube, with a funnel at each end—one funnel to cover the mouth of the one that speaks, and one to cover the ear of the one that listens. By that stick —it is all so proper and handy when it works well and steady—young people can talk in the same room, and not disturb the old people or set the work folks and the boys to titterin' as they used to do when we were young. It was discovered here in the Connecticut Valley, which has always been a place of providences. Just as I said, it is a savin' of fire and lights in the winter-time, and it suggests the right relations among families of property. It is a sort of guide-post to life.

"Kalub, don't you want that I should show you one?"

"Where did you get it, Asenath?"

"Asahel made it for me. I told him how to make it, but when I came to explain to him what it was for his face fell, and he turned red and he said, 'Hyppogriffo!' I wonder where he got that word —'hyppogriffo!' It has a pagan sound; Asahel, he mistrusted."

“Mistrusted what, Asenath?”

“Well, I haven’t told you quite all. When the head of a family knows that a certain young man is comin’ to visit him at a certain time and hangs up a courtin’ stick over the mantel-tree shelf, or the dresser, it is a sign to the visitor he is welcome.”

“But there is no need of a sign like that, Asenath.”

Asenath rose, went into the spare bed-room, a place of the mahogany bureau, the mourning piece, valences and esconces, and brought out a remarkable looking tube, which seemed to have leather ears at each end, and which was some dozen feet long.

“Moses!” said Caleb, “and all the patriarchs!” he added. “Let’s you and me try it. There, you put it up to your ear and let me speak. Is the result satisfyin’?”

Asenath assured him that the experiment was quite satisfactory.

“Well, well,” said Caleb. “Now I will go on shellin’ corn and think matters over; it may be all right if the elder says it is.”

For a few minutes there was a rain of corn into the basket, when Caleb started up and said, “Cracky!” He put his hand into one pocket after another, then went up to the peg board and took down his fur overcoat and felt of the pockets in it. He came back to the place of the corn-shelling doubtfully, and began to trot, as it were, around the basket, still putting his hand into one pocket after another.

“Lost anything, Kalub?” asked Asenath.

“Yes, the stage-driver gave me a parcel directed to Asahel, in the care of Amanda, and I don’t know what I did with it. I meant to have told you about it, but you set me all into confusion over that there courtin’ stick.”

We know not how many old New England homesteads may have a courting stick among their heirlooms, but imagine that they are few. Such a stick used to be shown to the curious in the Longmeadow neighborhood of Springfield, Mass., and we think it may be seen there still. It was especially associated with the manners and customs of the Connecticut Valley towns, and it left behind it some

pleasing legends in such pastoral villages as Northampton, Hadley, and Hatfield. It was a promising object-lesson in the domestic life of the worldly wise, and could have been hardly unwelcome to marmlet maidens and rustic beaux.

Caleb Short continued his shelling corn for a time, but he worked slowly. He at last turned around and looked at his wife, who was sewing rags for a to-be-braided mat.

“Well, what is it now, Kalub?” asked the latter.

“Asahel.”

“Yes—I know—I’ve been thinkin’ much about him of late. He came to us as a bound boy after his folks were dead, and we’ve done well by him, now haven’t we, Kalub? I’ve set store by him, but—I might as well speak it out, he’s too sociable with our Mandy now that they have grown up. It stands to reason that he can never marry Mandy.”

“Why not, Asenath?”

“Why not? How would you like to have people say that our Amanda had married her father’s hired man? How would it look on our family tree?” Asenath glanced up to a fruitful picture on the wall.

“Asahel is a true-hearted boy,” said Caleb. “Since our own son has taken to evil ways, who will we have to depend upon in our old age but Asahel, unless Mandy should marry?”

“O Kalub, think what a wife I’ve been to you and listen to me. Mandy *is* going to marry. I am going to invite Myron Smith here on Thanksgiving, and to hang up the courtin’ stick over the dresser, so that he will see it plain. That stick is goin’ to jine the two farms. It is a yard-stick—there, now, there! I always was great on calculation; Abraham was, and so was Jacob; it’s scriptural. You would have never proposed to me if I hadn’t encouraged you, and only think what a wife I’ve been to you! Just like two wives.”

“But Asahel Bow is a thrifty boy. He is sensible and savin’, and he is feelin’.”

“Kalub, Kalub Short, now that will do. Who was his father? Who but old Seth Bow? Everybody knows what he was, and blood will tell.

Just think of what that man did!”

“What, Asenath?”

“Why, you know that he undertook to preach, and he thought that if he opened his mouth the Lord would fill it. And he opened his mouth, and stood with it open for nearly ten minutes, and he couldn’t speak a word. He was a laughing-stock, and he never went to meetin’ much after that, only to evenin’ meetin’s in the schoolhouse—candle-light meetin’s.”

“Yes, Asenath, that is all true. But Seth Bow was an honest man. Just hear how he used to talk to me. He used to say to me—I often think of it—he used to say: ‘Caleb Short, I’ve lost my standin’ among the people, but I haven’t lost my faith in God, and there is a law that makes up for things. I couldn’t preach, but Asahel is goin’ to preach. He’s inherited the germ of intention from me, and one day that will be something to be thankful for, come Thanksgiving days. I will preach through Asahel yet. I tell you, Caleb, there is a law that makes up for things. No good intention was ever lost. One must do right, and then believe that all that happens to him is for his good. That is the way the Book of Job reads, and I have faith, faith, faith! You may all laugh at me, but Asahel will one day be glad that his old father wanted to preach, and tried, even if he did fail. The right intention of the father is fulfilled in the son, and I tell you there’s a law that makes up for things, and so I can sing Thanksgiving Psalms with the rest of um, if I don’t dare to open my mouth in doin’ it.’ Asenath, I look upon Asahel as a boy that is blessed in the intention of his father. The right intentions of a boy live in the man, and the gov’nin’ purpose of the man lives in his boys or those whom he influences, and I tell you, Asenath, there’s nothing better to be considered on Thanksgiving days than the good intentions of the folks of the past that live in us. There are no harvests in the world ekul to those. You wait and see.”

At this point of the story, the clergyman said:

“That is good old Connecticut doctrine, Brother Jonathan.”

The story-teller continued:

The weather-door slowly opened, and the tall form of a young man appeared.

“Asahel,” said Asenath, “we were just speakin’ of you and your folks, and now I want to have a talk with you. Take off your frock, and don’t be standing there like a swamp crane, but sit down on the uniped here close by me, as you used to do when you was a small boy. I set store by you, and you just think what a mother I’ve been to you since your own mother was laid away in the juniper lot! But I am a proper plain-speakin’ woman, as your own mother was—she that answered the minister back in meetin’ time when the good old elder said that your father was a hypocrit.”

Presently the weather-door opened, and Amanda appeared and sat down on the same uniped with Asahel.

The good woman continued:

“You two have been cowslippin’ together, and sassafrassin’ together, and a-huntin’ turkeys’ nests and wild honey, and pickin’ Indian pipe and all. Now, that was all right when you were children. But, Asahel, you and Amanda have come to the pastur’ bars of life, and you must part, and you, Asahel, must be content to become just one of our hired men and sit at the table with the other hired men, on Thanksgivin’ days the same as on all other days, and not stand in the way of any one. And, Amandy Short, do you see that?”

Asenath held up the courting stick.

“Do you know what that is?”

“It is just a hollow stick. I’ve seen sticks before. What does all this mean?”

“You’ve seen sticks before, have you, Amanda? And you have experienced ’em, too, for I have been a faithful mother to you—as good as two. But this is the stick that must unite some farm to ours, and I am goin’ to hang it up over the dresser, and when the right young man comes, Amanda, I want you to take it down and put it up to your ear, so, and it may be that you will hear somethin’ useful, somethin’ to your advantage and ourn. I hope that I made myself clearly understood.”

She did. The two young people had not been left in any darkness at all in regard to her solution of their social equation. Asahel stepped into the middle of the great kitchen floor. His face was as fixed as an image, and the veins were mapped on his forehead.

He bent his eyes on Asenath for a moment and then his soul flowed out to the tone of the accompaniment of honor.

“Mrs. Short, you were good to me as a boy, and I will never do a thing against your will in your family affairs. My father prayed that I might have the ability to fulfil what he was unable to do in life. To inherit such a purpose from such a father is something to be grateful for, and now that I am disappointed in my expectation of Amanda I shall devote all that I am to my father’s purpose in me. I am going to be a minister.”

“You be, hey? But where is the money comin’ from?”

“Mrs. Short, it is to come out of these two fists.”

Poor tender-hearted Caleb, he shelled corn as never before during this painful scene. Suddenly he looked up and about for relief. His eye fell upon the courting stick.

“Here,” said he to Amanda, who was crying, “just let us try this new comical machine, and see how it works. Mandy, let’s you and I have a little talk together. I’ll put the thing up to my mouth, so, and you just listen at the other end of it. There—I’m going to say something. Ready now, Mandy? Did you hear that?”

“Yes, father, I heard it just as plain as though you spoke it into my ear.”

“*You* didn’t hear anything in particular, did you, Asenath?”

“No, only a sound far away and mysterious like.”

“Curis, ain’t it, how that thing will convey sound in that way? I should think that some invention might come out of it some day. Now, Amanda, you just put your ear up to the funnel and listen again. Mandy,” he continued through the tube, “if your heart is sot on Asahel, do you stand by him, and wait; time makes changes pleasantly.” He put aside the tube. “There, now, do you hear?”

“You didn’t hear, mother, did you?” said Caleb to Asenath, glancing aside.

“No, Kalub.”

“This is a great invention. It works well. Now let me just have a word with Asahel.”

Amanda conveyed one end of the tube to Asahel’s ear.

“Asahel.” He took his mouth from the tube. “Did you hear?”

“You didn’t hear anything, did you?” he said, looking toward Asenath.

“No, Kalub.”

“Now, Asahel, you listen again,” said Caleb, putting his mouth to the tube. “If your heart is sot on Mandy, you just hang on, and wait. Time will be a friend to you, and I will. There, now, did you hear, Asahel?”

“You didn’t hear anything, did you?” asked Caleb of Asenath again with a shake.

“I don’t know,” said Asenath, “it seems to me as though the hands are the hands of Esau, but that the voice is the voice of Jacob.”

“Show! Well, now, Amanda, you and Asahel talk now with each other. Here’s the tube.”

“Asahel Bow,” said Amanda, through the tube, “I believe in you through and through.”

“Amen!” said Asahel, speaking outside of the tube. “Amen whenever your mother shall say Amen, and never until then. There is no need of any courting stick for me.”

At this point of family history Caleb leaped around.

“I know what I did with it—I do now!”

“Did with what, Kalub?” asked Asenath.

“That letter for Asahel—it is right under my bandanna in my hat!”

Caleb went to his hat and handed the lost letter to Asahel.

The latter looked at it and said, “England!” He read it with staring eyes and whitening face, and handed it to Mrs. Short, who elevated her spectacles again.

“That old case in chancery is decided,” said he, “and I am to get my father’s share of the confiscated property. I may have yet to wait for it, though. My great-grandfather was Bow of Bow. He was accused of resisting the Act of Uniformity, and his property was withheld.”

Asenath lifted her brows.

“Bow of Bow,” she repeated. “He was a brave man, I suppose. Resisted the Act of Uniformity? How much did he leave?”

“An estate estimated at £20,000.”

“Heavens be praised!” said the suddenly impressible Asenath. She added: “I always knew that you had good blood in you, and was an honest man, Asahel, just like your father; nobody could ever turn him from the right, no more than you could the side of a house; no Act of Uniformity could ever shape the course of old Seth Bow. And you are a capable man, Asahel; your poor father had limitations and circumstances to contend with, but you are capable of doing all that he meant to do. I always did think a deal of your father, and I think considerable of your grandfather now. I always was just like a mother to you, now wasn’t I, Asahel, good as two or more ordinary stepmothers and the like?

“‘Bow of Bow,’ ‘Bow of Bow,’” continued Asenath. “Well, I have prayed that Amanda might marry well, and your part of £20,000 would be just about twenty times the value of the Smith farm, as I see it. That farm isn’t anything but a bush pastur’, anyhow.

“‘Bow of Bow,’ what a sort of grand sound that has! ‘Bow of Bow.’ I once had an uncle that was a stevedore, an English stevedore, or a cavalier, or something of the kind, but he didn’t leave any estate like Bow of Bow. I think he uniformed in the time of the Uniformity.

“Asahel, you just put that there courtin’ stick up to your ear once more and let me say a word, now that I have new light and understand things better.”

Asahel obeyed. There came a response that could be heard outside of the hollow tube: “Amen!” A murmurous sound followed which was understood only by Asahel. “You will overlook my imperfections now, won’t you, Asahel? Pride is a deceitful thing, and it got the better of me. I only meant well for Amandy, same as you do. I’m sorry for what I said, Asahel. Marry Mandy, and I’ll be a mother to you as I always have been. As good as two common mothers, or more, same as I have always been to Kalub.”

“And I am Asahel. Have my father’s intentions been fulfilled in me?”

“Yes, elder,” said the Governor. “They have!” shouted all. “That is a tale that makes me pray to become all I can,” said a taverner from Boston.

“The purpose of life is growth,” said the Governor. “Growth is revelation. Grow, grow, and past intentions will be fulfilled in you.”

He crossed Lebanon green in the moonlight.

Lebanon, the place that had been filled with life, with hasty orders to couriers, as “Fly!” “Haste!” was silent now. What would be the next news to come by the green?

CHAPTER XV

“CORNWALLIS IS TAKEN!”

These were thrilling days. The American armies were marching south, and with them were advancing the bugles of Auvergne.

Simple incidents, as well as incidents tragic and dramatic, picture times and periods, and we relate some of the family stories of General Knox of the artillery, who had collected powder and directed, often with his own hands, the siege-guns of the great events of the war.

When the French officers arrived in Philadelphia after their journey from Lebanon, they were entertained at a banquet by Chevalier de Luzerne, the ambassador from the French court. Philadelphia was the seat of the American Government then.

The banquet was a splendid one for those times, and it had a lively spirit. The American guests must have been filled with expectation.

For the plan to shut up Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown was full of promise, and the military enterprises to effect this were proceeding well. The lord himself was dissatisfied with the plans he was compelled to pursue, and any fortress is weak in which the heart of the commander is not strong in the faith of success.

In the midst of the banquet, there was a summons for silence. The Chevalier arose, his face beaming.

He looked into the eager faces and said:

“My friends, I have good news for you all.

“Thirty-three ships of the line, commanded by Monsieur le Compte de Grasse, have arrived in the Chesapeake Bay.”

A thrill ran through the assembly. The atmosphere became electric, and amid the ardor of glowing expectation the Chevalier added:

“And the ships have landed three thousand men, and the men have opened communication with Lafayette.”

The guests leaped to their feet.

“Cornwallis is surrounded and doomed!” said they.

They grasped each other’s hands, and added:

“This is the end!”

The army, now confident of victory, marched toward Yorktown, under the command of Washington.

The inhabitants along the way hailed it as it passed—women, children. There were cheers from the doorsteps, fences, and fields, from white and black, the farmer and laborer. The towns uttered one shout, and blazed by night. The land knew no common night, every one was so filled and thrilled with joy. All flags were in air.

The morning of liberty was dawning, the sun was coming, the people knew it by the advance rays. The invader must soon depart.

“Cornwallis is doomed!” was the salutation from place to place, from house to house.

General Washington, with Knox and members of his staff, stopped one morning at a Pennsylvania farmhouse for breakfast.

The meal was provided. The officers partook of it, and ordered their horses, and were waiting for them when the people of the place came into the house to pay their respects to Washington. He stood in the simple room, tall and commanding, with the stately Knox beside him.

“Make way,” said the people, “make way for age!”

An old man appeared, the patriarch of the place. He entered the house without speaking a word. He looked into the face of Washington and stood silent. There had come to him the moment

that he had hoped to see; the desire and probably prayers of fading years had been answered. The room became still.

The old man did not ask an introduction to the great commander. He lifted his face upward and raised his hands. Then he spoke, not to Washington and his generals, but to God:

“Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.”

The generals rode on toward Virginia, cheered by the spirit of prophecy in the patriarch’s prayer.

It was a little episode, but the soul of destiny was in it.

October, with its refreshing shade of coolness, its harvest-fields and amber airs, was now at hand. Cornwallis was surrounded at Yorktown. He had warned Sir Henry Clinton, his superior, that this might be his fate. He is lost who has lost his faith, and begins to make the provision to say, “I told you so!”

Knox with his siege-guns, twenty-three in number, was preparing for the final tempest of the war.

And against Yorktown were marching the heroes of the old liberty banners of *Auvergne sans tache*.

In the early autumn of 1781 the field of war had become the scene of a thrilling drama in the British camp. Lord Cornwallis had taken his army into Yorktown, and under the protection of the British fleet on the York River had fortified his position by semicircular fortifications which extended from river to river.

He must have felt his position impregnable at first, with the advantage which the fleet would bring to him in the wide river, until there came news to him that unsettled his faith in his position. But he soon began to lose confidence. He seemed to foreshadow his doom.

Yorktown was situated on a projecting bank of the York River. The river was a mile wide, and deep. Lord Cornwallis expected to have the place fortified by middle fall, and that Sir Henry Clinton would join him there.

“I have no enemy now to contend against but Lafayette,” he thought until the coming of the French fleet was announced to him.

Washington determined to cut off Lord Cornwallis from any retreat from Yorktown by land or by sea. His plan was to pen up the British commander on the peninsula, and there to end the war. He largely entrusted the siege by land to young Lafayette. He probably felt a pride in giving the young general the opportunity to end the war. He liked to honor one who had so trusted his heart, and whose service had so honored him.

Washington ordered the French army to the Virginia peninsula, and with them went the grand regiment of Gatinais, or Gatinois, with which many years before Rochambeau had won his fame. The heroes of old Auvergne were to be given the opportunity to fight for liberty here, as they had done in the days of old.

These heroes had had their regimental name officially taken away from them on being brought to America—*Auvergne sans tache*. They desired to serve liberty under this glorious name of noble memories again. They appealed to Rochambeau for that distinction.

Their hearts beat high, for they were going to reenforce Lafayette, who was born in Auvergne, and who had desired their presence and inspiration.

So on sea and land a powerful force was gathering to shut up Lord Cornwallis in Yorktown and to shatter the British army on the banks of the York.

Washington himself was approaching Lafayette by way of Philadelphia, Rochambeau by way of Chester and Philadelphia, and De Grasse by the sea. General Thomas Nelson, Governor of Virginia, was arousing the spirit of Virginia again and calling out the militia.

At the great banquet which was given in Philadelphia by the French minister, Chevalier de Luzerne, to Washington and the French officers, when came the news that Count De Grasse and Marquis St. Simon with 3,000 troops had joined Lafayette, all Philadelphia had rung with cheers, and the news thrilled the country.

At that hour the destiny of America was revealed. There could but one thing happen at Yorktown now—Cornwallis must surrender. The General was certain to be blocked up in York River.

Everything was going well. Washington and Rochambeau went to Baltimore and found the city blazing as with the assurance of victory. At this time, with victory in view, Washington visited Mount Vernon, from which he had been absent six anxious years. He passed the evening there with Count Rochambeau, and they were joined there by Chastellux. Washington now left his old home for the field of final victory.

The great generals next faced Yorktown, with their forces, some 16,000 men. They saw the helplessness of Cornwallis, and as De Grasse wished to return soon to the West Indies, the combined forces prepared to move on the British fortifications at once. Seven redoubts and six batteries faced the allies, with abatis, field-works, and barricades of fallen trees.

The allies began to prepare for an immediate conflict. They erected advancing earthworks, in a semicircle, and with the French fleet in the bay, the 1st of October heard the sound of the cannonade.

The peninsula thundered and smoked, and the drama there begun was watched by Washington, Rochambeau, Chastellux, and Count de Grasse. What men were these with Lafayette at the front!

A great cannonade began on the 9th of October, Washington himself putting the match to the first gun.

Governor Nelson of Virginia was in the field. His house was there, too, within the enemy's lines in Yorktown. "Do you see yonder house?" said he to a commander of the artillery. It was the headquarters of the enemy. "It is my house, but fire upon it."

This recalls John Hancock's message to Washington at the beginning of the war. "Burn Boston, if need be, and leave John Hancock a beggar."

The enemy responded. The shells of each crossed each other in the bright, smoky October air. The British fired red-hot shot, and set

on fire some of their own shipping. The nights seemed full of meteors, as though red armies were battling in the sky.

The 14th of October came—a day of heroes. That day the redoubts were to be stormed.

Lafayette prepared his own men for the assault.

Then Baron de Viomenil led out the heroes of Gatinais.

Before this regiment De Rochambeau appeared to give them their orders, which meant death. He had won, as we have said, his own fame in Europe with these mountain heroes. The attack to which he was to order them now was to be made at night.

“My lads,” said he, “I have need of you this night, and I hope that you will not forget that we have served together in that brave regiment of *Auvergne sans tache*.”

A cheer went up in memory of old, followed by:

“Restore to us our name of ‘Auvergne sans tache’ and we will die.”

“That name shall be restored,” said Rochambeau.

They marched to death side by side with the bold regiment of Lafayette, who was to lead the advance.

About eight o’clock the signal rockets for the attack reddened the sky.

The regiment of Gatinais rushed forward. They faced the hardest resistance of the siege. This redoubt was powerfully garrisoned and fortified.

Baron de Viomenil led his heroes into the fire, and his men fought like ancient heroes, to whom honor was more than life. In the midst of the struggle an aide came to him from Lafayette.

“I am in the redoubt,” said the message. “Where are you?”

“I will be in *my* redoubt in five minutes.”

Strongly fortified as that redoubt was, it could not withstand the men of Gatinais. They entered it with a force that nothing could

withstand, but *one third of them fell*.

“Royal Auvergne,” said Rochambeau, “your survivors shall have your own name again.”

He reported the action to the French King, and the latter gave back to the heroes their regimental name of old *Auvergne sans tache*.

These men are worthy of a monument under that noble motto. We repeat, the words should be used on decorative ensigns of the Sons of the Revolution; nothing nobler in war ever saw the light.

Yorktown fell on the morning of the 17th, and a courier sped toward Philadelphia, crying, as he went: “Cornwallis is taken!” Bells rang, people cheered.

The messenger reached Philadelphia at night—“Cornwallis is taken!”

Windows opened. The citizens leaped from their beds. The bells rang on, and the city blazed with lights, and Congress gave way to transports of joy.

Dennis and Peter came riding back to the alarm-post, shouting by the way, “Cornwallis is taken!”

The Governor knelt down in the war office, and the people shouted without the silent place.

Peter could afford to be magnanimous now to his feeble old uncle. He hurried to the old man’s cabin and knocked at the door.

“I chop wood,” said a voice within.

“Uncle, it is Peter. Cornwallis has surrendered!”

The latch was lifted, and the wood-chopper appeared as one withered and palsied.

“What is that you tell me? Cornwallis has surrendered? What has become of the King?”

“The cause of the King is lost!”

“Then I don’t see that I have anything more to live for. Come in. I have nothing against you now, so far as I am concerned, for *you came back*—don’t you remember that on the night that I was to have been robbed you came back? I have never forgotten that. You came back.”

He tottered to the chest beside the table.

“Here, let me open the chest now while I have strength to unlock the lid. The King! the King! How he will feel when he hears the news! And he said of young Trumbull, ‘I pity him.’ His heart will go down like a sailor on the sea on a stormy night. Peter, I feel for him. Don’t you pity him? Sit down by me.”

He lifted the lid of the chest, and took out of the chest a leather bag. He untied the bag-string, and turned a pile of doubloons on the table.

“*One.* That is yours. You *came back* to your poor old uncle on the night when the robber was trying to find me.

“*Two.* It is yours, for you came back.

“*Three.* My sight is going. It is all yours, for you came back.

“My hands grow numb, the world is going. I can feel it going. But all that I leave is yours. My breath grows cold. I have only time to say, ‘God save the King!’ I want to go, and leave what I have to you, Peter, for you came back. Good-by, earth; I leave you my woodpile; warm yourself by my fire when I am gone. God—save—the—King!”

He sat silent. Peter bent over him. The old man’s breath was cold, and soon the last pulse beat.

Peter gathered up the gold. He would turn it into education at Plainfield Academy and at Yale College. Then he would go away,

after Dennis, perhaps, to the Western territory which would become a new Connecticut.

THE END

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Text in italics is enclosed by underscores (_italics_).

Except for the frontispiece, illustrations have been moved to follow the text that they illustrate, so the page number of the illustration may not match the page number in the List of Illustrations.

Punctuation and spelling inaccuracies were silently corrected.

Archaic and variable spelling has been preserved.

Variations in hyphenation and compound words have been preserved.

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