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CROSSED SWORDS

A Canadian-American Tale of Love

and Valor

By

MRS. CLEMENT ALLOWAY

Author of "Famous Firesides of French
Canada," etc., etc.

TORONTO

WILLIAM BRIGGS

1912

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MARY W. ALLOWAY

TO

CANADIAN AND AMERICAN WOMEN

WHO LOVE THEIR COUNTRY'S

HEROIC PAST

INTRODUCTION

This tale of love and valor is woven around an episode of international history, the fifth siege of Quebec by the Continental troops, under General Richard Montgomery, during the war of the American Revolution. No event chronicled in the annals of the Republic or of the Dominion surpasses it in romantic interest and picturesqueness of detail; and for daring, courage and endurance of hardship, few adventures equal that midwinter attack on what was then an impregnable stronghold.

The swords forming the cover design of this volume are reproductions of two of the identical weapons which figured in that notable assault. The one on the left was carried by Sir Guy Carleton, the commander of the Canadian forces, the other by an officer under Colonel Benedict Arnold's command. As the two rusty and trusty old blades now lie peacefully side by side in the picture-gallery of the Château de Ramezay, in Montreal, we hope that after a century of peace, the occasion may never arise when the two nations they represent will again cross swords.

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CROSSED SWORDS

CHAPTER I.

WHICH SHALL IT BE?

“‘Tis but a dreary month at best! I love not bleak November,” exclaimed sweet Phyllis Davenant, as she turned from the window with its uninviting outlook, and drew near the hearthstone, the room bright in the warm coloring of waxed floor, rafter and firelit pane.

On that evening in the year of grace 1775 the skies hung sullen and grey over the little walled town of Montreal, lying ‘twixt mountain and river. The mellow Indian summer, with its splendor of golden sunshine and crimsoning woods, had been brief, the Canadian autumn setting in earlier than usual. The trees were already bare, and sharp gusts of wind drove the fallen leaves into withered heaps on the brick sidewalks and cobble-stone pavements of the narrow streets, which followed the old winding trails of the red man along the shore.

Drawing a chair toward the glowing maple logs, before which her mother sat, apparently absorbed in some disquieting train of thought, the girl, throwing off her momentary depression, said, as she seated herself contentedly within the circle of light and warmth:

“Of a truth the fireside cheer seems most grateful when ‘tis so chill and forbidding without. Thérèse avows that the rough winds on such a day as this work woeful havoc with her complexion, upon which she bestows such care, so she, too, in all likelihood is keeping close to the château chimney-corner.”

Seeking to divert their minds and break her mother’s brooding silence, she pleaded persuasively:

“Let me draw your chair closer, mother. Sit here beside me and talk to me of our dear England. I have but dim memories of it, but there is something in the twilight hour that ever brings it to my mind, though I was but a child when we set sail to come hither to America.”

“Alack! we are far away from it to-night, and with but scant certainty of seeing its shores for many a day to come,” sighed the gently-born

English lady, whose soldier-husband was doing military duty in the Canadian colony, which but a few years before had been wrested from the French. As she gazed dreamily at the crackling logs, Phyllis dropped at her feet and laid her golden head in her mother's lap.

"I would, child," the elder woman continued wistfully, "that I could hear the old minster bells chime this evening over my sweet English garden, where you were wont to play among the jasmine and rosemary. I would I could see the sunset fall across the fair green fields and lanes, and on the glebe and croft at home. Sometimes in my dreams I hear again the rooks caw among the elms and the nightingale sing in the coppice, and see the lights gleam from the casements of the old house in Devon;" and laying her hand on the golden hair she whispered: "At times I feel I ne'er shall look on England and our kindred there again."

Looking up into her mother's face, and softly stroking the lace falling over the hand she was caressing, Phyllis, seeking to cheer her, interrupted, saying brightly, as she pointed to the hearth:

"And I fancy I see a picture in the fire. It is a ship, not many years hence, here by the riverside, with sails set for old England. On board

are British redcoats, for our Governor, his term of office ended, is returning home; my father, as befits a member of his staff, accompanying him. A few weeks later, wind and wave favorable, I see a certain maid and matron once again in the old manor-house of my forefathers, among the dear hills of Devonshire, where the Davenants have dwelt since the Tudor kings sat on the throne of England.”

The sudden falling of a log, which sent a shower of sparks up the wide-throated chimney and scattered live coals on the hearthstone, created a diversion which prevented the daughter’s seeing the tears gathering in her mother’s eyes, as rising, she said sadly:

“‘Tis a fair picture, child, and mayhap not unlikely to come true, were it not for this rebellion of His Majesty’s colonies to the south of us, in what they call ‘New England.’ I trow if they there continue to observe such treasonable behavior, the place will soon scarce be worthy of that name.”

“Are there any further tidings? Have they not long ere this come to realize that to oppose British arms and prowess were folly the most lamentable!” asked Phyllis with uneasiness, endeavoring to hide her own

anxiety on discerning the seriousness of her mother's countenance as she replied:

“Their quarrel with the king concerns not us, nor would it give us cause for alarm, had not news come that it is the purpose of these rebels to coerce Canada to join them in revolt. It has been known for some time that an armed force is making its way north, by way of the Hudson and Richelieu, and it cannot much longer be concealed that a siege of the town may take place any day or hour, though I fain would spare you knowledge of it.”

The faint pink of Phyllis's cheeks suddenly paled to ivory whiteness, and with her blue eyes wide with terror, she clutched her mother's arm, as if seeking protection in its frail defence. With white lips she stammered:

“Mother, we have arms and soldiers, and vaulted cellars filled with stores in case of necessity. Surely British regulars have no need to fear these poorly disciplined rebel recruits, many of whom we hear are untrained rustics,” adding with a severity unusual to her, “they will ere long discover that their skill lies more in the use of ploughshares

and pruning-hooks than in that of swords and spears!”

Without waiting for a reply, and drawing herself erect with quick change of mood, she exclaimed, her eyes flashing:

“I am a soldier’s daughter, mother, and will not quail before this peril, however dire or threatening!” Then glancing down, she asked quickly:

“What is that bulky missive in the reticule at your side? If it contain tidings, good or ill, let me hear them. Never hath it been said that a Davenant, man or woman, played the coward! I will be worthy of my lineage!”

With some reluctance Mistress Davenant took from its hiding-place a closely-written packet, of which the seals were broken, and placed it in the excited girl’s hands, saying:

“Were Montreal the only point menaced some shift might be made to withstand attack; though any hope of doing so successfully would, I fear, be but ill-founded. The walls that encompass the town are but of

rough masonry and timber of no great strength, and the fort, ‘La Citadelle,’ as the French called it, only a weak structure of wood with earthworks.”

“‘Tis true, mother, we may here be somewhat defenceless, but remember that Quebec has ramparts of stone and stout fortifications that are known to be impregnable. Wolfe himself, as you know full well, had to have recourse to stratagem, and as Thérèse de L’Érie forgets not to remind me, had Montcalm remained entrenched behind its walls our flag might not now be floating over Cape Diamond,” was the reassuring reply.

“To take it by strategy, then, must be the purpose of this invasion. By post-messenger this morn, your father hath received private information that a second hostile army is advancing toward Quebec, by way of the forests of Maine, bent on that stronghold’s reduction,” the mother dejectedly replied.

“Ha, ha!” laughed Phyllis, “that most certainly seems a madness scarce in keeping with common sense. I would read this message an’ it please you, mother. This is no time for secrecy. I must know the worst.”

“Ascertain, then, for yourself, my child. Concealment for the moment would be but putting off what sooner or later all must know.”

With crimsoning cheeks Phyllis glanced through the pages without a word, until, coming to the signature, inscribed in a bold, free hand, she read aloud:

“Yours, honored sir, in deep respect and with much concern,

“EDWARD VANROSFELDT.”

“Vanrosfeldt, Vanrosfeldt,” she pondered, repeating the name. “It surely hath a familiar sound. Who is this Edward Vanrosfeldt who presumes to thus address a British officer? What cool audacity he shows, that in the same breath he should have the monstrous effrontery to declare that he himself, who had erstwhile served under the king’s standard, has joined these traitors and is marching against his former friend and fellow-soldier! ‘Tis almost past belief! It angers me beyond control!” and curling her lip with scorn, she ejaculated bitterly:

“A truly despicable man he must be, forsooth, and utterly devoid of all

sense of manly honor and loyal duty!”

Surprised at so unusual an outburst of passion in one of so gentle a nature, her mother laid her hand restrainingly on her daughter’s shoulder, saying quietly:

“Calm yourself, my child; this violence of speech is unbeseeming a gentlewoman. The women of our race have ever been mild-mannered and slow to censure. This Edward Vanrosfeldt, as I remember him, some twelve or thirteen years ago, was a brave and handsome boy, but recently enlisted, and like his chief, General Wolfe, on the field of action when but sixteen years of age. He was with our troops when they entered this city’s gate victorious, after Quebec had fallen.”

A light of recollection suddenly flashed across Phyllis’s face, as she queried, the words coming sharply from her lips:

“When two years afterward we left England to join my father here, was it not this same youth who was tended through a long, sore illness, here in this very house, and who swore eternal gratitude for your motherly care of him? I was but six years old at that time, and so cannot now recall

his face, but I have heard somewhat about him.”

“Of a truth it was even so,” replied the mother meditatively; “and mayhap this word of warning sent may be proof that he still hath recollection of it. He was a winsome lad, with a ruddy English fairness, albeit his mother’s kin, if I remember aright, were from the Low Countries.”

Unsoothed by the quiet words, Phyllis walked the length of the room, and on turning to retrace her steps, exclaimed, tears of mingled anger and disdain filling her eyes:

“I have no memory of this false, fair-looking rebel, and had I, I would strive to blot it from my mind. I trust it may never fall out that we cross paths. I fear I could scarce restrain my bitter loathing within the bounds of prudence and proper courtesy. He would then know how Phyllis Davenant regards such as he!”

As her mother left the room, the anxious lines deepening on her brow, Phyllis sank into her chair. With her momentary courage gone, she thrust the offending letter into the lacing of her bodice, and with hands

clasped listlessly on her lap, sat thinking with fear and trembling of what might soon betide. Startled suddenly by the sound of a tap, tap on the pane, she looked quickly up to see a laughing face looking in through the long French window. In the black eyes and wind-blown curls she recognized her dearest friend, Thérèse de Lérie. Beckoning her to come in, Phyllis hastened to open the door to admit her visitor, whose natural gaiety, she knew, would help to dispel the gloom which enveloped her own spirit. With a whiff of cool air from without Thérèse tripped over the threshold, and, clasping Phyllis in her arms, said, as she kissed her on both cheeks, in her pretty French fashion:

“My dear Phyllis, tell me, I pray, what means your sitting alone thus dolefully in the evening shadows, and wearing so disconsolate a look! You seem truly as dull and gloomy as the day. One would think the care of all the colonies rested on your shoulders. To be sure, the times are such as to sadden even my lightheartedness. This morning I trembled when I thought I had discovered a grey hair among my braids. ‘Twould scarce be wondered at, with news of war and riot constantly in one’s hearing.”

“Throw off your hood, Thérèse, I beg of you, and sit down with me by the fireside,” said Phyllis, offering her a rush-bottomed chair.

“Most certainly I will do so, if you really feel as *distracte* as your looks betoken,” answered Thérèse, shaking out her skirts and settling herself comfortably, “and we will have, what I so dearly love, a *tête-à-tête*.”

In the Canadian winters of those early days, the warmth from the open wood fires could scarcely penetrate to the corners of the wide rooms and draughty halls of the rambling houses, so in the chill of the autumn evening the two girls drew close to the hearth. Sitting thus in the flickering firelight they made an engaging picture. Phyllis, with hair the color of the cowslip that fringes with gold the meadow brook, was fair in the pink and white of hedgerow blossoms, with eyes blue as her native Devonshire lakes, and lips the hue of the holly-berries that grow under English oaks. Thérèse, in exact contrast, was handsome in the beauty of dark, flashing eyes, graceful carriage, and complexion of a clear olive, on the cheek and lip glowing red as the heart of the pomegranate. Their prettiness against the soft background of changing shadows, and light glinting from polished cabinet to wainscot, seemed not in accord with any sombre foreboding of ill, or of aught that could distress.

A serving-maid, coming in with candles, was quietly proceeding to trim them, when Thérèse pleaded:

“Do not have them alight, I prithee, Phyllis. The dusk of this early twilight is so ravishing, so enchanting! What you English call the gloaming induces in one a tender feeling of delicious melancholy, that to me is more pleasure than pain. At this hour I always feel like singing little love-songs such as this,” and she skipped across the floor to where the spinet stood open. Thrumming softly some opening chords, she trilled a few lines of a French serenade—“_Je t’aime, mon ange, je t’aime_,” with a passion of sweetness, such as a lovelorn troubadour, with tinkling lute, might have sung ‘neath his lady’s lattice casement. Then whirling around, she laughed lightly, saying:

“I have learned that from Leon. Poor, dear Leon, he has of late taken to singing the most tender, heart-touching melodies. He delights in long, lonely walks when the moon shines, and I have discovered him even composing verse and love-sonnets. I am told these are the signs of the grand passion.”

As she rattled on in her slightly accented English, Phyllis's sombre mood melted, and she laughed:

“Do not be alarmed, Thérèse, at eighteen these symptoms are not to be regarded with seriousness. Leon will recover, be assured; but who, pray, is the maiden of his choice? I am at a loss to know.”

“Truly, it is strange, but he has not yet made me his confidante. I, who am his twin-sister, know not his secret. Our birthday *fête* we will celebrate now in a few days, as you know, and perchance we may then discover to whom among the demoiselles he has lost his heart. Do you not agree with me, Phyllis, that true affection brooks not concealment?” she enquired petulantly. As she asked the question, glancing up, she caught sight of the letter, which Phyllis had partially hidden, and snatching it from her girdle, said reproachfully:

“Friend of my heart, is this a *billet-doux*? ‘Tis surely in a man’s handwriting! Ah! who would believe that you, too, would seek to deceive me. You have a lover, and have concealed it from me! And worse,” she cried, “it bears the mark of having come from Boston town, by the belated post-rider who arrived this morning and who has set the whole

town affright with his alarming tidings.” Stamping her foot angrily, her eyes blazing, she continued hotly:

“Fie on thee, Phyllis Davenant! Intrigue and double-dealing are unworthy one whom I have ever thought was a true friend and loyal British maiden!”

“I will explain,” exclaimed Phyllis, taking up the letter which Thérèse had thrown angrily on the *escritoire*, her speech quickened by the impetuous injustice of the innuendo; but regardless of the interruption, the offended girl would not listen, but went on:

“Even I, Thérèse de Lérie, who bear no love for those who drove King Louis’s troops out of this land, which France won with valor and courage from the wilderness, would not stoop to parley with a rebel,” and catching up her silk *pelisse*, she made ready to leave.

“Thérèse,” said Phyllis quietly, detaining her, “you are partly in the right, but more in the wrong. The letter, ‘tis true, is from Boston town, and from a man whom we hold to be a traitor to his king and country, one Edward Vanrosfeldt. But lover of mine, forsooth! All you

have said would be well deserved, if I felt aught but bitter aversion for him whose hand writ these lines.”

Appeased, her April nature breaking into smiles after the storm of passion, Thérèse, raising her brows archly, as she tied the silken ribands of her hood, said provokingly, with inconsistency:

“Were he ill-favored ‘twould be easier, Phyllis mine; and who knows how soon our loyalty may be put to the test, for if, as is feared, these Continentals gain access within this city’s walls, it may chance that we shall meet this polite enemy of ours. I, myself, make no promises, for where a handsome face is concerned I cannot pledge myself to hate.”

Glancing at the deepening darkness without, she said, a little penitently:

“Pardon me, I beg; I was perhaps too hasty; so now let us for a moment consider a more pleasant theme, the one about which I came hither to converse. I must hasten, else *ma mère* will be alarmed, and send in search of me. The topic is our birthday *fête*, Leon’s and mine. We will be eighteen one week from to-day, and the whole town is bidden to make

merry with us, French and English alike. I, of course, mean those of proper standing in society. It will be my *début* into the gaieties of social life, and I scarce can wait for the hour to come. You must not outshine me, for I intend to be the belle of the ball. My mother, who was a court beauty in her time, is turning the château upside down that the de Lérias may receive in somewhat of the state and splendor befitting their descent. You should but glance at the preparations in the cuisine; such trussing, braising and posseting as there will be; such solemn conferences as there are over the making of a pâté or frappé, that one would think there were no such things as possible bombardments and menacing foes.”

“What gown will you wear, Thérèse?” asked Phyllis, caught by the glamor of the promised revel.

“That is what I myself am most concerned about. I have spent hours with the modiste, trying to decide ‘twixt satin and brocade, and what color would be most becoming. You will see, Phyllis, when the night comes, what my choice will be. My coiffure is to be in the latest mode in favor at Queen Marie Antoinette’s court. The mother of our little domestic, Lizette, was waiting-woman to our dear Marquise de Vaudreuil, so she has

deft fingers and has acquired much skill in the dressing of the hair. I think," she continued, contentedly, "that I shall not look unlike the portraits of my kinsfolk of court circles, which hang on our *salon* walls."

"Dear Thérèse, I may find it difficult to recognize you in powder, puffs and patches," said Phyllis, smiling at the innocent vanities; "you will find no rival, I trow, in my pale yellow hair and simple white frock. No one would see me when you are nigh."

"'Tis not likely, Phyllis," she replied, with a pleasant smile, "that we, who are so different, will fall in love with the same man. Captain Basil Temple's blue naval uniform and English air will doubtless catch your fancy, and I have noted that he much admires blue eyes. I myself prefer the brilliance of military accoutrements; and of redcoats, there will be not a few to choose from; but I must make haste to say *_au revoir_*." Hurriedly making her adieux, in a few moments she was hastening along the Rue de Notre Dame to her own home in the centre of the town, fearful of being belated on the short autumn afternoon.

The Château de Lérie was the most stately dwelling in the colony, having

been the residence of the French Governors in their time, where they had held court in imitation of that of King Louis, with the same punctilious etiquette in dress and manners, adapted, of course, to the crudities and restrictions of Provincial life. Since the evacuation of the town in 1760, when the Marquis de Vaudreuil, the last of the French rulers, retired with his family to France, it had been occupied by a member of his suite who had remained in Canada, having landed interests in the Province. The household consisted of Monsieur and Madame de Lérie and their twin son and daughter, who were so extremely alike in speech and feature as to be an unceasing source of amusement to their friends, and, at times, of annoyance to themselves. The sparkling loveliness of Thérèse was slightly marred by a small crimson birth-mark, which, to her grief, spoiled somewhat the smoothness of her brow, and which she pettishly complained should have been given to her brother instead of herself, saying that “comeliness was of less concern to a man than a woman.” Leon, who from their cradle had loved and almost worshipped his sister with a passionate affection, would then soothe her by saying, that if by suffering he could remove the blemish from her brow to his own, he would gladly bear the pain to spare her even that slight misery, when she would reply:

“Some day, mayhap, in some sudden peril of circumstance or fate, should a choice arise betwixt us, I may put you to the proof, and test your will to spare me suffering.”

Thérèse thought it no small thing to be of gentle birth. She was intensely proud of her family’s lineage on the spindle side from the old *noblesse*, and of the ancestor who came over in the vessel of the adventurous Paul de Maisonneuve, the founder of the city, and who, with his own hands, had planted the liliated flag of King Louis hard by where her roses then grew. She loved the beautiful gardens surrounding the old grey château, where flowers, whose ancestral seeds had been brought over from the monasteries and castles of old France, bloomed through the hot months of the short northern summer. It was her delight to walk by her mother’s side along the box-bordered garden-paths, under the stiff rows of Lombardy poplars, and listen to tales of the old régime, when Sieur de Montcalm and the valorous de Levis were guests under the roof she called her home. Many a time within its walls toasts had been drunk to those heroes when they had passed through the town, after victory on the fields of Oswego and Carillon.

Despite the resentment which Thérèse de Lérie cherished in secret

against those who had made conquest of her native land, the French maiden loved the English girl with all the warmth of her young, impulsive, Southern heart. There had never been any thought of rivalry between them, nor break in their affection, even though Thérèse's sudden gusts of passion and extremes of love and aversion might, with a less gentle nature, have imperilled their friendship. With sweet, gracious ways, which had come down to her from dead and gone gentle ladies, who had held their mild rule in moated grange or manor-house beyond the sea, Phyllis had already become a belle and toast of provincial life.

Unwittingly she had won the heart of more than one young subaltern of the garrison and beau of the town, some of whose likings were but mere passing attachments of the hour; but there was one among them, Leon de Lérie, who, though scarce more than a boy, knew that his love was no boy-fancy, but the master passion of his life. It had grown with the years, since, as a lad, he had run from his school companions in the college of the Jesuit fathers to carry the books and samplers of Thérèse and Phyllis, on their way home from the convent of the good sisters. The natural intimacy of children thus circumstanced had given rise to no thought in the mind of any of feelings other than brotherly and sisterly affection between them, until the son and daughter had reached an age when the long-nurtured plans of their parents must be made known to

them.

Arriving at the gate of the château, breathing quickly, and glad that the walk through the fast-gathering dusk was ended, Thérèse plied the great brass knocker and waited to be admitted. A light step within, and the door was thrown quickly open, and Lizette, a shade of anxiety creasing her pretty brow, said politely:

“Mademoiselle is late. Madame has been disturbed at the lateness of the hour, and Monsieur desires Mam’selle would attend him in the *salon* immediately on arriving.”

“I will do so, Lizette. Here are my hood and pelisse; take them to my chamber, and I will go to my father at once.”

Entering the room, the light dazzling her eyes after the darkness without, and with heart beating from the haste of her walk, she approached her father, of whom she stood somewhat in awe, saying coaxingly, “I beg you will pardon me, if I have caused you anxiety. I was at the Château Davenant, talking to Phyllis about my ball. The subject is to be blamed, and not I, for my delay. Leon, here,” turning

to her brother, who was standing silently by his father's side, "knows how hard sometimes it is to tear one's self away from our dear Phyllis."

Without giving his son an opportunity to reply to her words, Monsieur de Lérie, taking her hand, led her to a high-backed chair, close to that on which her brother leaned.

"Thérèse, my daughter," he said seriously, "I would have you think to-night on more solemn things than revels and dancing."

Alarmed at his words and manner and the stern, set faces of her father and brother, with a frightened little gasp she asked, starting up with hands clasped tightly:

"Oh! what is amiss? Has aught happened to my mother? Is she ill?"

"No, my child, your mother hath but just left us. She awaits to see you in her chamber after we have concluded the matter which we must now consider. Be seated, Thérèse, and you too, Leon, and I will proceed with what I would say. Listen, my children," and with pale face and something of reluctance, he spoke, the words falling painfully in the strained

silence on the ears of his listeners:

“Leon, you and your sister are all the children that now your mother hath, but before your birth there was another son. It chanced upon a day, some sixteen years ago this very month, that ye both fell grievously sick, stricken with the same fell malady that once before had left us childless. We trembled with dread and were distraught with grief, and when all hope seemed fled, we cast ourselves upon our knees and vowed to Heaven that if your lives were spared, one of you twain should from that hour be consecrated to the Church. If it were you, Leon, to the Jesuit priesthood should you be given; if you, _ma petite_,” turning to Thérèse, “then to the saintly veil of the Grey Nuns should you be consecrated. Hour after hour we watched and prayed, until, at last, first one and then the other fell into quiet, healing sleep, and we knew our prayers were heard and vows accepted.”

Looking into their eyes, and taking a hand of each, he asked in a low, troubled voice:

“Which shall it be, my children?”

Suddenly springing to her feet, the color fled from her cheeks, Thérèse cried with dry, blazing eyes:

“It must not be either of us! Speak, Leon, say it can never be. We cannot, will not, do this thing!”

“What say you?” her father asked, his voice trembling with the bitterness of his emotions. “Would you say to your father, ‘Break now these solemn vows and become *anathema*’? Alas! ye must decide which it shall be. Will you not say, Thérèse, ‘Let me take vows’? Think what it would cost me to give my son, my only son, with whom must end our noble line, to monkish life! Thérèse, ‘tis for you to say if this shall be!”

As he looked with an anguished plea into her eyes, she shrank away shuddering from the arm he had placed around her, crying:

“Oh! no, no, I cannot, even for my Leon’s sake, take the veil! I have no vocation to make profession, to tread the path of sanctity; not even if my soul’s happiness and salvation depend upon it. Something in my heart forbids; I want life, I want freedom! I love too well this world and all it holds of mirth and pleasure!”

Turning quickly to her brother and falling at his feet with hands clasped in supplication, and heart throbbing wildly, she pleaded:

“Leon, you did ever promise to bear pain and suffering in my stead. Now truly you must do as you have said,” and clinging to him with streaming eyes, she cried:

“Save me, Leon, by that pledge—save me now from the cold, sad cloister, from this hard and cruel fate!—I cannot keep this vow!”

Raising her from her knees, with face pale as if all the warmth of his young life were stricken from him, he said, in a voice he scarcely knew as his own:

“I will, my sister, do as I have pledged to you!” Then turning to his father, his voice hoarse with sharp agony, as if each word were a sword-thrust in his heart, and with such a look, that to the end of their lives they never forgot his face as they saw it then, he added: “I will go to the cell”; and making the sign of the cross, he strode from the room. In silence father and daughter listened to the sound of his footsteps dying away along the corridors.

CHAPTER II.

A BLOODSTAINED MESSENGER.

In the grey dawn of the following morning, the sentry, pacing before the north-east gate of the city, observed the figure of a man approaching. On disembarking from a canoe, he bade adieu, apparently with some reluctance, to an Indian who had paddled him down the river from some point on the opposite shore. As he neared the fort which defended that part of the town, his disordered appearance and evidence of haste brought the sentry to a halt, and with levelled rifle he challenged:

“Stand! Who goes there?”

“A friend, who has important tidings for the Governor, whom I have urgent need to see with all speed,” was the answer.

“What is your business with His Excellency, and your name and rank?” was sharply interrogated by the sentinel, who saw, as the man came from the dusk of the early morning into the light, which still shone from the

barred window of the guard-house, the figure of an officer. His features and condition gave proof of his having come through some experience of thrilling excitement, and the man looked sharply at him as he replied:

“My name is Fraser, my rank a lieutenant in His Majesty’s Seventh Regiment of Foot,—my business concerns matters of grave moment to the affairs of this Province, and which I would lay before His Excellency without delay.”

The guard suspiciously scrutinized the speaker, examining closely his uniform and emblems of military rank, and finding the mud-bespattered and torn garments to be those of the British army, with the decorations of one holding rank therein, he saluted, and lowering his rifle, answered:

“Enter, Lieutenant Fraser, and all’s well.”

The heavily-riveted oaken door swung slowly open, and the newcomer entered the fortress, and seeking the officer in charge, desired that an orderly be detailed to conduct him to official headquarters. The fort, from which he and his guide then emerged, was a primitive structure,

pierced by narrow grated windows, defended by small pieces of cannon, and had been modeled after the plan of the old fortifications of mediaeval France. The British colors were floating above it, where but a few years before had flown the white and blue standard of the proud Bourbons.

The little town of Montreal, in the glistening morning sunlight, lay still asleep, feeling secure in the walls that surrounded it, although a hostile army threatened them. A narrow street ran due west from the fort, on either side of which were dwelling-houses in the quaint architecture of Normandy and Brittany. The peaked tin roofs sloped gracefully to the eaves, their uniformity broken by rows of picturesque dormer windows, the gables ending in ample chimneys. As was usual in a fortified town, the houses were built close together, the windows being furnished with heavy iron shutters and bolts and bars. The street, which the two men traversed in silence, had been called by the pious Jesuit Fathers, Rue de Notre Dame, or Street of "Our Lady," a name which had been the battle-cry of Norman warriors since before Duke William seized the crown of Edward, the Saint-King of Saxon England. They encountered no one on the way except a night watchman, or an occasional *habitant*, smoking his short clay pipe and cracking the leathern thong

of his whip as he jogged to market on his load of hay or wood, gay in brightly colored sash and tuque and pointed capuchin, woven by his own fireside. The stillness of the early morning was broken by the tinkle of a bell calling to matins, which was answered by a silvery chime from the clock over the monastery of the St. Sulpice Fathers, whose white dial had set the time to the town since the days of La Salle, a hundred years before. The stroke of the hour of five had scarce died away when the corporal announced their arrival at their destination, as they turned into the main entrance of the Governor's mansion, a long, low, white-walled building, still known as the Château de Ramezay, from the name of the French noble who had built it some sixty years before.

A sleepy lackey answering the summons, opened the door, and as he asked: "What can I do for ye, sir?" he glanced uneasily at the dark bloodstains which deepened the red of the military scarf with which the right arm of the officer was bound.

"Inform Governor Carleton that a soldier in the British service seeks speech with him on a matter of vital import, and tell His Excellency that it is a case the consideration of which will admit of as little delay as is possible with His Excellency's convenience and comfort."

As the messenger retired, bowing, the stranger sank into a chair to gain a few moments' rest after his forced journey and fast of the night before. At the sound of approaching footsteps and the entrance of a handsome, military-looking man, he arose and saluted, knowing he was in the presence of Sir Guy Carleton, the Commander-in-Chief of the forces in Canada, and the representative in the colony of His Majesty, King George.

Sir Guy looked keenly at the stranger, his brow clouding as he perceived the evident marks of recent conflict and apparent flight.

“To whom have I the honor of speaking?” he inquired brusquely, “and what are the circumstances which bring one wearing the king’s coat hither in such a plight?”

“I am, Your Excellency, Malcolm Fraser, of the Seventh Foot; one of the command of Fort St. Johns, which, it is my unhappy fortune to be compelled to report, has been reduced by the American forces under Montgomery, into whose hands it has fallen,” was the reluctant reply.

Taking a seat and motioning his informant to do likewise, the commander, giving no sign of the emotions of regret and humiliation which filled his breast at the defeat of the garrison holding that important post, asked quietly:

“What are the details of the disaster? Be explicit.”

Leaning his head upon his hand, he listened moodily to the recital as his visitor continued tersely and with undisguised mortification:

“Our force, as Your Excellency is aware, was only about four hundred strong, with the addition of one hundred Indians. Early in September we received intelligence of the approach of the enemy. Appearing duly in sight, they landed on the west bank of the Richelieu, about two miles distant, and at once took up march toward our outworks. Immediate preparations were commenced to resist the attack, and when within range we opened fire upon them, but with little apparent effect. After consuming considerable time in skirmishing and various manoeuvres, the surrender of the fort was demanded, our signal of compliance to be the blank discharge of a cannon. I need not inform Your Excellency that this was peremptorily refused. Again a flag was sent with a written order for

our capitulation and the avoidance of a needless effusion of blood. Aware that efforts were here being made to come to our succor, we required that four days be given us for consideration. This being denied, and the attack renewed, after a resistance which had lasted fifty days, we were forced to comply with their stipulations,—that we march out with the honors of war and ground our arms on the plain near by. The perfidious Indians had deserted us some time before. Goaded to desperation at the thought of my country's flag falling thus easily into the hands of the invading rebels, I made a lunge at the first bluecoat who offered to lay hands upon it, but a sharp thrust from his broadsword striking my arm, I lost my balance and fell from the bastion into a bog near the drawbridge. Although stunned, I was not seriously hurt, having fallen where there was no great depth of water. Dragging myself along the edge of the stockade, with the protection offered by some low alders which fringed the marsh, and being covered with the wet soil, I managed to crawl out close to the hut of a friendly Abenakis scout, who took what parched corn and other provisions the place afforded, and motioning me to follow, stole out into the woods.

“After some delay,” he continued, “a canoe was obtained, in which we dropped down stream. Favored by the gathering darkness, we hastened on,

and by hiding by daylight and on any signs of alarm, succeeded in reaching the river just below the rapids. Knowing the necessity of advising Your Excellency of the fall of the fort and the capture of Major John André and other officers and men, I made all possible haste to bring hither tidings of the defeat.”

“Lieutenant Fraser, you most certainly have done myself and your country signal service by this night’s work, and immediate measures must be concerted to meet the attack which menaces these walls.”

Pulling a bell-rope which hung by the hearth, he said to the servant who responded:

“Conduct Lieutenant Fraser to a chamber and provide him with everything that is needful for his comfort and refreshment until the army surgeon shall arrive to determine what are the nature and extent of his injuries.”

“Have no concern about my wound, Sir Guy,” begged Fraser, rising to follow the servant; “‘tis but a flesh scratch, for which a few days’ rest and care are all that are needed; but for the refreshment I shall

have honest welcome, as my last meal was but a scant one, some twelve hours since, in the lodge of an Indian known to my guide.”

The wound itself had no serious aspects, but the fasting, night exposure and tardiness in obtaining needful tendance, brought on a fever, which for some days rendered Malcolm Fraser oblivious to passing events. When sufficiently recovered to appear in the official apartments, he found a general air of unrest apparent. Withdrawing with him to an ante-room, Sir Guy informed him that it had been learned from the most reliable sources that the American troops were advancing toward the city, and if not detained, as they had hitherto been, by rains and impassable roads, might be expected within a few days' time. With a frown and look of extreme disquietude, as of one who feared that his shield of honor was about to be tarnished, he added in a voice deep with the intensity of painful yet suppressed feeling:

“It has been decided by council of war, that it is of the utmost importance that my person should not fall into the hands of the enemy. It has, therefore, been urged upon me, much against my personal wishes, that I make a determined attempt to leave this point and reach Quebec, and there make a firm and what is hoped will be a successful stand for

the saving of our country. With a consideration of the extreme weakness of this place, I cannot deny the wisdom of the conclusion. Aware of the impossibility of obtaining assistance from Britain or the armies under Gage and Howe, I must perforce waive personal feelings at the indignity of the course proposed, and acquiesce.”

“When does Your Excellency purpose taking this most unwelcome step?” Fraser inquired respectfully. “Being an absolute necessity from the exigencies of the situation, I take it it cannot in the least degree cause reflection on your honor or valor.”

“All is ready to embark at a moment’s warning,” was the gloomy reply.

“May I be informed what are the intended arrangements for the proposed venture, Sir Guy?” again asked the officer, with increasing seriousness.

“Your late services, Fraser, entitle you to my fullest confidence, but it is deemed expedient that only those who will form my escort be put in possession of the time, place and manner of the projected flight—for flight,” he continued, bitterly, “however disguised in polite phrase, it must be called.”

“That precaution need not preclude my being cognizant of them,” was the hearty rejoinder. “If I may be permitted the glory of sharing the dangers which threaten Your Excellency, and menace the sovereignty of my king in this land, I will gladly form one of your body-guard, if I may be so honored.”

Wringing his hand, Sir Guy, with an emotion he could scarce control, exclaimed:

“With men of such spirit under my command, our king need have no concern for his royal supremacy in these provinces. I have affairs of moment to arrange and letters to write which are necessary in the contingency of my never reaching Quebec, which is among the possibilities, nay, rather I may say, probabilities; as the chances are one to a hundred of our being able to successfully pass down the river, along the shores of which, for fifty miles, are bivouacked the troops of the enemy, their batteries commanding the situation.”

CHAPTER III.

VOWS.

On the evening of the double birthday, in spite of the portents of war, and the shadow of the monk's cell over the young life of Leon, the Château de Lérie, with fires aglow in *salon* and lady's chamber, was *en fête* for its celebration with dance and feast. The lights from clusters of candles threw soft beams over the walls of the old reception-rooms, and a yellow gleam of cheer and welcome through every casement-pane; reflecting on the polished brasses of andirons and sconces until they seemed to be almost lights in themselves. Garlands of green hemlock from the woods wreathed pillar and cornice, entwining the flags of England and France as peacefully as if those who served under them had never crossed swords or drenched them with each others' blood.

Above the wainscoting hung portraits of dainty patched and powdered ladies, and bewigged, lace-ruffled gallants, ancestors of the de Léries, who had in their time figured in many a *bal masqué* and royal *fête* of the queens of France.

In one of the court dames there was a striking resemblance in feature and expression to Thérèse, although there was lacking in the girl's face

a certain look of craft and cruelty which hardened the otherwise dark beauty of Jacqueline, Comtesse de St. Leger, a great-aunt of Madame de Lérie. She had been in the train of the arch-plotter, Catherine de Medici, and according to some mysterious family legends, it was suspected that she had been her accomplice in more than one court intrigue and tragedy. Her skirt of black and gold with bands of embroidery, and doublet of white and silver tissue with large jewelled buttons, were the delight and despair of Thérèse, whose ambition centered in one day being wedded to a French noble, and robed like her whose picture might have been taken for her own.

Upon the floors, polished to the gloss of satinwood were reflected the rich velvets and old-time ruffs and laces of the portraits, with the sheen from satin and silk of the gathering guests. For those whose bent lay toward play and games of hazard, spindle-legged card-tables were disposed in convenient recesses, and for the ease and comfort of the dancers, there were stiff-backed chairs, upholstered in damask silks in the taste of du Barry or the Pompadour, or in tapestries wrought in days gone by, by the needles of the de Lérie ladies in the turret-chambers of the château castles of old France.

Toward midnight, to the rhythm of merry fiddling, the dancing was at its gayest, as light-footed, and apparently without a thought of care, as if the morrow held no ominous uncertainties. In the rooms, filled with grace and beauty, the eyes of the young dancers rivaled in brightness the gems of the stately maternal dames, who, sitting around the walls, exchanged pleasantries and the latest bits of gossip of the town.

Watchful and wise, after the manner of discreet and prudent matrons, they sat in the enjoyment of their well-bred dignity, bowing graciously to each new arrival, more especially the eligibles, complacently aware of their own mature charms. They discussed confidentially the weddings and betrothals of the past year and the marriages in prospect, in every item, from the color and texture of the gowns to the number and quality of the linen sheets and other furnishings that the mother of the last little fiancée had stored away in great dower-chests for the bridal. As the subject warmed, aided by some good port, which had mellowed among the cobwebs of the cellars since the natal day of the young host and hostess, to be decanted on that occasion, they whispered choice bits of news and even scandal from the French and English Courts.

Madame de Lérie, turning to her neighbor and intimate friend, who sat upon her right, and wishing to engage her in conversation, said:

“Dear Madame Davenant, ‘tis said the young queen, Marie Antoinette, is exceeding fond of gaiety and display; as is only right, I say, in one so young and beautiful. She is but four years older than my little Thérèse, and surely no one would look for wisdom or discretion in that silly child over yonder. I, for one, can see naught amiss in her love for dress and the Court’s gay doings, with scarce a year gone by since her crowning. The king is otherwise minded, so I hear, and sits but ill at ease upon his throne, lamenting that he was born to wear a crown. That is to be deplored, as our gay France is fond of royal pageantry and loves not a cloister-court, or monk upon the throne; but ‘tis said that at last he loves so well his queen that he can deny her naught that she desires.”

“Pardon me, Madame, if I venture to say that such a case of domestic felicity and fidelity is somewhat novel in the royal palaces of France. I trust the disfavor of certain cliques in Paris, of which we have heard, omens no evil fortune for your sweet queen; for even a crown does not always save a head, as it availed naught for our Stuart king, who, ye remember, was wedded to your Princess Henrietta of Navarre,” was the rejoinder.

“Who can tell?” was the answer; “for already there are enemies at Court who, as you say, speak ill things of our queen to her hurt; her innocent follies seeming to please as little as her lord’s uncourtly manners and stiff, unprincely ways.”

With a glance around, and lowered voice, Mistress Davenant then whispered behind her fan:

“I too have news by the last post from my cousin, who ye know is Maid-of-Honor to Queen Charlotte. She hints that her Majesty bears much anxiety regarding the health of King George, who is subject to strange mental whims, which give grave concern to his ministers and the peers of the realm. My cousin too has a grievance of her own. It has been a matter of private merriment among the ladies of the Household, that her Majesty should display so extreme a passion for collecting gems and wearing jewels, and yet she has decreed that the women of the Court appear no more in the enormous headdresses which are all the vogue.”

“Well, I most certainly approve your good queen’s sense and taste, for these stiff hoops and monstrous cushions on our heads are getting past

enduring,” sighed the hostess, pointing to the expanse of her peach-blossom brocade. Then letting the slight frown creasing her brow disappear in a smile, she waved her mittened hand toward the dancers, saying:

“Look, dear madame, at our children stepping the minuet; truly youth can carry off with grace any mode, however *outré*, be it hoop or headgear!” and she gazed fondly at the bright creatures trying to compress their youthful spirits within the dignity and stiff formality of the stately measures of the dance.

Truly it was a pretty sight! Phyllis, with blue eyes shining in the innocent glamor of the alluring figures, moved through their mazes with lips parted in a smile no man with a heart could see unmoved; her cheeks flaming pink as the brodered rose-buds clambering over the snowy satin of her gown. Her unpowdered hair was coiled high, and with bare arms and neck, white as the delicate lace shading her low-cut bodice, she was sweet enough to have snared an anchorite from his cell. As she sank in the deep courtesy, waving her painted fan, or stooping, gathered her silken skirts to trip under the crossed swords of the chevaliers, she was as fair a vision as ever made glad the heart of doting mother, or

tempted the soul of passionate lover; while Thérèse, gay as a tropic bird, in cerise-colored satin, was bewildering in her dark, brunette beauty.

An hour later Leon was leading Phyllis through the measures of a *contré-dance*. Though fine as any courtier of his house, with purple velvet coat, flowered vest and gold buckles on his shoes and at the knee, his gay attire ill suited the gravity of his deportment and looks. As Phyllis moved by his side, his face wore an expression that she could not understand, and throughout the evening his conduct had seemed strange and unaccountable to her. He was moody and restless, at times appearing to avoid her, now talking excitedly in loud gaiety, and anon becoming silent and taciturn. Remembering that he had seemed actually forgetful that he was pledged to her for this dance, she had greeted him with a pretty pout, saying, in quaint displeasure, as she swept him a mocking curtsy:

“A gallant courtier ye would make, Leon, to be so recreant in claiming a damsel’s favor!”

“What matters it? Courts and fair damsels are not for me!” he ejaculated

so sharply that, offended, she remained silent.

When the figure was ended, with a formal bow he seated her, and with seeming indifference passed on to join Thérèse, who was coquetting with her partner in another part of the room. Phyllis, although for a moment piqued, was also partly amused at his unwonted seriousness and apparently causeless tragic manner; and with a touch of the dawning maidenly desire to test her power, at the first opportunity she slipped out of the nearest doorway, and hastening along the corridor leading to the picture-gallery, hid behind an inlaid cabinet, in which the Marquise de Vaudreuil had kept her newfangled Sèvres china. Wilful in her wish to punish him, yet ready to laugh and forgive at the first sign of contrition; running away from him, yet hoping he would seek her, she waited with mood as changeful as the moon flecking the floor with diamonds of light, as its beams streamed through the many-paned windows.

Soon, in the lights and shadows, she descried him searching among the pillars, and knew he had missed her. Palpitating with mischief, her mouth quivering with a gay, breathless laugh, she was forced to press her handkerchief over her lips lest she betray her hiding-place. At length, as in his haste he stumbled against a chair, she was unable

longer to restrain her mirth, and a ripple of the sweetest laughter, with a flutter of her white dress, revealed her whereabouts.

In a moment he was by her side, and had her in his arms, while words of burning passion flowed out so impetuously that her light laughter died away into a cry of mingled fear and surprise, as, struggling, she exclaimed:

“Leon de Lérie, ye have no right thus to do! Release me at once or I will call for help!”

Instantly his arms fell by his side, and, white and faint, she sank into the nearest window-seat. Looking down upon her, his young face drawn and grey in the spectral moonlight, he said, brokenly:

“Yes, Phyllis, my darling, I let you go, but I must speak! I love you! I have loved you ever since I have known what love is. I cannot remember the time when you were not the idol of my boyish heart. I could ever bear anything, dare anything for your sake. Once in our childhood, when I fell bruised and bleeding from yon tree, striving to reach a red-cheeked apple you had fancied, I felt the pain no more, when you

kissed me with little, tender lips, and cried bitterly over my hurt. Now I am a man, and my love is but the stronger, my Phyllis. In the church the pictured saints and angels have ever seemed less fair to me than you are; and in my prayers, as I behold our blessed Virgin, methinks I see your eyes in hers. I have lived all my life with no thought of the future but with you, my love. I would be ever brave for your sake—good, that I might the better mate with you—and rich that I might the easier give you happiness—but now”—he stopped, and with voice choked in a sob, buried his convulsively-working face in his hands; the tears of a man’s deep agony falling through his fingers as he fell on his knees at her feet.

In a moment, with all traces of trifling and chiding fled, and conscious in her tender pity of a deep affection for the boy who had playfully tormented and manfully defended her with dash and vigor all their lives, the girl bent over him, as the color slowly returned to cheek and lip, saying gently:

“Dearest Leon, there is no need for grief. If, as you say, you love me, all may yet be well. Of a truth I have not thought of a love for me other than that you bear our dear Thérèse; but give me time to look deep

down into my heart, and perchance I may find love is there, or some foreshadowing of it; for I fain would ease this sorrow.”

With a groan, as if his soul were rent in twain, he raised his head, started to his feet, and recoiled, shrinking from her arms, which at the sight of his tears she had thrown around him as in their childish days, crying:

“Oh, *mon Dieu!*—unclasp your arms, their soft touch doth madden me, sending my blood like molten lead coursing to my heart, to scorch and blast it!”

“But, Leon, have I not said that though I may not love you now, I will strive to, as perhaps ‘tis unmaidenly to do,” was the faint reply.

“Tell me you will never love me!” he cried. “Scorn me!—flee me!—‘Twere better thus, then gladly and with true heart can I take my vows and bury under monkish cowl my ill-starred love, and in unceasing vigils, prayers and scourgings tear my idol from its throne!”

At the vehemence of his words and strangeness of his manner, something

of her fear returned.

“Leon, speak not so wildly,” she said soothingly, “else I shall think something hath turned your brain. Close study and too hard striving with dry Latin themes, or mayhap the austere piety of the good fathers, has filled your head, I fear, with fancies that are quite unreal.”

Clasping her to him again in uncontrolled agitation, with burning kisses on brow, lip and cheek, he muttered hoarsely:

“No, I swear, I cannot, will not, vow to aught save you, my own, my bride!” Then suddenly clutching his brow between his hands, he staggered back and pushing her almost rudely from him sobbed: “Alas! I am vowed to the Church. But this morn my parents have made known to me, that ere the waning of yon moon, now limning you like a saint in heavenly light, I go to my novitiate in the Jesuit order of monks!”

With a cry, her face whitened with horror, the girlish figure, in its silks and laces, shrank back appalled, as she comprehended his words.

With face buried in her hands, she cried out piteously:

“Oh, Leon, dear Leon, this must not be!” and he, with heart a-throbbing with agony, and not daring to touch even her hand with his own, besought her in a low, unnatural voice:

“Phyllis, for the love of Heaven do not weep so, or, I swear, in yonder river I will drown myself and my misery!”

Seeing that at his words she strove to control herself, he suddenly turned, and, leaving her, strode away, frightening trim Lizette, carrying a tray of glasses, almost into hysterics at the sight of his stern, agonized features. With the gay ribands fluttering with fear over her beating heart, and dropping a hurried little curtsey, she asked timidly:

“Will Monsieur have some wine?”

Seizing the goblet she offered him, he drained it at a single draught, and regaining by a strong effort his customary mien, returned it, saying:

“*Merci*, Lizette.”

As he re-entered the *salon* he saw, in conversation with his mother and Mistress Davenant, Captain Basil Temple, of His Majesty's frigate the *Vulture*, wintering at Quebec. Joining them, he leaned in silence against the wainscoting. With arms folded across his breast, he stood moodily, apparently watching the dancing, but in reality jealously listening to the voice of a man whom he had seen regard Phyllis with eyes which told his heart's secret, that he too loved her with the depth and rapture of a true and honest affection.

"Ye have recently arrived from Quebec," Mistress Davenant was saying.

"Pray, Captain, tell us what is the state of things there. Is there to be another siege? My heart quakes at the very thought!"

"Ah, Captain," sighed Madame de L'erie, "I was in that unhappy town when it was attacked by your General Wolfe. Ah, me! I shudder yet to think upon it—the roar of the guns still sounds in my ears—the hurried tramp, tramp of the soldiers, I think I hear it still! Never can I forget the weeping and wringing of hands as they bore the noble Montcalm wounded off the field, and my dear brother, Tancred—brave as that Red-Cross Knight whose name he bore—home to us, dead. Alas! it was a

cruel day for us and for France,” and the lady shook her head sadly at the bitter memories.

A tear dropped on her satin fan, but waving it vigorously and using her smelling-salts, she turned to him, saying:

“Change the subject, if you please, Monsieur, and let us be merry for to-night, even if the morning should bring the cannon-balls rattling on our roofs. See my poor Leon here,” turning to her son, “the doleful tale has made him quite distressed. He has the visage of eighty instead of eighteen, and on his birthnight, too, when all should be only wit and merriment;” and with a laugh she resumed her usual lighthearted manner and address.

She was a strikingly handsome dame in her rich velvets and jeweled stomacher, with a charming grace and polished speech, learned in the courtly circles of Paris, where in her maidenhood she spent several years in the household of her grandmother, the Marquise de St. Leger. In her *salon* she met the handsome young Monsieur de Lérie, with whom she fell in love, and notwithstanding more ambitious plans of her family, wedded.

Captain Temple, though restless at the absence of Phyllis, whom he had seen leave the room, listened with polite attention to Madame's efforts to turn the conversation into livelier channels by recounting some of the reminiscences of her early days. Although a matron of almost forty years, she still loved to recall to attentive ears the conquests and love affairs of her youth. Not perceiving his divided attention, she proceeded to tell with vivacity and relish of a royal duke's mad infatuation for her as Mademoiselle St. Leger; of the duels which had been fought for the favor of her smile; and with one of her old, coquettish glances, hinted that it had been even whispered at Court, that the queen was jealous of "*La Belle Canadienne*," as she was called.

"Does Madame regret the loss of all this," he asked, "and lament the banishment from the brilliant life of the *Palais Royal* for a provincial home, and the comparative rudeness of life in a Canadian forest?"

"Ah, no, Captain, not for a moment. I loved my Louis, and none of these things weighed with me as much as would a *sou* against the Crown

jewels, so that I were by his side!”

“Ah, mother,” exclaimed Leon, a dark flush mounting to his brow as he heard her last words, “would you not then counsel your son in like case to choose love above all else?”

“Vex not yourself with questions such as these,” she answered, turning to him with some irritation, “for you well know that from your cradle you have been vowed to the celibacy of Mother Church. Love comes before all save her claims, so it behooves you to give all your thoughts to her sweet and holy service. ‘Tis well no human love but that of mother and sister divides your heart with her.”

With a low bow to conceal the bitterness that marked his features, he said abruptly:

“This scene ill befits one dedicated to so high and holy a calling. Will you, my mother, make excuse for me if I retire to muse upon the high claims of its coming duties and denials? My heart accords not with this merry scene, and with your leave I would withdraw.”

Pleased at his apparently devoted and pious frame of mind, she quickly replied:

“Certainly, my son, retire and forget not to commend to Heaven the follies and frivolities of those of us to whom has not been given such high vocation.”

As with lines of stern self-control hardening his boyish features, he disappeared, his mother turned to Mistress Davenant, who having gone in search of Phyllis, had returned with her, and asked with gratification:

“Madame, do you not think that my Leon has a noble look? With his handsome face and fine, manly form, I have feared that some maiden of the town would seek to win his love; but I am assured he is heart and hand free, for besides his sister and your own sweet Phyllis, their playmate, he cares not for other companionships. With his noble kinsmen in France, and some family interest at the Vatican, we are not without hope that some day the red hat of the Cardinal may rest upon our boy’s fine brow.”

With the keen insight which love ever gives, Basil Temple had from the

first read Leon's passion in his every act and look. Knowing they craved the same woman's heart, as he marked her affectionate intimacy with the handsome boy, he had felt the bitterness of looking into happiness through another man's eyes. The dialogue between the mother and son, to which he had, without intention, become a listener, sent a great flood of hope and joy pulsing through his heart. Something in the listlessness with which Phyllis sank into the chair he offered her, and a certain sweet pathos in her face, which was more alluring than even her usual sunny brilliance of manner, impelled him to say, as with deference and tender gallantry he bent over her, his lips almost touching the fragrant, golden hair:

“Let me, I pray, take you from the heat and fatigue of the ball-room. A sailor loves the water, and methinks a glance at it under this beautiful moon would be grateful.”

Glad of an opportunity to escape the necessity of explaining to the sharp maternal eyes the reason of her pallor, she gratefully accepted his arm, the warm blood surging to his heart at the touch of her soft hand. As they passed out from the throng, with its satins, laces and laughter, her fair head bent towards him, Madame de Lérie asked quietly,

above the mingling of voices and the soft glide of feet over the waxed floor:

“Is this a love affair, dear Madame? By my word they would make a comely couple!”

“Perhaps it may so prove, for I have thought at times that the Captain’s manner meant something more than friendship merely; an’ were it so, I would not think ill of it, as he comes of noble blood, and owns fair lands in our dear England,” Phyllis’s mother replied; and at the words her mind reverted to certain family gems and laces hid away in casket and coffer, that would not look amiss on so fair a bride.

Phyllis’s apparent pleasure at his request, as she raised her guileless eyes to thank him, and her willingness to forego the dance to accompany him, awoke in Basil Temple’s soul a new-born hope. Leading her to a curtained alcove, where the heavy tapestry fell, separating them from the sight and hearing of the revelers, and showed the river like a silver floor, he suddenly poured into her ears his ardent love, as he whispered with some agitation:

“In quieter times I might bide with patience for some assurance that you look with favor upon me ere I spoke, but at any moment I may be forced to heed the call of duty, and join my ship at Quebec. With all the grim possibilities and uncertainties that menace us, I must listen to my heart’s call and tell you now, while I may, that I love you!”

Seeing from the color that flew to her cheeks that she was startled and surprised at the sudden impetuosity of his speech and manner, he took her hand, the words coming hastily, as he protested earnestly:

“Yonder pure stars have witnessed many a love-troth, but never one more worthy woman’s taking than this I plight, if devotion, lifelong loyalty and undying service to her lightest wish be aught of worth. Never before this night has word of love to woman passed my lips, and I am unused to trick of speech and honeyed words in which to pay my court. It is a bluff sailor’s love, proffered in a rough sailor’s way, but British seamen’s hearts are hearts of oak,” and pressing her slender hand between his own strong ones, he continued vehemently: “Twere easier for this tender hand to rend yonder gnarled tree from its grasp of earth, than for me to tear your image from my heart. I can offer you, my little love, a name upon which no man can throw a shadow of dishonor, and a

fair, sweet English home, among the rose-hedges of beautiful Kent, where my forefathers have dwelt since Harold rode to Hastings Field, and which needs only you, my pure Eve, to make it Paradise.”

Beneath the girl’s young, innocent maidenhood was the honesty of true womanliness, which despises all forms of duplicity and heartless coquetry. With a tearful seriousness dimming her usually serene joyousness of spirit, she interrupted him, endeavoring to withdraw her hand, as with distressed and frightened face raised to his she said:

“Captain Temple, I am only a simple girl, unversed in the great passions, which, I have heard, move men and women to happiness or misery, but I feel something of the worth of a true man’s love, so will not by coy dallying coquet with your heart. It were more kindly far to tell you now that this you ask, I fear can never be. I grieve most sorely that I must say you nay, but trust me, there are more hapless fates than yours, whose love, though unrequited, is no mortal sin. I am not without gratitude that thus ye honor me, but I must pray you for this same love’s sake, that you do not urge me more.”

With face ashen white under his sailor bronze, and a break in his voice,

he said, the words coming with difficulty:

“‘Tis bitter, this death sentence to my love!—but a breaking heart must needs be borne with a man’s courage—and be sure that you will ever be to me the fairest, sweetest thing this wide world holds!”

Lifting her trembling hands, and pressing them unresisted to his lips, he led her back to the *salon* and mingling with some of the departing guests, passed out into the quiet of the starlit street. A few rods from the threshold, a man, whom he recognized as the body-servant of the Governor, saluted and informed him that he was the bearer of a request that he report at once at headquarters. He immediately repaired thither, and on gaining the presence of the Commander, was surprised to find him fully dressed, and with evidence of having spent the night among the papers which were scattered around in a disorder betokening haste.

“Captain Temple,” he said, “I have summoned you hither at this unusual hour, to ask that you render a service which can only be required at the hands of a brave man and an honorable gentleman. It is no less than a request that ye risk your life in accompanying me in my attempt to leave this town during the coming night.”

Basil Temple, looking straight into his superior's eyes, answered, as he threw back his head with a dauntless bearing gained from twenty generations of brave Anglo-Saxon ancestors:

“Ye do me honor, Sir Guy, in making as a request that which is my highest duty and greatest privilege to perform. Believe me, sir, life is not so sweet a thing to me that I deem it aught beside the call of my country.” Laying his hand upon his sword-hilt, he declared: “I hereby pledge my word, on the honor of an Englishman, and a sailor who has seen service with those to whom this land is under tribute of gratitude, that my life shall stand ‘twixt yours and harm. Think ye that Basil Temple, who scaled the heights with Wolfe, and shared his risk to place our flag above them, will not face any odds to keep it there?”

No further words were spoken or questions asked, but the two men exchanged looks of trust, in the unspoken tenderness which can find no warmer expression of feeling between men of the undemonstrative natures of their race; but they understood that it was a pact which only death would break. Seated side by side, the plan of escape was given in its minutest details, and as daylight shone in through the crevices of the

shutters, they separated to occupy the hours till nightfall in needful preparations, which were to be kept secret from all except those who were to assist in them, or to form the vice-regal escort.

A trustworthy boatman, whose devotion and fidelity were unquestioned, was to undertake the conduct of the expedition. He was a *voyageur* of a race of *coureurs-du-bois*, who had paddled the streams and trodden the forest paths of the North since the days of Verandrye. A hundred years of roving life in the woods and on the waters had made the family as wary, alert and keen as the Indians with whom they were so closely associated, and from whom they had learned skill in woodcraft and the secret of the trail. His great-grand sire had followed the ardent explorer, the Chevalier de La Salle, to the banks of the Mississippi and there saw him fall by a comrade's hand. Having refused to be a party to the mutinous and murderous work, he fled through the uncharted wilderness to the great lakes and Ville Marie, as Montreal was called in those early days.

Deserting her home and people, a beautiful young savage followed him to civilization, and became his wife, according to a custom which was common between the traders and trappers of New France and the native

tribes.

With that far-away strain of Indian blood in his veins, the risk and romance of the expedition captured Bissette's fancy, and he willingly and hopefully assured the Governor that his craftiness would be more than a match for the most cunning Continental who ever wore blue-and-buff.

It was deemed inexpedient to use any vessel in transport which would be conspicuous enough to attract the attention of the enemy, and the amount of provisions would, of necessity, have to be exceedingly limited. To attempt to traverse a distance of one hundred and eighty miles in small open boats in the bleak month of November, without protection for the night, with the possibility of the severity of the Canadian winter's setting in at any hour, upon men unused to meet exposure, was a prospect which might daunt the bravest; but the greater the risk and need of endurance of hardship, the higher Bissette's spirits rose. As soon as the project was confided to him, he had sent a trusty messenger to Caughnawaga, an Indian village on the south side of the river, to tell an Iroquois, known outside his tribe as "Young Moose," that the Great Father at Montreal, Chief Carleton, required his help.

A few months before, “Young Moose” had been found wandering about the streets of the town, in a half-demented condition, with symptoms upon him of some impending malady. He was placed in shelter, and when it was found that he was suffering from the scourge of the red man—smallpox—by the humane order of General Carleton, he was given the same care and treatment which would have been accorded to one of his own soldiers, had he been the victim. The result was the undying gratitude of the savage, who would, if needful, have gone to the stake for his benefactor. Bissette, knowing that his untutored instincts would be of the utmost service in the navigation of the river, resolved to trust to his savage sense of honor, and enlist him in the cause. Everything being ready, as well as haste and circumstances permitted, with as little appearance of unusual preparation as possible, shortly after sundown a few boats were moored by the bank of the river, where the gardens of the Château ran down to its brink, and not far from the spot where two hundred and fifty years before the keel of Jacques Cartier’s craft had grated on the shingle. As evening closed in, dull, leaden clouds hung heavily above, and cold gusts of rain fell, as if Nature were trying to increase the melancholy of the situation; the lights in the town flickering dimly through the mists. The deep, black waters, swirling in

treacherous eddies and dangerous currents, in no small degree heightened the peril of the intended adventure. Great caution was observed to avoid attracting attention from the people of the town, whether they were in sympathy or not, as it was known that among the citizens there were at least some who, either from disaffection or a desire to be on the winning side, might take steps to frustrate the undertaking. A sense of fear might also be aroused if it were generally known that their official head was on the point of abandoning the post. In spite of all precautions, however, a suspicion of something unusual was in the air, and in certain quarters the situation was fully understood; so that in the dreary night, a band of heavy-hearted men and frightened women followed the small party that were directing their steps to the ill-provisioned, frail little fleet, tossing at its moorings.

Some of the Governors of Canada have, in their time, set up a semi-regal state in their equipages, with liveried and powdered footmen, postilions and outriders; but that little company had no suggestion of aught save sore discomfort and perturbation. In front walked what appeared to be a peasant fisherman, apparently embarking after disposing of his morning's catch to the *habitants* and townspeople in the riverside market, to return to some little log cabin where his wife would have the home-made

candle lighted in the four-paned window and a savory fricassée of deer meat ready for her *bonhomme* when he returned cold and hungry from his journey.

It was, however, no simple St. Lawrence fisherman, but the noble knight, Sir Guy Carleton, Commander-in-Chief of the forces of Canada, where he stood for the majesty of the king. Despite his abhorrence at the seeming humiliation of the disguise, and the indignity it suggested in thus habiting, he had, with the utmost reluctance, assumed it: setting aside his personal feelings, if so by his own humiliation his country could be the better served. As he took his seat in the small craft, with Bissette in the prow, oars in hand, only eyes sharpened by the most acute suspicion could recognize him under the homespun of the fisher-folk of the river.

Next followed, similarly attired, Captain Basil Temple, Lieutenant Malcolm Fraser, and lastly, the Indian ally. The other boats were also quickly filled, in each of which had been placed a scanty supply of food and ammunition.

In utter silence, and with heads bared in spite of the falling rain, the

parties separated, those left on land returning with slow steps and hearts filled with misgivings as to the fate of the adventurous little band, upon whose wisdom and discretion the future of the king's Canadian dominions hung. As the boats moved clear of the landing, for the better deception of any stray onlooker Bissette broke out into a few lines of a familiar song, which had been sung for a hundred years and more by the boatmen and hunters of the rivers and forests, from Labrador to the foothills of the Rockies.

Where they had stood a few minutes before, a figure of a man loomed up, who, by a peculiarity of his gait, was recognized as one who was known to have openly expressed sympathy with the Revolutionists in the colonies. Peering through the darkness, he curiously scanned the boats and their occupants; but as Bissette sang louder than before in his usual care-free manner the well-known words:

“_Rouli, roulant, ma boule roulant,

En roulant, ma boule roulant,

En roulant, ma boule_”—

he knew it to be the voice and manner of the “Wild Pigeon,” as Bissette

was called from the quickness of his speech and movements, and he shouted:

“A safe voyage, Antoine!”—to which Bisette replied, as he rapidly widened the distance between them:

“Thank you, my good friend, *au revoir!*”

With arms grimly folded, Sir Guy watched the dip of the oars, and the lights along the shore growing fainter, as they passed between the islands which there dotted the river's course. He looked with stern pain at the fort, where, but a few weeks before, he had lodged Ethan Allan, the “Green Mountain Boy,” and from which he had sent him in irons to an English prison, and above which, he doubted not, the pennant of the Revolution would, ere another sunset, be waving. The swift current, which there marked the river bed, assisted the rowers in their efforts to pass out of sight, and soon nothing but the black sky above and the blacker waters below surrounded them, the banks on either side being almost invisible. Slowly the hours passed; the channel narrowed and widened, and the most critical portion was reached. As they were compelled to draw nearer the shore, a light gleamed out over the water,

appearing to move from place to place. Like all the fisher-folk of the river and gulf, Bissette was imbued with many quaint fancies and beliefs, which had their origin in the folklore of the peasantry of France. He watched the light with anxiety, his cheerfulness suddenly deserting him and giving way before his superstitious fears.

With oars poised, awe-struck, he whispered, in the broken English he had learned among the British sailors on the wharves:

“Oh, Holy Virgin, see dat light—it is *le feu follet*—what you call dat in English?—‘will-o’-de-wisp’? It was dere dat poor Joe Gauthier drown hees’lf las’ year. I’m ‘fraid me—_sapristi!_—it mean no good for us for sure!”—and crossing himself devoutly, he repeated, with voice and hands trembling, a prayer to the Virgin: “_Ave Sanctissima, ora pro nobis._”

Notwithstanding his terror, he was forced to move closer to the bank, when an abrupt turn into a small bay revealed a camp-fire, the light of which glinting on a bayonet, scattered his fears of the supernatural, as he recognized no ghostly foe, but an outpost of the Continental Army. By preconcerted signs, a touch on the shoulder was passed along, and at the

signal each lay flat in the bottom of the boat, and Bisette and the Indian, paddling softly and dexterously with their hands, were imitated by their companions in danger.

A quick challenge rang out over the water, but in the semi-darkness, the apparently empty canoes were mistaken for floating logs of timber, which frequently drifted down with the stream at that season of the year.

The night passed in cold discomfort, and at last, towards dawn, a conference resulted in the conclusion that an attempt must be made to land at some point on the north shore and find harborage. Bisette accordingly headed his boat towards a little village where he frequently spent his winters when the river navigation was closed.

Near the bank lived a friend, whose guilelessness would never think of questioning the honesty of purpose of any one in Antoine Bisette's company, and under whose roof lodging and shelter might be found for the hours of daylight, which already showed signs of breaking. After an hour's pull he saw the smoke of his friend's fire, and thoughts of rest and comfort in the little cabin cheered the belated travelers in their cold, wet garments. As they touched land, Bisette jumped ashore, and

was followed by the others as quickly as their stiffened limbs would permit. He led the way, and was soon presenting his friends to his good Jean Baptiste, to whom he explained that they would like to spend the day by his fire, as one of them—pointing to Sir Guy—was too fatigued to proceed without rest. Taking his black pipe from his mouth, Baptiste volubly bade them welcome, and with shrugs of the shoulders and gestures of approval handed them into the warm kitchen, and drew out the home-made chairs for their accommodation. Being a trapper in the employ of the Hudson Bay Company, he had gained a slight knowledge of English, so in a mixture of both languages he exclaimed, as he clapped his thigh:

“*Oui, oui*, Antoine, an’ my good Marie will soon have a dish of fish steaming hot, an’ bread fit, for sure, for King Louis hees’lf,” and he pointed to a three-legged kettle on the crane from which a savory steam was escaping.

Suddenly the Indian struck an attitude of attention, and in a few minutes the others heard a sound from without. A rattle of arms startled Bissette to his feet, and glancing through the window, he saw a party of American troops advancing to the door, who in a moment filed into the kitchen with the evident intention of billeting themselves for

breakfast.

Bissette, with a leisurely swagger, went up to the chimney-corner, and giving his host a signal to be silent, with a rough shake on the shoulder of Sir Guy, who had fallen fast asleep on a settle by the hearth, he shouted to him as if he were a comrade of the lumber camp:

“Wake up, Pierre! you lazy dog, let us be on the move. *Pardieu!* you have snored long enough, and now must make room for these good *gentilhommes*, who no doubt already know as well as we the flavor of Marie’s good *bouillon*.”

Though so suddenly and roughly roused, Sir Guy understood, and entered at once into the by-play, and drowsily rubbing his eyes, hid his features until reaching the outside of the house, where with apparent indifference and unconcern he followed the others to the boats. Without having had a chance to taste the food, whose savoury seasoning still lingered on their senses, and with but a fraction of the journey performed, a heavy silence fell upon the party.

Two hours passed, when the Iroquois, grunting an exclamation, pointed

around a slight bend in the shore, where appeared a small but well-built brig. It was impossible to pass unobserved, so trusting to their disguise, they rowed alongside, when it was found to be manned by a British crew, by whom they were cheerfully received on board. A favoring breeze springing up, sails were set, and two days later they dropped anchor below the City on the Rock. After the perils of the journey, the sight of the grey bastions and strong gates lying in the golden light of the autumn morning made it seem to them as veritable a city of refuge as was ancient Shechem to the manslayer. With cheerful alacrity the refugees took to their boats to effect a landing. A few half-drunken sailors, returning from a night's carousal in Lower Town, staggered past just as they touched the shore. Elbowing what they took to be a timid fisherman, one of them, with a rough laugh, slapped the Governor familiarly on the back, and calling to his companions, said:

“Heigh ho! my hearties, here’s a pretty lot of lubbers coming ashore after a night’s fishing, and not a fin aboard. Somewhat’s amiss here! Heave to, my lads; let’s search their lockers and see if they have not stowed away in yonder hulk some good tobacco of Virginia or rare old Kentucky whiskey.”

“That I will, Tom,” said the one nearest to the speaker, “for if they are trying to hoodwink His Majesty, it’s Jack Tar’s bounden and plain duty to confiscate the stuff in the name of the king. What do you say, my lads, to heaving the whole crew of them into the water, as they did the good British tea in the bay at Boston town; for by the cut of their jib I take them to be Yankee spies, or smugglers. I have an old score of my own to settle with the whole tribe, for cuts on my back from the hand of one of them, that I’ll carry till I go to Davy Jones’ locker.” In a drunken rage at the memory of forty lashes he had received at a whipping-post, he swaggered up to Fraser, and giving him a blow, shouted:

“Give an account of yourselves, my masters, or by yonder rag floating from the main-topsail of the stout ship *Vulture* there in port, we’ll hang every man o’ ye from the yard-arm, or flog ye lashed to the mast before ye can count a score.”

One of the party landing, and among the first to step ashore, going up to the sailors and raising his cap, which had been drawn down over his eyes, revealed to their astonished gaze the captain of the *Vulture*.

The suddenness of the encounter immediately sobered them, and pulling

their forelocks, and with an uneasy hitch at their belts, they looked awkwardly at each other, expecting to be at once sent to the lock-up and put in irons.

In a few curt words Captain Temple told them that he was in the escort of the Governor-General of the Province, who wished to pass unrecognized to Castle St. Louis on the Citadel.

With zeal and heartiness they at once hastened to assist the tired refugees to land, and by a winding path around the face of the cliff led them to the fort that frowned above. Reaching it, and with no further need of disguise or subterfuge, Sir Guy again assumed his position as commander of the army, and proceeded to make a last and desperate resistance to the foes already lurking within sight of the walls. When the news spread throughout the garrison that Carleton had arrived at the town to take direction of the defences against the threatened bombardment, and to prevent its capture, a wave of courage and determination to resist to the last extremity took possession of every citizen and soldier within the walls; but in Montreal, the departure of the vice-regal party, when it became known, resulted in a panic of apprehension and utter hopelessness. A council was there convened to

consider what was the best attitude to assume on the appearance of the enemy. Monsieur de Lérie and other hot-headed spirits advocated resistance, but Colonel Davenant counselled throwing open the gates, after having, through a deputation of reputable citizens, come to the best possible terms. What the result of such a parley would be was a matter of much uneasiness, and the sudden clang of a church bell for vespers, or a horseman riding rapidly through the streets, made the frightened women clasp their children in their arms for shelter, and pale-faced men start to the doors to listen anxiously for sounds of alarm. Family plate and jewels were carefully concealed in safe hiding-places in the underground vaults or cellars with which every house was furnished, and each householder strengthened his shutters, bars and bolts. Every man capable of bearing arms was drilled, ammunition was served out, food stored, and the town as fast as possible placed in the state of a city prepared for a siege.

In the De Lérie mansion domestic clouds added to the general gloom. Thérèse, who usually danced and sang about the house like a bird, flitted uneasily from room to room, complaining to her mother that everything was so dreary and lonely, for thrice had she called her dear Phyllis to come and walk with her on the garden paths, as the day was

bright for the season, but she ever made excuse that she had no heart for pleasure more.

“I tell her,” she said, “that I for one refuse to be frightened because the soldiers of that handsome Monsieur George Washington should come marching into our town. It will be so romantic to be captive like ladies of the olden time besieged in their castles. At the siege of Calais, you must remember, in the time of our good King John, how the wives and daughters besought clemency for their lords from the Plantagenet Prince; so we will melt our enemies’ hearts with our tears and beauty. I hope to find that they have more sentiment and sensibility than these English officers, who are so stiff and formal in their manners that I am always ill at ease in their company. And even our own French—ah! they are not now like the chevaliers and lovers we read of in the dramas of Molière—who thought themselves happy to be permitted to die for their lady-loves. They forget how to court nowadays, it seems to me, and only think of what good bargains they can make, and seem not to remember that a pretty girl likes to know that they care more for her favor than the price of pelts or the prospect of the crops along the river!”

“You forget that your brother is a Frenchman, child!” said her mother

reprovingly.

“The worst of all is that my Leon has so suddenly changed! Were he already a monk in serge and sandals, he could not seem to be further above me—his little sister—to whom now in a few days at most he must make his adieux. If my silly, lighthearted ways are distasteful to one who is about to take vows, why should he also shun our dear Phyllis, who is all sweetness and whom we love as a sister?” was the fretful complaint.

“You misjudge your brother, Thérèse; he is never ungentle in word or act, especially to women; for he comes of a knightly, chivalrous race,” protested his mother with increased irritation.

“Well, only this morning after matins in the Church of Notre Dame, when I put my arm in his, as I have done a hundred times before, and thinking to please him, said: ‘We will go and seek Phyllis,’ he suddenly drew away from me coldly and frowned so darkly that my poor heart quaked with fear. The sacristan, as he passed, looked strangely at us on seeing his discourteous manners, and as he heard him mutter angrily: ‘_Vade retro, Satanas!_’ which I find to be the Latin for ‘Get thee behind me, Satan.’

Why he should liken me to the devil, who do try to say my *aves* regularly, fast on holy days, and for penance wore all last week my darkest clothes, when I so love gay petticoats and bright bow-knots, is past my understanding! Ah! the world seems sadly out of joint!” she exclaimed, sighing discontentedly.

“‘Twas that your brother would have you remember that ‘tis not fitting that one vowed to celibacy should seek a woman’s companionship; and never till this moment have I realized that our little Phyllis is no longer a child. But if the manners of our compatriots appear so brusque to you, what may we look for from these men of this New England, as they call it; whose sires, many of them, were so straight-laced that even so much as smiling on the Sundays, hearkening to a song-bird, or smelling of a flower on the way to worship, was deemed a mortal sin. Their solemn visages, too, were in proper keeping with their sad-hued garments; the men in hats like sugar-loaves, with doublets of coarse brown cloth, their only extravagance of fashion being broad, white linen collars; and the women, in their dove-colored gowns and plain caps, in no wise livelier than they. I have been told that even their sailors, who are not always apt to remember their litanies when out of sight of the church steeples, changed their morning and evening watches by the

singing of hymns and psalm-tunes. With their bare meeting-houses and solemn feasts, a very different kind of folk were they, rebels even then against their king, to the loyal, courtly Frenchmen who first settled this land. Coming hither to escape the worldly gaities of the cavaliers of Charles Stuart's court, they were in a sense banished, and in no wise like de Champlain, de Frontenac, and other chevaliers who sailed from our dear France with the great Bourbon seals upon their commissions!" remonstrated Madame de L erie, with something of scorn.

"This might all be even as you say, but 'tis said, too, that many of these Colonials boast of their descent from those same cavaliers of merry King Charles's time, who left the court for the forests of Virginia; driven across the sea for love and service of their king. They are a race of brave and gallant gentlemen, and not by any means commonplace planters and traders. They drive in great coaches, drawn by four or six horses, and live in lordly fashion, ordering their households and estates in their southern lowlands like those of their gentle ancestry."

"And now that I think of it," she continued, "our own de Champlain, although an Indian fighter, was almost as much a *religieux* as the

Puritans themselves. In his day Quebec, they say, was a shrine, and instead of ordinary converse about hunting and conquest and toasting pretty women, histories of the martyrs and lives of the saints were read around at his table, as in a monk's refectory, the chapel bell ringing from morning until night. Whatever they may do in that prim Boston town, I have heard that the Virginians at least dance with grace and skill, and dress like gentle folk; and this Washington, 'tis said, is more a king than many who have worn a crown. I remember to have heard it said that my father fought hand to hand with him on the sore field at Fort du Quesne, when the British prisoners vowed that, though the victory lay with us, if that stupid General Braddock had taken counsel with Colonel Washington, the young Virginian under him, the day would have fallen out otherwise than it did." Throwing back her curls from her flushed face, she added, hotly: "I would his troops were even now knocking at our gates!"

"Ah! traitor child, would you have an alien flag float o'er our city walls?" asked her mother in startled disapprobation.

"Is not this three-crossed flag of England that waves over our dear New France an alien flag to us, mother?" Thérèse exclaimed, her black eyes

flashing. “I, of French blood, whose noble line goes back to that brave knight who served with Charlemagne, care not for any standard save the liliated flag of France, which they have here trailed low in the dust. All others are alike to me!”

“My dear child,” her mother said sadly, “I fear this pride of birth and race will but embitter what it cannot mend.”

“I am fairly devoured with *ennui* in this dull town, and shall welcome anything that will break the sense of weariness, and the foolish dread of what may be a happy change. Are we not truly prisoners now within these narrow walls? We cannot pass without the gates to ramble in the woods, but a rude soldier points his gun, and demands some foolish password, which I invariably forget, or stupidly get wrong. Only yesterday, when I should, as I was told, have given the password of the day to the sentry, and repeated the words, ‘Good King George,’ I blundered, and said instead, ‘Good George Washington!’ And as to driving in the moonlight by the river to where the white rapids of Lachine foam and boil above the sunken rocks, that is not to be so much as thought of even, lest I should be caught and carried off to New York or Boston by some of these bluecoats. I protest I would scarce have the wish to

refuse a romance so very tempting and novel these dull times, had I the chance; and which I may, for as that English play-writer, Master William Shakespeare, of Stratford, hath well said, ‘Beauty provoketh thieves more than gold,’” she continued perversely.

CHAPTER IV.

MARCH HE WILL.

Some two months before, in the town of New Haven, Connecticut, two men were conversing on the theme of which all in the colonies, men and women alike, were thinking and talking—the stubborn campaign on which they had entered with such a mixture of rage and despair. One was a trader of the town, who had left his apothecary shop near the water-front to take to the field.

His companion, a man of a fine presence, showing camp training in his erect figure and soldierly bearing, was seated, but suddenly rising and placing his hand on the arm of the man pacing impatiently before him, he said:

“Arnold, be advised! Temper your passion with reason, for ‘twere the height of folly and rashness to carry out this purpose of marching without orders.”

At the words, spoken with persuasion yet with the authority of one who had seen service in the king’s army, Benedict Arnold suddenly wheeled about. Irritably shaking off the restraining hand, with hair pushed angrily back, and the hot blood crimsoning his handsome, swarthy face, he looked every inch a fighter, as he exclaimed with passionate vehemence:

“‘Tis easy for you, Vanrosfeldt, to counsel patience, who have already won your spurs. Think ye that I can longer bide here like a hound in leash? No! I swear only Almighty God will prevent my marching to Boston town, orders or no orders; for hark’ee, Vanrosfeldt, I am not made of the stuff that waits, as only yestermorn I gave this town good proof. Chancing upon a drunken dog of a sailor belaboring his whimpering wife with a rope’s end, I was minded to give him a taste of it himself, and at the public whipping-post hard by, then and there, gave him forty such lashes as his knavish back will bear the marks of for many a day to come. That is how Ben Arnold waits, so mark me, I lead my men to Boston

town to-morrow!”

“Well,” replied Vanrosfeldt calmly, “if to such a course you are committed, ‘twere useless, methinks, to parry words further. If I cannot dissuade you, I will at least not hinder your headstrong project.

Perforce we must take the same road, as I am about to join the camp at Massachusetts Bay.”

“I would not be averse to taking advantage of your greater military knowledge on the march,” said Arnold eagerly, “as I am more sailor than soldier, and these young volunteers from the College halls are more used to books than muskets, and the field of game than of battle.”

Accordingly, proceeding to sack the arsenal, Arnold set forth in the early morning at the head of his student volunteers, to join the growing army of patriots on the banks of the River Charles. Vanrosfeldt, as he glanced at the irregular ranks, unskilled in the use of the arms they awkwardly carried, said to Arnold, who already was showing himself something of a leader: “Arnold, America seems lacking in everything save men to fight!”

“Aye,” was the answer, “but they come, every man of them, from good fighting stock! ‘Tis New England ‘gainst Old England!”

On reaching the camp, that this was true seemed plain to be seen, the former case woefully so. To Vanrosfeldt, with his practised eye, they seemed a nondescript and motley-looking crowd, but there was something in their look and mien that showed they remembered from whence they had sprung. Sorry looking soldiers truly they were, bivouacked in the rude huts of stones and turf that were scattered over Cambridge Common, and which were patched up with boards and weatherworn sail-cloth which had been cast aside after long years of service among the fogs of the Atlantic fishing-banks. Among the men what was lacking in experience was made up for in courage. They remembered that not far distant was a grim, grey rock on which their Puritan forefathers had landed, and that they were the sons of those old “Roundheads” who had fought with Cromwell at Naseby and Marston Moor, shouting as they charged Charles Stuart’s ringleted Cavaliers “God with us!” The British held possession of the town across the river, but from the white farmhouses among the orchards, the wives and mothers brought food and needful clothing to sons and husbands, striving with the smiling bravery of pale lips to quiet the anxious beating of their hearts, that their soldiers’ courage might not

be lessened by their tears.

On an afternoon in early September the rays of the setting sun, slanting through the branches of the elms, cast long, wavering shadows over the pleasant fields of Cambridge, through which the River Charles ran under yellowing willows to the sea. Following a cow-path across the green, two soldiers of the patriot army were returning from Vassel House, a handsome mansion near by, from which its owner, a rabid Royalist, had fled some time before. Early in July, General George Washington had taken command of the army under one of those same Cambridge elms, since which time the house had been his headquarters.

As they walked, the men carried themselves with the assured gait of those having a firm purpose in view, and the doing of a great task before them. Such a frame of mind was befitting, as to them had been committed the making of a venture of imminent risk, one to which few men, even the bravest, were equal. Benedict Arnold, a look of fierce delight kindled in his eyes, turning to his companion and reading as they walked, said:

“Hark’ee, Vanrosfeldt, to our orders given herein: ‘It is intended by

the Congress at Philadelphia, that ye proceed to co-operate with the expedition under Generals Schuyler and Montgomery, and proceed to Quebec, by way of the waters and mountains of Maine. Upon the success of this enterprise, of preventing the King's troops in Canada from hectoring us on the north, the safety of the whole country largely depends.'” Stopping in the path, and drawing himself up to his full height, Vanrosfeldt said, laconically and with decision:

“We can do it, Arnold!”

Accordingly, a few days later, their detachment marched through the streets of Olde Town, or Cambridge, as it had become the fashion to style it, on the way to the northern border; betwixt which lay leagues of unbroken wilderness and unknown perils and hardship.

As the force passed the gates of the school, called for godly John Harvard, they found that, unmindful of the grave disquiet which the occupation of the premises by the troops from Connecticut had caused the worthy masters, a group of students had gathered under the walls. They lustily cheered the Patriots marching by, although they knew full well that each man had, in the well-filled pouch at his belt, a goodly supply

of bullets obtained from the melting down and casting of the leaden roof and organ-pipes of the chapel in the campus.

Arnold, in command, walked in front, in the full regimentals of a colonel in the Continental Army, with Ensign Vanrosfeldt bearing the pennant of the Revolution, the morning light striking bravely on sword-hilt and sling-buckle. They were followed by a heterogeneous company, but, for spirited character and iron frames and wills, the picked men of the colonies. The column of twelve hundred men was made up of veterans of the Indian wars, who were learned in the cunning and savage wiles of the painted race, had heard the hideous scalp-yell, and been accustomed since childhood to the menace hanging over border settlements. Among them were hunters, knowing in woodcraft and trained in the use of the bark canoe. Born to a knowledge of the Indian, and having spent their lives on the outposts of the frontier, they were as keen on the wilderness trail as the wariest redskin who ever fired a settler's shanty, or strung scalp to his wampum belt. Crack shots, they were accustomed to forest fighting, knowing often that if their first ball did not tell, there would be no chance for another. Every backwoodsman was above all things skilled in the chase, which was no mean training for the field of battle.

Bringing up the rear was a body of men with the free, springing step of the mountaineers of Kentucky and Virginia, each carrying a rifle, with a tomahawk and scalping-knife in his belt. Sinewy veterans of border warfare, they seemed to carry in the ruddy tan of their cheeks and clearness of eye, the breath of the sweet, pure air of their native hills. Clad for the most part in the dress of their plumed and painted foes, they wore fringed and tasseled hunting-shirts, and leggings of buckskin, girdles worked in beads, and, on their heads, caps of coon or mink skin, the tail hanging down the back. With their long locks falling over the capes on their shoulders, they were magnificent in appearance and stature, not one being less than six feet in height. Echoes of the despairing strife of their brethren on the northern tidewater had penetrated through the dim woods to their mountain fastnesses, and they had hurried through leagues of shadowy forest to help those fighting on the seaboard, and with them to strike a blow for freedom from what they deemed injustice.

They were led by Daniel Morgan, a Virginian, of a famous family of Indian fighters. A hero in buckskin and a giant in stature, he had won a name for bravery and daring unequalled by any in the great woods of

the Virginian frontier. He had left the blue mountains, the woodland haunts, the wild joy of the chase, and the camp-fire under the southern, balsam-breathing pines, for death, it might be, but fight he would!

Scattered among the ranks were farmers in every variety of homespun shirts and small-clothes, home-knit socks and cowhide shoes. At their sides were slung powder-horns, and in their toil-hardened hands were the trusty flintlocks that always hung ready over every chimney-corner in the settlements. Though followers of the plow, they had not forgotten the skill of their forefathers, who went to meeting-house with a psalm-book in one hand, and a gun in the other.

Arriving at Newburyport, scarcely had the first of the transports waiting for their conveyance been filled, when Vanrosfeldt, who was directing the embarkation, descried a small company of men approaching. They were covered thickly with the dust of the ten leagues over which they had come, and staggered with fatigue and the weight of the heavy muskets they carried. Their leader, though under medium height, was a striking youth, well proportioned, athletic in figure, and with a certain allurements of manner of unusual attractiveness. His features, though fine, were irregular, but this was forgotten in the beauty of the

eye, which was full, a deep hazel, and with an expression which, once seen, could never be forgotten. Though little more than a boy, his countenance already bore traces of a wild and wayward nature. His face was haggard from recent illness, and the hurried and lengthy journey on foot, for which, in spite of all remonstrance, he had risen from a sick-bed.

Interrupted in his engrossing occupation, Arnold turned to the young man, whom he had known since his childhood, and with a frown said testily:

“Aaron, how came ye hither?”

With a low bow, and pointing to his comrades, he replied:

“With this brave following, whom I have equipped for service, I have marched the thirty miles ‘twixt here and Boston. Six good men and true, we offer our swords on this crusade.”

“What folly is this, lad?” exclaimed Arnold. “Did I not hear of you ill in your chamber, dosed with sassafras tea, and well bled by the leech,

but one week past? This wilderness upon which we soon will enter is fit only for the foot of trappers and savages, and is no place for you, headstrong boy: so return forthwith to your foster-mother, good Mistress Shippen, as winding the silks for Mistress Peggy's tambour-frame is better suited to your years and taste than fighting British redcoats."

His air of depreciation and patronage exasperated the youth to anger.

"And I, in turn," he sneered, "would counsel you, Master Apothecary, to hie ye back to your shop of drugs on Water Street, New Haven, where I warrant ye have killed more men by your pills than ever ye shall with your bullets. If there were aught that might change my purpose, 'tis the thought of the sweet Peggy, who, I trow, would have wept her pretty eyes out had I had opportunity to bid her farewell; but even a kiss from her tempting lips would not have availed to deter me. Go I will! for neither argument nor persuasion will avail to change any purpose upon which Aaron Burr has set his mind." And lightly springing towards the boats, and hailing his companions to follow, he stubbornly took his place in the one which had just been loosed from its moorings.

An off-shore breeze rising freshly, and the tide with them, the course

was taken up and continued until the mouth of the Kennebec River was reached, when the prows of the little fleet were turned up stream. Some facts about the route had been obtained from a party of Indians who had recently visited General Washington's headquarters. It had been learned from them that, three suns' journey from the big river of the Iroquois, a highland separated the waters flowing into it from those running south to the sea. From this information, and a rude map of the region in his possession, Arnold determined to leave the river and strike due north to find the summit which divided the St. Lawrence valley from the water sources of New England. Crossing that, he hoped to reach the head of the Chaudière, and from thence make descent upon Quebec. The task of penetrating a trackless, unknown wilderness was one of great hazard, demanding singular courage and self-reliance; but it was undertaken with undaunted and resolute spirit, and its difficulties manfully faced by leaders and men.

So exceedingly toilsome and laborious, however, did it prove, and so almost insurmountable the natural obstacles which presented themselves as they advanced, that even the hardy woodsmen, inured as they were to the rough experience of forest life, oftentimes faltered, and at nightfall were glad to sink down by the side of a pond on beds hastily

made of pine or hemlock, and fall asleep in utter exhaustion. Week after week passed, and but little progress was made, until, with the food almost exhausted, slow starvation stared them in the face; and with the breaking out of malignant disease, terrible gaps were daily made in the ranks; to advance or turn back, seeming to be equally fraught with peril.

At last they sighted the high land that they had so intrepidly sought, and crossing it, pushed on down into the valley; although each man knew that they were pressing forward to assault a well-garrisoned, well defended town. Soon a clearing, with log huts among little patches of stubble-fields, told them that they had reached the outskirts of the French settlements, and the forty days of toil and famine were over—days in which they had waded rocky streams, sinking knee-deep in bogs; had hauled their *bateaux* over one hundred and eighty miles, and portaged them and their contents forty more, in cold and hunger, but with unabated courage and resolution.

At length what was left of the army, spent, tattered and gaunt, gathered on the banks of the tawny-flowing St. Lawrence, where, bristling with cannon on the beetling crags of the opposite shore, lay the fortress, to

take which they were ready to die. The mist of an autumn rain softened the lines of coping and grim bastion, and mingled with the smoke from the stone houses clustering on the water's edge below.

As the men gazed across at the fortified cliffs, Vanrosfeldt, with face stern and set, pointed silently to where, high above the ramparts, a thin red line streamed against the grey of the sky—the Lion Standard of England.

CHAPTER V.

THE CURÉ OF LORETTE.

A week of storm, with rain and sleet, and heavy winds from the north, was spent in preparation for crossing the river. Canoes, which had been procured twenty miles away, were carried to the shore, into which, on the first lull of the tempest, all except some two hundred embarked. Favored by the darkness, they crossed within a few cables' length of the *Vulture*, a British warship, which was stationed to intercept any such attempt; and running into a cove, found safe harborage, and disembarked, five hundred strong. Above them, up the face of the crags, a zigzag

goat-track wound to the dizzy steep, which seemed to hang in the air, and up which, fifteen years before, Wolfe and his kilted Scots had dragged their cannon. It was the only way; but where one man had gone, it was plain another could follow; so, although it was so narrow that two could scarcely walk abreast, without hesitation Arnold boldly determined to attempt dashing up it with his ragged, barefooted men; who, with damaged muskets, without artillery and with only five rounds of ammunition, were still as eager as he to fight. Glancing from the remnant of his fine corps to the defiant-looking ramparts, he turned, saying:

“My men lack everything save stout hearts, and it is imperative that Montgomery, advancing on Montreal, should at once be made aware of our present position. Whom think ye, Vanrosfeldt, should I select for this delicate and dangerous errand? It will require not only a stout heart, but a most robust courage, to traverse one hundred and eighty miles of hostile country to carry my despatches. They can be entrusted to no prentice hand, I tell ye; the moment is too critical.”

He had scarce finished the words, when Vanrosfeldt replied: “I will be the bearer of this message,” and Aaron Burr as promptly added:

“With such chances as there are of detention or accident, I would take share in this venture, and will trust to my native ingenuity and wit to carry us through; for albeit I may be lacking in the traits you name as needful, I will make amends by certain powers of dissimulation and persuasion, which my fair friends have done me the honor to lay to my charge.”

Aware that many of the French people of the Province had not yet become reconciled to British rule, and that to the clergy of the Church of Rome it was especially distasteful, Vanrosfeldt laid his plans so that this dissatisfaction should minister to his purpose.

The next day, as the setting sun was gilding the roofs and chimneys of the peaceful little French village of Lorette, which, among its orchards and brown fields, lay a few miles from Quebec, two young priests were seen seeking among the white cabins for that of the *curé*. Under the lee of the church, whose bell was softly ringing for vespers, they found the humble cottage, and knocking, awaited an answer. In a few moments, a woman in the close-fitting cap, grey homespun skirt and blue chintz apron of the Breton housewife, answered the summons, and asked in French

what was wanted; but without waiting for a response, on seeing the clerical habit of those asking admission, she threw the door wide open, saying: "Come in, messieurs," and admitted them into a low-ceiled, severely simple room. Upon the floor, which was scrubbed to a golden hue in extreme cleanliness, were laid strips of the home-made carpet, or *catalogne*, over the weaving of which the thrifty women of the valley spent the long evenings of the Canadian winter. On the wall hung a carved black crucifix, and beneath it a print of the *Mater Dolorosa*. Pointing to the wooden chairs, the woman informed the visitors that the *curé* was at vespers in the church, but would hear the brothers' wishes as soon as the service, which would be short, was over.

Disappearing, she returned with a tray on which were glasses of wine, which she herself had made from the wild grapes which abounded in the neighborhood, saying: "The day has been chilly and Messieurs may be cold," of which she was assured when she observed, that although the open hearth-fire sent out a grateful warmth, the strangers did not uncover their heads, but seemed the rather to desire to keep in the shadow. One walked restlessly to and fro, glancing impatiently at the path which led to the church, and at last, as a tall, black-robed figure appeared coming towards the little wicket, he took a seat furthest from

the light.

As the wooden latch was lifted, the strangers saw before them the spare figure and calm, saint-like face of a devotee, a type of the holy fathers who a hundred years before had crossed unknown seas with the story of the Cross. There was, however, nothing of the ascetic in the genial smile and outstretched hand with which he bade his brothers welcome, one of whom replied to his cordial greeting in the French tongue. Beginning to relate some of the simple annals of the village, he paused as he noticed signs of uneasiness in his visitors' bearing, on seeing which the lines of his face settled into an expression of concerned gravity. Shaking his head sadly, he continued:

“Ah, my brothers, we have fallen on troublous times. How fares it in the city? I hear the army of Patriots is already under the walls of Quebec, and another near Montreal, ready to deliver our beloved New France, for which our fathers gave their life-blood, and free her from the foreign chains with which for sixteen years she has been shackled. We pray, I and my people, for their prosperity.”

One of his listeners suddenly casting aside his cowl, and rising to his

feet, the priest, with astonishment, saw before him, instead of a shaven monk like himself, a handsome soldier, his queue tied with a black riband. Before he could recover from his surprise, Burr, with a smile of engaging sweetness dispelling the assumed sanctimoniousness of his face, heartily grasped the hand of his host, exclaiming joyfully:

“I am Aaron Burr, a soldier in this same army, and would fain have your prayers take the form of action.” Unpouching something from the innermost folds of his robe, he continued eagerly:

“Here in my wallet I have advices from Colonel Arnold, who commands this army, to General Montgomery, investing Montreal, which it is of the utmost moment should be delivered without delay.”

“Peace be to thee, my brother,” exclaimed his listener, and Burr answered in Latin:

“And to thee also, Father.”

“How can I be of service in so good a cause?” the *curé* asked meditatively. After a moment’s consideration, his face lighting up, he

said, turning to Vanrosfeldt:

“I have it! Ambrose Lafarge, of this village, leaves at sunrise to-morrow, to carry a pastoral letter from the good Abbé at Quebec to the Seminary of St. Sulpice at Montreal, stopping at each religious house on the way. He will give you and your *confrère* a seat, asking no questions. He loves to talk, and will do more than enough for all three;” adding, with a sigh: “It is true, my brothers, that these English have not been ungenerous to us; they have left us our mother tongue and our religion, for which we cannot but be grateful, but our hearts turn with longing to the flag of our father’s land, which we love. We have heard rumors that France too will join in this strife, which, being for freedom, must be right!”

The next day the first rays of light were striking on the roughly-shingled roof and slender spire of the little church, making its windows shine like stars among the leafless trees. The white sunshine touched with a tender grace the time-stained wooden crosses, which marked the graves of the good Pierres, Josephs and Maries who had lived out their simple lives within sound of its bell. The early candlelight shone from the four-paned windows of the log cabins, as a small vehicle

with a rough native pony between the shafts, drew up by a path down which the *curé* and two other priests were coming. The driver, pulling off his cap of muskrat pelt, bowed reverently in respectful silence, as his priest, in a few words, said, pointing to the strangers:

“My good Ambrose, my friends here will bear you company. Like yourself, they are carrying important messages to their superiors in Montreal. A journey, which might otherwise be a wearisome one for you, will now be lightened by good companionship,” and lifting his eyes to Heaven, he continued, with arm raised in blessing: “*Pax vobiscum*,” and turning, entered the church, to which a few early worshippers were coming.

When he returned to his dwelling, where his frugal meal was spread, his pious sister, Genevieve, who ranked him in sanctity with the saints Chrysostom and Francis d’Assisi, wondered if some black crime of the confessional was weighing upon his tender heart, that the fish she had broiled with her best skill turned cold, while, with a look of anxiety shading the usual serenity of his face, he sat lost in thought regarding the risk of the venture to which he had, in all good faith and conscience, lent himself.

Following the road, which ran parallel with the river bank, with his horse's head turned westward, the *habitant*, with the extreme reverence with which his simple-minded class regarded the clergy of his church, was filled with pious elation at being given the honor of having for his companions on the journey the holy brothers, more especially the shorter of the two, whose diligent telling of his beads and zealous reading of prayers seemed worthy of Ignatius Loyola himself. Abashed in the intimate companionship of so much apparent sanctity, his customary volubility and jesting as the village wit and story-teller took refuge in a shamefaced reticence. On the way he assiduously attended to their wants, and consented to find means to carry them across the river, as, from information obtained from the peasantry along the way, they learned that Montgomery had not yet left the banks of the Richelieu, where with his army he was known to be encamped; and where the quondam monks were anxious to join him before he pushed on to the city.

CHAPTER VI.

ALARM BELLS RING.

In a corner of a high-backed pew in the church of Notre Dame de

Bonsecours, which, with its dim grey walls, stood on the river bank at Montreal, a slight, girlish figure knelt, as she diligently counted the beads in her rosary, and repeated her prayers. In the pious devotee, whose falling tears blurred the lines in the breviary before her, would scarcely be recognized the gay, lighthearted Thérèse de Lérie. Her nimble feet loved better the swaying measures of the dance than bending at confessions and hearing masses; but that morning she had stolen thither to hide her first great grief, for on the eve before, she and her twin brother had parted for the first time in their lives.

She had tried her every art to win her parents from their purpose. First with coaxing and caresses, such as she had oftentimes used in their childhood to gain forgiveness for some boyish prank; then with tears she had entreated them to bethink them, ere they shaved his glossy curls, so like her own, and left only an ugly tonsure like those of the grave fathers of the monastery. She had entreated them to forbid that the young son of a noble house should quit his gay life in the *salons* of the town, to spend his days and nights in meditation in a cell, in fasts and doing alms; but entreaty, tears, kisses, and even anger moved not their purpose, so alone in the church she knelt with streaming eyes raised to the altar, where she and Leon had so often said their childish

prayers side by side.

Suddenly a loud clamor of bells was heard in the steeple above, which was answered back by such a clang from tower and belfry as never Sabbath heard before to call to worship or to mass. Soon there was a sound of running feet, and here and there incoherent cries of alarm; and a dire feeling of dread and fright entered even into the solemn quiet of the sacred place. Pale faces looked at each other with mute questioning, and the unspoken words hung on every lip:

“The foe!—they come! they come!”

At that same altar had prayed some of the early Fathers, many of whom had died for the cross glittering on the spire; and there in that hour of peril the priest, stopping in the middle of the Latin chant, turned to his people with arms raised among the floating clouds of incense, and with a calm benediction, dismissed them.

The rector in the Anglican church, reciting the Litany, prayed: “From battle and murder and from sudden death,” and as the people, responding, entreated with trembling lips, “Good Lord, deliver us,” he let them go

to join the hurrying men and women in the streets; and the news passed from lip to lip, that the American riflemen had crossed the river, and were marching towards the gates, with what appeared hostile intention.

A hurried council of war was held, and soon a small group of men, French and English, passed out of the gate by the Recollet Monastery; Colonel Davenant, as next in rank to the Governor, and Monsieur de L erie, as a representative Frenchman, taking the lead. The gate closed behind them with a dull clang, and they silently proceeded to skirt the marshes, beyond which was a line of blue set with steel, which glittered in the calm splendor of the Sabbath sunlight. The two soldier-citizens, representing the two greatest military powers in the world, who would look unmoved into the cannon's mouth rather than that the flag of their fathers should suffer dishonor, walked in front under the white pennant of surrender, with heads erect and step as dignified as if bearing the royal standard from a victorious field.

At sight of the handful of unarmed men and their flag of truce, the command "Halt," rolled down the advancing column.

Colonel Davenant stepped forward, and saluting, addressed the General,

saying:

“Sir, our city gates will be thrown open to your troops, as to offer resistance in the weak and defenceless condition of the town would savor more of foolhardiness and a wanton shedding of blood than of valor. We desire to enter into such terms as will ensure protection to our lives and property, and trust that an army, organized for the resistance of what it is pleased to deem oppression, will recognize the moral rights of a community of fellow subjects, who, though not in sympathy with the cause whose claims it would enforce, have thus far offered no hostile demonstration thereto. We are loyal subjects of His Most Gracious Majesty, King George, to whom we owe fealty, and we decline to give allegiance to any other than our rightful liege, unless compelled thereto by superior force of arms; but under existing conditions we can but surrender, and deliver up the keys of the town.”

Montgomery, with his customary graceful address and winning manner, replied:

“The great American Congress has sent this army into your province, not to plunder but to protect it. We have taken up arms in defence of our

liberty, our property, our wives and our children; and recommend that ye too range yourselves under the standard of general liberty, against which all the force of artifice and tyranny will never be able to prevail. To-morrow morning at nine o'clock we will take possession of the Recollet Gate, as I understand it is designated, where the proper officers must attend and deliver over the keys of all public stores. We will then proceed to take the custody of the posts and watches of the town; but there will be no sacking nor other act of violence permitted on the part of the troops under my command."

To the listeners in the town, came strains of martial music, which, borne on the south wind, momentarily became louder and nearer.

"Hark, what is that sound?" cried Thérèse, trembling in her mother's arms. "Is it not the rattle of musketry I hear? Alas! my father, it may be he has fallen!"

"No, my child, it is but the beating of drums; and hearken! can you not hear the sound of fifes? I take it as a sign of truce, and we are safe."

Straightening her slight figure, Thérèse, with flashing eyes,

exclaimed:

“Did I not tell you that this enemy is good and noble? Think ye that men who are brave enough to defy a king would fire upon defenceless women and children? If it e'er fall out that one of these same bluecoats lay siege to my weak, foolish heart, I fear me I will not even parley as to terms of surrender, but capitulate at once. Something, I know not what, a presentiment perchance, tells me that thus 'twill be.”

“Then have a care and let not your foolish fancy run away with your better sense. It ill becomes your mother's daughter thus to speak,” rebuked her mother.

“Suppose fate thus wills, how can a poor, weak girl, who I fear loves a romance better than her *crédo*, struggle against destiny! Besides, 'tis scarce a week since the Indian seer-woman did tell me that there is a handsome lover coming, who, though a 'brave' as she called him in her Indian tongue, is neither French nor English. He is to be tall and fair-looking, with eyes the color of the blue sky at dawn, and hair the hue of the ripened nut that falls in the woods when the maples turn to red in the autumn. I am to have a rival, too, she said, a woman young

and golden-haired. There is to be much trouble, and she saw the flow of blood, but whose she did not say; I trust it is my rival's."

"Peace, child; cease this wayward folly! You know full well that French maidens of gentle birth do not choose whom they shall wed. They have a proper *parti* chosen for them. Your cousin, Barré Raoul St. Leger, is the one with whom we have arranged a suitable marriage for you, and with whom you shall some day share his proud domain in the valley of the Seine. As *châtelaine* of St. Leger, you will reign where your mother played with his father, as babes, under its noble oaks and beeches. He shall take you to the Court of the young Queen Marie Antoinette, and to *Le Petit Trianon* at Versailles, to play the shepherdess in the royal gardens with the gayest of them, and it may be to even dance at the Tuileries' balls with the king himself. 'Tis a fair fortune!"

"Perchance the future has these things in store for me—who knows? And Court life would not come amiss to me; but be sure Thérèse de Lérie will only marry where she also loves."

The next morning she haunted the casement, and strained her ears for the trampling of feet, until at last with flushing cheeks she cried, as,

looking down the vista of the street, she saw a mass of blue uniforms:

“Make haste to look, mother, they come!—they come!—and friend or foe, it is a goodly sight. Now they approach!” and pointing excitedly to one of them in front, she exclaimed in admiration:

“Mark ye that soldier close behind him whom I take to be Montgomery! See his flashing blue eyes, and dark, nut-brown, curling locks! I never saw a finer form or face. See, he looks this way! I will salute him!” and before her mother could comprehend her meaning, a little lace kerchief was fluttering on the breeze, and whether with intention or not, fell from her hand like a tiny white cloud, and sailed near the head of the soldier whose attention she wished to attract. As she uttered an exclamation, he looked up, and deftly catching the trifle of lace upon his sword-point, lifted it to the low window, and bowed to the blushing cheeks and sparkling black eyes. As he passed on, she pressed the bit of cambric to her lips, and kissing it, cried:

“This is my flag of truce! I surrender without conditions, for yonder ‘Brave,’ as the seer-woman foretold—‘neither French nor English’—is my master and my fate!”

As Colonel Davenant left Sir Guy's headquarters, which were taken possession of by Montgomery and his official staff, he turned to his friend de Lérie, and pointing to the roof of the château, said bitterly:

“In fewer years than number our children's lives, three flags have floated yonder; but courage, my friend, we have yet Carleton and Quebec! There the red cross of England still waves, and though with us, as your luckless king once said, when in a like unhappy plight, ‘All is lost but honor,’ I predict that there Richard Montgomery will meet with other greeting than it has been our evil fortune here to offer him. As the great de Frontenac said when the surrender of the town was demanded in his day, ‘Our answer there will be from the cannon's mouth.’”

The first duty of the American general was to proceed to billet his men upon the inhabitants of the town. After the long marches, and the arduous work of reducing several forts, the peaceful possession of the place, and the quiet accommodation it offered in the comfortable, and in some cases, luxurious homes, were most grateful to the footsore army. It chanced that Major Vanrosfeldt, the handsome officer who had so suddenly captivated Thérèse's fancy, was assigned quarters in Colonel

Davenant's house. He had not forgotten the picturesque mansion, just within the city wall, where he had received kindly succor years before. While he could not but feel a pang of regret that he was thrust upon it in the guise of an enemy, he nourished the hope of finding some opportunity of returning the service by some timely act of his own.

As Montgomery passed it a few minutes after his entry, he had admired its soberly imposing and homelike appearance, and at once decided to make it his officers' mess. Surrounded by extensive gardens, with a broad and sunny courtyard, gabled roof and dormer-windows, it was one of the most beautiful residences in the town. To the Colonial soldiers, many of them used to the plainness of Puritan homes, the old *château*, with its foreign baubles of gilt and marble, which still remained, was a dream of luxury, and they examined its tapestries and articles of *vertu* with interest and curiosity. Over the entrance hall was a niche, containing a marble image of a saint, placed there by the original owner, which, offending their Puritan sensibilities, was at once displaced. The rooms were handsomely wainscoted, and the low ceilings raftered in oak, while on the walls were hangings representing scenes in the brilliant reign of Louis the Fourteenth, who, though dead for some sixty years, was still spoken of by the subjects of his great-grandson

as "*Le Grand Monarque*." In the cellars were sparkling wines of Bordeaux and Rochelle of half a century's vintage, brought over to make merry the feasting in the days of the old régime.

As the men gathered around the crackling birch logs that roared in the large fireplaces, they at times longingly called to mind their own home-hearths across the border, where the women they loved thought of them as they spun, and counted the days till their return.

Sitting in the twilight a few days after the investment of the town, General Montgomery gazed at the burning embers. A wistful look saddened his features, and turning to Vanrosfeldt, who sat with him, he said:

"This same moon, lighting these casements here, shines fair and clear to-night along the Hudson," and rising with an impatient gesture, he continued impetuously:

"I would, Vanrosfeldt, that the health of Schuyler had permitted him to reside here this winter. An irrepressible and unaccountable desire to once more sit by my own fireside possesses me to-night. I would I might go home, even if, to compass that end, I must walk the length of the

lakeside in the winter's cold!"—a strange premonition of impending fate, which at times weights the human heart, as inexplicable as unconquerable, seeming to bear upon his spirit.

"'Tis a natural desire, sir, but think, I pray you, of the success which has marked our career thus far, and the still greater victory that, without doubt awaits us down the river," was the cheering response.

"I am weary of power, Vanrosfeldt, and totally want the patience and temper for such a command," he continued dejectedly.

"Nay, think not so, General, nor harbor thoughts such as these, which are but for the moment, and will pass away with morning and renewed action; when, marching back to the Hudson, crowned with success, ye will look back and laugh at the imagined weakness of this hour," persisted Vanrosfeldt, smiling convincingly to dissipate the gloom overshadowing the spirit of Montgomery.

"Aye, friend," he replied, with an ominous shake of his head, "but forget not that Quebec lies 'twixt this night and that."

Mistress Davenant, and more especially Phyllis, found the occupation of their home by the enemy an exceedingly distasteful state of things, as the main rooms and principal kitchens were entirely given up to their use. Under the eaves were several chambers, which had been used as a reserve in the days of the open hospitality under the French Regime, and to which they retired. They were small and simply furnished, but though uncomfortably cramped for space, were at least isolated, and free from the discomfort of the rest of the domicile, the foreign soldiers not being there encountered in the narrow passages, as could not be altogether avoided in the lower corridors and on the stairways.

Madame de Lérie, with great kindness of heart, immediately sent a message with proffers of shelter for Phyllis in the privacy of her home, which had escaped confiscation, saying:

“Dear Madame Davenant, ‘tis neither decorous nor becoming for a well-born maiden, as fair and young as your sweet child, to remain under the same roof as these unwelcome soldiery, even though they are officers, and mayhap gentlemen. Thérèse, who pines for her brother, whom alas! duty and religion have parted from us, will find solace in the companionship of one who is as dear to her as a sister.”

Accordingly, on Phyllis's arriving at the great door of the château, Thérèse received her guest with open arms and much effusion and embracing, conducting her to her own little rose-hung boudoir, saying, "We will share it together, my poor Phyllis," who, dropping into a low fauteuil, sighed with pleasure; and then with a little shudder of revulsion, exclaimed:

"To live in daily danger of encountering these soldiers is utterly repulsive and repugnant. This forcible occupation of one's home is like being compelled to live in the publicity of a military camp, with its noise, rattle of arms and clang of spurs."

To her surprise, Thérèse replied, with a disdainful laugh:

"Why, Phyllis, you talk more like one of the veiled sisters in the convent than a pretty young girl who should seek admiration. To me 'tis charming, like living in a real drama, in which you might play the part of heroine. I love romance, and if the handsome soldier to whom I have lost my heart were quartered in the Château de Lérie, I would be nothing loth to have it turned into a barracks too."

Shocked at what she considered a lack of proper spirit and maidenly reserve, Phyllis said somewhat stiffly:

“Thérèse, I hope you are but in jest. This soldier of whom you speak is an enemy, and should be treated as such!”

“My dear, am I not truly doing so?” she enquired mischievously. “Are we not expressly told to ‘love our enemies’? I would all the teachings of the Church were as easy to follow; then might I soon be as pious as my patron saint, and have a nimbus round my head like the good Saint Thérèse. I am distracted that I have not again seen this idol of my heart, notwithstanding that I have watched diligently from my window here to see if he passed this way. When by chance I have encountered any of these bluecoats upon the streets, my heart has set a-beating, thinking perchance it might be he. However, I am not disconsolate, for on the morrow we may meet. Then, as you know, at the General’s request, we are to don our bravest attire and sup with him and his staff.”

“In our case, Thérèse, ‘tis rather a command than a request, but one which policy forbids our refusing,” was the annoyed response to what, to

her, was unbecoming in feeling and behavior.

“You are much too severe, Phyllis, for the summons was couched in most courteous phrase,” objected Thérèse.

“I, for one,” was the hot reply, “am not overwhelmed with gratitude that my father should be bidden to sit as guest at his own board; invited to drink of his own wine, and be compelled to retire thence to such rest as he may find among the rafters of the garrets. Even on the dressing-table of my mother’s boudoir no doubt rest the spurs and sword-knots of these rebels against their king. I would I might remain away!”

“‘Tis the least likely thing that I should do so! Merriment is surely now scarce enough to ensure my welcoming aught that savors in the least degree of pleasure. To speak the truth, Phyllis, I am all impatience for the hour, and have commanded Lizette to lay out for it my white petticoat of satin, with slippers to match, and my gown of crimson silk, which you say so well suits my complexion. Now that I am eighteen, I shall, I presume, be at last permitted to wear the jewels for neck and wrist which were willed to me by my grandmother, the Marquise de St.

Leger, so I expect to look my best and make a conquest of the handsome soldier,” Thérèse answered, as she glanced with much approval at her reflection in a wall-mirror opposite her chair.

At the appointed hour on the evening of the banquet, Madame de Lérie arrived in proper state and with well preserved dignity at the Continental officers’ quarters, the two girls by her side—Thérèse flushed and excited, Phyllis cold and a little pale. They were a pretty pair, in soft calash-hoods and pelisses of grey and crimson edged with fur, their hands hidden in big muffs of marten, with pattens snugly protecting their little feet. As they approached the doorway of her home, Phyllis shrank back as a figure in blue sprang from the adjoining *salon*, and, opening the heavy door, held it as they passed through. Not lifting so much as an eyelash, she bowed coldly in acknowledgment of the courtesy; but Thérèse flashed a warm glance of thanks, blushing crimson as she recognized who it was that offered it. No sooner were they out of hearing than, in a rapture of excitement, she grasped Phyllis by the arm, exclaiming:

“‘Tis he! Oh, ‘tis he, Phyllis, the soldier who with such a court-bred air was so gallant with my kerchief the day the troops marched in. Oh!

how my heart beats at the sight of him.”

“Thérèse,” she answered frigidly, “I trust you are mistaken in thinking the soldier of whom you speak so warmly and this man are the same.”

“Wherefore not?” she inquired, and then clasping Phyllis’s hand rapturously, she continued: “Be assured, ‘tis he, ‘tis surely he!”

Drawing away from the proffered embrace, Phyllis said icily:

“That soldier is Edward Vanrosfeldt;” to which Thérèse, with a quick blush, made answer:

“It matters not to me what name he bears or what coat he wears!”

A town invested by an enemy is usually not given to overmuch merry-making, so on that November night the grey-gabled château, with

every window a-glitter, was a heartsome and cheering sight. The hour was still early when the guests gathered around the long mahogany board, in the yellow gleam of candlelight and sheen of silver and crystal. From the strained conditions and unusual circumstances surrounding it, the supper began as stiff as a state-banquet, but presently the mellowing influence of madeira warmed a more genial spirit, and avoiding subjects which might give offence, conversation at last became general; and as the wine went round, French *bon-mots* mingled pleasantly with American wit and English humor. The blue-and-buff of the Continentals, the red coats of the British, and the white-faced regimentals of a chevalier of France, which Monsieur de Lérie wore as befitting the occasion, made a fit and varied background for the brilliance of the ladies' gowns.

Thérèse looked gorgeous as a southern flower, in her favorite wine-color and the coveted jewels, the offending birth-mark artfully concealed beneath a ringlet; and Phyllis was fair and sweet in India sprigged muslin over cerulean blue. With tightly laced bodices, fluttering ribands and witching little patches at the angle of a lip or by a dimple, they were both charming and captivating.

To the pique of Thérèse, it was Phyllis, who was seated on his right, to

whom Lieutenant Vanrosfeldt most frequently turned, and with whom he conversed. He seemed to be almost oblivious to her own bright presence, notwithstanding, on his presentation to her, she had coyly thanked him with well assumed shyness for the return of her kerchief; which, with eyes demurely lowered to the pearls on her slippers, she explained she had let fall in the excitement of the moment.

Phyllis, her hair shining like burnished gold in the saffron light of the candles, endeavored to turn the conversation away from the embarrassment of personal concerns and feelings by talking to him of Colonial society in Philadelphia, Boston and New York, saying:

“Tell me, I pray, of the Lady Washington. We hear many tales of her sweetness and grace of manner.”

“I can but say,” he replied with reverent seriousness, “that Mistress Martha Washington, as she chooses now to be called, is worthy of her husband, and greater praise it is in no man’s power to give.”

“Is she beautiful?”

“Not in the sense of majesty of carriage and Grecian form of feature, but she has a look and mien most passing sweet, and withal an air so gracious, that one forgets to consider whether her brow is arched, or her lip that of a Venus, as is your own.”

The warm blood flowed to her cheeks at the words, and with but a slight lifting of the head and not appearing to notice the compliment, she continued:

“Perhaps ‘tis scarcely fair to ask, but I would know something of the dames of whose beauty we have heard, and who, if the tales be true, must be fair indeed. If ‘twill not be too prying into your preference, I would know which of the belles bears the palm. To Anne Temple, the Boston beauty, I do not feel a total stranger, as, although I know her not personally, Captain Temple, of His Majesty’s navy, who is her distant cousin, hath often made mention of her name.”

The color in Thérèse’s cheeks deepened angrily to the red of the wine she was sipping, as, listening to his words, she heard him, with lowered voice and brown head bent toward his fair questioner, reply:

“Believe me, I have until this night thought that fairer face than Anne Temple’s ne’er saw the light of day; but now I protest, and ‘tis no idle flattery, but a true man’s word, her beauty in no wise compares with your own. A guinea-piece fresh from the royal mint is leaden dull before the golden gleam of your bright hair.”

With lowered lids and apparent indifference to his meaning, although she colored prettily to the tips of her ears, Phyllis again gave no sign of pleasure at the words, though spoken in a tone few women could resist, even accustomed as they were to the broad manner of compliment of the time.

A movement prevented her the need of replying, as General Montgomery rose to propose a toast to “Our wives and sweethearts, present and absent,” the customary one to “General Washington and the Army” being omitted in deference to the feelings of the guests.

It was gaily and heartily drunk, when he called upon Lieutenant Vanrosfeldt to respond. As he rose in compliance, his handsome face showing a soft emotion new to his comrades in arms, who knew him only as the dauntless soldier, not a woman present but wondered of whom he was

thinking as he drained his glass. Refilling it with ruby-red wine, and holding it up, until in the flickering light it glowed as crimson as the corsage encircling Thérèse's snowy shoulders, he asked:

“Will ye lift a glass with me?” and bowing low to the ladies he said:

“I have no wife nor sweetheart across the border to pine for me, and so, alas! cannot pledge to the lady of my heart, therefore I may be the only man present who can with clear conscience and due prudence propose that we drink a toast-gallant to the fair women of Canada. Unfortunately at the moment they are our captives, but in return they take by storm the citadels of all our hearts, which are too ill-defended to resist their darts. In the chances of love and war, we may find ourselves, ere the campaign ends, held prisoners in silken chains, and shackled in a sweet captivity we will be loth to flee.”

As the men sprang to their feet, raised their glasses and tossed off the toast, Montgomery laughingly exclaimed:

“Gallantly spoken; we'll drink with you, Vanrosfeldt, and quaff deeply.

It may be as ye say, an' by my word 'twere but a just and merited

revenge; so have a care, for by your own showing ye yourself are the fittest target for their shafts.”

When the gentlemen rose, as the ladies prepared to leave the board and sweep from the room, a little knot of blue loosened from Phyllis's bosom and fell to the floor. As with a backward glance Thérèse saw the man, to whom she had suddenly and impetuously given her love, gather it up and thrust it under his buff waistcoat, all the affection of her childhood and maidenhood turned into a fiery jealousy of her, who, she thought, had robbed her of him whom she loved with the wild abandon of a first and uncontrollable passion.

After the first disturbance of the enemy's occupation of the town had subsided, it settled down to the ordinary routine of domestic and commercial life, with nothing to mark that a great political crisis had just occurred, save the external evidences of military changes which were necessarily involved. Day after day passed, and no report of the capture of the fugitives to Quebec, nor of the discovery of their feint, was brought in; and the tense feeling was beginning to relax into a state of hopefulness that the outcome was better than had been feared. With the return of “Young Moose” the hope became a certainty, as he

brought the tidings that Sir Guy and his party had been taken on board a small vessel, by which they had probably reached that city in safety.

When the news of Carleton's escape was reported to Montgomery, turning to Vanrosfeldt, he exclaimed in a passion:

“‘Tis a scurvy trick! By a rare piece of good fortune mine enemy has evaded me this time, and by my faith, if it be not cowardice, it savors strongly of it. This paltry manner of entering his stronghold must gall this high-born knight, but let him not think that I fear to follow and force him from it, impregnable though he deems it. It is my intention to proceed thither without further delay, leaving here only such troops as the holding of the place demands. I will show King George's minions that the Army of the Republic, under command of General Washington, is not to be laughed at with such trickery as this! I will join Arnold under the walls of Quebec with all haste possible, and by my sword, I swear that I will eat dinner on Christmas Day in Quebec, or in hell!”

Rising angrily, and striding back and forth, he suddenly stopped and ordered:

“Bid Davenant attend me here at once. He has no doubt been in connivance with this measure. A pest on it! I will have satisfaction from one at least of this brood of poltroons! He shall be thrown in irons into the dungeon of the fort, as was our comrade, Ethan Allen!”

Vanrosfeldt, thinking of the fair young girl who was his daughter, said, with the only note of pleading which had ever fallen from his lips to mortal man:

“Sir, let me entreat that ye do not in a just anger what in a more temperate moment your better judgment may condemn as ill-advised. If Davenant assisted in this venture, it were only what a man loyal to his king should have done.”

“Ha! are ye still attaint with loyalty? Belike ye waver in your pledge to Congress!” was the heated ejaculation, as Montgomery, incensed at the turn affairs had taken, flushed red with passion.

Drawing himself up to his full height, and looking his general straight in the eye, with a glance which expressed the deep affront he felt in the words, but without letting them anger him, Vanrosfeldt quietly, but

with courtesy, said:

“Forgive me, General, if I venture to remind you what my lack of loyalty has already cost me, and what in lands and fortune I may yet, in common with yourself, be deprived of.”

Montgomery, whose anger, though hot, was short-lived, held out his hand, saying:

“Vanrosfeldt, by my troth, I did ye a foul wrong to have even breathed a suspicion of your truth and fealty. I spoke thus in the heat of what ye have rightly called a just anger, and would fain give proof of my regret. In what way can I grant you favor?”

“Recall the order for Davenant’s arrest,” was the quick reply.

With reluctance the General made answer, saying:

“My word is pledged to do your desire. Ye plead well for him, an’ if ye were not so excellent a soldier, Vanrosfeldt, methinks ye might rival at the bar our forest Demosthenes, Patrick Henry of Virginia. Ye are not

often thus soft of heart. What is the meaning of this melting mood? See to it that ye let none of these Canadian belles touch your heart.

Doubtless there are fair Colonial maidens who would look with no ill eye upon your wooing.”

“Were it so, I am debtor for their favor to one so unworthy, General.”

“Consider if there be not some damsel in our own Boston, or other fair New England town, whom ye can regard with favor, for I have thought this se’ennight past that I saw ye look with too kindly eyes upon the sweet Phyllis, an’ take my word for it, ‘twill only lead to harm. This is no time for love-making. Take good counsel, Vanrosfeldt, an’ storm not Cupid’s batteries in this campaign,” his superior counselled.

Turning to his advisor, with a serious but determined air, in measured words that carried with them conviction of their weight, Vanrosfeldt, with dignity, yet with respect, made answer:

“We live, sir, in times when truth and openness are most needful, and even were it otherwise, candor hath ever been a frame of mind for which I have striven; so now I tell you, General, that the conquest of this

Province is not more the desire of your heart than that I win this maid is dear to mine.”

“This then is why ye plead so feelingly for the father. Well, he shall go for the nonce, but when I return from Quebec with Carleton at my chariot-wheel, to this Davenant must be meted out his just deserts; and in the meantime we will make use of him. He shall bear to Carleton, whom I fain would spare the horrors of a siege, our demands for his surrender; as in spite of his recent double-dealing, I still remember him as once my comrade in arms and fellow-soldier.”

As day after day passed, every waking hour was filled with keen and intense emotion and uncontrollable restlessness for Thérèse de Lérie. Her penchant for the handsome soldier, under stress of his undisguised admiration of Phyllis and his unconcealed indifference to herself, developed into a reckless infatuation; every other sentiment and affection seeming to be swallowed up in her passion for him, and a mad jealousy of her unconscious rival. Her changeful moods of despondency, alternating with fits of exaggerated cheerfulness, were taken as attributable to her grief for the loss of her brother’s companionship, and her constant attendance at church was hailed as a beneficent result.

She requested that she might be allowed to go to matins and vespers unattended; and as her deepening piety was considered to be sufficient safeguard, she was permitted to follow her bent undisturbed. Although she daily left her home with the apparently pious intention of devotion, it was not to the altar her steps were directed, but to *Place d'Armes*, the square upon which the church stood, and where the troops were daily drilled. There, hidden in the porch, she watched their evolutions, among all the bluecoats seeing only him whose every graceful, soldierly movement added fuel to the fire of her consuming love.

As the month drew to a close, the rains and dull skies of the autumn gave way to the clear, crisp days that usher in the early Canadian winter. On one such, a heavy fall of snow had turned the sombre greys and browns of the town into the whiteness of the clouds, and every angle of chimney and roof-curve was softened against the blue of the sky, the evergreen trees bending beneath their crystal-white burden.

In the gleam of the afternoon sun the westward-looking casements glowed in the ruddy flame, making the young town, with its church spires, great gables, and many-windowed monasteries, look not unlike some old-world

hamlet on the Rhone, or among the brown hills of Tuscany.

Tempted by the beauty of the day, and the clear sheets of ice which had formed in sheltered places along the shore, a party of skaters, just before the hour of sunset, passed down the street known as Rue Jacques Cartier, and soon were gliding over the crystal surface, which partially covered the swift current beneath, but which in mid-stream was still flowing and open, as was usual in November.

Phyllis and Thérèse were among the gayest of the skaters, and in short skirts and tight-fitting corsages of blue and crimson, they looked like bright-plumed birds as they gracefully skimmed over the surface of the ice, in the charm of physical joy, in the magic of easily-won motion.

On the shore, a group of officers, who were off duty, had loitered to watch the pretty scene, with its moving figures, gay against the sunlit drifts of snow. Thérèse, who at once perceived that Vanrosfeldt was among them, curved backward and forward in the space before them, knowing that her pretty feet and glowing cheeks could not but excite admiration. She was chagrined, however, when approaching as near as maidenly propriety would permit, to find him acknowledge her bow of

recognition by a formal salute, while his eyes followed the slim, waving figure of Phyllis. Carried away by the exhilaration of the hour, with long, sweeping strokes, she had outdistanced her companions and ventured the farthest from the shore; the slanting rays of the sinking sun lighting up the gold of her hair like a saint's aureole. Eagerly his eyes followed her, wishing he might have the rapture of clasping the small, warm hand, and in the glamor of the intoxicating, swaying motion, glide away—anywhere—with her by his side. Suddenly a look of horror and dismay blanched his features, as she turned, and was skating backwards. Directly in her path he saw the ice break into a yawning hole. Wildly he shouted, as he rushed down the bank to check her ere she reached the fatal spot, his anguish giving him skill in traversing the treacherous, smooth surface. He tried to shout, but the words seemed frozen on his lips. He fell, but regardless of pain, pressed forward, cursing his inability to move faster, as he saw the gliding blue figure swiftly lessening the distance to the cruel, gaping hole waiting to receive her. Oh, he thought in an agony, if only he were on the skates with which many a time he had measured his skill on the streams of Connecticut with his boyhood's friends, that with a wild dash he might be in time to save her. At last, in a frantic cry of "Danger! Danger!" his voice reached her ears, and turning suddenly, she recoiled in terror

from the dark, jagged-edged depth rolling so near to her feet. With a terrified shriek she darted from the already crackling ice, and clearing it, fell into his outstretched arms, as she gasped: “You have saved my life!”

As he looked into the sweet, frightened face, and felt the nervous clinging of her arms, he crushed her to him, and in tones of mingled pain and ecstasy cried:

“Oh, my darling! my Phyllis, had I seen you go down into those black, foamy waters, I should have plunged in after you, for death with you were dearer, sweeter than life without you!

“I am a rebel in your eyes,” he added bitterly, as she withdrew from his embrace, “and to-morrow we march on to Quebec; but tell me, dearest one, that ye do not scorn me though I wear the uniform of an enemy. Mine honor is pledged to my flag, but my heart, sweet one, is all your own. The chances of war tear me from you now, but, if in more peaceful times I return, tell me ye will not say me nay; and if I ne'er return, remember there was one who loved you with a love, than which no man can ever feel a greater.”

With crimson flooding her pale cheeks, and heart beating tumultuously, she wondered what was the strange new rapture which, at the words, thrilled her being with a joy and gladness never felt before. Was this the grand passion, to which but a few days since she had declared herself a stranger? When other lips had asked it from her, she had promised to look down into her heart to find if love were truly there. At that moment she knew it was, but not for her boy-lover, Leon de Lérie. Her affection for him was but the pale love of a childhood's playmate; but to this stranger, who scarce a week ago she had counted her foe, she had unwittingly given her woman's heart; and, bewildered and frightened, she answered in a trembling whisper:

“I will not say you nay, if 'tis within my power and not against my duty.”

Before he could reply, or add to his impassioned appeal, Thérèse skimmed up, with eyes full of sympathy. Raising them to his face, while she clasped Phyllis in her arms, she said between little hysterical gasps:

“O monsieur, my heart is full of gratitude, you are so brave!—so

noble!—to have saved the life of my dearest friend!”—while in her pretty, excitable and customary fashion, she impetuously kissed Phyllis on both cheeks. Suddenly, apparently overcome by her emotions, she sank on the ice in a fainting fit, and was borne in his arms to the bank, where, after retarding as long as was possible her return to consciousness, with a flutter of the eyelids, and a soft sigh, she looked up into his face, the image of girlish sympathy and sweet ingenuousness.

It was a pretty piece of acting, clever enough to deceive even a saint, and her heart beat rapturously as he held her head upon his shoulder. Leaning dependently on his arm, when sufficiently recovered to rise, as they slowly walked in the gathering grey of the winter twilight to the cariole which had been hailed to convey them home, the dusk hid the color flaming to her cheeks as she imagined, that in a certain look of happy excitation in his eyes, she had seen traces of admiration for herself.

CHAPTER VII.

PARTINGS.

The following morning the American troops mustered in heavy marching order to proceed to Quebec, to decide whether or not the thirteen scattered colonies lying along the Atlantic beaches, with three thousand miles of ocean on one side, and an impenetrable wilderness on the other, were to fight single-handed against a sovereignty which reached back over a line of a hundred kings, and was hoary with the traditions of a thousand years of valor.

From every casement, door and garden-wall along the route, in silence the inhabitants watched the army, with jingle of spur and rattle of scabbard, marching by. Aaron Burr, with his new rank of captain, stepped with dignity beside his corps, his slight figure drawn up to its greatest stature. As was his wont, he was not forgetful to cast an occasional glance of blandishing admiration at dark eyes peering from behind the screening curtains, even though he knew he was marching to reduce with fire and sword their countrymen, who, with anxiety and dread, apprehended their enemy's approach.

Thérèse, with burning cheeks, gazed at the ranks as they filed past, and in her heart bade them God-speed; for whatever fate would overtake Sir

Guy, were it banishment, imprisonment or death, she knew would, without doubt, also involve in some degree the family of Colonel Davenant; and thus might be removed from her path the one whose beauty stood in her way.

Scheme after scheme flashed through her brain, as to how she could supplant Phyllis in Vanrosfeldt's favor, and she wrung her hands in an agony of revolt that she must remain behind, when she would gladly have walked barefoot after the retreating ranks, or on her knees as pilgrim to a shrine, only to be near the man she adored.

In the impotence of unrequited love, she took up a little sketch of Phyllis, which Leon had traced on a drowsy, happy afternoon of the past summer, which, with the crowding of events, already seemed so far away. Looking at it, ugly lines of hatred and revenge marred the fairness of her face, and she hissed through her white teeth, in a frenzy of anger:

“I hate you!—hate you!—hate you!—Phyllis Davenant, for if it were not for these smooth looks and baby face, he might have loved me first. Would that it were the days of the great de Medici, and I had her skill and cunning, that with poisoned glove or deadly perfumed kerchief I

might strike you dead ere ever you should reach his arms. If it e'er befall that fate shall put you in my power, know that no false pity shall spare you nor girlish qualm of conscience baulk me in my purpose to crush you or spoil your fair name and fortunes as I do this!" and throwing the portrait under her feet, she trampled upon it in an uncontrollable fury of passion, until, wearied, she sank into a seat and buried her hot cheeks between her hands, to cool the fever of unrestrained excitement which burned them scarlet.

A step approached along the corridor, paused at her door, and after a light knock, her mother entered. Startled from her brooding posture, and picking up the picture hastily and secreting it, she rose, and trying to smooth out the signs of agitation from her face, said meekly: "What is it, mother?"

"Be seated, my child, I have somewhat I would say to you. Thérèse, your father and mother are grieved to see your sadness, which even now has driven the smile from your face, and your pining for your brother, from whom we were forced to part you. I will not hide from you, that seeing the strong likeness between yourself and the face of that Comtesse Jacqueline whose portrait hangs above the wainscot-niche in the *salon*

yonder, I have watched with anxiety lest her traits of character should, with her features, have come down to you. You know that she it was who abetted the wicked Catherine de Medici in some of her darkest deeds. It has never been denied, that, to please that bloodthirsty mother of kings, she handed the poisoned gloves to the innocent Queen Jeanne d'Albret when robing for the wedding of her son, Henri of Navarre, with Marguerite de Valois, the daughter of Catherine. We have observed with joy your many prayers, and the devotion to the Church which has of late marked your behavior, and, fearing lest this grief and loneliness may so work upon your mind as to do you hurt, I have come to say that we would have you wed your cousin and betrothed, Raoul St. Leger. We had hoped not to lose you ere a few more years had added to your wisdom, but for many reasons we now deem it best that the marriage should take place at once. Life and fortune are unstable in times such as these, and the enemy we saw leave this morning have in their hands our country's destiny and likewise ours. If they reduce Quebec, your father's allegiance to the British crown may cost him his estate, and mayhap his liberty. Your present conduct shows you to be no longer a heedless child, but a woman, with deep and tender feeling; so we would have you wed your cousin. Once his wife, and in our own dear France, this country's fortunes cannot affect yours, and thus would be taken from our

minds a load of care which these troublous times make hard to bear.”

“But, mother, would you lose both your children at once? And I am young, scarce nineteen yet.”

“I was your mother, child, at this same age; and Raoul loves you. France favors this new revolution, and the Marquis de Lafayette, whose wife, Adrienne de Naolles, is the daughter of my dearest friend, makes common cause with these Colonials; as I know full well you do yourself. By marriage with a Chevalier of France you can, without treason, openly espouse it.”

“And thus make myself, by all the laws of war, your enemy!”

“Nay, child, you would not, for howe’er this struggle ends, we, your father and myself, as soon as you are established mistress of the Château St. Leger, will set sail for France and join you there. It is your cousin’s wish; and Leon, too, will enter a brotherhood in Paris. Think you not that Raoul is a noble youth? Not many damsels have so much cause for gratitude, for your *dot* is small; your love is all he asks.”

“I pray grant me a little time. I would bethink me what my heart says. It is three years since I have seen my cousin Raoul, and perchance his love may have changed. I was but a little maiden when he saw me last, and he might find the Thérèse of to-day different to the little cousin to whom he played the lover; and less fair than he would have a Marquise de St. Leger, who were ever noted for their beauty. Have I not heard you yourself say a hundred times that more than one great Chevalier of France sued for your heart and offered you broad lands and coronets, and you would have none of them, but only plain young Monsieur de Lérie, my father, whom you did love.”

“True, child, but surely you can love your cousin, for your heart is free, I know; but your request is not unfair. We would not use undue haste or urgency, nor press too much your inclination, but I must bid you ponder well, and see if your heart be not drawn towards Raoul, and thus ease my mind and your father’s of ill bodings of the future, which now cannot but disconcert and trouble us. In the meantime use your industry in setting your wardrobe in order, as there is possibility of our making journey to Quebec. Through the good offices of Major Vanrosfeldt, who has been promoted in rank and influence, we have obtained passports, so that there is no obstacle to our proceeding

thither with safety and joining Raoul, whom we already look upon as another son. We are the more anxious to lose no time, as our friends, the Davenants, will bear us company, Monsieur being the bearer of dispatches from General Montgomery to Sir Guy, touching his intentions on Quebec unless resistance is abandoned.”

With an alacrity which her mother thought augured well for her scheme, Thérèse immediately began the arrangement of her ribands and laces, which formed so important a part of her toilet, saying with kindling eyes: “I will make ready with all haste.”

Accordingly, some days later, a travelling party of ladies and gentlemen alighted at the St. John’s Gate, Quebec. Addressing the watch in charge, Colonel Davenant said:

“We are a party of loyal British subjects, accompanied by the ladies of our families, and seek admission within these walls.”

“My orders are to admit no one within the gate,” the man replied.

“But mine is an especial case; I am Colonel Davenant, carrying

diplomatic communications from General Montgomery, which I have pledged my word of honor to deliver personally into the Governor's hands.

Monsieur de Lérie comes hither on private matters, and craves for admission to join relatives now sojourning within the city."

Before the guard could repeat his instructions, Lieutenant Fraser, going his round of inspection, and recognizing the names of those in conversation outside, replied to the request of Colonel Davenant, informing him:

"As the bearer of advices from Richard Montgomery, Governor Carleton will refuse to receive you. He has declared that no consideration will be given to any conditions offered by the Commander of the armies of the United Colonies, now invading his dominions, whom he regards as rebels against the righteous authority of their sovereign prince, unless it be to crave His Majesty's clemency and pardon; but as a member of Sir Guy's staff I have no right or desire to refuse you entrance into the city. I regret, although cognizant of Monsieur de Lérie's loyalty, that, as the town is already placed on short rations, it is imperative that there be put no further strain upon its slender resources. It will therefore be necessary that he and his family find lodgment in some habitation

without the fortifications.”

Colonel Davenant, turning to his friend, said with feeling:

“It gives me extreme sorrow, de Lérie, that the usages of war take no cognizance of the sentiments of friendship or hospitality, and it is with grief that I feel we must part company.”

“We will hope for happier times,” was the reply, “and we are not yet in extremity. My little Thérèse shall go to the Abbess, her aunt, in yonder convent; and Madame and I will proceed to the seigniory of our friend Le Moyne, where no doubt we will find ready welcome; so adieu, my good friends,” and with a simulation of cheerfulness they were far from feeling, the party separated.

As the two men clasped hands, and the women with tears embraced, they knew full well that famine and bloodshed would do their deadly work ere their paths would meet again. Less than an hour later the Mother Superior was leading Thérèse along the whitewashed corridors to the privacy of the cloisters. They hastened with hurried tread and averted faces lest they should encounter any of her unwelcome soldier-guests,

who had, in spite of the tearful entreaties of the timid nuns, quartered themselves in the convent, and to whom the clean bare walls and simple fare of the sisterhood seemed luxurious. The Abbess whispered behind her hand, as she glanced fearfully around:

“Ah, my dear child, I fear this is no place for you, for these holy walls are but an army barracks. Our quiet refectory is soiled with the continual tramp of armed men; and we scarce can go to matins but we must hear the clang of swords without our chapel doors. Each day we fast and pray that *le Bon Dieu* would send them hence. ‘Tis said they come of praying stock; I would to Heaven I could say they fasted too, for our larders and granaries are stripped bare for their service. The blessed Virgin only knows where it will end”—and carefully lowering her voice and looking cautiously around, as if fearing the very walls might hear, she whispered: “And this is not all; their clothing, when they came, was scarce decent, so torn and worn was it with their rough journey through the woods. And hearken, child, ‘tis said so pressed were they there with hunger, that they killed and ate their very dogs—unclean beasts, unfit for Christian men to eat!—But haste, I must hide you well, my little one!”

“Ah, good mother, I for one have no dread of these bluecoats, but if you fear aught for me, I can but hide these curls beneath a linen coif, and wear a wimple like your own. Vested thus, I promise you my eyes shall never rise above the plain hem of my robe.”

“Well thought, my child. Our little sister, the novice Agatha, a week ago was laid to rest. She was about to take the veil; her robes will fit you well, and shield from curious eyes your youth, and beauty of face and form. The saints forbid that I should unjustly or too hastily judge these men, from whom, though they may be rough-mannered some of them, no Sister here has heard as much as a breath of aught that might offend; so in your veil you shall be safe, if none of these curls escape from beneath it.”

“In that case for the time being they must needs be shorn in part, when I shall look more like my dear banished Leon than ever. My poor brother, he has had to have his shaven close.”

Placing a key in a door at the end of a long passage, the Abbess led Thérèse into the austere simple chamber, where she doffed her ribands and donned the garb of the cloistered. Drawing her veil around her and

assuming a downcast air of great sanctity, she said, in the low tones she purposed to affect:

“Oh, good mother, could my dear Leon see me now, he surely would not say as once he did: ‘Get thee behind me, Satan’!”

“Speak not your brother’s name lightly, little one, for I have heard great things of his piety and zeal. ‘Tis said that not even the Father Abbot himself outdoes him in prayers and vigils. If word of it reach the Holy See at Rome, who knows what good may come of it? Now look to it, Sister Thérèse, as we will call you, that you keep your eyes bent humbly on the ground, and let not these men catch sight of the bloom upon your cheek, lest they might forget your veil.”

That night, in a little cell under the roof of the convent, Thérèse laid her head on a hard pillow on a pallet of straw. The moonbeams which streamed through the uncurtained window were her only light, and the plastered wall was bare and cold-looking, but she found it the sweetest resting-place her life had ever known, for pausing curiously by the door of the refectory, herself unseen, she had caught sight of Major Vanrosfeldt in earnest conversation with Arnold.

As in the sanctuary of the convent she passed the days and weeks in the quiet, monotonous rounds of piety and charity, the Sisters, unsuspecting, did not notice a pair of dark eyes flash from beneath her protecting coif at the sight of a certain brown-haired soldier passing by; their own being bent timidly and prudently to the ground at the sound of a spur or the sight of a blue-and-buff coat. The wearer of one was never absent from the thoughts of Thérèse, it mattered not how her hands were occupied, and even at her devotions she could not bar the longing for him from her mind. In her dreams, night after night, she saw his face and fancied herself free from the restrictions that divided them, and which at times she felt she could not much longer endure.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MONKS.

With the setting in of winter, and the enemy still at the gates, over the doomed city the phantom of famine spread out batlike wings; cut off from the outside world and unable to obtain supplies, it was in sad stress and full of sickness. Public and private stores were carefully

measured, and had run so low that peril of starvation was daily becoming more imminent and threatening. Wood was so scarce and impossible to obtain that on many a hearth there was nothing but the ashes of fires which had gone out for want of fuel, and on others, going up in flame, the wood of fences, gates or even furniture, which necessity demanded for household combustion. The children of the extreme poor cried in vain for the food which the empty cupboards denied to their hunger, and which the meagre dole from headquarters only whetted. Outside of the walls were well-filled storehouses and barns bursting with the summer's harvest, but between them a watchful foe kept sleepless vigil. Day after day pinching Want knocked at mansion and cottage alike with increasing insistence, and along the narrow streets, that erstwhile had been bright with pleasure-seekers, and were wont to resound to the light laughter of gay dames and demoiselles, gaunt Hunger dogged the steps of rich and poor without discrimination. Still the commanders had no thought of yielding, the stern ramparts seeming as obstinately defiant as were the triple walls of Jerusalem to the legions of Titus.

The month of December dragged wearily on, and in a tall, grey house just within the fortifications, Phyllis watched day and night by the bedside of her mother, who tossed restlessly to and fro in the burning fever of

a malignant malady by which she had been suddenly stricken. Tortured by witnessing her pain, the girl was almost thankful when at last delirium blotted out the sufferer's realization of the present with all its want and wretchedness, and her mind wandered away to other days and happier scenes. On an afternoon when the setting sun was sinking cheerlessly behind the hills, and snow was drearily falling, she was sitting in a dull silence of despair by the sick woman's side; no sound breaking the eerie quiet save the whirl of the wind outside. Waking from her uneasy sleep, her mother called her name, some thought of the past having seized her beclouded brain, as she whispered:

“Phyllis, child, do you say you fancy you see a picture in the fire? Does it mean that we are going back to England—our dear England?” As a bell from a church nearby rang out the hour, her face suddenly lighted up, and half rising from her pillow, she exclaimed in pitiful excitement: “Is not that the chime of the old minster? Are we then once again at home? Methought when I went to sleep that it was winter, dreary, cold winter, in a distant land; but that must have been a dream, only a terrible dream of the night, for we are home again! Home at last!”

As she gazed about her, Phyllis, standing near wringing her hands in mute misery, dared not utter a word lest the happy spell of the delusion should be broken. Then looking up, her face flushed with disease, but with the smile which had for so long been banished, she pleaded:

“Phyllis, go gather me a rose, the sweet, red rose that grows near the hedge”; and laughing in piteous mirth, she muttered: “Methought I ne’er should feel the scents of my sweet English garden more!” Dozing off again, she talked incoherently, moving restlessly in her uneasy slumber, until, rousing once more from her stupor, she begged:

“Oh, bring me wine or milk, my lips feel strangely parched. Phyllis, child, haste to do my bidding!”—and the tender daughter was forced to turn away, hoping that she might forget to ask from her that which in the lonely Canadian house she was powerless to procure. With body numb and chilled, and spirit well nigh broken, she sat dumbly as the evening faded into night, and through the long, dark hours waited for the dawn; but which, alas! she knew could bring no relief!

As time crept slowly on, the fire burned low, for the supply of fuel having been exhausted, the small articles of furniture which she was

able to use, and with which she dared to feed it, were becoming scarce. Although feeling her own strength failing, she walked restlessly to and fro about the room in her effort to keep herself warm. It was well that anxiety of mind had driven away appetite for food, for there was little to satisfy it in the almost empty larder. In the dusk of coming morning she heard footsteps pass on the snowy streets, and looking listlessly out saw the dark figures of monk and nun hurrying by on errands of mercy to the sick or dying; for every day the aged, and little, tender children, were sinking under the rigors and privations of the isolated, beleaguered town. At times she recognized the heavy step of soldiers marching to mount guard or relieve the watches on the outworks. So pressing were the needs of others beside herself that she dared not expect or seek assistance; so there was naught to be done but wait for the end, whatever it might be. Suddenly there was a loud knocking at the entrance door, which echoed through the silent chambers. Startled and trembling, she sprang to her feet in frightened wonder as to what it might betoken. Was it, she questioned herself in agitation, an alarm that the city had capitulated? Or was it that help had come to her in her terrible need? With the cry on her lip, "God grant it may be so!" she hastened to answer the summons.

It chanced that the day before, a young sailor on his deathbed had cried for a priest that he might be absolved for some crime lying heavily on his conscience. In the lucid moments of burning disease, the dying man had confessed, in what seemed only the mad ravings of a disordered brain, his remorse that while aware that he was smitten with the disease of smallpox, which was ravaging the troops, he had voluntarily carried, two weeks before, a letter from his superior, Captain Temple, to friends who had but recently arrived in the threatened city. He owned that in a diabolical revenge for the falseness of the girl he loved in England, who had deserted him for his mate, he hated her whole sex, and took a Satanic delight in knowing it was in his power to spoil the beauty of another. He told the priest of the fair girl who in the dusk had taken the letter from him, thanking him for it, unwitting of the taint of its passing through his hands; and how he had gloated over the fact that soon the loathsome disease would furrow and deface the soft pink of her cheek. He begged that the holy father would ease his soul of the load upon it, by going to a certain house on Rue St. Jean, and having the fatal letter burned, that the contagion might if possible yet be stayed; that he might be absolved and die in peace. The confessor shriving him and performing the rites of the Church for the dying, promised that his wishes should be carried out. In obedience, therefore,

to his commands, before daybreak, a priest was knocking at the door of the house to which he had been directed, and in which apparently there was a case of illness. He saw that a light burned in the chamber above, which on his summons was carried from the room. He could see through the glass panel, as Phyllis descended, that it was borne in the hand of a young girl.

“Oh, *mon Dieu!*” he groaned, an ashen paleness, whiter than the pallor of the cloister, covering his features, “It is my Phyllis, my love!”

Drawing his cowl about his face, he shrank back into the deep shadow of the door, where, seeing the dim outline of his figure, the frightened girl uttered an exclamation of relief on discovering by his gown the character of the nocturnal visitant. Failing to recognize the wearer in the uncertain light, she timidly asked the nature of his errand.

In a voice made unfamiliar by scarcely controlled emotions, in a few words he gave, as he had been bidden to do, the dead man’s message.

“Alas! good Brother,” she replied, “‘Tis well he died in the comfort of thinking that his evil deed might be prevented; but my mother lies in

the chamber above stricken with the fell disorder. I am all alone, for my father, being an officer, is not permitted to come to us lest the health of our troops, upon which so much depends, should be endangered, and they should suffer losses such as, we are informed, have fallen upon the camp of our enemy without the walls.”

Her listener silently bowed his head lower, in unspoken thanks to Heaven that it was not she, whose every word rent his soul with anguish, who was the victim; and a mad longing to tear off his sacred robes and clasp her to him for a moment almost overpowered him. She continued:

“It avails not now to burn the fatal letter, and although my faith is other than that of one who wears these vestments, I would crave your prayers, good Brother, that I may be spared to tend my mother through the dreadful tortures which already scorch her very life-blood, and have so marred her gentle face that it bears no semblance to that which I remember since my cradle days. My task were not so hard were food and needful remedy to be had. I tell you, with as simple truth as if this narrow porch were your own confessional, that twice hath the sun made the circuit of the heavens since food, except in meagre measure, has crossed these lips. I dare not venture forth, and fear of the plague

forbids any to come to our aid. Not for myself I complain, but when she cries in her wandering for nourishment, which I have not in my power to offer, my heart and strength fail me, and I fear a few more hours will see the limit of my endurance.”

From among the folds of the cowl were huskily uttered the words:

“Sister, Heaven, who catereth to the sparrow, will succor you. You are in no worse extremity than was the prophet of Israel by the brook, and did not the ravens feed him?” and the dark figure hurried down the deserted street.

Before an hour had passed another summons called Phyllis from her mother’s side. No one was visible, but on the threshold lay a small hamper containing bread and wine and simple lotions for the easing of the burning pain. At the same hour, day by day, a like tendance was proffered; and Phyllis thanked a kind Heaven, knowing not that the young devotee’s abstinence and fasting in the refectory were deemed but fresh evidences of his piety, as with the greater portion of his frugal meals laid aside, and with wine begged from the cellar for the needy, he ministered to her wants. Her thankfulness and joy in the accepting of

them would have been tempered could she have seen him scourging himself in the solitude of his cell, because the love denied the vowed Jesuit celibate still burned in the heart of Leon de Lérie.

As each dreary night wore dismally on, before the dawn broke, the call to prayers in the Jesuit monastery hard by sounded sharp and clear on the frosty air. Ere it ceased, the doors of the cells opened noiselessly upon their heavy hinges, and the monks glided silently along the bare stone floors of the passage-ways to the dimly-lighted chapel within the walls, where the tapers flickered among paintings and images of saints and martyrs. Some of the Brothers, with round, happy faces, jogged cheerfully along, with a pleasing sense of duty performed in this world and a certainty of favor in the next; upon whom the austerity of their vows seemed to sit but lightly. Others, driven thither by the stress of sin or sorrow, with marks of spiritual conflict on their faces, muttered prayers as they continued the devotions by which, through the long night-watches, they had sought to bring peace to their troubled souls. Some, with the white hairs of old age among the ring of tonsured locks, with the calmly serene look which had come from the years of seclusion in the quiet monastery, had forgotten the outside world and their turbulent youth over the seas, and with calmness waited for the day when

the Angelus should fall on their unhearing ears, and they too would be laid in the vaults over which their feet were treading.

At times into some narrow cell there might come a vision, a dream of a sun-flooded village of old France—of eyes lit with love—of laughter sweet as the song of the thrush in the May-tree. Unsought there might come memories of the clasp of soft, tender hands, of shy, warm kisses in a sheltering screen of vine leaves, or a woman's clinging arms and heartbreaking tears of parting—thoughts that pierce and burn. But no regret for the sweetness of the past, no rebellion against its pain and loss, might be cherished within those grim walls with sighs or longing, or with penance and flagellations of repentance they must be banished from mind and heart. They knew the cross of their consecration must be borne in silence and submission through the slow passage of the long years, until that fair day dawns when crowns are given.

Among them, missal in hand, walked one who had recently sought admission to the order. In the severely simple robe which he had voluntarily assumed on laying aside his customary gay attire, and with a rapt expression of almost agonized devotion, the novice, Jerome, the name in religion by which he chose to be known, would scarcely be recognized as

Leon de Lérie. Taking his place among those worshipping around the altar, his clear young voice rang out in a passionate response to the chanting of the aged priest, who, in chasuble embroidered by a fair penitent of the Court of King Louis, intoned the prayers and led the responses. At their conclusion the same solemn procession reformed, and the chapel was again empty, save for the tarrying of the youthful brother, who, prostrate before an image of the Madonna, cried: “_Mea culpa! Mea culpa maxima!_” in contrition for the mortal sin of love for a woman.

The letter which had carried the fatal contagion was from Captain Temple, and ran thus:

“On board the *Vulture*.

“Dear Mistress Davenant:—By trusty messenger I send greeting, and expression of my anxiety on your behalf. A siege of the city by the invading army is inevitable. Arnold’s command has, in spite of the utmost vigilance, succeeded in crossing the river. Montgomery’s force, which has been waiting some twenty miles away for the result of the negotiations for treaty, which your father was the means of bringing to the Governor, but which he refused to take into

consideration, has now joined Col. Arnold here. It is apparently their intention to immediately begin the attack.

“My mind is filled with horror, and my soul recoils at the thought of the intentions of these men, desperate in their resolve to reduce the city at this severe season; and of your suffering the appalling miseries of a sack of the town. In your ignorance of what such an event would entail, it is not possible for you to fully realize to what terrible measures victorious troops in such circumstances sometimes resort. Far be it from me to recount to your innocent ears the wantonness which at times troops intoxicated by victory and blood-lust display; but I would save you from the mere breath of it, even were my own life to be the forfeit. With the approaches to the town to watch, and the river to patrol as well as the ice and advanced season will permit, I must remain with my ship; but which, in the event of your fleeing the city, is at your service, from bow to stern, and the last ounce of powder and every gun on board will be for your defence. The *Vulture* lies directly below Fort St. Louis, and any signal displayed there will be recognized. If a contingency should arise in which my help be required, let fall a handkerchief over the cliffs at the ringing of

‘Eight Bells,’ and I will at once concert measures for your succor.

“Yours to death,

“BASIL TEMPLE.”

CHAPTER IX.

THE FLIGHT.

At Holland House, Montgomery and his officers were taking serious council. The former, pacing to and fro, with arms folded moodily across his breast, paused before Arnold, and said tersely:

“Until Quebec is taken, Canada is unconquered, and it must be by siege, investment or storm! The first is out of the question from the difficulty of making trenches in a Canadian winter, and the greater difficulty of living in them when made. We are without engines or engineers capable of mining, and the fewness and lightness of our artillery make the breaking of the walls folly to attempt!”

“‘Tis but a matter of time and patience, General,” was the confident

rejoinder. “We must starve Carleton out, which will be, I feel assured, an easy task, as a deserter from his ranks, who joined us this morning, asserted that their straits are such that a few more weeks and a further holding out will be impossible.”

“To us it is also impossible, Arnold; for forget not that the term of enlistment of the troops under our command expires with the last day of the year, now but two weeks hence; and it is needless for me to remind you that many of the men are already waxing impatient of this slow dallying along these shores. If, therefore, a blow is to be struck, it must be ere the New Year’s daybreak. To the storming we must come, and that without delay! Nevertheless I confess that to see the city in flames at this severe season of the year, and the carnage, confusion and plunder which must be the consequence, fills me with horror. After the manner in which my overtures have been met, I have not the reproach, however, to make my own conscience, that I have not warned them of their danger and folly.”

“Of a surety, General, their blood shall be upon their own heads; but I own to some misapprehension of the tactics needful for success. Were the place of ordinary strength we might perforce proceed at once to active

hostility, but without sufficient ordnance or engineering contrivances, that is not to be thought of.”

“We will have recourse to stratagem, Arnold, for once before this place has fallen by its use. Side by side, Wolfe and his men climbed up these crags, having outwitted Montcalm’s sentries, and won the day. I shall soon give proof that if Guy Carleton has forgotten, Richard Montgomery has not. We will scale these barriers with ladders, and like Romeo at the balcony of Juliet, will teach them that war, like love, laughs at locksmiths. These clumsy Britishers will find their bull-dog obstinacy scarce a match for Yankee cunning. We are reduced to this, being deficient in artillery, and not strong enough for an open escalade.”

“This, General,” said Vanrosfeldt, who had been listening eagerly, “is only possible under cover of night and that one of unusual storm or darkness, such as I am glad to say is not uncommon at this time of the year.”

“True, Vanrosfeldt, and it is my purpose to wait with what patience I may for such an one, and we must either quit all pretensions to valor or possess ourselves of this fortress!”

With eyes blazing and soul on fire at the magnificent daring of the scheme, Vanrosfeldt suddenly exclaimed:

“Grant me, General, the privilege of leading this forlorn hope, with forty men whom I shall prepare for this romantic means of scaling these ramparts. With a skill equal to that of the lovelorn Montague, with ladder of ropes on the palace of the Capulets in old Verona, we will by subtlety cheat these walls, which would well defy the battering-rams of a Pompey.”

Accordingly, with the zeal of a Trajan drilling his legionaries to march, heavily laden with armor and camp baggage, Vanrosfeldt caused his men to construct ladders of the dimensions he thought advisable.

Persistently, and with only requisite intermission, he familiarized them with the novel tactics, until at the end of a week they could nimbly mount the ladders, burdened with their equipments, and even in the darkest night scale an obstruction with ease and celerity. Consumed with hot impatience for the moment to strike the blow, he constantly employed the hours of the short winter days in becoming familiar with every detail of the fortifications and the nature of the ground which lay

between them and those determined on their capture.

At every gate and on every point on the ramparts British sentinels day and night paced to and fro, buffeted by wintry wind and storm. Rations had had to be cut down so low that the half-starved soldiers could ill carry out their orders, and even in the officers' mess there was but scant provision. In Fort St. Louis, Carleton and his staff waited in a suspense which tried men's souls, and was worse to be borne than the risk and rush of battle. In the council-chamber which still seemed to breathe the valorous presence and spirit of de Frontenac, de Champlain and the great soldier-knights of France, they waited.

On the King's Bastion loaded cannon pointed grimly to the river; among the troops the strictest discipline was maintained; food and ammunition were dealt out with the most rigorous care and economy; all bore themselves with what fortitude they could muster, and every hour of every day was filled with unchronicled deeds of heroic endurance and self-effacement for the general good. The hours as they passed seemed to drag with leaden feet, and the days to the length and stress of weeks; and still both armies lay watching each other. Looking out gloomily over the dreary scene and the still drearier prospect, the commander of the

threatened fortress said in stern, measured tones to his aide, who had just informed him that the stores were reported as running so low that they could hold out but little longer:

“Davenant, this town and garrison may die of starvation; so let it be, for it will only be over our dead bodies that yonder flagstaff shall be laid hands on!” Pointing with a soldier’s pride to the colors fluttering in the winter wind over the citadel, he exclaimed hotly:

“That is the flag of England, and never shall these gates be thrown open to admit its foes! Honor before life!”

On Christmas Day the watch of “eight bells” rang on board the *Vulture*, and out over the waters of the St. Lawrence, which the effect of the tide had prevented from freezing solidly; the rocky sides of Cape Diamond sending it echoing along the shore. Here and there in the town pale-faced women hurried over the frosty pavements, some having sought the churches and chapels for morning prayers, glad that the quiet hour in a measure calmed the suspense and anxiety which hung like a pall over the sorely-beset city. All barter and trading seemed to be forgotten in the hourly dread of what portended, and every able-bodied man was

detailed for sentry and picket duty.

In the great stone houses, perched on the towering promontory, no Christmas cheer or festive song made rafter and wall ring with merriment, and no gay greetings passed 'twixt friend and neighbor, for, from choice as well as necessity, it was a day of fasting rather than of feasting.

In Rue Saint Jean a door opened, and from it a young girl emerged, whose slight form ill fitted the dark, fur-trimmed pelerine, which in happier days had so well outlined its youthful roundness and grace. Tremblingly she closed the door and passed along close to the wall as if craving its protection, or in case of weakness its support, as she sped toward the Castle St. Louis. Seeking to avoid the notice of the guards, who at short intervals paced the ramparts, she reached the spot where the outworks overhung the cliffs nearest to the fort. A sharp pang of fear paralyzed her lest her face showed signs of the plague, which she had begun to hope Heaven had spared her, when she saw that a priest, who was passing on the road, glancing at her for a moment as she stopped, suddenly recoiled, in what seemed to her horror and surprise, and turning abruptly away, quickly entered a church near by. So hurried and

determined was his evident effort to avoid encountering her, that she failed to recognize in the apparently timorous monk Leon de Lérie; who, in the brief encounter, saw she was fleeing her home, but dared not seek to stay her or ask whither she was bent on going. Hastening to reach the battlements, she leaned over, and afraid of the dizziness which seized her brain, dropped a silken kerchief which had encircled her slender throat. Thinking of the coincidence, that she should be compelled by stress of circumstances to have recourse to the same device to attract attention for which she had chidden Thérèse a short time before, she laughed hysterically, saying half aloud:

“It is for a firm, true friend I thus make sign, and not for one of those hated foes!” whose loathed blue coat she saw in an American soldier passing at a distance below. At the sight of it she gave a quick gasping sob at the thought that she had given her love to one who wore it, and was even then down there somewhere, among those sworn to bring ruin and death to her people and kinsmen. Turning and quickly retracing her steps, she hurried back to prepare for flight from the town.

Captain Temple, who daily at that hour had carefully scanned the face of the cliff, saw at last the white signal fluttering from the wall. A

flood of honest joy flushed brow and cheek as he commanded two of his men to make immediate search for her silent token; whilst he himself went below to arrange for her comfort, as reverently as if it were a princess of the blood-royal who was seeking sanctuary from danger.

The young Colonial soldier she had seen was quick-sighted, and happening to glance up at the moment the white hand had dropped what he rightly divined was a signal of some sort, mayhap a sign of an intrigue, for which he himself had a passion; he watched the silken thing fall and catch on a hawthorn bush a few yards away. Already tired of being deprived of the companionship of the fairer sex, with whom he knew his fascinations of manner and handsome person made him especially acceptable, he strode up through the snow-bank and secured Phyllis's neckerchief. He laughed gleefully at the correctness of his surmise, when he found pinned in a corner of it a small unsealed note in a delicate handwriting.

"Aaron," he laughed to himself, "you lucky scapegrace, you are in your usual good fortune to thus stumble upon a love-tryst of some kind. I trust this billet is not in that outlandish French lingo that has so tormented my ears since ever we crossed over into this luckless

province. Ha!” he exclaimed, as he unfolded it, “by my word it is in as fair English as any missive I have ever read from good Mistress Shippen, wherein she doth labor with me to strive to follow in the steps of the ‘saintly Jonathan Edwards,’ as she styles my grandsire,” and he read:

“15 Rue St. Jean,

“December 25th, 1775.

“Dear Friend,—

“For such I know I may without fear style you, and there never was time when I stood more in need of true friend than on this unhappy morning.

“I am alone in this hapless city, in daily expectancy of being defenceless at the mercy of a marauding soldiery. Shortly after your letter of such exceeding kindness came, my mother fell grievously ill, and not many days after was released from the pain and suffering of the loathsome scourge now prevailing, and were it not for the good words the message contained, I would fain have lain down by her side and prayed that I too might die. Instead I

bore up as bravely as I could, hoping that soon I might be restored to my father; but yesterday a messenger from the army surgeon came to acquaint me of fresh trials in store. My father, overcome by grief at the loss of my mother under circumstances of such peculiar distress, has fallen ill of an ailment, long suspected, and which extreme anxiety and grief have developed alarmingly.

“Without desiring to cause me disquiet, the good doctor intimated that this shock, if aggravated by the tumult of an attack on the town, might be followed by fatal results. I fear I must, therefore, test your kindness of heart and charity without loss of time, as evidences of renewed activity among the enemy are apparent from the walls and from the fact that our troops have received orders to sleep nightly in their clothes, with their fire-arms beside them. I have spent the hours of the past night considering how I might in safety reach your ship, and whether wisely or not I have decided thus.

“From my father’s official position and prominence in the town, I feel assured that I shall have little difficulty in passing the guard to go without the walls; which I shall essay to do by the St.

John's gate. At nine o'clock to-night I shall be on the path leading from it to the Lower Town. A messenger may recognize me by a white scarf of silk wound loosely around my neck. I pray you do not fail me.

"Yours in much trepidation,

"PHYLLIS DAVENANT."

"Phyllis," he thought, "truly it hath a sweet and winning sound, an' if this fair lady in distress bear aught of resemblance to this dainty lettering, the lovely Phyllis would be worth the risking something for. Aaron, you are indeed a fortunate if somewhat graceless rascal, for the sweet goddess of love ever seems to give special heed to the guiding of your ventures into pleasant ways; and truly at her alluring shrine kneels no more devout worshipper than yourself"; and Aaron Burr laughed sardonically, as loitering in the vicinity, he saw two seamen from the ship set forth to search for the token among the icy rocks. With the skill of sailors who could climb to the main-mast in the trough of the sea, or walk a yard-arm in the teeth of the wildest nor'-easter that ever blew, they scrambled over the crags, and examined with diligence every hollow between, until completely baffled. Thinking it hopelessly

lost in some snowdrift, they went back to the vessel to inform their captain of the fruitlessness of their quest. On hearing the result of the search, he was distracted with conflicting emotions. That it was the preconcerted signal of distress he had no doubt, but in the absence of an understanding of her condition and purpose, action on his part was an impossibility. He walked his quarter-deck torn with misgivings, his fear lest some evil should befall her wringing his heart with torture, in his passionate powerlessness to give response to her appeal.

Heavily muffled in a long cloak of grey camlet cloth which had been her mother's, and whose ample dimensions admirably disguised the girlishness of her figure, with a bundle in her hand and a white scarf wound around her throat, Phyllis at the hour of nine moved nervously along the crooked streets and reached the heavy, iron-studded postern through which she hoped to be able to pass. Addressing the sentry at the gate, she was intensely relieved to find he was of her father's regiment, having at times acted as his orderly and messenger between military quarters and his home. Being familiar with the face of his commander's daughter, he offered no opposition to her purpose; his respect for his superiors, and a strict sense of discipline, not, however, preventing his warning her against the danger and risk of such a proceeding at so

late an hour. He was, however, assured, when pointing to her bundle she explained that friends were waiting for her on the outside, who would conduct her from the threatened town to a place of refuge.

As the gate clanged heavily behind her, and she looked out at the bleak stretch of snow, lightened only by the rays of the great white moon and the twinkling of lights in the windows of the part of the town skirting the river, she shrank back terrified; but the spars and black hulk of a frost-caught ship, with a lanthorn slung at the bow, which lay in the ice at the dock, filled her with hope. Moving out of the shadow of the wall, she looked timidly and anxiously around for her rescuer, who, she doubted not for a moment, was near at hand, and ready to do her service. Before she had taken a dozen steps, the figure of a man in uniform, which the uncertain light prevented her from recognizing, stepped out from behind a projecting buttress of the ramparts, and touching his hat, addressed her by name, and requested to be permitted to conduct her to her friends, who impatiently awaited her. At once, without a thought of guile or a suspicion of deception, she followed, all her attention being directed to the care required to clamber over the steep and snowy declivity leading down the hillside. Unfamiliar with the neighborhood, and in all good faith, she did not observe her direction, until suddenly

stopping, her conductor dismissed his assumed character, caught her in his arms, and jestingly attempted to get a look at the face hidden under her hood. Shrinking from him and terrified, she struggled, and angrily promised that Captain Temple should be made fully acquainted with the rude conduct of his messenger; adding as loftily as a queen might command an insolent vassal:

“Lead on, sir, ye shall answer for this!”

“With all the pleasure in life, my sweet English rose, but in good sooth no further than yonder gate in this high wall; wherein I promise ye will find hearty welcome and most excellent accommodation.”

Suddenly a dire suspicion of treachery drove the color from her cheeks, and almost stopped her heart’s beating, as she said:

“What mean words such as these, sir? Who are you? Is not this the Convent of the Good Hospitalière Order? I am seeking His Majesty’s ship, the *Vulture*, lying by the shore, and fain would go thither at once.”

“Nay, a warship’s deck is no fit place for tender damsels such as you. I

am languishing for the sight of a fair face, so I entreat you to bide here instead. 'Tis true 'tis the convent, but for the nonce, a barracks of the troops of the United Colonies of America; from whom the good, pious souls within fly like a flock of frightened doves before a hawk, at the sound of a man's footfall; but long ere this they are wrapped in vestal slumber, dreaming of saints and angels, in the cloisters yonder."

"Oh, I pray you do not entrap me thus! Prithee conduct me back again within the city walls. Starvation there and all the bloody horrors of a siege were easier to be borne than that unwittingly, and without chance of escape, an innocent maiden should be thus miserably misled."

Sinking on her knees on the snow, her hood falling back, the cold lustre of the December moon revealed her sweet face bathed in tears, and floating around her shoulders her wind-blown, golden hair, which, in the haste of her flight, she had arranged but carelessly. With clasped hands she pleaded for pity, entreating for clemency in this shame and affront to her maidenhood. With white, trembling lips she stammered:

"Surely you are but in jest, fair sir, and cannot mean to do me hurt!"

Looking down upon the lovely, suppliant figure at his feet, that which had begun as merely an incident upon which to turn a barrack-room joke, roused the dark passions which were rampant in this man's nature, and which even in his youth won for him the repute of a Lothario. An evil light kindled in his handsome eyes, and with an unholy joy he thanked his stars that a lucky chance had thrown this beautiful, unprotected maiden into his power. Trying to take her hand, he said:

“To escort you back to the city gates at such an hour would cast a slur on your maidenly propriety. Be content to bide here instead, an' if it be known that you are safely lodged within these most decorous walls, no ill will be thought of it. Dost think that Aaron Burr, who is known as the most gallant squire of dames from Jamestown to Boston, will refuse shelter to a distressed damsel belated upon this snowy waste? It desolates me to say you nay, sweet one; so be persuaded, an' ye shall have safe lodgment and the privacy and courtesy due to such beauty, until your heart melts and you will permit me to kiss these ripe lips of your own sweet accord. I promise me I shall not have long to wait, for Aaron Burr is not lightly balked in any purpose upon which he has set his heart.”

Suddenly a thought struck him, and being willing for once to forego his own selfish designs for the sake of the cause so dear to him, he said plausibly:

“Come, my sweet captive, I am moved by your tears, and will grant you the boon you ask for a slight favor on your part. Give me the password of the night, an’ I will risk life and limb to do your desire and convey you to yon ship.”

Forgetting for a moment her own fears in the greater one of the city’s safety, the soldier’s daughter rose to her feet, and drawing herself up, in a voice cold and clear as an icicle, with the light of battle flashing from her eyes, made answer:

“I know it not! The watchman at the gate was known to me and did not require it,” and with curling lip and burning scorn, she continued, “and had I knowledge of it, not even the welcome boon of relief from the torture of your hated presence would wring it from me!”

Seeing her spirit, and admiring her even more in anger than in the softness of her tears, he replied:

“Flouncing thus, my cold, white snow-drop, ye are lovely, an’ as ye choose then my escort to the convent, be it so. We will proceed thither at once; but first dry these eyes, for though like blue-bells wet with dew, I fancy not a Niobe.”

The next morning the good Mother Superior, with a look of deep distress agitating her usually placid face, called Sister Thérèse to her, and told her that the young soldier, Monsieur Burr, had informed her that he had found a young and beautiful girl wandering by the riverside. Seeming to be in great distress of mind at the failure of friends to meet her at a place appointed, he had offered her the hospitality of the cloisters, knowing full well that the kind Abbess would welcome the stray lamb to the fold; and the good woman continued, “Thérèse, I like it not. It is a plausible and fair sounding story, but I scarce can give it credit; but the more unworthy is she, the more it behooves us to give her Christian succor. Many an outcast Magdalene, lost to this world and the next, hath drifted hither, and with penance and alms sought Heaven’s favor, and won great repute for holy deeds and sanctity in after life. I would not offend the purity of your young mind with such dark thoughts of sin, but I need you in this case. The Sisters, so long used to the quiet of

convent life before these rough, sinful times, are so afraid, that their trembling limbs would scarce carry them to that part of the building where these soldiers now abide. You, though little more than a child, are used to the ways and manners of the outside world, and have sterner stuff in you; so I would have you minister to her needs, and carry refectation to this poor wanderer from the paths of right. But enter not into converse with her, else your pure spirit might suffer greater harm than from even the rude jokes of the whole soldiery.”

Thérèse, who had found it hard to measure her light steps to the solemn movements of a life of devotion, could not repress a blush of pleasure at being permitted to somewhat relax the restrictions it imposed, and which so ill accorded with her restless nature.

Her rising color was mistaken by Mother Ursula for a sign of ingenuousness, and as she watched her go to do her bidding, she prayed that a soul so pure and innocent might influence the poor outcast towards good, rather than itself receive taint.

With bent head and downcast eyes, Thérèse paused on the threshold of the mess-room, in which, as she reached it, the morning meal was in

progress. On the walls hung military accoutrements and various articles of uniform. As her eye caught the gleam of steel and she saw the stacks of muskets, there was roused in the heart of the quiet-looking young nun a spark of the martial spirit of her knightly forefathers, who had fought and bled with the mailed ancestors of those same men at Crécy and Agincourt. Her face flamed at the wish, that like her countrywoman, Jeanne D'Arc, she, too, might don sword and buckler, and fight for the flag of her loved France and see the Bourbon lilies on their field-azure wave once again above the fort on the cliff, where the great de Champlain had unfurled it.

Veiling her features, with a few gentle words she made known her mission, saying in her native tongue, with eyes demurely cast down:
“Voici le déjeuner de mademoiselle.”

Master Burr, springing from his seat, where he had been giving to a few kindred spirits a highly-colored description of his adventure of the night before, and of his skill in knight-errantry, with a graceful bow proceeded to conduct the black-robed figure to a distant part of the building. As they traversed the long corridors, even the white purity of her wimple did not prevent her receiving a bold, debonair stare of

admiration from his handsome, dark eyes, which none knew better than he how to use in laying siege to a woman's heart. On reaching a door at the top of a flight of stairs, he produced a key, and with a deep bow, threw it open, saying to his prisoner, not supposing the little French nun understood the English language:

“Here, my sweet linnet, is refreshment for you, and lest ye should be minded to leave this cage, in which it grieves me sore to keep you, I will wait outside the door until this little raven-clad recluse withdraws with me. It were vain to try to gain speech with her, as she knows not a word in our tongue, and equally vain for you to beat your pretty wings against these bars. Instead, grant me the kiss I craved, for I would I might have it of your own free will, and ye shall have till the New Year's day to offer it, but not another hour. Then I will take it; for never hath it been yet said of Aaron Burr that he hath vainly sued for woman's favor,” and closing the door he left the two women face to face.

A wild throb of joy darted through Thérèse's heart, and the color flooded her cheeks, as she discovered, in the pale, dejected girl before her, her rival, Phyllis, she herself being unrecognized in her cleverly

assumed disguise, and with the light of a cloudy morning coming but dimly through the deep-set window.

Laying the tray down upon the bare table, the nun, in a well-feigned voice, said in English, "Eat, this is your breakfast."

Pushing aside the food and grasping the nun's hands in a transport of relief at the sight of a woman's face, Phyllis with trembling lips cried:

"Ah, good Sister, a pitiful Heaven hath sent you hither. As you see, I am a prisoner, most unwillingly, in the power of this ruthless soldier, with whom, I call Heaven to witness, I never had speech before last night." Relating the circumstances of her capture, she begged the Sisterhood's intervention on her behalf, saying: "If by their help I safely reach my friends, a goodly sum of gold will be given for their tender charities, of which I have so often heard."

Thérèse decided, with instant resolution, that, instead of asking the Abbess to use her good offices for her relief, in every way in her power she would try to keep Phyllis a prisoner. Shaking her head sadly, as if

giving no credence to the tale, and drawing away her hands, as though there was contamination in those clasping them in entreaty, she crossed herself piously and said in rebuke:

“Poor lost woman, add not to your sins by untruth in order to gain the liberty to join your unworthy companions, who doubtless in a drunken revel forgot their tryst with you.”

A crimson flush driving the pallor of distress from her face, Phyllis, shrinking back, gasped with sobbing breath:

“Is it thus I seem to you? I pray you do not spurn me! I am as pure as you yourself, and there is something strangely familiar in your voice and bearing that persuades me that you will be my friend.” Suddenly, a thought striking her, with a new light of hope in her eyes, she besought: “Enquire, I entreat you, if among the troops here encamped there is one Major Vanrosfeldt. He will go surety for my truth and honesty, and is doubtless at this moment within easy reach; or is there not within the convent one who is a friend of mine, Thérèse de Lérie?”

At the mention of the names, a quick revulsion of feeling filled the

mind of Thérèse. Instead of still desiring to keep Phyllis in captivity, she became anxious to have her removed as far as possible from the vicinity of the barracks, and released from circumstances which, should they come to the ears of Edward Vanrosfeldt, might touch his sense of chivalry and perhaps result in the culmination of her own worst fears, by his offering to the girl the protection of a husband. Thus at a single blow would her hopes be dashed to pieces; hopes which, knowing him to be momentarily exposed to the critical chances of active service, had warmed into the expectation that some circumstance might arise, that would make him debtor to herself for care or tendance, and thus peradventure some warmth of feeling might be excited in return. Drawing near, with an air of saintly compassion, her dark lashes drooping in the demure propriety of the convent-bred, she laid her hand on the bowed head, saying gently and tenderly:

“My erring sister—for such, in spite of your folly, charity bids me call you, whether your tale be true or false—I would have you go and sin no more. I shall acquaint the Mother Superior with your desire, and I have no doubt that by application to Colonel Arnold, it may be brought to pass in due course; but,” she continued, lowering her voice, “of this Major Vanrosfeldt it were better not to speak his name within

these walls. A young novice, Agatha, placed here by her parents, who feared that harm might come of her giddy ways, has mysteriously disappeared for some time past. It is thought, and I fear with only too much truth, that this handsome Colonial, with his blue eyes and curling locks, and whom I have seen, knows more of her whereabouts than he will care to own to. It would not help your cause, but rather throw suspicion upon you, if you should, in converse with the good Mother regarding these irksome restrictions upon your liberty, confess to intimate knowledge of him. Of this Thérèse, I know of but one of that name within these walls, and she wears the veil of the order.”

“Good Sister, there is naught to cause shame if on my lips I take the name of a good man and true, who has made me offer of his heart, and waits only for days of peace to claim my own. He is guiltless of this laid to his charge; but I am willing to be guided by your judgment in the case, and keep silence if that seems wisest,” replied Phyllis, with something of her old spirit, determinedly refusing to harbor the suspicion of her lover which the nun’s apparently sincere words aroused.

As she thus spoke, a fierce anger that this fair-haired girl should, without seeking it, already possess what her own dark beauty was

powerless to inspire, filled Thérèse's hot, passionate nature with a dumb rage, which forced burning, blinding tears into her eyes. In the dimness of the cell, unable to see her averted face, and mistaking the cause of the emotion heaving her bosom, Phyllis fell upon her knees, and taking her hand, kissed it in a passion of gratitude, saying:

“Seek my release for kind charity's sake, sweet nun! May Heaven bless your tender heart. Surely it is easy to believe in the piety of the dead saints you pray to, when there are living angels like yourself!”

As the key turned again upon the half-fainting girl, with the mist of tears upon her flushed cheeks, Thérèse raised her eyes to Phyllis's jailor, and said in tones of softest compassion, speaking in English:

“Ah, sir, such vileness in one so young and fair makes my heart bleed, and I long to save her from further depths of sin. In her refusal of your request I believe she but dissembleth, thinking she will thus increase your favor for her. It is my duty to thwart these plans, by informing the Mother Abbess anent the matter, and secure her freedom from your coercion. To do otherwise, were to dishonor the veil I wear. I must without delay lay the case before those in command here, and

entreat that this frail sister be permitted to return to her friends, if such they may be termed. It may be that perchance even so short a sojourn within these holy walls may have power to turn her spirit into seeking paths of purity and honesty.”

Placing himself before her in the narrow passage-way, and assuming his most vanquishing air, Captain Burr, looking at the pretty, tearful face before him, said:

“Such cold piety is strangely unsuited to eyes as lovely as these, now melting me with their tears; and these soft hands were never meant to grow hard with tasks which your vocation lays upon them. Ye are too pretty for a nun. Instead of this sober garb and these plain linen bands, gems and laces were more befitting. If, fair nun, in a secret corner of your heart, that is even now sending warm blushes to these cheeks, you shall think to cast aside these black robes, and seek the outside world with life and liberty and love, you have but to find your humble servant, Aaron Burr, an’ I promise you his good sword-arm will be at your bidding to do you service, and help you flee these bonds.”

Crossing herself, as if to exorcise the suggestions of the Evil One, she

exclaimed, as she endeavored to move on:

“Step aside, I would fain pass, sir.”

With his rare grace of manner, the glamor of which many a woman had cause to rue, he obeyed, and watched her as she walked quickly away, saying to himself, as he slowly followed:

“Yonder is not the stuff that saints are made of, an’ I would not be afraid to lay wager against any odds, that the fall of Quebec within a week is not more certain than that yon pure vestal, St. Thérèse, take my wise counsel. If that plain coif hide not more of sinner than of saint, then my repute for reading human nature, and especially that of woman, is for the first time at fault. I have a thought, Sister Thérèse, that we shall meet anon.”

CHAPTER X.

BESIEGED.

The year’s last morning dawned at last; the hours of the day wore on

until set of sun; the vesper bell rang, and to the suffering people sleep would soon give a welcome surcease of misery in its blessed forgetfulness.

When her evening meal was brought to her cell, Phyllis found beneath her plate a note bearing the signature of her tormentor. With eyes fixed in terror she read:

“Sweet, obdurate one,—

“Patience hath never been numbered among the many virtues for which your devoted slave hath wide repute, and the small stock in his possession hath already reached its limit; as hath also the time allotted you for consideration and compliance. To-night on the stroke of twelve the term of service of these troops expires.

Before dawn to-morrow, or never, the city must be ours! Howe'er it falls out, I will no longer be amenable to a woman's whim. With my duty here fully discharged, I will hasten to your relief, either in person or by messenger, and take you under my protection, whether ye will or no. Such devotion as mine, I feel assured, must ere this have touched your heart, and doubtless I will find you not only

willing but anxious to remain in my loving care, until such times as means of carriage can be found to Boston or Philadelphia; for if there be a post-chaise about this luckless town it shall be confiscated to the claims of love and gallantry. So hold yourself in readiness—a few more hours—when the cloisters are wrapped in slumber, and thou shalt welcome thy ardent and impatient lover,

“AARON BURR.”

In her narrow cell Phyllis walked to and fro in an agony of apprehension, as the hours of night drew near. The petition to Colonel Arnold had been listened to with the utmost respect, but as an attack on the stronghold was hourly impending, he had replied that it was impossible that any measures tending to her return within the enemy's lines could be undertaken until Quebec had fallen. He vouched, however, for her personal safety until then, promising that on his triumphal entry into the town, he himself would see to her safe restoration to her friends, adding tersely: “For we do not make war on women.”

When the Patriot army went to rest, with the early close of the wintry day, the fields of snow lay white and glistening in the weird light of a

waning moon, which struck sharply on the crystal angles and abutments of the icy barriers, and glinted from coping and buttress of the citadel, which was silhouetted against the dim blue of the sky.

Ever watchful and wakeful, Edward Vanrosfeldt gazed over the white waste, upon which the slightest movement of the smallest object would be plainly visible from the heights. He silently anathematized the unbroken stillness which mocked the men, who night after night impatiently hoped that their slumber might be broken by the sharp command, "To arms!"

Counting the hours as the year's life ebbed slowly away toward the midnight, when would end the term of enlistment of the troops, he noticed that a haze began to obscure the moon's brightness; that the stars began gradually to disappear, one by one, behind white, scurrying clouds, which as snow began to fall, grew heavier and darker. The wind, which had suddenly changed to the north, whistled in shrill gusts, whirling the drifting snow against the tree-trunks, and filling up the hollows of the rocky ravines. The cold momentarily increased, as an Arctic blast from the ice-fields of Labrador swept fiercely up the St. Lawrence valley.

With senses alert Vanrosfeldt looked at the gathering tempest. He quietly but swiftly made his way to Holland House, and into the chamber occupied by his chief and his staff, where, on a narrow pallet, with uniform unbelted, lay the noble form of his general in the abandon of slumber. The peacefulness of sleep had smoothed away the lines of care which marked his countenance in the weeks of arduous marching and restless waiting. He had for the moment forgotten the frowning battlements which he must storm, and all the preparations for the mortal combat hourly imminent; and in his dreams perchance he was again by his home-hearth on the banks of the Hudson. Into them came no misgivings or fears for the issue upon which might hang his country's weal, and which had silvered a few of the dark hairs that fell over his brow. Unheard, Vanrosfeldt softly approached and laid his hand upon the shoulder of Montgomery, to awaken him—little dreaming to what a fate! Immediately he sat upright, dazed for a moment by the sudden rousing, involuntarily fastening the military coat in which, half unbuttoned, he had lain down.

When fully awakened by the light which had been struck, he started to his feet, as Vanrosfeldt, with eyes burning with excitement, said:

“Sir, the midnight hour has but just struck, and a wild tempest has suddenly arisen. Hark to the fury of the blast!”

Rising to his towering height, and calmly but quickly buckling on his sword, a solemn and earnest resolution darkening his eye, the general said calmly but portentously:

“Vanrosfeldt, the hour has come!—order the troops under arms.”

Hurrying forth to execute the command, the word went out, and soon the storming party was drawn up, ready for action and the attack. In the darkness, as his men answered the summons, Vanrosfeldt personally inspected the condition of each, and by the touch of his hand ascertained that the equipment was as he had determined it should be. By two o'clock the whole brigade was carefully inspected, and ready to march to the allotted points. About nine hundred men had answered to their names, and were divided into four companies, two of which were detailed to do the actual fighting, the rest to act as decoys and draw away the attention of the enemy from where the serious assaults were to be made.

Scarcely able to keep his footing on the windswept ramparts, the solitary sentinel pacing the King's Bastion thought he had seen a light flash through the gloom—go out—and immediately, as if in answer, another follow further down the river. Uncertain and listening, the welcome words came, “Guard turn out!” as a shivering relief tramped heavily up the icy road. At once his suspicions were communicated to Lieutenant Fraser, who was in command of the squad, and soon the dire news that the enemy was in motion spread from the fort through the town. Into the gloom and bitter cold of the night, the troops and citizens who were compelled to bear arms, with the sailors from the frigates, mustered at their posts at the beating of the “assembly.” In the darkened houses there was a sudden glimmer of candles, lighted hurriedly by trembling fingers; and glancing fearfully through the frosted casements, women in tears and terror clasped their frightened children within their arms, as the sharp clang of alarm-bells and quick orders to the men gathering in the streets, broke in on the howling of the December wind.

At a flash of the signal-lights, which the watch had observed, dark forms in hot haste moved along the river bank, and Vanrosfeldt saw his General at his side ready to lead. His face grew darkly concerned, and

turning in agitation, he exclaimed hurriedly:

“General, I beseech you to remain in the rear! I entreat that this exposed position be left to me! It is sheer madness thus to place in danger so imminent a life, upon which so much depends!”

“This place is mine, I yield in courage to no man!” was the calm reply.

With increased distress Vanrosfeldt desperately endeavored to move his determination to lead in the attack, saying:

“Remember, sir, I entreat you, the trust imposed upon you by our Commander-in-Chief, and run not this awful and needless risk!”

Waving his hand, he quietly made answer:

“It is the memory of that trust that nerves me now”—and then, with a firmness which might not be gainsaid, he ejaculated: “I am in command here, sir, waste no more time or words. Proceed to action.”

Then side by side they cautiously led their men along the shore toward

Cape Diamond, over hummocks of ice, which, left by the action of the tide in its rise and fall, so obstructed their way that but three or four could pass at a time. The progress was maddeningly slow. On a narrow path on the further side of the King's Wharf, just past the old King's Forges, and which was known as *Près de Ville*, they reached the first barrier. It was well known to the vigilant aides, and its removal was at once begun. Savagely dashing against the timber and stone which formed it, the General with his own hands helped to tear it away, to make a passage for his patriots. It was a formidable stockade, running down the face of the precipice to the brink of the river, formed of strong posts fifteen or twenty feet high, knit together by a stout railing of pine at top and bottom. Montgomery himself sawed through the logs to allow of four men entering abreast.

The bulwarks of the city came only to the edge of the hill above the place, but a few paces further on there was a second obstruction, which took up the space between hill and river, leaving only a cart-track on either side. This blockhouse, some forty or fifty feet square, was loopholed for musketry, and pierced above for two twelve-pounders, which, charged with grape-shot, commanded the narrow gorge up which the attacking force had to approach.

Each night at watch-setting Lieutenant Fraser had examined the post, himself pointing the guns; as on that defence the safety of the city largely depended.

Unable in the blinding storm to discover any signs of alarm on the part of the besieged, with the utmost elation Montgomery turned to Vanrosfeldt, who with an Indian guide was nearest to him, and commanded:

“Order the forward column to advance and attack yonder blockhouse, where doubtless Master Carleton’s men are fast asleep, not dreaming, forsooth, of our presence. We will give them no gentle awakening, I promise you.”

The command was needless, for ere the words were ended, his eager men were pressing around him. To fire their courage he lifted his sword, and waving it above his head, in clear, ringing tones, that reached them through the din of the tempest, he cried:

“Men of New York, ye will not fear to follow where your General leads!” and rushing hotly up the declivity, he shouted again:

“Come on, my brave boys—Quebec is ours!”

Over the obstructing ice and through the deep drifts of snow—in the frenzy of the attack, the joy of the peril—slipping, stumbling, but undaunted, the poorly-clad men gallantly pressed against the driving storm. Like Julian, trailing his imperial purple through the mud as on foot he led his Romans through Assyrian marshes, Montgomery, forgetting his rank, with face flushed with the hot blood that the icy sleet could not chill, tugged with his own hands at the great, frozen blocks. At last two hundred men formed in column. No light shone from the redoubt, which lay directly in their path. It was not until the invaders had reached the second barrier that the British sentinels became aware of the approach, and gave the alarm. As they caught sight of the head of the column, and not being able to gauge its strength, a momentary panic seized them. Some attempted to conceal their arms, others offered to throw them into the river, when Lieutenant Fraser, his face livid with passion, in a low, menacing voice ordered the frightened guard:

“To your posts, ye miscreants! Ye craven cowards! Is this town defended by women? I swear the first man to desert his gun I will shoot down like a dog!”

Despite the human weakening of half-starved and sorely pressed men, they were British soldiers with British courage, and at the order every man quickly fell into place. As they stolidly waited, with shouldered muskets, for the word of command, not knowing what odds they were facing, the broad chests heaved in silent suspense. The sailors, with eyes strained in the blinding darkness, showed not a tremor of fear as they stood with linstocks in their hands ready to apply the torch. Sixty yards lay between them and their approaching foe, when out rang the shout: "Fire!" and a belching blaze of flame and shot, like the hot breath of hell, fell on the heads and breasts of the foremost. Forward, prone upon the snow, without a groan, fell the majestic form of Montgomery, and those of his immediate following who were within range, of those who composed the group leaving unhurt only Burr and the Indian guide; while through the trailing smoke, the shrieks and moans of the dying mingled dismally with the howling blast.

Struck in the arm with a musket ball, Vanrosfeldt reeled, his cry, "My God! the General falls!" reaching those behind; and then—turning, stumbling, and falling over each other, they frantically sought their wounded comrades, and in the bitterness of repulse bore them down

through the breaches they had so manfully carried but a few moments before.

In the dark hour before the dawn, in the wail of the storm, a bewildered consultation was held, and moments pregnant with destiny were lost; even the staunchest of heart among them quailing before the awful suddenness of the calamity. Aaron Burr, a strange combination of the lowest vices and highest courage, stood calm and collected, and advised immediate advance; but the order for retreat was given, which—in spite of the example of chivalrous gallantry the fallen Montgomery had shown—on a renewal of fire from the enemy, and their appearance in pursuit, was converted into a precipitate and disorderly flight down toward the river. Half frozen, with faces streaked with blood, in the agony of loss and defeat they hurried to the convent with their groaning burdens, leaving their dead upon the field. Left alone, one man still stood irresolute. There beside the young aide lay the body of his commander; behind him along the river bank, his comrades were flying in a panic; and in front the enemy was issuing from the stronghold. With a cry of anguish, and though only a boy in stature, he stooped, and with a herculean effort, in a frenzy of grief and devotion, lifted the superbly proportioned body of Richard Montgomery upon his shoulders. But “Little

Burr,” as he was called, staggering knee-deep in snow, wrestling with the elements, and with the enemy forty paces behind, found even his headlong courage and indomitable will shrink under the strain, and he was forced to drop his precious burden in his tracks.

In the eastern part of the town, Arnold and his men, unaware of the disaster, were pressing along Rue St. Matelot, their purpose silently spoken in the bands of white paper in their caps, on which, the better to enable them to distinguish their comrades in the confusion, they had written the words of the fierce war-cry of Patrick Henry of Virginia, “Liberty or Death!” In the town above them every bell was ringing a wild jangle of alarm, drums were beating, and upon the men running singly along the narrow defile with their gunlocks thrust under their threadbare coats to keep them dry, there fell from the windows a deadly hail of shot. Close behind them a few of their comrades were dragging a field-piece, and above the noise and tumult Morgan, with the soul of a Crusader, was cheering his riflemen on, who, fighting in their own fashion, and yelling the Indian war-whoop, rushed after him, the hillsides echoing to their cries.

Reaching a barricade, Arnold was shouting his orders, listening the

while for shouts of victory from Montgomery's men, who were due if they had succeeded, when, a ball striking him upon the leg, he fell, still rallying his soldiers. One of his men was beside him in a moment, who on seeing he was disabled, cried excitedly:

“You're hit, Colonel, and the shots are flying here as thick as peas in a pod! I'll carry you on my shoulders to their infernal barricade yonder.”

“No, my good lad,” he replied, “I am in the way of my duty here, and know no fear;” and rising on one leg, and dragging the other after him, he continued to conduct the charge until the position was taken, and the guards made prisoners. Seeing him fall, Morgan then took command, and led the assault with almost superhuman exertion. He plunged into the town, fighting in the streets as he went, until he and his men were surrounded. Forced to surrender, the man who years before had not flinched under five hundred strokes of the lash, which he had been ordered by a tyrannical superior officer, under that one stroke of misfortune bowed his head and cried like a child.

But the odds were too great, for, instead of the support from Montgomery

which Arnold hoped for, a bloodstained, panting and exhausted messenger brought the woeful news of the repulse. The British garrison being thus enabled to concentrate their full force against him, he was overpowered, some of his officers and men being carried prisoners into the Citadel. Others fell back, and he himself was borne to the camp hospital, his blood leaving a crimson track along the way. Repulsed, but not vanquished, he demanded that his drawn sword and loaded pistols be laid beside his couch, within reach of his hand, that with them he might receive the enemy should they enter to attempt his removal.

Over the city on the hill, the night of bloodshed and terror, made horrible by human strife and slaughter, was giving way to morning, and the storm which had raged throughout the fateful hours died away. The only signs of turmoil were the smoked and broken barricades, crimson stains upon the virgin whiteness of the snowy hillside, and the still forms, which in their cold winding-sheets of Canadian snowdrifts lay half buried below the brown, beetling cliffs.

With the first pallid moments of approaching daylight, one of the city gates opened and from it emerged small groups of those who had been so long pent up within its walls; citizens with hurrying, uncertain steps

coming forth to seek the means of alleviating the want and suffering in their homes, and a file of soldiers detailed to ascertain the losses of the enemy, to bury their dead and carry the wounded into the fort. Following them were several monks, crucifix in hand, bent on bringing spiritual consolation or bodily help to any in need of them. With them walked one who, though straight and tall, yet from the youthful look he bore, was evidently a novice in the monastic life. His presence and purpose would, however, not have been a source of wonderment or question, even if any apart from their own pressing concerns had thought to consider them, for in the stress and disorder of the time, not only the venerable Abbot and reverend Mother Abbess and those already in orders, but even those preparing to take vows in the monasteries and convents, were specially commissioned to do churchly duty or proffer charitable tendance to the sick, the starving or distressed. Hastening down the declivity, the black-robed figures directed their steps toward the convent barracks, guided thither by the soiled and trampled snow, and the bloody footprints along the way. The young novice, tarrying behind, stopped to minister to a poor fellow, who, wounded and half frozen, was calling feebly for help, but who in a few moments was beyond what human hands or words could do. Leaving the body to the soldiers who were approaching, he rapidly overtook the priests and entered the

convent with them.

Scarcely more terrible were the hours of darkness to those in the carnage of the onslaught than to the girl locked in the quiet convent cell. Through the narrow window, which faced the town, she had heard the distant roaring of cannon, the crack of musketry; then the trampling as of feet flying in a desperate headlong rout; and at last groans, prayers and even curses from the tortured lips of those whose bleeding bodies were being borne into the building below. Not knowing but what the fight had been in favor of the invaders, hour after hour she listened with throbbing heart for the dreaded footsteps of her detested persecutor hurrying along the bare floor of the hall. At length, weak with uncertainty and misery, she once more placed her ear to the keyhole to listen, and a sudden faintness seizing her, she grasped the latch for support—found it rise in her clinging fingers—the door open—and lo! she was free. The key was in the lock on the outside, and whether inadvertently or with purpose, the wards had not been turned. Her jailor, though unscrupulous and selfish, was not as yet wantonly cruel, and probably thinking that some casualty might befall him, or even the convent might be fired, he had left it within her power to escape.

Scarcely daring to breathe, with shaking hands she nervously donned her

cloak and hood, without waiting to secure any other of the articles which she had hastily gathered together in her flight from the city. Leaving his missive on the floor of her cell, where in her agitation she had dropped it, she hurried breathlessly along the empty corridors, the care of the wounded having evidently drawn all the inmates to the part of the building where they were sheltered. By making use of the least frequented halls and stairways, she reached, without observation, a little-used postern leading into the garden at the back—and she was safe from those terrible stone walls! Here she readily found access to a winding walk leading towards the town, but which, before she had proceeded far, she found completely lost in the pathless tracks of the storm. Trembling from anxiety, lack of sleep, and the fear of being unable to climb the declivity, with the worse terror of encountering her persecutor, she stood and looked helplessly around her. From the main entrance of the hospice emerged the youth in monk's garb who an hour before had sought to offer the consolations of the Church to the wounded and dying soldier on the hillside, and who had since been doing like service to the inmates of the convent. With bowed head, and apparently on some errand requiring haste, he took the same direction as that which Phyllis would fain have pursued. With tremulous uncertainty she tried to make another effort to proceed and follow in his steps. He must, she

thought, be familiar with every road and by-way leading to the city, and feeling his presence to be a safeguard and guide, she struggled along, and for a short distance was making fair headway, when suddenly, her foot striking against a fallen bough, hidden under the drift, she stumbled and fell forward in the snow. At her cry of dismay the monk turned, and hastening back, reached her, as regaining her feet, she tried to shake the flakes from her hair and eyes, where they had blinded her for the moment. She was only conscious that a dark face under a cowl was regarding her, and a voice which sounded strangely hollow asked:

“Sister, can I be of service to you? Whither are your steps bent? The convent, from which I perceive you have just taken leave, were safer than these paths, where are sights that may blanch your cheek and sicken your heart. Return, I pray you.”

“Nay, good Brother, I beseech you turn not away, but rather, in the charity in keeping with your robe, aid me in reaching the city walls, within which is my father, sick, and I have cause to fear, mayhap dead. I do not seek to detain you, all I ask is the guidance of your footsteps thither.”

Not turning towards her, his averted face rigid as a death-mask, he moved on, saying coldly, "Follow me."

He measured his steps to the weakness of hers, but never once looked back to see how she fared over the rough way. It mattered not how she faltered or slipped, no hand was held out to her assistance nor further word spoken; but if she could have looked beneath the cowl, she would have seen that with a fierce grasp upon himself, his dark eyes burning with passionate love, Brother Jerome was crushing down the heart of Leon de Lérie; that the fingers, tightly clasped beneath the serge gown, dared not touch hers, lest the chains of self-restraint snap and he make shipwreck of his vows.

In unbroken silence they climbed the hill and reached the gate, and as she was about to face him and say, "Accept my heartfelt thanks, good Brother," he turned away abruptly, and keeping close to the wall, disappeared.

With the falling of the night a solemn hush brooded portentously over the Religious House of the Hospitalières, which not many hours before had been alive with active, though stealthy, military preparations. The

refectory, which erstwhile had been the scene of feasting and rough soldier life, was strewn with pallets, on which, moaning with pain, and ghastly with bloody bandages, lay the wounded and dying. Some were in merciful unconsciousness; others, with minds wandering, were calling weakly for loved ones far away over leagues of forest and mountain; and not a few lay silent in the calm of death.

Over one, whose brown curls were red and clotted, a young nun bent, who, as she bathed the lacerated flesh and damp brow, wept as tenderly, and with as keen distress, as a girl might over her lover. Edward Vanrosfeldt, for whom she cared, with eyes shining and cheeks aflame, muttered and raved in the wild imaginings of his fevered brain. He tossed from side to side in his delirium, hindering the proper swathing of his wound, so that the falling tears of the Sister would scarcely permit of her ministrations. She listened to his incoherent wanderings of speech, as he spoke of the past, to which in thought he had returned.

At one moment he fancied he was in the mad fury and rush of battle, and anon he crooned a love song, at the sound of which the dark-eyed Sister, who sat patiently and without weariness hour after hour by his side, leaned towards him, and placing a small, cool hand on his burning brow,

tried to cheat herself with the fond fancy that it was to her he sang.

The love and longing within almost breaking bonds, her lips were about to touch his cheek, when the fantasy of dreams suddenly changing, he thought he was again on the treacherous river, seeing a young, fair girl gliding over the gleaming surface, a dark gulf waiting to receive her, and his voice of warning unable to reach her. Great drops of agony started out on his brow, and he struggled with all his strength to rise. Holding out his unbound arm, he cried in tones of anguish:

“Phyllis!—danger!—danger!—my love, my own!”

In his fevered illusion, as he thought she was about to fall into the abyss, and through the mists that shadowed his mind, he saw the form of a woman near, he threw his arm about her, and raved, laughing wildly, “Saved! saved!” and then in the vagary of his sick brain, relaxed his embrace and lapsed into a sleep of exhaustion.

Thérèse, agitated almost beyond control, sank back in her chair, her bosom heaving tumultuously. The dim light of the night taper showed her face white and distorted with anger and jealous rage, while she dared not utter a sound. Her hands moved involuntarily towards the bandages

that stayed the flow of his life-blood, as she muttered to herself, repeating his words:

“‘Phyllis,—Phyllis,’—‘tis ever ‘Phyllis!’”—and a wild desire, half ferocity, half agony, seized her to unbind the swathings,—to grasp the man’s throat, and silence forever his lament for his Phyllis ere it turned her brain to madness. Leaning quietly over him, beautiful, tigerish, and white-lipped, her likeness to the picture of the wicked *Comtesse* of the *salon* more striking than ever, her fingers touched the fastenings by which his wound was bound. The movement, slight as it was, disturbed him, and as he turned she saw that a knot of blue ribbon, with a crimson stain upon it, was tied over his heart. As he opened his fever-bright eyes, she looked into their shining depths, and recoiling, her fingers fell powerless, as with streaming tears she wept, with pain as sharp as ever tore a woman’s heart, crying:

“*O Ciel*, I cannot, for I love him! I love him!”

With the dawn, her vigil ended, and the night light put out, she replied to the enquiry of the lay Sister who was to take her place:

“The poor soldier has passed a restless night, his mind wandering at times, but I besought Heaven on his behalf, and already I see signs of recovery.”

“Yes, Sister Thérèse, prayers offered by one so pure of heart have without doubt been heard, for see how he sleeps, breathing as sweetly as a child upon its mother’s breast.”

As the days passed, the love for Edward Vanrosfeldt proved stronger than the jealous hate, and she tended and watched him unweariedly, grudging the slightest care to any other; but in the silence of her thought she nourished a deep revenge, for “Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned.”

On an evening when the convent bell was calling to vespers, as with the danger past, the patient lay weak and pale before her, laying her hand on the locks, grown long and clustering above the white brow, she said:

“Monsieur is better, thanks to the favor of a merciful Heaven.”

“And to your gentle ministering, sweet Sister.”

“At times, monsieur, I feared I should scarce ever see you well again; for besides your bodily ailment some weight of trouble seemed to press upon your mind, as though some one had wrought you ill, or given you cause for sorrow. Who is this Phyllis for whom you did cry continually in your mad raving? I, too, have known one of that name. Is she your sister? Or perchance she is your cousin, who will be glad when the fair news of your betterment reaches her, for doubtless by this time she mourns you as among the dead.”

A warm color flooded the wan white cheeks as, grasping her hand, he exclaimed in a dangerous excitement:

“Spake I her name? Then that I love her is no longer secret! It is not that of sister or cousin, but of one even dearer, an’ never sweeter, fairer maid won a man’s undying love. I would you could see her, Sister Thérèse!”

“Mayhap I have. What is her family name, monsieur?”

“Have you then seen her? When and where? Pray tell me!” Leaning toward her, and clasping her hands in his, he exclaimed: “Oh, sweet saint, you

have never known the rapture and agony of love's thrall, but believe me when I tell you that the life you have saved depends on the constancy and truth of Phyllis Davenant!"

Shrinking back, and crossing her hands meekly on her breast, Sister Thérèse bowed her head, as she said with a trembling of pity such as the angel barring the way to Eden may have felt:

"Ah, monsieur, it rends my heart to tell you the truth. If this Mademoiselle Davenant, who has but just left these walls, is she whom you love, better were it for you that I had loosed these bands and let the life-blood ooze away in your unconsciousness, than that you should live and wake to her unworthiness."

Then, as if every word were a dart piercing her own heart, she continued, as his eyes, filled with an agony of apprehension, were fixed upon her bowed head:

"This Phyllis Davenant, fair of feature and with hair like the cloud when the sun is setting, a soldier—one of your own comrades—brought hither out of pity and to save her from the perils of her own reckless

folly. He informed us that by signal, which had been prearranged, she had run away from her home and friends, and was bent on meeting one Captain Temple, meaning to join him on his ship, but by some misapprehension he failed to keep his tryst. I counsel thee to think not of her; she is unworthy of such as thee.”

Her listener’s face was livid, his eyes dry and hot, and through his drawn, parched lips came in husky tones, as of a man stricken to the heart, the agonized question:

“Speak ye the truth? She who told you this must have wantonly erred! Tell me ye are in doubt! One word of uncertainty will exorcise this demon of distrust tearing hope out of my tortured soul. Speak, holy Sister, as you hope for heaven, say it is a black untruth, or that it may have been another.”

“Nay, I cannot. I myself have seen her, having met her in other days. She is false to thee,” and turning away to hide the heaving of her breast and gleaming triumph in her eyes, she put her kerchief to her face as if in sorrow for him.

Back like a flash of lightning, cruel memory darted over the past, illuminating the dark cloud of suspicion with looks and words hitherto unheeded and forgotten. Captain Basil Temple's intimacy with her family, of which Phyllis had spoken, gave color to the story told by the nun, who, he was sure, could have no motive but to spare him future pain, and who in the telling of which seemed herself to have sincere sorrow and distress. A lie that is partly the truth is ever the blackest of lies and receives readiest credence, so with the blood surging with agony through heart and brain, and with a groan of the deepest misery, he turned his face to the wall, determined even yet to outwit fate and die. He cursed the British bullet that it had done no surer work than to spare his life, for better were it, he thought, with a groan, to be lying under the sod by the riverside, than to live in an anguish which neither lead nor steel had power to inflict.

But youth and Nature are at times stronger than even despair and heartbreak, so that when the first tender green of spring touched the hills with a soft relenting, and the scent of blossoms blew in through the open windows from the convent gardens, he was able to leave the hospice to join Colonel Arnold up the river, who though only partially recovered from his own wound, had, on the reported arrival in the gulf

of British and Hessian reinforcements for the garrison, retired to Montreal, which was still held by American troops.

In the chamber which had been occupied by Captain Burr, Thérèse on his departure had found a monk's gown. Carrying it to her cell, and throwing it over her own, he being short of stature, it fitted not ill, the lines of her slight figure being lost in the loose folds of the rough serge. With her veil, coif and wimple removed, and her short hair curling in rings about her face, she saw herself reflected from her only mirror, the panes of her narrow window. Startled, she exclaimed under her breath, "It is Leon, not Thérèse!"

Suddenly a thought flashed through her mind, and her face was lined with a quick decision, as carefully folding and secreting the robe in the coverings of her cot, she resumed her veil and crept away to do her allotted tasks, which throughout the day she performed with hasty abstraction, her face flushed with an inward excitement.

That evening, as the last of the soldiers took leave of the convent and passed out of the gate, a young black-robed priest followed them, his presence arousing no comment. Edward Vanrosfeldt was again bodily fit

for active service, but there were lines of suffering upon his face which marred its whilom comeliness. Feverish for action, he had been impatient for the freeing of the river of ice, and felt something of his old spirit return as he embarked on the transport waiting at the shore. As he took his place in the sloop which was to bear him up stream, he noticed a boyish-looking priest sitting in the stern, his face bent low over the book of prayers in his hand, apparently oblivious to the men of blood who were his fellow-passengers, and seemingly averse to holding converse with them.

On learning that the enemy had finally withdrawn, Madame de Lérie, anxious to once more behold her beloved child, and wishing with the protection of Sir Guy's fleet to return to her home in Montreal, hastened to the convent. There, aghast with dismay, she learned from the good Abbess, who was prostrated with grief, that Thérèse had mysteriously disappeared, nothing having been seen or heard of her since the American army had left the town. Diligent search and inquiry had been made, but no trace could be found.

“And, my sister,” the pious soul said, amid choking sobs, “it may be I was not watchful enough of one so young and beautiful, but she was full

of good works, and so pure in heart, that I began to hope that she too might have a vocation for the Church. Among the sick and wounded she was an angel indeed, nursing the poor men day and night, with no thought of weariness. To her care and prayers one soldier most surely owes his life.”

“Of what soldier do you speak?” asked Madame.

“He was a Major Vanrosfeldt, with hair brown and curling, and eyes as blue as a babe’s.”

Quick as thought back to the mother came the memory of her child leaning out of her chamber window, saluting a handsome soldier passing by, at the returning glance of whose blue eyes crimson blushes had dyed her cheeks. A horrible agony of fear tore at her heart, and leaning for support against a pillar, she tasted the wine the frightened nun hurriedly procured for her, but no word of the dark, miserable suspicion forcing itself upon her was uttered, as sick at heart she said:

“Pray for my child, good sister, that no ill befall her.”

“Oh, be of good comfort, I will say *aves* without ceasing to the blessed Virgin, who knew a mother’s grief, that her young life may be spared.”

“I thought not of her life; death is not the chief evil to be feared,” she answered brokenly; and with soul tortured with uncertainty and anguish, the distracted mother returned to the city, to spend weeks and months waiting for tidings, refusing to leave the place where she had seen her child last, until hope itself died out.

CHAPTER XI.

MORAL SUASION.

The amber sunlight of a morning in April was turning the waters of the Hudson from pale gold to burnished bronze, and a small vessel, with sails whitening from the soft rain of the night before, was sailing up the river with four passengers aboard, who on dropping anchor at Albany, disembarked from the sloop and proceeded to the home of General Schuyler, which lay about a mile below the town. Its master, who by continued ill-health had been compelled to give up active service,

received the travellers with a hearty hospitality, most grateful after the fatigue of their journey from Philadelphia, in which city they had been commissioned to proceed to Canada to endeavor to ascertain what were the temper and attitude of the provinces toward the revolting colonies, and whether the Canadian people might not be induced to make common cause with the revolutionists. After a few days' sojourn the party again set out on their route, which was continued by way of Saratoga and Lakes George and Champlain to the British dominions.

Reaching Montreal after a journey which had consumed a month's time, and in which much hardship had been endured from the ice floating in the lakes and rivers, they sought guidance to the Governor's house. Clad in sober browns and drabs, in knee-breeches and silver-buckled shoes, they had the appearance of being simply a small company of private gentlemen about to tarry in the *château*, which they were approaching, to enjoy a friend's hospitality, and tarry for a time beneath his roof. As they passed through the streets, however, loud huzzas from some of the people, and a salute of cannon from the fort, belied the conceit, and proclaimed that the occasion was one of public concern. Guests had been bidden, so that the *salon* of the *château* was filled with a distinguished and genteel assemblage ready to receive them; and in the

doorway stood Arnold, the host, waiting to extend to them greeting, and bid them welcome.

The members of the party of travellers were presented in turn, the first being Master Benjamin Franklin, a printer of Philadelphia, who at the age of seventy still apparently retained the vigor and energy of youth. His eye was keen and piercing, yet withal kind and gentle. His hair, which was unpowdered, and without the queue of the prevailing fashion, fell in natural locks over his shoulders; which accorded well with the extreme simplicity of his linen and raiment. With a countenance of great benignity, and distinguished by an unusual breadth of brow, he looked the scholar and the sage.

Accompanying him in somewhat less of the plainness which marked the garb of the philosopher, was Samuel Chase, a lawyer of Maryland, who though scarcely yet past the prime of manhood, had acquired a name for unusual legal acumen and skill in logic.

Then in turn were introduced the other two members of the party, who were brothers—one, Master Charles Carroll, the possessor of a princely domain in the same state, and the largest and wealthiest landowner in

the Colonies; the other, the Reverend John Carroll, a prelate of Rome, holding the office of Bishop of Philadelphia. His creed was that of the Baltimores of his native state, the Baron and his son Cecil, who being neither in sympathy with the royal Stuarts nor with Oliver Cromwell, had sought to try the experiment of founding in Maryland a democratic principality, conducted according to the Catholic tenets of faith and practice. The churchman had accompanied the commission by special invitation, his priestly calling being depended upon to give him influence with the clergy and the people of the Canadian city and province holding the same religious belief as himself.

Some of those of French nationality assembled to receive the visitors, bowed with respectful cordiality when they remembered that their own young compatriot, Gilbert Mottier de Lafayette, an officer in the Guard of Honor in Paris, of high rank and title, vast fortune and powerful connections, was burning to leave the most brilliant and fascinating Court in Europe to fight as a volunteer in this struggle.

Colonel Davenant, who, broken in health and spirit, had returned some weeks before to the quiet and retirement of his home in Montreal, and those present of English birth, thinking of the inglorious flight of

their Governor by night, in darkness and storm, scarce six months before from the same portals then open to receive their enemies, acknowledged the introductions with courteous but cold formality.

Arnold, still lame from his wound, conducted his guests to the banquet-room, where a feast was spread for their delectation; over which Father Carroll pronounced a blessing according to the ritual of the Church he represented.

As Vanrosfeldt glanced around the board, he saw seated on Arnold's right, Franklin, and opposite to him Colonel Davenant, by whose side sat his daughter. She looked white and anxious, regarding with concern her father's face, which was flushed with the mental disturbance which his being compelled to be officially present occasioned. Shrinking uneasily from meeting Vanrosfeldt's eyes, which he persistently and purposely seemed to avert, her agitation could not be controlled. Thinking of her father's enfeebled state of health, her anxiety as to the result of the strain under which he was evidently laboring increased painfully during the course of the repast. In reply to Arnold's inquiries of his guests regarding their purpose and plan for the carrying out of their instructions, Franklin explained with a persuasive smile:

“With the co-operation of my colleagues, I am commissioned to endeavor by all means in my power to present to the inhabitants of Canada such cogent arguments for our position, that, seeing its justice, their own reason will force them to join our cause, and throw off the tyrant chains by which they now are bound.”

At the treasonable declaration, Colonel Davenant could no longer restrain his indignation, and with a hectic color mounting to his brow, and the light of scarcely suppressed anger in his eyes, he curtly, yet with politeness, remarked:

“Your purpose then, as I understand it, sir, is to accomplish by argument what your General could not compass with his sword.”

Smiling blandly, the Sage replied:

“It is my intention to prove the truth of what a certain philosophic friend of mine has averred, that ‘The pen is mightier than the sword.’”

Turning to Phyllis, who saw that he could no longer control himself, her

father said, in a half audible undertone:

“It is to be regretted that such should not have previously been the opinion of our host. It would have saved much needless shedding of blood, and his own limb’s present incapacity.”

Not appearing to hear the remark, Arnold again questioned:

“What is the method by which you intend to secure this end?”

“That our principles may have immediate dissemination, we purpose printing and scattering them broadcast,” replied the printer.

Interrupting sharply, Colonel Davenant again broke in, saying:

“Master Franklin seems unaware that this town contains none of the apparatus needful for his purpose. A good steel blade, to my mind, carries weightier argument than a quill-pen from the wing of a goose, even though it be sharpened by Washington himself, and dipped in the combined wisdom of his upstart Congress!”

Pointing to a large chest which the servants had brought carefully into the adjoining room, Chase urbanely remarked, with a touch of satire in his tone:

“Permit me, sir, to assure you that there need be no concern upon so vital a point. Master Franklin, foreseeing such a contingency, has, with his usual foresight, provided for it. In yonder case is his own printing-press, and even were it not so, his native ingenuity would find a way out of the dilemma, as he could proceed to manufacture his own type and ink, as he has on occasion done before;” and turning to his host, he continued politely: “We are, however, dependent on Colonel Arnold’s courtesy for a chamber where the work can be done without needless interruption.”

With a smile, Arnold replied:

“Master Franklin will find a safe and quiet apartment in the vaulted rooms which lie below this building, where will be afforded him all necessary assistance in his peaceful and bloodless campaign. I pray that it may have a more favorable outcome than our most lamentable venture at Quebec; but whatever be the means employed, we must all hang together in

order to accomplish the worthy and commendable end in view.”

With a twinkle of the eye, and a raising of the eyebrows, Franklin looked around the board, as he rejoined with a laugh:

“Most certainly, as has before been remarked, if we do not now hang together, we without doubt will all hang separately later on!”

As the company repaired to the *salon* for conversation and conference, Monsieur de Lérie, who was present to meet the commission, singled out Father Carroll, as being of the same faith as himself, and taking out his snuff-box, said, as he delicately offered a pinch:

“My son, like your Grace, is in holy orders.”

Accepting the courtesy, the prelate replied:

“I would then, sir, that he were here. His native tongue would be of service to my present mission in conversing with the French-speaking clergy of the town; and even if this present commission be abortive, should France send troops to America to serve in our cause, some of his

creed and language will be a necessity to perform priestly duties among them, should the need arise.”

“The claims of the Church, Father, be assured, will ever come with him before even those of country, if the call of duty bade him choose between them. He is still in his novitiate, but ye can at any time command him. Religion comes before even patriotism! I am a British subject, but I am before that a Catholic.”

His attendance over, Colonel Davenant, a-tremble with anger, and Phyllis, in pained wonder at Vanrosfeldt’s studied avoidance of her, took an early leave, on the plea of his delicate health. Leaning heavily on his daughter’s arm, in the wan light of a waning moon, they walked slowly through the quiet streets toward their home, which still bore marks of its occupation by the departed Colonial officers; and which, unlighted, would give them but a cheerless welcome. At last, breaking the silence, in an excitement which made his hand, resting on her arm, shake as in a palsy, he said satirically:

“Master Franklin and his accomplices or colleagues, as he dubs them, need scarce be so sanguine of success. We are not a parcel of

soft-headed women to be so easily moved by his eloquent manifestoes, even were they couched in all the wit and logic of this imaginary philosopher of his—‘Poor Richard’ himself—to whose sayings albeit I will not deny a certain sagaciousness and homely humor. I predict that before a month’s time he will be conveying his precious printing-press back whence it came, but lacking a goodly supply of uselessly spilt ink. He will then have to inform those at the head of this insane revolt that they will not have occasion to place this loyal Tory province among the stripes, which I hear they have impudently added to our flag to indicate their rebellious colonies; for to such lengths have they already gone!”

The sturdy Loyalist refused to notice his daughter’s gentle attempts to divert his mind from the disturbing theme, and went on hotly: “In conversation this evening I learned that even a treasonable standard of their own has been made under the order of this Washington, by a Quaker woman in a certain cottage on Mulberry Street in Philadelphia. This same Betsey Ross, as she is called, has placed her audacious head in a noose, and will not be forgotten when the King’s troops victoriously enter her town of ‘Brotherly Love,’ which is the meaning of their high-sounding Philadelphia. ‘Brotherly Love’ forsooth!—a precious misnomer that for a nest of pestilent traitors whose mischievous rebellion they vaunt as patriotism. Nor is this the first time the flag of England has been

tampered with amongst them. In the time of King Charles, the blessed martyr, one Endicott, a governor over them, in full light of day, for some twinge to his Puritan conscience, whipped his sword from off his thigh and boldly cut the red cross from the flag, the townspeople of Salem looking on. The place is still called by that name—meaning peace—and near by is Concord—truly they have at least a genius for making choice of names that prove singularly inapt!” As Phyllis again tried to interpose, he exclaimed irritably:

“Nay, child, do not seek to check me, I will say all that is in my mind, albeit I was not slow to do so at the board from which we have just risen. I was fain there to tell them that this Quaker woman will shortly find that she had been wiser to have spent her time fashioning decent garments for the tatterdemalion army of so-called Patriots, who went hence to Quebec clad in blue homespun taken from our stores here. She may yet find, that by discreetly confining herself to the flax of her distaff, she might have saved herself later a less comfortable acquaintance with hemp—that following the teachings of peace she is taught in her Friends’ meeting house, had been wiser than meddling insolently with His Majesty’s ensign! As to those printers and lawmakers, or I bethink me, law-breakers, whom we have feasted with

to-night, I predict with certainty that the day is not far distant when their saintly polls will decorate ‘Temple Bar’ on Fleet Street, in London town, as a timely warning to all who would defy the just authority of our Heaven-appointed Sovereign. They will then find that whether they hang together or separately, Master Franklin’s witless jest was but a sorry one.”

“Oh, father,” at last interrupted Phyllis, as he paused exhausted, “in spite of their disloyalty and rebellion, these Colonials seem to be fair-minded gentlemen. A soldier on a gibbet! ‘Tis too harrowing to contemplate! Edward Vanrosfeldt, though seemingly most fickle in friendship and strangely forgetful of past favor, is surely worthy another death than that of a common felon!”

“Ingratitude is ever the blackest of sins! Were the rope already around his neck, I would not raise a finger to save him!” was the angry reply; Vanrosfeldt’s studied coldness of manner, the reason for which he was unaware of, seeming in a measure to warrant his opinion.

Not again responding to his vehemence of language, but timidly striving to allay his still rising passion, Phyllis led him over the threshold of

their home, and then soothed him to slumber ere seeking rest herself.

The hour of two was chiming from the belfry of the Recollet Monastery, whose gardens adjoined those of the château, when the light sleep into which she had fallen was broken by the sound of a horseman riding rapidly past toward the east of the town, in the direction of military headquarters. Not many minutes after, the sudden relighting of the windows where Colonel Arnold was lodged, augured that the rider, who had hastily alighted at the door, brought news of serious moment. He was an American officer to whom had been entrusted the command of a fortified post on the north bank of the river, known as "The Cedars," and lying about forty miles distant. The position had been occupied to watch what they called "The Vulture's Nest," a British encampment further up the river, the purpose of which was to descend and co-operate with Carleton in driving the Continental troops out of Canada, and put an end to the aims and purpose of the invaders.

In extreme agitation, with pauses for hurried breathing, the man related that his scouts had brought him word that a party of one hundred and fifty British, and a band of Indians, five hundred strong, were descending the river to attack the American stronghold. As he proceeded,

Arnold's face grew serious and attentive, but hardened into lines of angry severity as the miserable tale proceeded—that the garrison was so paralyzed with fear of the bloodthirsty savages, and dread of their atrocities, that the place would immediately surrender on the arrival of the first Redcoat or copper-colored savage that appeared outside the palisades, unless strong reinforcements were at once sent to its assistance.

Looking sternly at the terrified officer, with lip curling in a fine scorn, Arnold witheringly exclaimed:

“Schuyler hath well said that ‘to take a post we must at times shoot a general!’ This craven act of deserting yours in a moment of such peril may have saved your unworthy scalp, but it will make but a sorry show when ye are called to answer for this night's work before the Commander-in-Chief!”

Raising his fist, with a savage curse, he shouted:

“Begone, coward! ere I forget that ye wear the Blue-and-Buff and hold the rank ye have disgraced, and I forestall that tribunal by flogging

you as I would the greenest drummer-boy in the service! But no, I swear I wrong even such an one by comparison with such a varlet as ye are, for the most chicken-hearted fifer or camp-follower in the army would blench with shame at the thought of such a trick as this! However, I find comfort in the knowledge that the relieving party, which will march at daybreak to the help of your deserted post, will be under the command of a man who would suffer the red fiends to kill him piecemeal in the slow agony of their infernal fires, rather than surrender without a blow. To Major Vanrosfeldt will be given the rescue of the place!”

Vanrosfeldt, ‘tis needless to say, reckless of life, with a burning desire for action, and the thirst for fighting and adventure of his kind, was found ready and eager at sun-up to obey. The fierce joy of the charge, with colors a-swing and sword aloft, were to him the very wine of life. His spirit was caught by the rank and file following him, as with stern faces they hurried to what they well knew might be torture and death with nameless horrors.

By the sound of the forced march, Phyllis in the early dawn was aroused from her restless, fitful sleep. Rising on her elbow in the great, curtained bed, she parted the rose-chintz curtains to listen, uncertain

whether it were reality or but the fancy of a vanishing dream.

Slipping to the floor when assured that she heard the sound of men and horses in motion, she threw a scarf around her shoulders and looked timidly out. Leaning upon the sill of the open window with her cheek aslant on her clasped hands, she felt the soft air of the morning fan her face and caress her ruffled, golden hair. The first faint pink of the breaking day was stealing over the river, touching the grey chimneys and red roofs with the warm, ruddy color of dawn. A sweet smell of early violets stole up from the garden below, where the budding apple trees showered their white blossoms and the honey-locusts waved in the tinted fragrant air. The beauty and calm of the sunrise soothed her spirit, bringing a tinge of pleasure to her cheek, and the hour would have been heavenly but for the rapidly approaching feet of armed men, toward whom the Colonial soldier guarding the Recollet Gate looked with concern, as he paused in his slow pacing to and fro. Hidden by the screening leaves she watched the troop advance, until, catching sight of the man at their head, her hand was laid quickly upon her breast as if to stay the mad tumult of its beating; for there, with tortured wonderment as to what had hardened his heart against her, she saw before her Edward Vanrosfeldt marching out of her sight!

As he passed beneath the once familiar window, he looked up, wondering behind which slumbered the girl he loved. Drawn by the fascination of resistless memory, which would not be baffled, he lifted his eyes, and a sudden gust of wind parting the tree-boughs, he saw, framed in the tender May-green leafage, the sweet face of the only woman who could make the life he was risking worth the saving. With the balm and blossoming of the spring around her, and the sunshine filtering through her hair, she was tenderly beautiful! For a single moment, with a strange, wistful look, their eyes met, the slow paling of her cheeks setting his heart a-throbbing with a mingling of pain and joy; but turning away he thought with a smothered groan, "How can one so fair of face be so false at heart!" Faint and stricken at his averted look, she hastily drew back into the chamber and with a low moaning, fell a-weeping bitterly.

With quick orders at the fortified gate, it opened and closed after him, and he vanished from her sight; but if he could have seen the white fingers waft toward it a kiss from lips a-quiver with the ache in her breast, he would not so eagerly have craved the death to which he believed he was marching.

The day following, the sun was sinking toward the west, behind hills verdant in the bloom of the early spring, and the river flowed majestically and peacefully on, here and there broken into foam by an occasional rapid. Through the glades of the forest and across the streams on their way, watchful against ambush, grudging even the delay needful for rest and refreshment, the relieving force pushed on until within gun-shot of the threatened post. Nothing gave them warning that a few hours before, with scarce a show of resistance, it had fallen.

Unsuspecting of such a disaster, and hopeful that there was yet time for its salvation, Vanrosfeldt and his men moved confidently and rapidly toward it, when suddenly there arose from five hundred savage throats the hideous war-cry which had presaged many a deed of horror, and tortures, that to chronicle their details would pale the face of the bravest. A momentary wavering, and the suddenness of the surprise past, the voice of the leader was heard above the hellish yells of the attacking savages, calling upon his men to rally; his own keen sword sending more than one redskin dead to the grass. Soon under the feet of white man and Mohawk, it became trodden flat and gory in the fierce fight. Not until a third of the soldiers had fallen, were the remainder surrounded and overpowered, but not before a messenger had broken away

and was speeding back with the tidings to Arnold, who was some miles in the rear, following with reinforcements.

A muttered curse fell from his lips as he heard of the shameful surrender forced upon the brave boys holding the post to the wanton cruelties of the ruthless, savage foe, and although hurrying to the scene of action, his speed was redoubled to wreak a swift vengeance for the dead, and to retake the post and save the living, if such there still were. Reaching the little hamlet of *Ste. Anne's* at the western end of the island of Montreal, he stamped his feet impatiently on finding that his boats were not yet in sight. No sound disturbed the quiet beauty of the spot save the lapping of the golden-green waters on the shingle, where long years before the song of the voyageurs had echoed as they started for their wanderings in the pathless wilderness of the western plains. With ears eagerly intent for any chance alarm or surprise, Arnold, looking out over the islands which marked the confluence of the Ottawa and the St. Lawrence, saw that from one at some

considerable distance the Indians were conveying their prisoners to the mainland. Furious with impatience at thus being chained to the spot, and unable to go in pursuit, he despatched a rifleman to hurry up the boats. Scarcely had he disappeared, when the tinkle of a paddle was heard, with the quick sweep of a canoe as it rounded a point of land near by, and made for the spot where the troops were waiting. Luckily the boat contained a small party of friendly Indians from Caughnawaga, with their chief Red Deer at their head, who recognizing the uniform, paddled for the shore. Pointing up stream, Arnold, with excited gestures, and the use of a few Indian words with which one of his men was familiar, conveyed the urgency of the case to his ally, who in a moment was ready to go to the enemy, with a demand for the return of the prisoners to the custody of Colonel Arnold, which, if refused, would result in his destroying the Indian villages, and putting to death any of their people who fell into his hands.

With teeth set and looks as malignant as those of the savage himself, Arnold watched the canoe shoot up the stream to the point where the embarkation was hurriedly taking place. He saw the Indian land, and after a parley, paddle quickly back with the current. The reply he

brought was that they refused to give up the prisoners, and if the Americans attempted to follow and attack the British, the Indians, it was feared, would immediately put to death those in their power.

Words cannot express Arnold's feelings on receiving such an answer.

Maddened by the conflicting passions of revenge and humanity; knowing that he had a force amply sufficient to take a deep revenge; raging for action, yet restrained by pity for his unhappy comrades, who were on the brink of destruction if vengeance were attempted, the situation offered the horns of a dilemma, which to decide between was but a choice of horrors.

A solution appeared in the sudden arrival of the boats, into one of which he jumped and led rapidly to the island where the captives had been confined. All had been removed except five, who had been deprived of their clothing and left naked and starving.

Unaware of the exact position of their foe, themselves exposed, and darkness closing in, there was nothing to be done but return again to *Ste. Anne's*. As the slender rim of the young moon rose over the dark line of the forest, the quiet air heavy with the evening odors and the

drowsy drone of homing insects, the calm and silence seemed only to mock the hot impatience with which he prepared to bivouac for the night, with the restlessness of those who long and wait for the morning.

With the first twitter of the birds in the pale light of dawn, a canoe skimmed lightly down the stream, bearing a flag, and bringing a cartel from the British. They proposed that an equal number of prisoners be exchanged, the Americans to return to their homes and never again bear arms against their rightful rulers; and that a certain number of American officers be sent to Quebec as hostages until the agreement be fully carried out. It also declared, that if these terms were refused, the savages, enraged by Arnold's threat of wholesale slaughter, would, it was feared, at once put to violent death those in their hands; the Englishman humanely deploring his inability to prevent the carrying out of the fiendish intention. The moment was one of frightful uncertainty, and to one of Arnold's impetuous and passionate nature, well nigh intolerable. Vanrosfeldt, he knew, would die a hundred deaths, with all the torment the savage mind could invent, rather than enter Quebec on terms which meant dishonor; for to submit to dictation with a force adequately sufficient to punish the offenders, he knew savored strongly of it. He was fully assured, too, that Daniel Morgan would rot and

perish in his Canadian prison rather than buy his freedom at such an ignoble price!

Finally, to save the threatened slaughter, the document was signed, contingent on certain modifications of its terms being accepted; the British officer acceding to them with readiness and evident relief.

CHAPTER XII.

DISCRETION THE BETTER PART OF VALOR.

Valor, however daring and seemingly reckless of consequences, must at times yield to the dictates of discretion; so when it became known that frigates had arrived at Quebec, bringing English, Irish and German reinforcements, thirteen thousand strong, and that they would no doubt shortly sail up the river, it seemed evident that to continue further offensive measures in Canada was entirely without hope of success.

Arnold's proud and masterful spirit would not have quailed before even this, had not want of supplies in the necessaries of life and field equipment, such as meat, bread, shoes, clothing and tents, with the prevalence of malignant types of disease, formed invincible allies to

his enemy. When it was positively known that Carleton and his forces were making their way up the St. Lawrence, not only to drive out the invaders, but also to assist in making, with other portions of the British army, a concerted invasion of New York, Arnold realized that the junction of Canada with the colonies was an utter impossibility.

Addressing Vanrosfeldt, with whom he was in conference, and who protested against the abandonment of the enterprise, he exclaimed impetuously:

“Vanrosfeldt, let us retire and secure our own country before it is too late. There will be more honor in making a safe retreat, than in hazarding a battle against so much superiority. Our past endeavors must have shown we are not lacking in spirit; let us by now withdrawing and embracing our own safety prove that we are not wanting in sense. Be assured that I do not thus argue in fear of my personal safety. I am content to be the last man to quit this province, and am willing to fall myself, that my country may rise.”

“We must, therefore, Colonel, fall back on Fort St. Johns, and then proceed to Lake Champlain,” Vanrosfeldt unwillingly assented.

Accordingly the retreat was reluctantly begun. The leaders watched their men dejectedly enter the transports, refusing to do so themselves until the last bluecoat had left them on the shore alone, except for the straight form of "Red Deer," the faithful Caughnawaga chief, who stoically stood beside them, the only Canadian who accompanied the army in retreat. As the last boat disappeared on the stream, the two officers mounted and rode back to reconnoitre; when coming in sight of the British columns under Burgoyne, and satisfied of their character and number, they wheeled on their horses just in time to escape. Galloping rapidly back to the shore, and stripping his horse of saddle and bridle, Arnold took a pistol from his holster, and patting the animal's neck, said:

"Ye shall not fall into the enemy's hands. Better like Caesar to perish by a friend's! Could ye speak, ye too might say '*Et tu, Brute!*'" and pointing the fire-arm at the head of the horse, which had so gallantly carried him through charge and defeat, a bullet went crashing through his brain, and he fell dead at the feet of his master, who silently extended the still smoking pistol to Vanrosfeldt that he might do likewise. Hastily pushing off his boat with his own hands, they leaped

aboard and pulled out into the stream, to overtake the troops, who had already disappeared in the darkness. Looking back through the gathering gloom, they saw the savage mournfully regarding them, ere he turned and vanished in the depths of the forest.

Not many hours afterward, the British regained possession of the fort of St. Johns, which commanded the Richelieu. This river was the great highway of war-parties on all occasions of hostility. The fortress, which was of considerable strength, was surrounded by a ditch sixty feet broad and ten feet deep. In front of the gateway on the southern face was a glacis, which, with two drawbridges connecting the north and south gates with the outworks opposite to them, added materially to the strength of the defences. The rest of the moat being lined with a stockade, the approaches were well guarded. The place was of great strategic importance, controlling one of the gateways into the country, as, with Lakes Champlain and George and the Hudson River, it formed the natural route by water to New York. Sir Guy Carleton knew full well the necessity of obtaining naval supremacy on these waters, that he might bring his troops within convenient distance of Albany, and by a junction with the King's troops from the city of New York, isolate New England from the other States. Both sides being aware that they formed the

easiest route for invasion, both parties during the summer prepared to vigorously contest their control, and add as materially as possible to their naval strength. General Carleton contracted with skilled shipbuilders from Britain, and naval stores were gathered from the fleet on the St. Lawrence, to supplement which three vessels of war, fully equipped, had been sent from England. Twenty gunboats and more than two hundred flat-bottomed boats were constructed at Montreal, the larger ones, unable to ascend the rapids, being taken to pieces and reconstructed at St. Johns, making in all a formidable force.

The largest vessel in the fleet was the *Invincible*, a three-masted ship, carrying twenty twelve-pound guns and ten of smaller size. About seven hundred well-trained sailors and gunners, commanded by officers of known experience and tested skill, manned the boats, upon which was to embark an army of twelve thousand soldiers and marines.

Washington, looking anxiously toward the same purpose, committed to Arnold the apparently hopeless task of opposing the overwhelming force in course of preparation. Although every stick of timber for the little flotilla would have to be cut from New England forests, where in June it was still growing, and stores have to be carried from the tidewater of

the Atlantic, over roads which were nearly impassable, yet, without questioning, he enthusiastically commenced operations.

His father having been a seafaring man, with that early association, and a knowledge of shipbuilding and seacraft, he became the life of the dockyard, keeping adze, calking-iron and oakum constantly busy night and day. Continually going to and fro, he urged on the work with burning zeal, making estimates for mechanics, seamen, naval supplies, and, in fact, everything needful to equip, build, man and arm his little fleet of “gundalows” that bore no semblance, save in name, to those that floated on moonlit Venetian lagoons. Their builder, unsustained by the faintest hope that he could accomplish anything that would at all compare with the well constructed armament preparing in British waters, nevertheless resolved to oppose to the utmost of his power its reaching Ticonderoga.

With colors flying from the masthead of his battleship, General Carleton had landed at the port of Montreal in the early summer. Standing on the deck, he glanced over the fields and green woodlands lying warm in the Canadian sunshine, and on the water flashing in a golden sparkle in the westering sun, upon which his last voyage had been made in the dead of

night as a fugitive. With the inspiration of the contrasting circumstances lighting up his countenance, he said, addressing Captain Temple:

“The natural elation which this occasion cannot fail to excite, together with the report that Arnold and his men are hurrying south, is tempered by a matter of personal concern, namely, my anxiety in regard to the health of my friend Davenant, whom the trials and troubles of our late siege have woefully shattered, both in mind and body. I would I had tidings of his present condition. I am aware, Temple, that ye stand in friendly relations to his family, so feel that we have common interest in their well-being. If by any means ye can obtain information as to their state, I beg your service in the matter.”

“It shall be my first duty, General, as soon as I can leave my ship, to make the needful inquiries, and immediately report the result; as not only my desire to serve Your Excellency, but my own fears and interest, render me concerned to seek out their whereabouts and learn of their condition and circumstances. I shall, at the earliest moment possible, proceed to their late home and seek to gain tidings of them.”

In accordance with his promise, a few hours after reaching port Basil Temple bent his steps to the nearest gate of the town, entering which, his way lay by the grey stone walls surrounding the Château de Lérie. The garden was redolent with the breath of flowers, and the sweet, seductive smell of moist, green earth, bringing to his mind the scent of English orchards in May. A sigh escaped him as he thought of that moonlit November night, when on the withered leaves he had last trodden its walks, with heart sore and bruised, that though he had wooed he could not win sweet Phyllis Davenant. He remembered her gracious, radiant loveliness as he pleaded his suit, and the gentle answer of her guileless heart, as pure as the lilies growing in stately ranks beside the garden paths; and at the vision of her winsome maidenhood, war-ried sailor though he was, he could have wept with longing for one tender word from her lips. As the breeze came to him filled with the scent of roses, there came memories of other roses, brave, red, English roses in another garden far over the sea, where he had once dreamed she might some day walk by his side.

With bowed head and heart heavy with misgiving, and aching with bitter thoughts, he went along the familiar way. He heard not the chirp of the robin nor the vesper fluting of the wood-thrush; he felt not the

sweetness of the summer evening; his mind in all ruth and tenderness was only on the grey-gabled house near the Recollet Gate, that had once held the bright presence of the girl whose image still filled his heart, and for whom he would willingly give up his life, if so be hers would be the happier. The great chimneys at length came in view, and with a throb, half joy and half pain, he approached the door and knocked. His pulses beat in a tumult of excitement which no roar of cannon could produce, lest the fears which he would scarce own to himself should become a sickening certainty, and with almost a sense of suffocation he waited an answer to his summons.

The door quietly opened, and with all the English bloom fled from her cheeks, and with face white as a lily, Phyllis stood before him. Without waiting for greeting, she held out her hands, saying tremblingly:

“Oh, Captain Temple, come and help me in this my hour of sorest need,” and burying her face in her hands, she tried in vain to check the sobs which shook her slight form like a reed in the wind.

Closing the door, and striving desperately to hold back the mad longing to take her in his arms, he asked in a voice deep with pity and alarm:

“Phyllis, my Phyllis, what is it?”

“Oh, my father!” was all she could gasp in reply, and silently beckoning him to follow, she led him to an upper chamber, where on a couch lay the once soldierly form of Colonel Davenant. As they entered, a look of recognition and relief lighted up the wasted features of the man, fast sinking into death. With a gleam of returning consciousness, he stretched out his hand and laid it on the sailor’s strong, brown one, saying feebly:

“Basil Temple, ye are a good man and true. With the insight which comes to the dying, I know I can trust you to help my daughter, my little Phyllis, to leave this distracted land and reach her kindred in old England, whose quiet vales, alas! I never more shall see. Promise me that ye will not betray my trust, and I will die content.”

Through the quiet of the chamber, in which the clock relentlessly ticked the moments of her father’s life away, to the ears of the girl leaning over him in speechless grief, came the low, earnest words:

“I solemnly promise, on the honest word of a sailor, and by the holy memory of my dead mother, to do your will and bidding, by the help of God, though it cost me life itself; and may heaven be denied me if I willingly or heedlessly betray the sacred trust.”

A faint pressure of the hand, a few moments' waiting and watching, and Basil Temple led away the sorrow-stricken girl, who then owned no kin nearer than those in a land across leagues of rolling ocean.

As soon as the first violence of grief had spent itself, and as immediate action was necessary, he inquired:

“If I can find safe means to send you to my cousin, Anne Temple, now sojourning with kinsfolk in Philadelphia, will ye be willing to go to her?”

“Oh,” she sobbed, “I would I had again my mother! I am so lone, so lorn! Could I tell you the weary anxiety and grieving of these long, sad months which have passed, you would understand my craving for a woman's sympathy, and how good it is now to hear a kind friend's voice. I have heard of this sweet cousin of yours, from those who have met her in that

city, and have learned that her beauty of form and feature in no wise exceeds her kindliness of heart. I will gladly go to her.”

Noting his look of surprise, she added:

“I have heard you make mention of this fair cousin of yours, and too, Major Vanrosfeldt hath spoken in her praise;” and the man, looking at her, felt as if a sword-blade pierced his heart at the sight of the faint color stealing into her pale cheeks on the mention of that name, and a light it brought to her tearful eyes, which he himself would have given a king’s ransom to be powerful to do. But for this he might have again besought her to give him the right to bear her over the seas to the old, ivy-grown hall among the fair meadows of Kent.

CHAPTER XIII.

SHIPS IN BATTLE.

The dreaming October woods had burst into scarlet and golden-yellow, like the bloom of tropic flowers, here and there touched with the warm pink of the heart of the northern rose; and the British fleet was

entering the crystal-green waters of Lake Champlain. In front, under full sail, rode the *Invincible*, with two schooners, the *Lady Maria* and the *Carleton*, in her wake. Following them came the rest of the fleet, gunboats and transports, all fully equipped with men and guns. With a strength in fighting ships more than double that of the enemy, no practical opposition was anticipated from them.

In the cabin of the flagship, a young girl, with the pensiveness of recent sorrow upon her, sat gazing out over the water, to where the shores lay calm and beautiful under the clear blue sky, and the wooded banks, in all the brightness of crimson, russet and bronze, faded away into the dark evergreens and mist of the distant hills. The still serenity of the peaceful scene seemed to accord ill with the warlike attitude and hostile atmosphere on board a battleship. Although the tender melancholy of autumn, speaking of death and decay, brought the tears unbidden to her eyes, Phyllis entertained no fears nor felt any apprehensions for her safety, for, fully confident that the superior strength of the British fleet precluded the possibility of any material resistance being offered, Captain Temple had prevailed upon her to take the risk of running down to New York, whence it would be easy, with a flag, to proceed to Philadelphia.

She had accordingly taken advantage of the fleet, and gone on board as it set sail for Lake Champlain. On the deck above, a young priest paced to and fro, at the moment of starting having offered himself as chaplain to General Carleton, who commanded the squadron. A number of the troops being of the Roman Catholic faith, his services were accepted, in case any poor fellow, mortally wounded, might wish to be confessed and shriven ere he died.

Arnold, aware of his inferiority in ships and weight of metal, determined to avoid meeting the enemy in the open lake, where he might be flanked and surrounded, so he proceeded to a strong position between Valcour Island and the western shore. There both wings would be covered, and he could be attacked only in front. Then, with three schooners, two sloops, three galleys and eight "gundalows," fitted out with fighting men and such seamen and gunners as he could get together, he waited to resist by as furious an opposition as possible the expected advance.

In the blue haziness of daybreak on October eleventh, a small guard-boat stationed as a sentinel on the lake brought him word that the British fleet was approaching, and soon it was perceived moving over the water

in all the majesty of full sail in a favoring breeze.

On board the *Invincible* Carleton suddenly became aware of the masts and hulls of shipping hidden between Valcour Island and the main shore. Captain Temple at the same moment made a like discovery, and turning to the commander he said confidently:

“It is as I have surmised, Your Excellency; that insignificant fleet of whale-boats skulking in the lee of yonder island can offer no serious opposition to our course. With a fair wind, not many hours hence will see us holding the key of the situation;” but Sir Guy, remembering the desperate valor of his adversary, said slowly:

“The man in command of that fleet will defy any odds. I do not forget his admirable audacity before the walls of Quebec; and observe, even now, without waiting for our attack, he is moving forward to resist our smaller vessels in front; but we will soon bring upon him the consequences of his incredible assurance.”

At mid-day, the British being ranged within musket-shot of the American line of battle, the action opened and soon became general, and from the

shore of the mainland to the island, the hostile fleets fired at close range. Arnold, in the *Congress* galley, to which he had gone after abandoning the *Royal Savage*, which had been run aground, anchored in the hottest part of the fire, utterly regardless of risk or danger.

During the long hours of the afternoon a terrible cannonading was continually kept up with round and grape shot, accompanied by a constant blaze of rifles from Indians hid in the depths of the adjacent forests. The sounds of the heavy guns reverberating over the water and rolling among the hills, made a din so horrible that those holding Crown Point could there hear the struggle upon which their fate depended. The *Congress*, upon which Arnold and Vanrosfeldt were fighting, the latter pointing the guns for the clumsy and inexperienced gunners, was kept in the thickest of the combat, and bearing the brunt of the battle, and although it was torn by repeated shots between wind and water, hulled a dozen times, the rigging riddled to pieces, and the deck strewn with the dead and dying, those commanding it had no thought of submission. By their example of reckless daring and wild cheering, they sustained, by word and act, the courage of their men until sundown, showing themselves still unbeaten, though terribly crippled. Turning toward Vanrosfeldt, in whom hope was at last beginning to give way, Arnold shouted defiantly:

“Major, we may go down, but it will be with our flag flying! I will never surrender!”

Feeling confident of ultimate success, and the early darkness of autumn fast falling, Carleton posted his ships across the channel, by which, if escape were attempted, it would have to be made, but which he fully believed was impossible, and that with morning the capture of the whole flotilla was certain.

Such, however, was not the view held in the shattered, dismantled little fleet lying in the deep haze which was gradually rising and hiding the hulls of the belligerents from each other.

On the deck of the *Congress*, slippery with blood—the yards adrip with the clammy fog—Arnold and Vanrosfeldt took council together. Their faces were blackened with powder, and their clothes torn and stained with the blood of their fallen comrades, who had gone down in the water surging blue and white around them, when suddenly the latter said tersely:

“There is but a single course open to us, Colonel,—it is but one chance

in a thousand—and only one! With our ammunition almost spent, we must run for it! This fog, now rapidly rising and thickening, may be our salvation.”

Silently then towards midnight—in the darkness made ghastly by the white, wavering mist—the first ship, like a phantom of the air, glided out, the others following with lights out, save for a single lanthorn in the stern of each, to guide the one in its wake. In a breathless silence they passed, one by one, unperceived, between the hostile vessels.

Bringing up the rear, the *Congress* was the last to steal through the danger line. Undiscovered, she too sailed by the last spar; and heeling to the breeze which at the moment arose, they all bore swiftly over the lake.

On the rising of the sun, the lifting mists spread rainbow tints over forest and lapping water, when it seemed to the English tars, with not a thread of hostile rigging in sight, as if the American fleet had been swallowed up in the waves. Finding instead, that it had stolen away in the favoring fog and darkness of the night, sails were immediately set and pursuit taken up. The fugitives were at length sighted, with every inch of canvas spread, flying toward Crown Point, hoping to be able to

attack the British from that defensible position. In a reckless frenzy, to give the others time to escape and utterly heedless of consequences, the *Congress* was kept in the rear, and allowed to receive the incessant fire poured upon her, and which she returned to the best of her ability. Although so disabled that she could not fly, yet she would not surrender, or strike her flag, which those in pursuit could see through the smoke of their guns still flying gallantly, though torn to tatters and black with powder. After sustaining broadside after broadside, and a complete wreck, the ship was run boldly between the opposing vessels into a small bay. On passing by the *Invincible*, determined that his last shot should tell, Vanrosfeldt fired at the deck, where a naval officer who was directing some gunners received the full charge, and fell with a groan.

Beaching his then useless craft, Arnold ordered his marines to jump overboard with their small-arms and wade ashore, and handing a torch to a seaman, it was applied to the tarred sides and rigging, and the ship was soon ablaze. Lingered until the fire had made sufficient headway, the sailors leaped from the bowsprit, and with a last look at the flagstaff, up which it was already creeping, all took to the woodland paths.

Setting fire to the buildings at Crown Point on their way, they pressed on to Ticonderoga, the lurid flames behind them leaping red against the smoke-dimmed sky. Thus was partially destroyed a post of great importance among northern defences, it being strongly built, some fifteen hundred yards square, with stout walls sixteen feet thick, by twenty feet high.

Through the din of the fierce fighting, Phyllis had found shelter below, panic-stricken as the awful sounds of the bloody conflict reached her ears. In the terrible months since the gay, lighthearted days in the sunny gardens at Montreal, she had become familiar with the cruel features of war, and capable of the brave bearing and self-repression, which to tender women are possible, in times in which even men's souls are tried. No cry of alarm had fallen from her pale lips; only the drawn lines around them, a low moaning, and the occasional wringing of her hands, told of her mental torture, as, pacing to and fro in the narrow space, she listened to dying shrieks of agony or cries of pain mingling with the hoarse shouts of battle. Toward evening the noise of the fight gradually lessened, the sinking sun sending crimson shafts of light across the wet, red decks, when she saw four marines carry below a form,

bleeding and disabled. She at once knelt beside the wounded man, seeking if haply by some means she could do aught to ease his misery. She shuddered, but showed no sign of shrinking, even when the sailor, who had received Vanrosfeldt's last shot, turned his face toward her, and she saw the pallid, pain-distorted features of Basil Temple. Bleeding from wounds in the side and right arm, he lay with closed eyes, but he forgot the cruel torment of the lacerated flesh and weakening of the flowing blood as he felt her soft fingers bathe and bind his wound, and warm tear-drops fall upon his brow, as Phyllis, bending over him, spoke words of gentlest pity. Through the pain came to him the thought of how he would fight to win back life if the love of that woman were but for him, and how less hard it would be to die under the touch of that hand than live to see it claimed by another, and then a blessed unconsciousness crept over his senses, and love and jealousy and pain faded away in the mists of forgetfulness, and he knew no more. The night passed, and with an overpowering sense of weakness he again opened his eyes, and in the dim light of the cabin, saw sitting watching beside him two figures in black. At first he thought the face nearest him must be that of some fair angel come to minister to his passing soul, but emerging from the lethargy that held his senses, he whispered, "Phyllis!"

Immediately she leaned over him, and forgetting the conventionalities of mere friendship, called him by the name his mother, who slept in the little Kentish churchyard within sound of the sea, had given him.

“Basil, I am here.”

A light of rapture shone from the half-closed eyes as he heard the intimate, familiar word, and with a great effort he said:

“Phyllis, I am a dying man—I love you—love you, dear.”

She bowed her head and bent towards him, compassionate tears flowing fast as she thought of the mental pain added to his bodily anguish. The priest arose and went to the farthest corner of the cabin, seemingly buried in prayer. The silence was broken again, the words coming faintly:

“I would die happy—could I know—that for the brief moments I have left on earth, you were my plighted wife; but even these few seconds of happiness may not be mine.”

“If it would ease in any wise your pain and misery, gladly would I grant this grace,” she whispered softly, her eyes wide with awe and a sweet compassion. Quickly, from the recess to which he had retired, the priest stepped to their side, and in a low voice said, as he still kept his features hidden in the shadow, which hitherto prevented their being seen:

“Sister, the man is dying—soothe his last moments by granting his prayer.”

With face as colorless as the one regarding her with a wistful longing, she quietly placed one hand on the wounded one, and the other on the book of prayers the monk held in his hand, and in the silence whispered solemnly and sweetly:

“I promise, while your life shall last.”

As she finished, a faint whisper came to her ear:

“Kiss me once, my sweet love,” and she put her lips to his cheek, with

all the tender grace and gentleness which were her dower. He smiled, and with a sigh of indescribable content lapsed again into a state of unconsciousness.

A sudden movement of the Jesuit caused her to raise her eyes, and as he turned, as if to avoid meeting her glance, a ray of candlelight fell upon his features, and starting she exclaimed:

“Leon de Lérie!”

Frowning and taking no notice of her outstretched hand, he said coldly, in the passionless restraint of the monastery:

“Know me as Jerome, the Jesuit; I bear no other name.”

Stunned and bewildered, she shrank away, not daring to inquire if, from what seemed a blood-mark upon his brow, he too had been wounded.

Day followed night, and the surgeon did his work without question from the girl at the bedside. At last, weary and worn and faint with watching, she whispered tremulously to him:

“Is the end near?”

Turning quickly to search her face, he said:

“The end is far off, I have good reason to hope. Though weak and sorely wounded he will recover. I am glad to be able to assure you that when he awakes from this healing sleep he will be past danger.”

Her slight start, as of fear, caused him to pause as he was turning away, and his medical skill was at a loss to account for the sudden look of dismay which overspread her features. Fearing that the unexpected revulsion of feeling might end in a collapse of her overwrought powers, he encouraged her with every possible hope, until seeing her, by a great effort, rally, he passed on to attend to other more critical cases.

Hours passed, and as Basil slept she sat motionless, in a numb despair, realizing she was bound, by a promise circumstances made sacred, to the man who lay before her, while all the love of her heart belonged to another. Conscious that the evil had been wrought unwittingly, she felt only a tender compassion for him, who had not then, nor ever could have,

from her aught save pity for the cruel wrong a wayward fate had dealt him.

At length, a faint moan escaping from his lips, she found his eyes fixed sadly upon her. Great drops of misery beaded his brow, as regarding her he said:

“Phyllis, I have acted a dastard’s part. Thus unworthily have I fulfilled your father’s dying trust. I cannot fling away the life which is coming back to me unsought, but I pray heaven the bullet is already cast that will rid me of it. One kiss is all of plighted troth that I have craved, and I swear by all a man holds honorable and most holy, it shall be the last. In the face of what seemed certain death, I laid these unwelcome bonds upon you, but trust me, the vows of yonder priestly celibate are not more sacred and binding than this I now take upon me—of holding you to them only for the right to protect your innocence from harm until you are safe with friends or kindred.”

Leaning towards him, with a look and tone which made more keenly bitter to him the keeping of his promise, she said quietly, with a gratitude but all too apparent:

“Basil Temple, as my dying father said, ‘You are a good man and true.’”

*

The British found Crown Point when they arrived unfit for occupation, and the ruins still smouldering from the burning by Arnold. Their repair so late in the season was thought to be unadvisable, so word was at once sent to Burgoyne, who was encamped some miles away, summoning him to confer as to the wisdom of proceeding to Ticonderoga, to which Arnold had fled.

No sooner was it night, and the sky above them darkened by the smoke from the ruined buildings, than the British troops, exhausted by the tumult of the day, hurriedly prepared to bivouac on the field. Unnoticed in the confusion, a dark form from among them stole into a half-ruined cellar, and, creeping from stone to stone, hastily took the trail along which the Continentals had fled a few hours before. All through the hours of the night he hurried light-footed in the damp and rustling woods, starting at even the sound of his own footfalls. From time to time he stopped and hearkened, lest the far-away cry of the wild

creatures of the forest, or the distant whistle of the brown deer from its hemlock covert, might be the running of pursuers on his track, suspicious of his deserting to the enemy.

Without food, and with only water from the lake, which he ventured to the shore to hurriedly drink, the morning brought a lagging of energy in the slight frame, almost womanly in its delicacy. As the grey dawn defined the scene more clearly, the fugitive, weary-white, scanned the lake shore anxiously for a sight of the walls of Fort Ticonderoga, which he knew could not be far distant, only twelve miles lying between it and the one he had left. As the sun rose he pressed on, until, among the crimsoning green of the dreamy woods, the abutments of the fort could be distinctly seen; but a full half-mile still lay between the gate and the tired feet dragging themselves toward it. The stones and brambles on the way had torn his flesh and wounded his feet, but with the goal in sight he rallied again, righting with a dimness in the eye and a sound of rushing water in the ear for which the placid lapping of the lake gave no reason. But a few more rods were left, when, with a sudden darkening of the skies and a feeling of helpless sinking, he fell.

A few minutes after, a small body of soldiers, detailed by Major

Vanrosfeldt to scout along the narrow path on the shore, and report if any fresh movement on the part of the British was apparent, came upon the prostrate form of a Jesuit priest, senseless, white, but still breathing. Stooping over him, one of them exclaimed:

“A monk, and none other! I have not seen one with this cut of coat since I left the white convent at Quebec, where but for the good nursing of some of his faith, more than one of us lads would now be lying within sound of their chapel bell. Now it is our turn, boys, and we will carry this holy man into the fort.”

As they lifted the prostrate and helpless form, the cowl fell back, revealing the delicate, marble-like features, and the same speaker exclaimed:

“By my faith, if he is not the Brother Jerome who, though he be not quite to the mind of a staunch Puritan, spoke holy words when neither parson nor deacon could reach my bed!”

Bearing him in their arms they carried the light burden, and laid him, dressed as he was, on one of their own cots in the barracks. By Major

Vanrosfeldt's commands, light nourishment and stimulants were given on the return of consciousness, when he was left to recover from his exhaustion and exposure by rest and sleep. At nightfall, when lying in the dim light of a single candle, and able to give an account of himself, the boy-Jesuit recalled to that officer's mind the presence of a priest in the sloop in which he left Quebec, saying he was one and the same, and that he was desirous of attaching himself to the Patriot army in order to reach Philadelphia, where he was, when required, to do churchly duty among the French allies.

The same day General Burgoyne joined Sir Guy Carleton to consider the advisability of an immediate attack on the fort. The assault was reluctantly abandoned for reasons which seemed valid and weighty, namely, that the place was well garrisoned and supplied with stores and ammunition; that stormy weather was threatening, which would interfere with the passage of the bateaux; that supplies needful for the sustenance of a force sufficiently strong to hold possession of the place until spring, would have to be carried by land through an unsettled region, one hundred miles in extent, exposing those conveying them to attacks and ambushes, all of which rendered the undertaking of doubtful wisdom.

Accordingly the British fleet set sail for Canada to go into winter quarters, the Hessians to lie along the banks of the Richelieu and Lake St. Peter, their leader, the Baron Fredrich Adolph Von Riedesel, to take up his temporary position in the vicinity of the little cluster of houses known as Three Rivers. There his wife, the Baroness, and her children were expected to join him, they having left Wolfenbutten, near Brunswick, the May previous.

As the *Invincible* drew near Quebec, Phyllis stood in the bow gazing at the grey walls, the tears almost blinding them from her sight, as poignant memories of the past rushed to her mind. From yonder ramparts had fluttered her signal of distress; from yonder gate she had fled for protection to the man standing on the deck a few feet from her. He was apparently intent on the docking of the ship, but she could not but know that he was sharing her thoughts—remembering her terror and perils on that day. As she thought of his gallant efforts to succor her in her helplessness, she was filled with a deep pity and gratitude, which she might have thought was love, could she have forgotten a winter eve on that same river, and the words of another: “Remember, there was one man who loved you with a love than which no man can ever feel a greater.”

Alas! she knew it was not love that set her heart a-beating, but rather some measure of fear, as turning, with a few quick strides he stood beside her. His own was weighted with a heavy oppression, and still pale from his wounding, his face bleached to a deadly hue, as knowing that the hour of parting had come, he wot not when he might again look into those blue, troubled eyes, with their tear-wet lashes. Scarce daring to meet their gaze, he bent over her. Looking down to hide the signs of her emotion, she held out her hand in silent farewell. Suddenly he grasped it and holding it fast, as if he could not let her go, he said in a low voice, in a tremor that would not be restrained:

“Phyllis, Heaven alone knows when we two may meet again. You are my plighted wife; but those words spoken to one whom ye thought to be a dying man shall not bind you to me if your heart says otherwise. With the help of God I will strive to forget them, to think of them as unsaid, but my darling—that kiss—its sweetness and tender pity burn and break my heart! I, a sailor who has seen battle and death in many forms without flinching, am weak and unstable as the water flowing around us, in the intensity of my love for you. Have I even the faintest hope that I may ever win a measure of yours in return? Can ye love me, Phyllis?”

Gently withdrawing her hand, laying it upon his arm, and looking up as once before she had done in the old château in Montreal, her grief and distress scarcely less than his own, she answered:

“Basil Temple, between us there should be nothing but perfect understanding. In sight of those ramparts and with our mutual memories, I would speak to you naught but the simple truth. You are too gallant, too chivalrous and noble to have aught else. Less than a woman’s whole heart would be unworthy your acceptance. Alas! it is not in my power to give it to you.”

At that moment the vessel was moored, and leading her silently to the gang-plank, unable to accompany her ashore himself, he placed her in charge of an inferior, to conduct her to the city. Taking her hand in parting he bowed low over it, in fashion as courtly and deferential as if at the throne of his Queen. Not a word was spoken to detain her—not a syllable of entreaty—only a low-breathed “God keep you—may all fair fortune attend you,” and he was alone with only taunting longings and haunting memories. As he watched the slender figure ascend the steep road and at last disappear, he groaned: “Heaven help me!”

Within the city walls, to which after the lifting of the siege they had at last found ingress, Phyllis sought and found asylum with Monsieur and Madame de Lérie. The once handsome face of the mother was pale and wan, and sadly lined through sleepless nights and days of grieving. Taking Phyllis, who was weeping bitterly at the sight, into her arms, the forlorn woman said:

“Ah, my dear child, to see your sweet face brings back to me my lost Thérèse. Stay with me, child, and we will be mother and daughter. Raoul is well-nigh mad with grief at the mystery surrounding the fate of his betrothed, whom he has loved since her childhood. He lives but for revenge, and there is promise of good opportunity therefor, as the great lords in England are planning a grand *coup d'état*, which will utterly quell this insane revolt. General Burgoyne, with the German mercenaries, as some call them, is to proceed by the Richelieu and Champlain towards the Hudson, up which General Howe will advance to meet him, and a third contingent will sail up this river to a point called Oswego, on Lake Ontario, and there will be joined by Sir John Johnson, and the Indians of the Mohawk valley. The three commands will combine forces near Albany, and thus cripple the enemy, so that they must be utterly

crushed, and taught a lesson they will not soon forget. It is to the last named expedition that Raoul has offered himself, and if this Major Vanrosfeldt, who retreated with Arnold, and who, he has learned, is in command of one of the forts he is to attack, ever meet him face to face, there will be a short shrift for the destroyer of his happiness and our innocent Thérèse.”

In the weeks which followed, it somewhat weaned Phyllis from dwelling too much upon the nursing of her own sorrows to have to soothe and cheer the drooping mother, to give her hope after repeated disappointments, and to ward off despair when that seemed all that was left. The childish dependence upon herself, a mere girl, of the once gay, self-reliant woman, was pitiable to behold, and called out all the tenderness of her nature.

The one break in the monotonous seclusion of their lives was when the New Year's eve again came round, and Quebec was to celebrate with thanksgiving and rejoicing her deliverance from the menace of the year before. The town had again resumed its old-time social atmosphere and *habitant* life. The streets were alive with people in holiday garb. The petty noble, with flashing black eyes and grand air, strode along in his

rich furs and silken sash, or drove over the snowy roads in his gaily-robed carriage, by the side of some pretty demoiselle in her bright winter dress. The half-wild woodsman, in his embroidered moccasins and leggings, had come in from camp or forest trail to keep the festive season in family gatherings around the home hearth.

Long-robed, cowled friars hurried by, between vigils and prayers, in striking contrast to the picturesque scene.

In the morning, with the January sun shining unclouded and clear, the church bells called to special services, ringing out joyously over the snow-white streets; and from nave and choir, through cathedral chancel and transept, the “Jubilate” swelled and echoed. There were prayers of thankfulness and songs of praise—then a solemn hush and the measured tread of feet, as eight unhappy wretches, with downcast eyes and halters around their necks, marched toward the altar-rails, and knelt upon the steps. To show their penitence for having sympathized with the invaders, they had, in the sight and hearing of the people, to crave the pardon of God, the Church and their King. After the masses and services were ended, there were promenading, marching and parading, the guns of the fortress, above which floated the standard of England against the wintry sky, roaring a *feu de joie*.

In the evening the city was ablaze with light and revelry, and the streets gay with guests in festive attire, hieing them to Castle St. Louis to hold revel with dance and feasting.

At Governor Carleton's board, sixty guests sat down to a banquet, and amid toasts and a merry tinkling of glasses, with flowing Madeira and old sack, he was felicitated upon the change of fortune the twelve moons had brought around. Phyllis, in her sombre black, was seated beside the Baroness Von Riedesel, the wife of the commander of the Hessian allies. She had some time before arrived in the Colony to join her husband, a brave soldier who had been shamefully sold by his own prince to fight in a foreign war.

In no mood for revels or merry-making, Phyllis had tremblingly shrunk from the thought of taking part in a scene of gaiety, but Madame de Lérie, whose mind was breaking down under the strain of sorrow and distress, insisted that she do the Lady Carleton's bidding, showing a childish delight in the thought that it was to hold high festival for the repulse of the hated foes who had stolen her child and broken her heart. To please her, Phyllis had overcome her repugnance and allowed

the poor weak-minded woman to dress her hair, and put on her here and there an ornament, being scarcely able to keep back her tears as the bereft mother, seeming at times to think that it was her own Thérèse she was decking for a fête, called Phyllis by her child's name.

In her place among the guests at the castle, in spite of her utmost self-restraint, the tears there would not be controlled, but filled her eyes at the sight of her father's vacant place being filled by another. Noticing the fluctuating color of the girl's face and the trembling of her hands, the kind-hearted Baroness turned to her and said:

“This night is strangely in contrast to this hour a year ago.”

“Yes, Madame, that terrible night leaves hard and bitter memories,” and glancing at her black dress, and thinking of what it betokened, she sighed:

“Alas, Madame, war, whether it bring victory or defeat, means sad hearts and empty places.”

Seeing the restraint the girl was putting upon herself in striving to

control her feelings, the considerate German gentlewoman strove to lead her thoughts away from the crowding memories of the past by telling her of the sunny Rhineland, of her own home among the vineyards of Germany, and the old castle on the cliff where her children were born. As Phyllis listened, the tense lines of her face softened, and as the good lady told her humorous anecdotes of her rough voyage, and of her reception at the English court, she smiled, and even a silvery laugh rang out, as with an amused *moue*, the Baroness told how the King had kissed her at the drawing-room at his royal palace.

“You see, *meine liebe*,” she said, “the Queen had graciously expressed a wish to see me, so my Lady Germaine, whose husband, as you know, is the minister for these colonies, with great tact and kindness presented me with a court-dress, in which to appear worthily before their Majesties in their London palace, which, when we arrived, to speak the truth, I thought was somewhat old-fashioned in its furniture. At the hour appointed, the ladies and gentlemen all took their places in the audience chamber, when the King, with three gentlemen walking in front of him, came into the room, the Queen following with a lady holding up her train, and attended by a gentleman-in-waiting. The King proceeded to the right and the Queen to the left, speaking graciously to every one

as they passed. At the end of the room they met, bowed low, each then going to the side left by the other. I whispered to my Lady Germaine, who was presenting me, and asked: 'What shall I do?' She replied: 'There is nothing to be done but stand in our places.' When the King came up to me I was much astonished to have him kiss me, and I blushed scarlet, not expecting so much condescension. His Majesty then inquired about my husband, saying kindly: 'Every one is pleased with the Baron, and I trust the cold in that country will not hurt him,' and with a pleasant bow he went on. The Queen was also very kind, asking me if I were not afraid to cross the sea. I replied that it was the only way I could see my husband, whereat, smiling and praising my courage, she too moved away."

When at last the ladies withdrew from the board, leaving the gentlemen to their wine, the Baroness kept Phyllis at her side, and with words of sympathy drew out her story. Her interest did not end with the evening, and in the days of the new year Phyllis's chilled and burdened heart was warmed and eased under the tender words of her new friend. With that strange, unaccountable attraction, which at times ripens a chance intimacy of a few days into a friendship which seems to have the maturity of years, the two women were closely drawn toward each other,

the exiled Baroness thinking that Phyllis's Saxon blue eyes reminded her of the fair-haired maidens of her Teuton kindred.

Whether it was the anniversary memories or a sudden giving way of the mental faculties, Madame de Lérie grew rapidly worse. The last few months became a blank to her, and she was possessed by the illusion that Thérèse was still in the convent, and thither she begged piteously to be taken. When opposed in her desire, she fell into such a frenzy that it was deemed advisable to put her in retreat. As she longed for the convent, thither she was taken and placed under the care of the Abbess, her sister, who, overcome by what she protested had been brought about by her own lack of vigilance and wisdom, gave the poor, mind-beclouded creature, who was quite passive in her hands, the most tender care. Each night as she placed her securely in the cell next to her own, where Thérèse had once donned her veil of disguise, the nun bent her steps to the chapel and there knelt, with hands clasped in an agony of prayer and penitence, the grey dawn creeping through the narrow windows often finding her still on her knees prostrate on the altar steps.

Phyllis, once more left friendless and homeless, was taken to the motherly care and domestic circle of the good Frau Von Riedesel, and

when early in the year they returned to their temporary home in Three Rivers, she journeyed thither with them and became a member of the Baroness' household.

*

With the coming of spring the sap once again ran sweet in the maples of Canadian woods. Under the blue skies the bee sipped from the pink and white of flowering fields, and the swallow dipped its wing in the sunny air. With the opening of the streams and lakes, the Baron, impatient for action, had once more led his Hessians into the field, leaving somewhat unwillingly the women and children in the rustic quiet of their humble and unfamiliar surroundings.

Along the paths of the quaint little French village of Three Rivers the matronly form of the German gentlewoman, with her blue-eyed children, and the gold-haired English girl, with her sweet, sad face and sombre garments, soon became objects of familiar interest to the peasant women of the hamlet. As they sat at their doors spinning in the sunlight, singing little Breton lullabys or crooning folk-songs to the babe rocking in the cradle at their side, they were glad in their simple

hearts when they could offer them kindness or civility.

In the peaceful and sequestered seclusion of the spot, the weeks passed without event, until the summer suns of mid-July were yellowing the fields of rye and barley, and the wind shaking the ripening young apples to the ground, when the little hamlet was thrown into a frenzy of excitement at a flotilla of frigates sailing up the river to proceed as far as it was navigable by such craft. It was soon known that the *“coup d'état”* had begun, and that Colonel St. Leger was making for Oswego, to join with the other British commands in simultaneously crushing what they looked upon as an insane and mad revolt, which they were confident could hope for nothing save ultimate disaster. The women prayed and waited, until at length, when the maize in the fields was filling in the ear, and the August twilight lengthening the purpling shadows in the forest, a body-guard of soldiers arrived in the village. They brought a message from the Baron, who was camped at Fort Edward, conveying his desire that his wife and her household should immediately join him there. He would have them change the dull picturesqueness of an obscure Canadian village for a share in the army's anticipated triumphal entry into New York.

With loving alacrity the summons was obeyed, Phyllis to accompany the Baroness, who, assured by her confidence in her husband's success in arms, looked upon the venture as a mere summer jaunt of pleasure. Blithely they embarked in the boats provided for their conveyance over the first stage of the progress, which was to be by water; the remainder of the journey to be continued by land over roads which had been purposely obstructed by the enemy to hamper and retard as much as possible the movements of the British troops. So successfully had this been done that it had taken the general's men a month to compass the twenty-five miles lying between Skeensborough and Fort Edward. To the travellers it was so exhausting that their arrival at last at their destination was most grateful. Expecting shortly to hear of the fall of Fort Schuyler, which it was St. Leger's purpose to reduce, and fully believing that Howe was moving up the river, General Burgoyne, with the wit of a man of fashion, and the gallantry of a soldier who was certain of victory, in his bravest attire welcomed the ladies to the fort. He assured the baroness that it would be a mere sojourn of pleasure, as British soldiers never retreat, and the crushing of those impudent rebels being then, he was confident, but a matter of a few days, the noble baron, her husband, would ere long receive the thanks and honors of the British Sovereign; the only precaution he deemed it desirable to

take being the preventing of the enemy's intercepting St. Leger, and thus retarding this desirable culmination, of whose certainty, to his mind, there could not be the shadow of a doubt.

CHAPTER XIV.

DO OR DIE!

When Colonel St. Leger with his chasseurs landed on the lake shore of northern New York, his force was small, but he was soon joined by Sir John Johnson with his famous "Royal Greens," and a body of Rangers. The tribes of the Mohawk valley, with their great chief, Thayendanege, a pure-blood Mohawk, known to the whites as Joseph Brant, also swelled the number.

As St. Leger approached the neighborhood of Fort Schuyler, with these strangely assorted ranks under his command, a fierce light of hate burned in his eyes, and a fire of revenge consumed his whole being, as ruthless as the lust for blood in the copper-colored savages under him. He had learned that the lonely fortress lying at the head of boat navigation on the Mohawk River, and which had been but partially

restored and strengthened, was commanded by Colonel Gansevoort, with Major Vanrosfeldt next in rank and authority. Addressing himself to the two other leaders, and pointing in the direction of the stronghold, he said fiercely:

“When yonder fort falls, the fate of the mob of rebels is in your hands; I ask for but the life of one man within its walls. There are scores to settle ‘twixt us other than those our insulted Sovereign and country demand, and which only his blood will wipe out. It will be war to the hilt! Edward Vanrosfeldt will answer to Raoul St. Leger for the foul deed that blackens his rebel soul, in the theft of my betrothed bride! When we come face to face he shall breathe only long enough to answer to my demand as to her whereabouts and fate!”

Impatient of delay—“On to Fort Schuyler!” he ordered, and marshalling his nondescript following, the march was at once taken up. Brant’s redskins, with eyes gleaming, tomahawk in hand and hungry for plunder, led off at a wolf trot in single file. Alert and cautious, the force stole through the forest trails, ready to concentrate on the slightest alarm, but fully expecting soon to be in possession of the post, in which it was understood there were only about seven hundred men, with,

it was thought, but slender supplies. Well situated on the watershed between the great lakes and the Hudson, and strongly built of timber and earthworks, it was, however, a somewhat formidable defence.

St. Leger and his men coming at length in sight of its log bastions, stealthily approached, their movements hidden in the blurring mists of a rain that was dismally falling. Halting within safe distance, a council was held, and within an hour an officer, bearing a white flag, boldly advanced over the sodden ground toward the great gate, demanding a surrender in the name of His Majesty the King, which imperious order was laughed to scorn by the men of the garrison. The following morning three officers from the Canadian camp arrived with a message to be delivered in person to the commander of the fortress. They were led blindfold within the walls, conducted to his presence, and received in a room with the windows shut, and lighted by candles, to prevent an accurate knowledge of the place's strength being gained. The message which they carried was at once made known; its weight being strengthened by dark suggestions of eagerness for slaughter on the part of the Indians; St. Leger, in a manner unwarrantable and unprecedented in a British soldier, allowing his own implacable desire for personal vengeance to overrule his instincts of humanity, and make him for the time forget the high

standard of honorable warfare which had ever distinguished the army he served, in defence or attack.

At the threat, Vanrosfeldt strode forward, hot with passion, and addressing the speaker, looked full in the man's face, saying with cutting emphasis:

“Do I understand you aright, sir, that you have come from a British Colonel who commands the force that invests this fort? By your uniform you appear to be an officer in the British service, although your words belie it. Have you come to the commandant of this garrison to tell him that if he does not deliver the post into the hands of your Colonel, he will send his Indians to murder all within it, not excepting the women and children? Such, I am bound in honesty to say, are not the customary temper and tactics, as I remember them, of the army in which he holds command, so you will be pleased to reflect that their blood will be upon his head and his alone!

“We are doing our duty here. This fort has been committed to our charge, and we will take care of it. After you get out of it you may turn around and look at the outside, but never expect to come within it

again, except as a prisoner. For my own part, before I would consent to deliver this garrison to such a murdering set as your red-skinned allies, by your own showing, are, I would suffer my body to be filled with splinters and set on fire, as has been practised before by these savage hordes of brutal women and children scalpers! This is your answer; take it back to your commander!”

Throughout the valley of the Mohawk were scattered a number of settlements, peopled by Germans, the descendants of those who had endured the endless miseries of the “Thirty Years’ War.” They had left their black-timbered homesteads in the dark forests of their fatherland, where their tribe-folk had wandered and fought in the dawn of history, and with the old sea-kings’ love of roving, had faced the storms of the ocean, and sailed away to find in the forests of the new world the peace and prosperity denied them in the old. But again there was war!

When news of an invading army spread to hamlet and homestead, the quiet rural settlements became suddenly hostile. Grandsires related by the broad hearthstones almost forgotten tales of foray and siege; of ancient village-moots where strifes were settled, and of feuds when warriors had boldly clashed in mortal combat.

In the feudal strongholds of the old fatherland, the petty German princes—the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, the Duke of Brunswick, the Princes of Hesse and Waldeck—with the spirit of mercenaries, had been willing to barter their fellow countrymen to fight in America; but in those colonists arose the old Gothic spirit with which their fathers had dared the invincible military genius of the Caesars. The old battle-cries were again shouted: “Death is better than a life of shame! If life be short, the more cause to do bravely while it lasts!” Leaving the plough in the furrow and the upland white unto harvest, they doggedly took down the old flintlocks from beneath the strings of dried apples and herbs hanging from the chimney ledges; and sharpening blades, rusty from long disuse, prepared to drive back the foe—or die! By common consent the leadership was given to Nicholas Herkimer, a veteran of threescore years, who, with his men, thereupon stoutly set forth. As they marched the uneven ranks were swelled at every by-path and cross-road in the valley, until on reaching Oriskany, some eight miles from the post, his followers numbered about eight hundred. Communication with the fort to secure concerted action being imperative, three messengers were dispatched thither to tell of the advance of a relief party to its aid. Unaware that an attempt for their succor was being

made, the garrison thought that the surrounding forest, alive with the red and green of the regulars and the paint and feathers of the savages, teemed with death for them in its most revolting forms, until the trusty messengers from the German camp, floundering through a dangerous swamp, tottered half-dead into the fort, and told of the reinforcements on the way.

It was accordingly arranged that a furious sortie be made from the fort upon the Canadians, and at the same time Herkimer make an onslaught upon their rear, and thus crush them at a single blow. Upon absolute co-operation the success of the scheme depended. To ensure it, a discharge of three guns from the fort was to be the signal; upon hearing which the Germans were to start at once in order to time their arrival to the right moment for attack. The beleaguered garrison meantime were to make such demonstrations as would concentrate the whole attention of the enemy upon themselves, in order that Herkimer be not surprised, and a proper interval of time elapse before they sallied forth in full force.

It was reckoned when the messengers set out that they should reach Fort Schuyler at about three in the morning, but it was almost noon when,

utterly exhausted with the danger and difficulty of stealing through the morasses which lay in their way, their errand was there made known. Through the passing hours of the morning it had been with difficulty that Herkimer could keep control of his volunteer force. Unused to camp discipline, and filled with alarm as to what was taking place a few miles distant, they were in an agony of impatience to march on at once. Frenzied by the delay, and doubting not that their messengers had fallen into an ambush and perished, mutinous whispers and dark looks among the men began to threaten the taking of authority into their own hands. The father of one of the youths who had offered himself for the carrying out of the task, with eyes in which a dull, fierce anger burned, advanced to his neighbor, Herkimer—who waited in stolid silence for the expected signal—and with clenched fist, looking hotly into his face, said:

“Mein Gott, Nicholas Herkimer, thou art a coward to bide here when death marches but a few miles on!”

The commander looked around, and seeing a dogged determination on the sullen faces, and a mutinous movement as of shouldering of arms, he gave the order, and the column moved on; not knowing that at the moment their comrades, toiling and struggling, were yet two hours distant from the

post, where their message was still undelivered. Cautious as they had been, however, the approach of reinforcements had already been discovered by St. Leger's scouts, and a strong detachment of the Royal Greens, together with Brant and his braves, were on the way to intercept them. They had reached a point about two miles distant from the fort, where there was a semicircular ravine, through which a causeway of logs traversed the swampy ground, with steep banks on either side covered with trees and underbrush. The experienced eye of Brant at once saw the extreme strength of the spot as an ambushade, and under his direction it was soon prepared with the deadly skill and intelligence for which he was famed. Silently then in the ambush they waited.

Herkimer and his raw army reached the brink of the ravine, and unwitting of the awful welcome awaiting him, he led the way down into the valley of death—the very mouth of Hell! Before the rearguard could follow from the rising ground, a murderous fire opened upon him, pouring death and destruction into his ranks. Johnson's Greens charged down upon them in front, and the Indians closing in behind, those still in the rear, some of whom had been loudest in demanding the hurried advance, were obliged to retreat and leave their entrapped companions to their fate, who, though stunned and confused, soon rallied and formed into a circle which

neither bayonet charge nor musket could break. The dark hollows of the ravine were then filled with a mass of fifteen hundred human beings, wrestling, crushing, struggling and dashing out each other's brains with inhuman fury. The Satanic din, the horrible cries, groans and imprecations, the shrieks of agony and hatred, caused the wild denizens of the wood to forget their own prey and flee away to hide in fear of a fury which even their own savage natures could scarcely parallel.

Brant, though possessed of many gentle traits and of superior intelligence, gave way to his savage instincts for the moment in directing the butchery, his unerring tomahawk cleaving the skulls of more than a score of patriots. Early in the struggle a musket-ball slew Herkimer's horse and shattered his own leg just below the knee; but undaunted and bating nothing of his coolness in his dire extremity, he took his saddle and placing it at the foot of a great beech, seated himself upon it, and lighting his pipe, shouted his commands in a voice of a stentor. Ordering the fight, he set his men in pairs behind the trees, that each might defend the other when loading.

The frenzy of battle became a mad fury when they discovered that a party of Tories from their own valley had joined the Indians; and those

who were their neighbors and had been their friends fought against them for two mortal hours of carnage. In the gloom, neighbors went down in the slippery, yielding bog clasped in a death struggle, their hands grasping the knives plunged in each other's hearts, as they desperately cursed or as despairingly prayed.

As if in sympathy with the fearful carnival of death, nature added to its terrors. The heat of the summer morning was intolerable, and dark thunder-clouds hanging over the ravine at the beginning of the conflict soon enveloped it in a gloom as of midnight. The wind howled through the trees, and the rain poured in torrents down the sides into the swamp below. Lightning in sheets, and with sharp flashes, illumined the scene with lurid horror; but the crash and crack of terrific peals of thunder scarce served to drown the wild clashing and uproar of hundreds of men in mortal strife below.

Down went the gallant regulars of England, the Indians and Germans, some pitching forward on their faces, others reeling backward, clutching at their wounds and writhing in pain, or falling instantly dead, struck true to the heart; for those farmers, too, shot straight and well. All around on both sides there were dismal groans, moans of anguish, and

cries of despair. Here and there, silenced by a quietness that was never to be broken, the dead lay in heaps like the windrows of the peaceful meadows. The wet muskets becoming useless, the bayonet and the knife finished the work of slaughter, until more than five hundred men were killed and wounded.

So determined and firm had been the resistance offered, and so unexpected the prowess of the farmer-soldiers, that the Indians at last gave way and fled in all directions. The remnant of the regular troops thus finding themselves deserted, became disconcerted and began to retreat up the western road; the bloodstained Patriots, too weak to pursue, remaining in possession of the hardly-won field.

At that moment the warfare of the elements, too, ceased, and the clouds rolled away, trailing like veils of lace over the hills. As the first ray of sunshine flickered through the wet leaves, through the air came the booming of guns—one!—two!—three! the signals for which they should have waited! Following it came the crackle of musketry from the direction of the fort, where it was expected the relief force would shortly appear to its aid, and to whom it sounded as the stroke of doom.

The Canadians also heard the ill-omened reports, and made all possible haste to return and join their own army under St. Leger. The remainder of the Patriots, making litters of branches, bore back their wounded to Oriskany, the point from which they had goaded their leader to make a premature march, and which had led them to the ambush; the man who had called Nicholas Herkimer a coward, being left behind in the valley of the dead. The sortie was made from the fort, and the disaster in the ravine having weakened the British strength, it was, although without assistance, a brilliant success, and they were completely routed, leaving large spoils of ammunition, clothing, food and drink to be carried into the fort. As a sign of victory one of the captured standards was ordered to be run up over the fortress. Major Vanrosfeldt, turning in protest, said abruptly:

“Colonel, if we would hoist a flag, it is only fitting that it should be the one our country has adopted!”

“But, Major, we have none such, so must perforce content ourselves with this.”

“No other flag, Colonel, should now float above this fort, save that for

love of which so many of our gallant bluecoats lie dead yonder on the grass!” was the stout reply.

“Hold, I have a thought!” exclaimed the officer addressed, and turning to the color-sergeant, who stood irresolute, he commanded: “Bring hither the red coat of yon poor fellow, who, alas! this day fought well and hard for his flag. He will never need it more, an’ it must now serve another purpose.” As the man made haste to obey him, he called:

“Go to my luggage and from the befrilled shirts therein bring me the best among them; and you, Vanrosfeldt, must furnish a field for stars in that blue coat of yours.”

Soon with nimble fingers the man was tearing the red and white into strips, which, deftly tied upon the blue, he ran up as the banner of the united colonies of America!—the men making the breeze that unfolded its starless tatters tremble with their huzzas.

In the murderous fight each side lost about one-third of their number, mainly in hand to hand struggles; as at Bunker Hill, they could see the whites of each other’s eyes as they clinched for life or death.

Almost all who were carried back to Oriskany died of their wounds through lack of skilful treatment. Among them was the brave Nicholas Herkimer. A few days after the battle, propped up on his couch, he calmly read from the thirty-eighth psalm: "I am feeble and sore broken, they that seek after my life lay snares for me; mine enemies are lively; they are strong."

As he reached the words: "Forsake me not," he quietly laid down his pipe, which he had been smoking, and closing his eyes, passed peacefully away.

Raoul St. Leger, though badly crippled, was not yet crushed, and still meant to hold his ground; maddened that only the walls of the fort were between himself and his revenge. To still further increase his discomfiture, the loss of over one hundred of their best warriors made a growing discontent among the Indians, until their refractory behavior became a source of great anxiety.

Another tempest sweeping down the valley and raging with great violence, a few nights after the battle in the ravine, Major Vanrosfeldt and two

of his men crept out of the sally-port at ten o'clock at night. Crawling on their hands and knees along a morass to the river bank, they crossed it upon a log, and passed unobserved beyond the line of drowsy sentinels. It was a cloudy, moonless night, and their way lay through a dense and tangled wood, in which they were soon lost, when the sudden barking of a dog told them they must be near an Indian camp. Alarmed and fearful of being discovered, they crouched in hiding, not knowing whether to advance or retreat. At length towards dawn the sky began to clear, and to their joy, by the light of the pale morning star, they discovered the course they wished to follow. Taking a meandering route, they reached at length the German flats in safety. There, mounting fleet horses, they hurried down the valley to the headquarters of General Schuyler, who, having already heard of the terrible encounter in the ravine, was trying to devise some means of succor for the fort.

Being then implored for assistance, he at once called a council and urged that a detachment be sent forthwith to retain possession of the important post and save their comrades in arms from a bloody defeat.

Although a man of exalted character, with a courage which no reverse could shake, and always ready for action in his country's need, some of

the officers who regarded him with disfavor treated his appeal with irresolution and lack of ardor, although he earnestly besought them to do as he proposed, and hasten to the relief of the fort bearing his name. As he paced the floor in anxious solicitude, the silence around was broken by a whisper which reached the ears of all present and fell upon his own: "He only wishes to weaken the army."

As the vile and utterly unmerited insinuation was spoken, he swung upon his heel and confronted the slanderer, his face blazing with indignant passion. So fierce was his anger that the stem of the pipe he was smoking was crushed between his teeth and fell in pieces to the ground, as he thundered out:

"Enough! I will assume the whole responsibility of this! Where is the brigadier who will go?"

All sat in sullen silence; but suddenly, Arnold, who for some time had been brooding over what he considered the unjust course pursued by Congress, in promoting his juniors in rank to positions above him, jumped to his feet impetuously and exclaimed:

“Here am I! Washington sent me to make myself useful, and I will go!”

Schuyler grasped his hand gratefully, and immediately the drum beat the “assembly” and twelve hundred volunteers were enrolled for the service.

The next morning the expedition started up the Mohawk valley. Arnold pushed forward with his characteristic energy, but was, however, so much retarded by the natural difficulties of the way, that full three weeks passed ere he found himself within twenty miles of the fort. Chafing at the irritating delay, when it was so imperative that no time should be lost in bringing encouragement to the threatened garrison, and in disheartening as much as possible their lurking enemy, he heard with disquietude of strategic movements on the part of the British army. He became aware that Burgoyne, to interfere with his designs and prevent the carrying out of his intentions, was detaching a force of German mercenaries to intercept him, a second contingent to follow to the support of the first.

These foreign allies found they had a difficult task to perform, and their progress was slow over roads that the heavy rains had made almost impassable. They were at the same time handicapped by the clumsiness of

their accoutrements, their brass helmets and heavy sabres alone weighing more than the full equipment of a British soldier. Mounted on horseback in the open, those Brunswick chasseurs, with their short, thick rifles, were a formidable foe; but afoot in the humid heat of the month of August, trying to march over rutted cart-tracks, those military Goliaths in armor were hardly a match for the native Davids in shepherd coat and sling. This events proved, for soon the second troop on the march descried ahead of them their comrades of the advance body, in full retreat, bringing tidings of a terrible disaster. They related that the day before small squads of men, mostly in shirt-sleeves or farmer's smocks, were seen gathering. Armed only with fowling-pieces, they were assumed to be British sympathizers seeking the protection of the troops, and apparently unable to defend themselves.

Deceived by appearances, by the middle of the afternoon the unsuspecting Germans had found themselves surrounded by a desperate and determined foe, who rushed upon them in the spirit of their leader, Starke, who, as he led them to the charge, shouted:

“We will either beat the British, or Molly Starke will sleep a widow to-night!”

The Americans had fought with the abandon of a forlorn hope; the Hessians resisting stoutly, until, their ammunition beginning to fail, their firing slackened. Perceiving this, the Yankees rushed into the entrenchments, and it was then gunstock against sabre, and on the fall of the British leader, his men becoming discomfited, a rout ensued, many of them being left behind as prisoners.

Alas! men must die for the wrong as well as the right! Some one may have blundered, but 'twas theirs but to do or die—and when the smoke, which lay heavily on the hillside, had trailed away, its green slope was a ghastly sight, with the wounded and dying of both sides. The farmers in their smocks were many of them among the dead, lying quietly among the bodies of those splendid chasseurs; but the rest, looking with fierce triumph into each other's blackened faces, and grasping hands, hard and stiff with toil, cheered and waved their straw hats above heads that were wet and glistening with heat and damp with blood.

The Jesuit, Brother Jerome, since his rescue by the party of Continentals, had remained attached to the troops, and had followed the detachment which, led by Vanrosfeldt, had gone to the support of Fort

Schuyler.

Early in the morning on which St. Leger's chasseurs and Indians arrived before its walls, the priest, who frequently wandered in the woods around, his solitary habits and avoidance of intercourse with the soldiers being attributed to his religious calling, had ventured further than usual from the post. His only companion was a half-witted youth, Yan Yost, a nephew of General Schuyler's. Returning at nightfall, they found, to their surprise and alarm, Green Rangers and Indians encamped about the fort, completely cutting them off from its shelter.

Cautiously, and fearful of detection, they crept back into the dim depths of the forest, and following a by-path in order to reach the cabin in which Yan Yost lived with his mother, they found it deserted; the woman, having been alarmed, had evidently taken refuge with neighbors in some less lonely place. There the two oddly assorted companions obtained shelter, and day by day they ventured forth to learn what was taking place, not aware that Arnold was marching up the valley to the assistance of the fort. Chancing to cross the path of one of his scouting parties, the priest and his companion, not giving a satisfactory explanation of their presence, were carried before him.

Something in the Jesuit's effeminate appearance and slight French accent

aroused suspicion, and despite his frantic and hysterical protestations of innocence, he was summarily sentenced to pay the penalty of spying, and swing for it.

Falling on his knees, and calling upon Heaven to witness to the truth of his words, he vehemently asserted his willingness to give any proof demanded of him to show his hatred of the British cause, and his sympathy with the Continentals.

Arnold, keenly searching his pallid countenance for signs of dissimulation, said in a voice of thunder:

“If spy you are, I swear you shall hang, and that ere another sun set!—but if not, prove the truth of what ye say by carrying out my orders, an’ ye shall find full pardon.”

“Name your wishes, and I shall conform to them,” was the trembling reply.

“Then mark them well, Sir Monk, but I have no appetite for double-dealing, so it behooves you, if ye would save your holy neck, to

go to the camp of this St. Leger, and so weaken his courage by creating a panic among his troops, that he will forthwith abandon his intended siege. I will send an Oneida scout to watch your movements, who, on the first breath of suspicion of your cozening me, will instantly murder you in cold blood.”

The garrison of the fort, in the meantime, ignorant of the fate of Vanrosfeldt and his companions, and finding the provisions much reduced, became uneasy, and what was to be done as a last resource was concernedly discussed. Some advised surrender as the only humane course open, but Gansevoort refused to entertain the thought for a moment, and declared that if the food gave out, and no relief were in sight, he would himself sally forth at night and cut his way through the enemy’s camp.

In accordance with Arnold’s instructions to the supposed spy, a few hours afterwards, St. Leger’s scouts, as they stole through the woods to reconnoitre, heard mysterious rumors, which had been diligently spread, of Burgoyne’s having been completely defeated, and that a great American army was coming up the valley to the fort’s relief. They carried back the ill tidings to the camp, and toward evening, as the officers were

grouped together in anxious conference, Yan Yost, who was known throughout the valley to have Tory sympathies, rushed in, accompanied by a priest. Panting for breath, he gasped out that they had barely escaped with their lives from a resistless American force, which was close at hand, and showing his coat, which he had had riddled with bullets before leaving Arnold's camp, said a companion had fallen.

"How large is this force?" asked St. Leger, turning with white, set lips to the priest of his own mother Church, whose features the gathering twilight obscured from his questioner.

With nimble wit, and without uttering a word, the monk pointed significantly to the leaves of the trees that fluttered in multitudes above them, and solemnly shook his head as if in warning, and in the consternation which followed, stole away into the forest paths and made his way back to Arnold's camp.

The Indian, who had come by a circuitous route, also appeared, and at once corroborated the story. When the savages, who were holding a religious feast to crave for the protection of the "Great Manitou," heard that the army of Burgoyne was cut to pieces, and another of three

thousand men was coming upon them, they prepared to fly, uttering their weird cry, "Oonah! Oonah!" It was in vain that St. Leger tried to weaken the effect of the men's words, which spread rapidly through the camp. He exhorted, entreated, threatened, and sought to bribe the Indians; but already disaffected, they began to desert in scores, those remaining proceeding to open the camp-chests and get at the rum. On the liquor's taking effect they began to assault the soldiers, some of whom, joining with the rioters, caroused with them, and all night long the camp was a perfect pandemonium of heathenish debauchery, which it was impossible to control.

The next day St. Leger, in despair, took flight, rushing for safety to the Canadas, and the whole army, becoming disheartened, dispersed, the remaining tents, stores, ammunition and artillery falling into the hands of the American troops.

The garrison of the fort, when apprised of the mutiny among the enemy, sallied forth and pursued the flying force; and the faithless Indians, enjoying their reverse, and willing to curry favor with the strongest party, kept up the chase almost as far as Oswego, laying ambushes every night, and with glittering knives diligently scalping all stragglers.

Arnold himself returned to the Hudson on hearing of the success of his ruse, accompanied by Vanrosfeldt, who was thirsting for action in the field.

St. Leger, heart-broken at the discomfiture of his expedition, and more that he thought his rival had triumphed over him, embarked with the remnant of his chasseurs for Montreal, and thence to Quebec, where his miserable tale crushed out the faint hopes that some traces of the lost Thérèse might be found.

Frenzied, and unable to remain inactive, he again offered himself for service in a squadron which was leaving for the Atlantic coast. As side by side with Captain Temple, in whose ship he sailed, they together silently looked at the grey cliffs and ramparts fading from their sight, neither man knew that the heart tragedy of the other was hidden behind those walls.

When the news of the continued and unlooked-for disasters reached General Burgoyne, chagrined but unable to determine what the next manoeuvre should be, his camp remained without movement for some four weeks. It was then desperately determined that the army take up line of

march southward, in three distinct columns, the light horse on the right, under Malcolm Fraser, then Brigadier-General, and the left, near the river, under Baron Von Riedesel. The centre was to be commanded by General Burgoyne himself, who, with the grenadiers and infantry, strongly flanked with Indians, should, on Fraser's making a circuitous march through the woods, join him, that together they might fall upon the rear of the American army. It was arranged that three minute-guns should be fired when the junction of the forces was thus made, as a signal for the artillery to make an attack on the American front and scatter them in confusion; for Burgoyne swore it should never be told in England that he was "bested by a parcel of raw country bumpkins."

At an early hour on September nineteenth the American pickets observed an unusual activity in the enemy's camp. There was a glitter of bayonets and sabres, and a flashing of scarlet and gold uniforms in the morning sunlight, as through vistas in the forest the troops were seen to go through their evolutions of marching, countermarching, and forming the various lines of battle as had been arranged.

Arnold, becoming aware of the meaning of the manoeuvres, detached Morgan from his division to charge the British and Indians, he himself

resolving to turn the enemy's right and cut off Fraser from joining the main army. So dense were the woods and so broken the face of the country, that neither realized their contiguity until suddenly they met face to face, when Arnold, with the fury of a jungle lion leaping on its prey, fell upon his foes, disputing the ground inch by inch, until they were forced to entrench themselves in a sheltering pine forest.

Burgoyne, on the arrival of Riedesel's infantry, valiant soldier that he was, with true British spirit and pluck disdained to fight under cover, and ordered the woods cleared; and soon, at the point of the bayonet, with flashing of steel, column after column, fighting fiercely, dashed upon the enemy's lines.

Phyllis, with the Baroness and her household, who had followed the troops on the march, found refuge in a house hard by. With that fascination which the horrible possesses, they tremulously listened to the noise of the struggle through the clash and clamor of hours.

When they knew that the Baron, at the head of his men, was in the thick of the fight, the wife's courage gave way, her brave heart quailed, and the strong woman, weeping, leaned her head on the shoulder of the frail girl. Phyllis, with tender words of hope and comfort, bade her bear up

for the sake of the frightened little ones, who were hiding their pale faces in her arms, and with their small fingers trying to shut out the sight and hearing of the awful struggle.

With night came the tramp of returning men, and the heavy rumble of cannon, and the two armies lay down on the ground, so near that the sound of their drumbeats and shouts could be plainly heard in either camp.

Day after day they lay watching each other. The British sent out spies to ascertain the strength of the Continentals, which, however, the density of the woods rendered it impossible to ascertain. All attempts to discover if there were any indications of help coming from the south were likewise futile. At last a messenger made his way in with a communication from Sir Henry Clinton, stating his immediate intention of attacking Fort Montgomery and other fortified points. The tidings were hailed with delight, and an answer was sent, enclosed in a silver bullet, which opened with a small spring, urging Sir Henry to advance. With stringent orders for extreme caution and circumspection in passing the hostile territory, the messenger departed. The imminent danger of the mission and its urgency seemed to interfere with the man's

discretion, for when in the dusk he encountered a body of troops near Fort Montgomery, and heard them mention the name of Clinton, he threw aside all precaution, and asked to be conducted to the presence of Sir Henry. Led into the fort, alack! he discovered his error too late, as the General Clinton he confronted was not Sir Henry, but, by an unfortunate coincidence of names, the American commander of the post.

Indiscreet, but brave, he refused to give up his despatch, and when the silver bullet was about to be seized, he hastily placed it in his mouth and swallowed it. A liberal dosing of tartar emetic soon effected what the commands of his enemies could not compass, and the bullet being recovered, the compromising contents of the missile fell into the hands of his judges. There was a short trial for such an offence. The poor fellow was sentenced to be hanged as a spy, and on October eighth, when Sir Henry stormed and took the place, the soldier's body was still hanging from the bough of the apple-tree near by, to which he had been strung up a few hours before. On the same day, unaware of what was transpiring, General Burgoyne, tortured with anxiety, with desertions occurring daily, which even the death penalty did not affect, determined that tremendous risks must be taken. Distracted by the disaffection of the Indians, who were disappointed in their hope of plunder, and were

anxious to leave the war-path for the hunt, to supply their wigwams with food, he resolved that a desperate course must be followed. With no base of supplies he was compelled to cut off one-third of his men's rations, trying at the same time by every means in his power to communicate his condition to the garrison in New York and implore assistance, but which the vigilant American pickets made abortive. Howe's procrastination seemed incomprehensible, and the dilatoriness of the Colonial minister in issuing the requisite orders to him was certainly most reprehensible. What did it boot that the gallant army, the army of his king, who would rather die than retreat, lay wasting and starving in suspense and inaction; that Howe sailed away, apparently unaware of the imperative need of supporting the army to the north of him, when my Lord George Sackville Germaine, the Colonial minister, who had written in his London office the despatch with the requisite instructions, had been in haste to attend a dinner party in Richmond! He had been bidden to feast there right royally and make merry and jest about the "beggar war" and the audacious impertinence and unwarrantable assurance of those ragged rebels over seas. The pleasure barge awaited—his elegant silk and lace toilet had to be made—the matter could wait—he could not tarry, forsooth, to sign the paper, but hurriedly thrust it into a receptacle in his desk, until a more convenient season, where, whether from the

wining or the dining, it lay forgotten until too late to save the cause of his king and alter the fate of two nations. Thus was changed the history of the world, for on such small happenings do momentous events and stupendous issues sometimes seem to hang.

So on the field it was either fight or fly—and on October seventh fifteen hundred men, made up from all the regiments, with eight brass cannon and two howitzers, and led by the four generals, advanced to a clearing about two miles from the American right flank—General Fraser moving by an indirect route to cover the by-paths by which small foraging parties were seeking means of relief for their pressing and imperative wants. In the cool of the morning, as he passed a wooded hollow beneath a hill, which was crowned by a redoubt, he said to a clansman near him:

“Yon bonnie glen reminds me of the banks an’ braes of our native Highlands,” and pausing a moment as he looked at it, he continued:

“If Malcolm Fraser falls to-day, bury me here.”

Within an hour the conflict began, fast and furious on both sides, the

Americans rushing up to the very mouth of the cannon and struggling wildly for their possession. Five times were they taken and as many times lost, for both sides were brave, valorous and skilful. Morgan, with his corps, dashed to the hills where he saw Fraser's flanking party, and opened on them a fire so destructive, and bullets so unerringly aimed, that they were forced to fall back. Then, with appalling force and impetuosity, he wheeled and fell on the British right flank, so that they broke and fled, but soon rallying, returned to action.

Arnold, who thus far had only watched the trend of the battle, leaping on his large brown horse, spurred the animal full gallop for the thick of the fight, the men greeting him with frantic cheering as he placed himself at their head.

Dashing at the British centre, which until then had stood unbroken, and mad with the frenzy of battle, he rushed along the line, brandishing his sword above his head. At his first assault the Hessians stood firm, but on his second furious charge, they broke and fled in dismay, and then the battle became general along the whole line, with Arnold and Morgan the ruling spirits among the Americans, and Fraser the directing soul of

the British. Mounted upon a splendid iron-grey horse, and dressed in the full uniform of a field officer, the latter was conspicuous for his appearance, and the way in which he rallied the troops by word and example.

Morgan soon perceived that the fate of the day depended upon the gallant Scot, and in an instant his purpose was formed. Calling a file of his best shots around him, he pointed with his gun to the man on the great grey horse, and said:

“That gallant officer is General Fraser. I admire and honor him, but it is necessary he should die. Victory for the enemy depends upon him. Take your station in that clump of trees, and do your duty.”

Those men could shoot to a hair-breadth. Each of their bullets meant one British soldier less; so riding along, although at long range, a ball hit the crupper of General Fraser’s horse, and another passed through the animal’s mane, just behind the ears. Noticing it, the officer who rode by his side said with concern for his safety:

“It is evident that you are marked out, General, for special aim. Would

it not be prudent to retire to a less exposed place?”

“My duty, Major, forbids me to fly from danger,” he replied, grasping his broadsword. Scarcely had the words passed his lips, when he fell mortally wounded, his foot caught in his stirrup. He was carried off the field by two grenadiers; and when the news of his fall spread through the British lines, and also of the arrival of three thousand American troops, a general rout ensued. General Burgoyne, taking command in person, endeavored to spur the sinking courage of his men, but all in vain. They fled precipitately to their entrenchments, followed by a furious shower of grape and musket balls, Arnold’s voice in trumpet tones urging his followers on in the flame and smoke of the savage pursuit. Burgoyne tried with despairing valor to once more make a rally, but although British courage and discipline had so often wrought marvels of prowess, and accomplished almost superhuman achievements, there are some things which even they cannot do, and his commands were fruitless. His men, stumbling among the bodies of their own dead, gave way, and the British ranks—another name for reckless hardihood and heroic devotion to king and country—weak from fasting and broken by disappointment, by the decrees of an inexorable fate, were forced to fall back despite the threats, prayers, oaths, and even sword-pricks of their officers, who

themselves, brave to the last, were furious with shame and crushed with humiliation.

Night at last closed in, and the only sounds succeeding the awful day were the feeble moans of the wounded, the heavy tread of retiring columns and the deep breathing of the weary armies asleep on the field. Over both a single star kept watch in solemn, heavenly radiance, as over so many of earth's bloody fields it had done in the passing centuries of the world's struggles.

CHAPTER XV.

A MOURNFUL DINNER PARTY.

That morning, when breakfasting, the Baroness, whose alarm was ever on the alert, had fancied she saw a hurried and preoccupied air on the part of her husband, which she vain would have accounted for. Being assured that he was merely contemplating a *reconnoissance*, the high-sounding word had so allayed her fears that she had promised to provide a dinner as elaborate as their slender resources allowed for his officers on their return. In the afternoon, when the table was set with its common

and meagre appointments, and Phyllis was returning from a short walk to place some wild grasses upon it, being all the October fields could furnish, she saw a band of Indians in war-dress hurrying by. Their excited looks and gestures told her that they were hastening to take part in action somewhere. Scarcely had she reached the door of the cabin, and told her fears to the Baroness, when they heard the sound of skirmishing, and knew that somewhere a battle was raging. In a sickening suspense the hours dragged slowly on until the one in which they had expected their guests to arrive. Looking for the hundredth time toward the distance, where trailing smoke and the dull roar of ordnance told their accustomed ears that an engagement was in progress, they saw the first guest brought to their door. It was poor Fraser on a stretcher, covered with blood, and borne by his grenadiers. Hastily the dishes were removed from the table, and he was laid moaning feebly upon the board by which he had thought merrily to sup. The noise of the battle growing louder and nearer each moment, the children, clinging to Phyllis's skirts, cowering and trembling, were too much terrified even to cry.

At last, night coming on, sleep mercifully soothed them, and they were laid on little beds made for them in the passage-way, that they might not disturb or witness the last agonized moments of the brave, dying

soldier. Following their small forms as they left his sight, he looked after them wistfully. Calling the surgeon to his side, and looking steadily into his eyes, he asked: "Must I die?"—and as the answer came in a silent bowing of the head, he turned his face away, sighing wearily, "Oh, miserable ambition! Poor Mistress Fraser! My fatherless bairns!"

He lingered until midnight; at the last rambling in his talk, thinking at times he was a boy again playing among the heather and bracken of his Scottish hills, or wandering with the lass he loved by its lochs and tarns; and anon he was in the mad rush of battle, cheering on his men. Just before the turn of the night he rallied somewhat, and signed for Phyllis, who had never left his side for a moment, to draw near. With face well-nigh as white as the sinking man's, she bent over him to take his last words, to be sent to his wife and his "bonnie wee bairnies." It was soon over, and tenderly, as if they were wreathed lilies, she placed beside him the soft grasses of the meadow, and the crimson leaves of the maple.

As the sun set the next day, in the calm of the October evening, the bearers carried him out, to lay him on the braeside overlooking the

quiet glen by which he had ridden the day before. As the cortège moved up to the redoubt, the eyes of both armies followed. The Americans, seeing the party, but unaware of their purpose, at once opened fire, but through it all the chaplain read on unmoved. The soil raised by the cannon-balls rained upon his uncovered head unheeded, as over the group, with bowed face, he uttered the words: “I am the resurrection and the life”—his voice almost drowned in the roar of the guns.

The shades of night fell sombrely around them like a pall, and the watching stars came out like funeral tapers o’er a bier.

Suddenly the firing ceased, and the solemn boom of a single gun rolled at intervals through the valley, and awakened the echoes of the hills.

It was the minute-gun of the enemy, firing a salute for the gallant dead!

When it had become known that the silent group was a burial-guard, the enemy’s cannon were at once silenced, save for the rendering of homage to the brave, as the fearless leader of the Light Horse troop was left to sleep with his martial cloak around him. There was little time for mourning, and at ten o’clock the same night the British army, falling

back, took up its way northward, and less than forty-eight hours afterwards was again under fire from the Americans. Word was at once sent to the ladies to fly for shelter to a house near by. Getting into a carriage, the horse was put to his greatest speed, the swaying of the vehicle over the rough road adding to the misery of the awful situation.

When they were a few rods from the door, Vanrosfeldt's command appeared upon the further side of a small stream flowing near by, and at once took aim at the trembling occupants, doubtless thinking them fugitives. The mother, frenzied with fright, threw her little ones into the bottom of the carriage, and placed herself over them with the mother instinct, willing to receive in her own body any bullet which might perchance reach them. Phyllis, with the sudden perception and courage which imminent peril often gives, brave, pale and beautiful, rose to her feet, and exposed herself to their fire, knowing that as soon as it was seen that she was a woman they were safe.

With the glint of the setting sun upon her hair, Vanrosfeldt, understanding her intention, but little thinking it was the golden head he would have died to save from harm, immediately, for its sake and because he saw she was a maiden and unarmed, dropped his sword, and

commanded that the firing at once cease in that direction.

Unmolested they then safely reached the shelter, and the girl who first saw the light in a peaceful old English manor-house, and the woman whose children were born under the buttresses of a feudal castle, well guarded by warder and keep, were glad, in the tumult of war, to find sanctuary under the roof of the half-ruined hut. With the approach of darkness, they huddled together, without light or beds, the poor little girls laying their heads in the laps of their mother and the “Fraulein Phyllis,” as they had grown to call her.

As night came on the wounded were brought in, and Phyllis, forgetting her own misery, tried to lessen the greater agony of those around her.

The second night of horror approached, and thirst began to add its terrors to the miseries of the unfortunates, cooped together in what was fast becoming a pest-house. Some of the wounded cried piteously for water, the small quantity of Rhenish wine having long since been given them. When the morning again broke, a soldier offered to go and try to fill a bottle at the river. He went out; the minutes passed slowly, they lengthened, and no sound of returning feet came to the strained

listeners. Another volunteered, the click of a gun was heard, and he, too, was seen no more, and still the fever-parched lips cried for “Water, water, if only but a drop!”

A third soldier, ghastly with a festering wound, was rising slowly and tottering from his bed of straw to follow his comrades; for better, he thought, would be the swift, sure death from an enemy’s ball, than those slow tortures of Tantalus.

Phyllis, who was at his side in a moment, laid her hand upon him to restrain him, saying:

“Give me the vessel, I will go; they will not fire upon a woman,” and with the children sobbing and trying to detain her, she opened the low door and passed out.

It seemed as if each could hear the other’s heartbeats, so still and harrowing were the passing moments. One poor fellow broke down and mingled his tears with those of the crying children. When unable longer to bear the silence, little Freda threw herself upon the cold, hard floor pitifully wailing: “Our *Fraulein* is shot too!” but a quick step

was heard at last, the door flew open, and with eyes shining, and with cool, pure water overflowing the cruse she carried, Phyllis stepped over the threshold.

Again and again she left the darksome hovel, and went out into the sun-flooded plain, her fear of mind being forgotten in the joy of cooling the dry lips, and bathing the burning brows and open, aching wounds. Another day and night thus passed, and the suspense as to the fate of the army seemed almost harder to be borne than the suffering of hunger and mortal pain.

An ensign, but slightly wounded, assured Phyllis that even if the British bugles sounded the retreat and it came to the worst, they would not be deserted, for, disabled as they were, he and his fellow officers would take the ladies and children and try to escape with them.

At length, with peril thickening around his doomed army, General Burgoyne called together a council of his officers and staff, and on the morning of the thirteenth they assembled in a tent for conference. With musket balls flying overhead, grape shot striking the ground around the canvas, and a cannon-ball almost sweeping across the table around which

they were deliberating, they were warned that their council must needs be brief; and on the English general was forced the unwelcome conviction that those rebel “Homespuns” were in no wise the despicable rabble he had deemed them to be.

Afire with anger and chagrin, those deliberating hurriedly determined that steps must be taken at once to open a treaty with the commander of the American army.

Accordingly, toward evening, a flag was sent to General Gates, with a note intimating that General Burgoyne was desirous of sending a field-officer to him upon a matter of great moment to both armies, and wishing to know at what hour on the next morning it would suit General Gates to receive him. The reply came promptly: “At ten o’clock at the advanced post of the army of the United States.”

Then the army of redcoats, dusty, dishevelled, thirsty, hungry and weary from their marches, their fights and reverses, sat down on the crest of the hill, under the skies dim with rain, and knew that the gallant English blood, which made a long, crimson track behind them, had been shed for naught but heartbreaking defeat! The grime of battle on many a

brave cheek was channeled white with the brine of tears, as forgetting their own misery and despair in the love of King and country, they thought, none daring to ask the other, "What will they say in England?" when the dire news reached the royal and ducal palaces and the lowly cots among her dales from which they had marched so blithely.

The result of the convention, as it was politely styled, was: "That the British troops march out of their camp with all the honors of war, their artillery to be moved to the bank of the Hudson and there left, together with the soldiers' arms, said arms to be piled by word of command of their own officers." In accordance with this order, with sad and sorrowing countenances, rank and file left their camp among the hills, and with slow march reached the green plain below. The different companies, by order of their several commanders, there ground their arms and emptied their cartridge-boxes.

Those who lifted their downcast eyes looked in vain for the sight of an exulting bluecoat, or a single contemptuous glance, for, with the exception of those who had charge of the surrender, every man had been ordered within camp, that no needless burden might be added to the humiliation of a beaten foe, but a boldly brave and ever magnanimous

one.

The American staff officers, General Gates in a plain blue frock coat, advanced to meet General Burgoyne and his suite, in their rich uniforms of scarlet and gold lace. When within a sword's length of the British they were presented by Major Vanrosfeldt, who had been active in arranging the negotiations between them.

General Burgoyne, with his native grace, lifted his hat, and bowing to General Gates, said: "The fortunes of war, General, have made me your prisoner," and at once the generous reply came: "I shall always be ready to testify that it has not been through any fault or lack of valor on your Excellency's part!" Turning to Daniel Morgan, with equal magnanimity, Burgoyne held out his hand, saying: "Sir, you command the finest regiment in the world."

A few hours afterward, the American army was drawn up in two lines parallel to each other. Between them the British marched, escorted by a company of light dragoons, preceded by two officers bearing the American colors. They stepped to the notes of a spirited new tune called "Yankee Doodle," composed by a British sergeant at Boston town, to ridicule the

raw army when it was encamped under Washington at Cambridge.

The two commanders gazed in silence as the brigades filed past. Without a word, Burgoyne stepped back, and, drawing his sword, in the presence of the two armies presented it to his conqueror, who, receiving it with a grave inclination of the head, immediately returned it.

Active hostilities being thus at an end, Baron Von Riedesel requested that his wife and family be released and united to him once more. An orderly was sent to carry the message, and they were soon again seated in the carriage in which they had escaped.

Not knowing the temper of the victorious troops, nor the terms entered into by the two armies, the women felt some fear in meeting those whose guns were so recently pointed against them; but discerning no appearance of resentment, they began to be somewhat reassured. On arriving at the tents a handsome officer, with a look of deepest commiseration, lifted out the Baroness' children in his arms and held them, kissing them affectionately. Only the thought of how the sight of her emotion would affect her soldier-husband, enabled the mother to keep back her tears, as General Schuyler, austere with men but tender with women, said

chivalrously:

“Do not tremble, do not be afraid. Your sorrows are now at an end,” and added, turning to Phyllis, “As it may embarrass this young lady to dine with so many gentlemen, I pray that ye come to my home and partake of a frugal dinner, which we will there serve you with a free will.”

Surprised at the gentle courtesy from one of those whom she had thought to be but an underbred parcel of rebels, the grateful mother said, with a tremble in her voice:

“Ah, sir, you yourself must be a husband and father!”

“A kind Heaven has vouchsafed me that unmerited though valued privilege, madam, of which I would be utterly unworthy did I not feel keen sympathy for your calamity. General Burgoyne has consented to do me the honor of sojourning under my roof; I trust I can prevail upon your family and guest to do likewise.”

Accepting with gratitude, Phyllis and the rest of the war-worn party arrived at the Schuyler mansion, where the Baroness was received as

cordially by the general's wife as if their husbands had never crossed swords. Although not many weeks before her palatial home, with its orchards and gardens, had been put to the torch and made pitiful havoc of by order of General Burgoyne, no hint of the natural resentment, which the loss could not fail to excite, was apparent in the reception she accorded to those by whom the ruin had been wrought. Though not, like the Baroness, of noble birth, Mistress Schuyler was the granddaughter of the first patroon, the lordly Killian Van Rensselaer, whose lands of Rensselaerwyck had run full two score miles on either side of the river, and well nigh fifty miles inland. A certain gentleness and thrift had come down to her through generations of calm-eyed Dutch housewives, who had gone their homely round of duty where the windmills swung in the salt winds blowing over the Netherland dykes. Her stately dwelling had been one of the finest among Knickerbocker homesteads, built entirely of brick, with steep hipped roof and heavy gables. The entrance hall with its wide double doors was of noble dimensions, the walls and cornice being finely carved in oak. Rows of grand chestnut trees shaded the ample grounds, and its gardens had been widely noted for their rare flowers and choice fruits.

Since the destruction of her home, she and her family had found

temporary shelter in another, to which she proffered welcome with the same Dutch decorum and dignity as if it were to the stately dwelling of her ancestors. She had already given to the place a homelike comfort and even elegance, so that the little German Thekla, the youngest of the Baroness' children, being led into the principal room, and thinking it quite magnificent after her life in deserted huts and log cabins, clapped her hands, and dancing about in childish glee, asked with delight: "Is this the palace that we are to have in America for fighting for the English king?" Noticing a look of confusion on the faces of those around, she ran to her mother's arms, saying in a frightened voice: "Did not the king promise us a palace when at his castle in London town?" Before the embarrassed listeners could reply, Mistress Schuyler patted the child on the head, and with a smile reassured her, saying:

"When you are a little older you will find that even kings cannot always keep their promises, however fain they might be to do so."

Looking on in silence, with a flush of honest shame reddening the bronze of his cheek, General Burgoyne, turning to his American host, said with a noble-minded humility:

“Ye are taking, sir, a strange revenge in thus receiving with courtesy, hospitality and unmerited consideration, those who not long since rendered this family homeless; for which keen regret is but a poor reparation!” and Schuyler at once answered: “Say no more! It was but the fortune of war!” when withdrawing and leaving the refugees to obtain the rest and quiet they so much stood in need of, the women soon found themselves alone.

Scarcely was the door closed upon them, when it was again thrown open to admit an American officer, who, as he saw the ladies, started violently, first turning pale and then a deep red, with uncontrollable agitation.

Regaining his composure with an effort, he advanced, and holding out his hand to Phyllis, said: “By what strange fortune do I find you here?” and then not taking the one she offered—cold to sternness, his own fell suddenly to his side as the words of the nun came back: “She is unworthy such as thee! She is false to thee!”

The strain under which she had so long struggled, the emotion which the sight of Edward Vanrosfeldt caused, his evident joy, and then his sudden coldness, with the memory of his previous avoidance of her and his

vengeful pursuit by Raoul St. Leger, broke down the barriers of her self-restraint, and burying her face in her hands, the girl, proud and sensitive, hurried from the room. As in moments of extreme excitement the almost forgotten tongue of childhood comes most readily to the lips, Edward Vanrosfeldt turned, and in the German which he had heard at his mother's knee, said:

“Tell me, Baroness, of the *Fraulein* Davenant, and how came she hither?”

In gentle words she told him what she had learned of Phyllis's life in the months since they had met. He hearkened with a chivalrous and tender pity to the tale of her sorrows and of her flight from Quebec—his hand clenching at the recounting of her forcible detention there by a comrade in arms, whose name, as well as his own, he observed she had evidently refrained from mentioning; but the memory of her desire to join Basil Temple—racking, long cherished doubts and some faint glimmerings of hope that the pious nun, unwitting to herself, might have been in error, crowded confusedly on his brain. With clouded brow, the lines of his face tense and drawn, he hung on the woman's words. At the recital of the betrothal in the cabin of the *Invincible*, turning deadly pale, he

seized the narrator's arm, who, startled, wonderingly begged to know the meaning of his perturbation. Looking at her imploringly, he hoarsely cried:

“Say she is not pledged to him! In pity tell me it is false!”

“Alas! 'tis but too true; but, oh, sir, if in any way you have the power to now befriend the poor, forlorn child, I pray that ye do so, as it is no longer possible for me to protect her, for as prisoners of war we must soon take up march to Boston.”

“In what way can I do her service?”

“Procure her safe escort to Philadelphia, where there are relatives of this man, who will, when the times allow, doubtless become her husband, and to whose care he has commended her; and thus save her from this rough following of a soldiers' camp, which ill befits one of her gentle breeding and delicacy.”

“Madam, be assured these desires shall be at once carried out. To-morrow I leave on the business for which I am now seeking instructions from

General Schuyler. I shall be the bearer of despatches touching this surrender to General Washington, and will charge myself with her safe conduct to this man's kinsfolk, if it meet with her wishes."

For a moment he stood in deep thought, the color of his face turned to deathly pallor, and speaking slowly and with difficulty, he said:

"*Frau* Von Reidesel, pardon me if I seem dull-witted, but this betrothal on board a warship in time of action, must there not be some error here? Perchance the sweet maid's innocence and friendlessness have been imposed upon, and she may not be bound willingly to this man."

"Alack! I would it were so, but no, if I understood aright, she herself consented in the presence of a priest of the Church of Rome, who sanctioned her promise to become his wife. He was one Brother Jerome, whom she had known in her childhood as Leon de Lérie, her playfellow.

"Brother Jerome! Did she say Brother Jerome? He it was who, after the burning of Crown Point, attached himself to our troops and ever seemed to be where least expected. I myself had suspicion of his honesty, for a man, be he priest or soldier, who is a traitor to his own cause and

people, deserves not the trust of any other. Although I ever sought to avoid him, he with persistence seemed to seek my presence. Why, I know not; but of his verity or falseness my mouth was sealed; for, from a certain look he bore, if I mistake not, he is the Brother Jerome of whom I heard from his sister, the sweet saint in the convent at Quebec, who nursed me, when wounded sore in body and spirit, back to life again.”

A sudden light of understanding flashed across his listener’s face, as she whispered:

“Have a care! You had best be on your guard, for I have heard that, which I know now cannot be true, through some misapprehension, the mysterious disappearance of this same Sister Thérèse is laid at your door and there are those who would avenge her and call you to account.”

CHAPTER XVI.

A GALLANT SIGHT.

Philadelphia, to which Phyllis set forth, was in those days a larger city than New York, and one of the most important and influential towns

in America, being held in great repute for the wealth, culture and courtly deportment of its social circles. Upon the shaded streets, named for the trees of the forest, were many handsome, commodious buildings and dwelling-houses of elegance, built to stand the test of centuries; Chestnut Street being the favorite promenade of society and fashion. On sunny afternoons it was bright with maids and matrons going a-shopping, chatting gaily as they bartered in glistening brocades and shimmering silks and satins for their gowns, or chose gauzy sarcenet and lutestring ribands for their bonnets. Philadelphia belles, careful to appear in the latest modes, were critical as to the newest fashion of bodice and cut of scarf, and appeared decked out in hats as large and extravagant as those of Paris or London.

Nor was this frivolity confined to the wearers of petticoats alone, the dandies allowing themselves to be in no wise outshone in the gorgeousness of their dress. As they strolled out to take the air, aware of the perfection of their attire from queue-riband to shoe buckle, conscious of the elegant turn of their silken calves and the rich fashion of their garments, the more foppish among them fairly swept the ground with their modish, smartly-laced hats in salute to the ladies of their acquaintance; not forgetting to glance occasionally with

satisfaction at what they deemed the irresistible charms of their own reflections in the shop windows.

Dashing gallants who sought a name for rakishness, stood on the street corners staring audaciously at every pretty woman passing by; or when the mood seized them, rudely jostling staid Quaker-folk, whose decorous ears they shocked with the loud oath or broad jest, which with coxcombs passed for wit.

On the footpaths, simpering macaronies with arms linked minced their steps as they sauntered affectedly along, attending fair damsels returning from piquet or afternoon tea and gossip; or with a languishing smirk and heels together in stiff-backed bows, handing them to their sedan chairs.

The Quaker town, in contrast to its artificial phases of social life, was renowned far and near for the beauty of its gardens, in which the women took especial pride. Many tended them with their own hands; sowing, planting, gathering rose leaves for the still, herbs for savoring and tinctures, and fruit of different kinds to be made into syrups and cordials, dried, or otherwise prepared for winter use.

The early settlers, coming from flowery England, had made it one of their first cares in the new land to have a garden. In tender memory of it, they had reared from seed and cutting the homely flowers they had loved by its hedgerows and doorsteps; and soon the brier and dog-rose of England had lifted familiar faces to cheer their homesick, exiled hearts. Under American skies, lavender, spearmint, sage and thyme, which had been pungent sweet along old English garden-paths, mingled in Colonial flower-beds with the foxglove, Canterbury bells, marigold, bachelors' buttons, heartsease (of all flowers the sweetest named) and lovelies-bleeding, with their familiar cottage names and smells.

The homes of Philadelphia, which they surrounded, with their ample halls and beautiful winding staircases of the Georgian period, were notable for the magnificence of their style of entertaining, and especially for the stately splendor of their dinner-parties, over which the high colonial dames presided with their dignified, well-bred courtesy and native grace.

Phyllis, arriving duly in the city, under the careful conduct and formal guidance of Major Vanrosfeldt, was kindly and hospitably welcomed to one

of the most substantial and well-built houses in the town, the home of General Henry Knox, who was absent on the field, in the staff of General Washington. Mistress Lucy Knox, being aunt to Anne Temple, had in charge her lovely niece, whose vivacity, and at times wilfulness, gave her much ado to manage and guide discreetly. With repute as a beauty and well-dowered belle, the pretty maid was much sought after, and her aunt accounted herself fortunate that she had found for her, in Phyllis, a companion both gentle and retiring.

Scarcely, however, had the doors of her new home closed upon their guest, when a feeling of deep gloom settled down upon its inmates, in common with the other patriots in the town; for, to the sound of British fifes and drums, their enemy marched in and gaily took possession of the city.

Looking through the drawn curtains, with eyes dim with tears, Phyllis saw the gorgeous cavalcade advancing in all the pomp and brilliance to which as a British soldier's daughter she was familiar. They were her countrymen—in that cause her sworn protector served; for it her father had fought, and in it died—but the man she loved wore the blue and buff; and, as perforce we must honor where we love, inclination and duty

fought a hard battle in the heart of the young girl. With the silent, tearful group of women she looked quietly on; the conflict in her heart seeming to her louder than the noise of the street, where the rumble of heavy cannon, cheers of men and trampling of feet mingled with the clamor of the band playing jubilantly the "British Grenadiers." Her pulses kept time with the familiar air as she thought of how many a time she had seen her father marching to it at the head of his men. She loved the gallant red coat of the British. She gloried in their common country, its annals of great deeds and peerless record of imperialism and conquest. She remembered its magnificent charges on the field; its warriors who had crossed swords with Roman, Frank, Saracen, Dane and Saxon; its valiant soldier-kings, Alfred and Richard of the Lion Heart; its Edwards, Henrys and Williams; and she could not conceive that there could be aught but ultimate victory for it still. Looking at the ranks approaching, she proudly knew that not a man among them would ever be shot in the back, but would fall, if fall he must, with face to the foe; that not a drummer boy, beating with such spirit, knew how to play the "Retreat"; and she was torn with the feelings at war in her heart, her love for England and her king wrestling with her love for the man fighting against them, and she asked herself piteously: "Which would I have win? Alas! 'tis a bitter choice!"

As they drew near she saw at their head men whose names had been to her as household words, but whom she then looked upon for the first time.

Lord Cornwallis, whom she knew to be a high-minded man and competent officer, leading his tall Grenadiers in their blue-faced red coats, his own figure stout and thickset, she could not but acknowledge looked somewhat ungraceful upon his horse; his well-formed, strong features making some amends, however, for lack of stature and presence. Sir William Howe, the Commander-in-Chief, a better soldier, she had heard, than man, with his fine form, full six feet high, was striking and attractive in his person and mien. He carried himself with such easy dignity and was so admirably proportioned that Anne Temple, who had a keen taste for good looks, whispered to Mistress Knox: “How like he is to our General!” but Mistress Lucy drew herself up and somewhat sharply made answer:

“Like General Washington, forsooth! Surely not! To my mind for natural dignity of carriage and majesty of bearing, he has no peer among living men!” and looking at the passing pageant of red and gold, and thinking of the blue and buff her Henry wore, with a toss of her head and curling lip, she said scornfully: “He would disdain to be tricked out in such

gaudy frippery as this!”—the Puritan strain in her asserting itself even in her patriotism.

As in the case, which Phyllis well remembered, of the Colonials billeting themselves upon the inhabitants of Montreal, so the British troops proceeded to quarter themselves for the winter, which shortly would set in, it being then already November. Public buildings and the private houses of the Whig gentry were confiscated without ceremony or apology to their owners, many of them, with prudent foresight, having previously had their silver plate and valuables buried.

General Howe, for the headquarters of his brilliant staff, selected one of the finest houses in the city, and being given to easy living and fond of comfort, appropriated a private coach and pair for his personal use; his brother, Lord Howe, Admiral of the Navy, retaining a banking house on Chestnut Street above Spruce.

With the unfurling of the British colors over Philadelphia, the majority of the Patriot sympathizers resolved to leave the town, but what was known as the fashionable set adhered to the crown, and gave cordial welcome to Howe and his redcoated officers, in the stately receptions

which the women knew so well how to conduct, and to the suppers and gaming tables of the men.

These, with the play-houses, dancing, dicing and cock-pits for the livelier spirits, made the winter a gay and festive one; the old Penn house in which Howe resided being the centre of the social life of the town.

One of the principal loyal citizens, and a red-hot Tory, was Master Edward Shippen, a gentleman of rank, character and fortune. He was the father of a bevy of pretty daughters; Peggy, the youngest and flower of the flock, for her beauty and sprightliness, queening it as a belle of the town; her uplifted, haughty, little head and look of high breeding giving her a certain regal air and deportment. She would not be refused when she desired that Phyllis, being English-born, should accompany Anne Temple in her visits to the Shippen mansion, which kept open house for the British soldiers of rank in the army. A favorite guest among them was a certain dashing and popular Major John André, who, besides being an efficient officer, possessed so many gentle graces of demeanor, charms of person and natural gifts of mind, that he was soon an intimate friend of the family, and welcome in every fashionable Tory

drawing-room. He had been sent a prisoner from Canada to Philadelphia by Montgomery, after the reduction of Fort St. Johns, and on the arrival of the British troops in the city had established himself in a retired and beautiful mansion in a quiet court in rear of High Street. Being of an artistic and poetic temperament, he found the modest elegance of the home of the philosopher, Benjamin Franklin, well suited to his turn of mind. On André's making choice of it, the Sage's daughter discreetly withdrew. She was made welcome by the hospitable Shippen household, who had known Sally Franklin since her birth, until the times should permit her again occupying her father's house, he being absent on diplomatic business in France. Word had come to the colonies that he, the Puritan son of the New England candle-maker, born in an obscure cottage in a green lane in Boston, had become the idol of the gay, giddy, French capital. 'Twas said that court artists were kept busy decorating the fans of noble ladies and the snuff boxes of courtiers with his portrait. That coats and neckcloths *à la Franklin* had become the fashionable rage, a momentary fancy for simplicity having suddenly swept over brilliant Paris. These reports had confirmation in a letter received by the sprightly Sally from her father, and which she read with much merriment to Peggy, when she, with her friends and cousins, met together for morning gossip under the pretence of doing tambour-work.

“Read it, Sally dear!” Peggy had pleaded; “doubtless your father’s wise words would be to our benefit and instruction as well as your own.”

“As ye will,” answered Mistress Sally, and nothing loth, she unfolded the pages and read:

“Dear Sally,—

“Figure to yourself an old man, very plainly dressed, with thin, grey hair, very straight and long, and wearing horn-bowed spectacles, here among the powdered heads of Paris. The clay medallion of me was the first of the kind made in France. A variety of others have since been manufactured of different sizes; some to be set in snuff boxes and some so small as to be worn in rings. These, with the pictures and prints, have made your father’s face as well-known as the moon, so that he durst not do anything that would oblige him to run away, as his phiz would discover him whenever he should venture to show it.’”

“That is monstrous amusing,” interrupted Peggy, laughing. “It is

true then that plain bands and a quiet manner of dressing in Paris have become the style. One can scarcely imagine that gay town in sombre raiment.”

“He says,” continued Sally, smiling and dimpling, “that ‘it is said by the learned that the word doll, used for the images that children play with, is derived from the word idol. From the number of dolls made of me, your father may truly be said to be i-doll-ized in this country; but I could scarce believe my eyes on reading your letter, that there was so much pleasure and dressing going on among women in Philadelphia, and that you yourself wished to appear in the mode. I cannot in decency, at such a time, when frugality is necessary, encourage my children in foolish whims and luxuries. I would not care to see you in either lace or feathers. If you will wear cambric ruffles, as I do, and take care not to mend them, the holes will come in time to be lace; and feathers, my dear girl, may be had in America from any cock’s tail.

“If it happen that ye see General Washington assure him of my great and very sincere respect, and say that the old guard here approves of his conduct.

“Write often, my dear madcap, to your loving father,

“B. FRANKLIN.”

“I trust,” said Mistress Peggy demurely, as a little murmur of laughter went round the room, “that good Master Franklin may not hear the price I paid for my new pink ‘Calamanco shoes.’” Then glancing at herself in a mirror opposite, she pouted, and looking around for sympathy, continued:

“‘Tis scarce to be expected that we, who make some pretence to fashion and gentility, should appear in linen kerchiefs and wear the close-fitting, kiss-defying poke-bonnets one sees in the Friends’ meeting-house. I, for one, am glad that the old ‘sumptuary laws’ of the early days in these colonies are no longer in force. In my grandmother’s time they were forbid to wear thread lace, ruffs, or silver and gold on their girdles or garments. They were laid under correction if the women appeared in ‘silke’ scarfs or tiffany hoods, which were dubbed ‘wicked apparel.’ I hope that no whisper has reached your father’s ear, Sally, of the grand tourney the British officers talk of giving as soon as the spring opens, and for which Major André is already considering the

decorations. I fear the writer of 'Poor Richard's Sayings,' which hang over the chimney-niche yonder, would have somewhat to say in its disfavor."

"I would there were some means of preventing the carrying out of this project, Peggy," said Phyllis, who sat by her side in sweet seriousness.

"And wherefore, Phyllis?" queried Peggy, letting her work drop in her lap, as she looked up in surprise.

"To me it is scarcely seemly at such a time of strife and uncertainty to thus make merry. Though British-born, I agree with wise Master Franklin, and should this extravagant diversion take place, I, for one, will not give it countenance. Methinks soldiers, carrying swords, ought to be more intent on their use than the artist's pencil, and on serious plans of battle than light tripping in the minuet!" was the fearless answer, even though, with the color deepening in her cheeks, she saw that her words were not heard with approval.

"Well, Phyllis, I am far from agreeing with you," replied Mistress Peggy, her temper somewhat ruffled. "Nothing short of a West Indian

hurricane, such as Betty Schuyler here has just been telling us her lover, Alexander Hamilton, hath often witnessed when a boy, will hinder my taking part in it. You had best change your mind, Phyllis.”

As frequently as duty and decorum permitted. Major André left the lonely grandeur of the Franklin mansion for the gayer domestic atmosphere of the Shippen homestead, where the romantic maidens and their friends treated him with especial friendliness. They were enamored, not so much of the man himself, as of the sentimental pathos of an unhappy love affair with a young English girl, which had sent him to the army in America. Even there he could not wholly destroy the glamor of the hopeless attachment, and the tender-hearted Peggy’s pretty eyes filled with tears when, describing his misfortune at St. Johns, he turned to Phyllis, saying:

“I was stripped of everything save the picture of my love, one I had myself painted of her sweet face, and which hath a look something of your own, but I was lucky enough to be able to conceal it in my mouth, and having that I still thought myself fortunate.”

Although the Patriots were compelled to endure the investment of the

town by the British, and every Whig who had anywhere to go had left it, those who remained made the redcoats in some respects none too comfortable by having recourse to various stratagems for their annoyance. Between the British drummer-boys and some of the youths of the town continual and persistent hostility was maintained, heads being broken in many a rough bout and scrimmage. The occupation of the city, however, was not altogether unbearable, from the fact that it was known to be of no practical advantage in the campaign in furthering the cause of the British. Supported by this consoling conviction, the people, with what patience they could, lived through the weeks of winter, until it passed away before the soft breath of spring.

In northern woodlands the crocus again put forth its white buds, and over the beautiful southland there was the odor of magnolias and orange groves; the song of the mocking-bird in the deep woods of Kentucky, Virginia and the Carolinas making the air liquid with melody.

The gay months in Philadelphia, with their balls, routs and plays, and the grim, awful sufferings of Valley Forge were ended at last. The British officers had determined with the coming of spring to fête General Howe, who was returning to England, with the most splendid

military pageant ever seen on American shores, preparations for which had been in progress for some time. It was to be in the form of a tilt or mediaeval tourney, according to the rules of ancient chivalry. For the time it was superseding in interest all other topics of converse over foaming flagons in the taverns and in the tea-drinking and chatter of the drawing-rooms. All the beauty and gentility of the town were bidden, and although some had left the city, many of the belles willingly accepted the elegant cards of invitation tendered them, and which had been artistically designed and gracefully executed by Major André. He was skilful with the brush and had produced the various sceneries used during the winter in putting on the boards, dramas, which the London ladies had greatly admired, written by “Handsome Jack Burgoyne,” as he was called, who had a gentlemanly passion for the stage. André had full scope for his talents in the mural paintings of woods, waterfalls and flower garlands for the adornment of the great festival, his talents, youth and fine presence making him the life and inspiration of the project.

By common consent Mistress Peggy, the darling of her family circle and of the social life in the city, was chosen to receive the coveted honor of acting as Queen of the Tournament. Some of the most exclusive of the

Patriot ladies having graciously signified their intention of being present. Anne Temple, although unable to induce Phyllis to do so, prevailed upon lively Lucy Knox, who was still as fond of pleasure and full of romance as when a girl, to accompany her. Accordingly, three o'clock on the fine May afternoon, than which no day could be fairer, found them at the King's Wharf, where the company was assembling. The river flowed sunny and glittering down from the wooded hills; far away over meadows golden with buttercups, white clouds drifted like the great round sails of Netherland barges, and in the dim thickets the cuckoo called, and mating wood-pigeons cooed their love-songs. On the water the richly furnished galleys, with streaming ribands and bands of music, each floating the British flag, were receiving the brilliant throng of gaily-bedecked men and women.

There was a dainty lifting of silken skirts as the ladies tripped the planks, and their safe embarking made much holding of gloved and mittened hands seem pre-eminently needful, as the sound of their delicate laughter and the deeper mirth of the men rippled upon the May-day air.

When all was ready, at a given signal, the whole fleet lay upon their

oars, while, to the lifting of hats cocked at the most fashionable angle, with a crash of brazen harmony, the musicians struck up the notes of “God Save the King,” the sound tingling unpleasantly in the ears of some present.

Mistress Lucy Knox, whose words were drowned in the loud chorus from the shore, her patriotism in arms, covertly whispered to Anne, as they in turn stepped aboard:

“A pretty piece of assurance that, quotha!—but let them sing and cheer their lustiest, for this may be the last time that tune will be heard within this town, unless it be put to the praise of liberty, or at least to other words than these. ‘Yankee Doodle,’ as they call this new ditty which has so caught the fancy of the people, I venture to predict will be the next we will here listen to.”

As she spoke the cables were loosed and the magnificent fleet of ships, galleys and barges, with flags and ribands gaily streaming, set sail and glided onward.

At a late hour of the night, with the quiet stars in the silent, solemn

blue soothing their minds after the dancing and junketing of the great fête, Lucy Knox and her young charge returned along the shadowy streets to their home, the familiar scents of dew-wet thyme and lavender, rosemary and musk blowing sweet and pure over the garden walls. Phyllis, at the bed-time hour, had partly disrobed, and unlacing her bodice and loosening her comb, had lain down, keeping a single candle alight for their welcome. On their return, hearing the sound of their slippers tapping on the stairway, and rubbing into wakefulness her soft eyes heavy with drowsiness, she begged to be told of all the wonderful happenings of the day.

Anne Temple, with the gauzes of the gorgeous Oriental costume she had worn somewhat dampened by the night dews, with sparkling eyes, began, nothing loth, a running description, as she took off the broad silk sash and jewelled turban of what Mistress Knox had called “a silly and outlandish garb.” Untying her spangled slippers, she said eagerly:

“Oh, Phyllis, words of mine can scarce picture the scene. The great arches, with their decorations and mottoes, and the pavilions, with lines and double lines of Grenadiers and Light Horse, were monstrous fine. The ladies, with their knights and attendant esquires in elegant

trappings, the blue uniforms of the navy, the gold lace and scarlet of the staff officers and the chasseurs of Brunswick, were gay beyond the telling, not to speak of the dancing and toasting with beaker and bowl. Ye should have heard the compliments to our grace and beauty; it fairly turns my head to think upon it all. Margaret Shippen made a lovely 'Queen of the Tourney'; among the pretty show of loyal dames none equalled her."

"None looked better than yourself, Anne," interrupted her aunt; "albeit your dress, with its Turkish trousers instead of decent petticoats, was somewhat scandalous, as were also the robes of the silly-named knights, who themselves wore the gowns instead of the women, for whose favor they made pretence to fight in full career with lance and shield."

"Hoopskirts and farthingales were not the mode, aunt, in the days of ancient chivalry, and according to its usages, and as Major André said, 'were not befitting this tournament,'" replied Anne, a little pettishly.

“This John André, child, is, as I have observed, a well-mannered, capable youth, but he had best curb his doings somewhat, else if he let them thus run riot, he may venture one day into something he would fain undo,” was the ominous rejoinder.

“Well,” said Anne warmly, “in this at least, aunt, I think he was much to be praised, for I am sure that the pretty French Queen in Paris could have had no more beautiful fête.” Turning to finish her description, she continued: “Oh, Phyllis, ye should have seen the scores of mirrors! One could scarce turn around without seeing one’s face and form somewhere framed about with festoons of ribands and garlands of flowers, in the light of hundreds of candles!

“But even the ball-room was surpassed when supper was served. Instead, forsooth, of a banquet in this beleaguered Quaker town, it seemed to be a feast in the fairy palace of Queen Mab. I would scarce have been surprised to have seen her and her train riding in on a moonbeam, so dazzled were my eyes with the brilliance of the company, and the beauty of the board. Even the black slaves, bowing in obeisance, as they served the wines and dishes, wore silver collars and bracelets, like those of

eastern lands. 'Tis said in the Assembly that Major André can make the most delicate verses ever printed in Master Franklin's 'Evening Post,' so it seems that he has equal skill with the pen and brush."

A sigh from Mistress Knox showed that she was wearied with the excitements and surprises of the day and night, and Phyllis at once hastened to aid her in removing the festive garments she had worn. Troubled with certain twinges of conscience which had tormented her through the revelry, she threw herself upon her dimity-curtained tester-bed, a tear trembling on her lashes. Turning to Phyllis, who, tender in a moment, was bending over her, she said, taking the girl's hand in her own:

"It was a brave sight without doubt, and the tilting and trumpeting stirred one's blood, but Phyllis, child, you were wise to bide at home; 'twere better, too, had I done likewise. As Anne has said, this redcoat ball they call a 'Mischianza,' or some such heathen foolishness, was more like a night's revel in a houri's palace in the Orient than a feast in a colony founded by a simple, God-fearing Quaker. One could scarce believe that the land is torn with strife, that war-clouds darken the skies, and the Dove of Peace, with bleeding wings, hath not where to

‘rest the sole of its foot’! Strive as I would I could not make it a merry meal!”

Phyllis sighing with her in silent sympathy, she continued:

“Like a death’s head at a feast, through all the reveling and prodigality, unbidden would arise before my mind a camp hard by, where in nakedness and bitter want, our great Chief, with my Henry and their men, suffered throughout the bitter cold of the long months of winter. As I looked around and saw the bejewelled and silver-buckled shoes lightly beating time to the sound of lively music, methought I saw the snows of Valley Forge crimson-stained by the bare and lacerated feet of their soldiers.

“As we sat at the gorgeous banquet, in a blaze of red coats, sashes and ribboned orders, with even the black servants doing trencher service in silken raiment, I thought of the famine-pinched faces of those who crouched around the fires through the long night-watches, in ragged, threadbare blue coats, rather than lie down in the huts bare of covering from the wintry blast. As they sipped their wine and passed their toasts with jest and laugh, methought I saw a solitary figure, with calm,

saint-like face, wrap a cloak around him, and climbing the hillside in lonely solitude, call on the God of the down-trodden and oppressed for help and defence; but mark me, child, Valley Forge will shine in history with the light of heroism, when all the glitter of this tinsel show we saw to-day will be forgot.”

Smoothing her pillow and drawing her bed-curtains, Phyllis soothed her, saying:

“Thank heaven the winter is past in camp and town. Strive to rest now in mind and body whilst I go and make ready a sleeping cordial for you, when you must seek to slumber, for the night is already far spent.”

CHAPTER XVII.

CHALLENGED.

A month later, the British, at last realizing that the holding of the place was of no strategic value, prepared to evacuate the city, and forthwith they marched out on June eighteenth, and within twenty-four hours afterward, Benedict Arnold, not yet recovered sufficiently to take

the field, by authority of Washington entered and took command. The last echo of the footsteps of General Howe's lackeys had scarcely died away on the threshold of the Penn house, when Arnold's servants arrived to make ready for the state in which he there intended to live. The house, built by William Penn in the year 1700, was a singular, old-fashioned structure, laid out in the style of a fort, with abundance of angles and two wings projecting out into the street, in the manner of bastions, enclosing a spacious yard filled with rows of lofty, venerable pines. Arnold was still young, being only thirty-six years of age, and already covered with military glory. His manly bearing, unrivaled daring and almost reckless bravery in action, with the romantic interest of his still troublesome wound, invested his person with uncommon attractiveness; notwithstanding which, Tory ladies thought it prudent to retire behind curtained windows and closed doors.

The spell which made him the hero of the hour was felt by all, even by those whose political tendencies had caused them to cultivate the society of the officers of the army which had just withdrawn. On his appearance, starred flags which for months had lain hidden were brought out and thrown to the summer breeze. Some of the shop-keepers, with an eye to future profit, hastily pulled down the "King's Arms" from above

their doors, as was also the sign of the “Harp and Crown Inn,” by its worldly-wise and time-serving host.

Then, in the heart of the city, as its resident military governor, Arnold began a most sumptuous and extravagant style of living, establishing likewise a fine country seat on a bluff overlooking the Schuylkill, to the banks of which the beautifully wooded park extended. It was known as “The Slate Roof House,” and with its broad walks, drives and grand old oaks, was one of the finest places in the colony.

Within the month, in the hazy blue of a mid-summer evening, his doors were thrown open for the giving of a ball, for which, in a bed-chamber in the Knox mansion, the ladies were prinking and putting on their fine array. Phyllis, with cheeks as pink as the June roses swaying in the open window spaces and in the great Nankin bowl she had filled from the garden earlier in the day, was growing prettier with each stage of the dressing and donning of silk and lace. Her eyes seemed to have caught the blue of the sky, the harebell and forget-me-not, and her hair, which was piled high in shining puffs, the golden glow of the sunset. It had been put up by the hairdresser, who had been busy since dawn in carefully fashioning the coiffures of pads and curls so much in vogue

among ladies of fashion. A black maid, simpering in smiling admiration of her task of assisting in the dressing, was giving the finishing touches of paint and powder, and deftly placing here and there little black patches on the ivory of chin or brow.

For some weeks previous Anne Temple had been absent from town, sojourning in the rural quiet of Mistress Washington's seat at Mount Vernon, trying with her youthful gaiety to beguile somewhat the tedium and loneliness of its mistress in the four years' absence of its master, who in that time had not once crossed its threshold.

She had frequently made visits to the country-seat on the Potomac, and from her childhood had been familiar with the box-bordered paths of its quaint gardens, and the peacocks flaunting their green and gold finery by the weatherworn sun-dial on the green. On sunny mornings she had often followed its mistress, as she tended and gathered her flowers, or gave directions in the spinning and smoke-houses. Many a time had she stolen away from her task at the harpsichord to run into the wide kitchen to watch the spits turning before the hearth-fire, or laugh at her pretty features reflected in the shining brass of the warming-pan or copper skimmers hanging by the dresser.

It had been her unfailing delight to ride through the Virginian woods in the early morning hours, on the pillion behind Master Washington, when he set out to oversee his plantations; but in the dreary time of war, with spirits dampened by the quiet yet busy pulling of lint and making bandages, the days lagged so wearily, and she found Mount Vernon so extremely dull, that she gladly welcomed the one of her return to town. Even there, in the more lively home of Mistress Knox, with little enough of gaiety, she found it somewhat mopish; so, as she dressed, her cheeks were aflame, and her eyes sparkled at the mad distraction of an evening's frolic and dancing.

As she stood at her dressing-table, with lavender-scented delicacies of raiment on bed and chairs, humming the burden of a new minuet, with the candles shining upon her from either side, she was a winsome creature.

Dowered with the sunny beauty of her Huguenot ancestry, who had fled their native France at the terrible knell which had rung from the church belfry of the old town of St. Germain de l'Auxerrois, her piquant features had an air of refined and gentle breeding. Upon her hair, which rose over a cushion, she wore a satin and gauze headdress, coquettishly

adorned with roses, and her pink satin gown, spreading over a wide hoop, made her waist, with its pointed bodice, look the most dainty the heart of maiden could desire. Below the flounce appeared two little slippers, with red heels, the highest the fashion would permit, encasing, in openwork silk stockings, a pair of arched feet, said to be the smallest and most perfect owned by any belle in the colonies. On her bosom was folded a kerchief of filmy Italian lace, which shaded without hiding the graceful neck.

Adjusting a bow of riband, and shaking out her perfumed scarf of lace, in her tender little vanities, she contemplated her sparkling reflection with innocent gratification. The prospect of a dance had gone to her pretty head like wine, and laying down her powder-shaker, she suddenly turned, and bowing with a low, sweeping curtsy, said with a gay laugh to Phyllis, whose admiration shone in her eyes:

“Am I not fine—and to think that this is the first new gown I have had since Lexington! Our dear Mistress Washington would be aghast were I to whisper to her how many golden guineas it has taken to deck me for this rout, but one cannot wear linen tuckers, fustian or homespun to a ball. I am sick to death of spinning-wheels forever whirling in the

chimney-corners and of brewing tea from ribwort, sage and other herbs and simples. Bestowing high-sounding names on these decoctions to my mind in no way improves their flavor. 'Tis true that some of our acquaintances praise them as being most excellent and delicate to the taste, but I am far from patriotic enough to relish this 'Liberty tea' made from the four-leaved loosestrife that grows by the roadside, or 'Hyperion tea' brewed from raspberry or currant leaves from the garden."

"Is there not a vow upon you in regard to this?" asked Phyllis.

"Aye, of a truth I am under covenant, and at Mistress Washington's tambour-secretary, signed my name in full, Anne Prudence Temple, with my most clerkly flourishes, albeit with something of a pang. With her eyes upon me, an' in my ears her words: 'Subscribe to it, my child, 'tis our woman's charter an' will bear results as weighty as that the Barons signed on Runnymede meadow,' I had perforce to sign myself thus: 'We, the daughters of patriots, do with pleasure' (pleasure, mark ye, Phyllis), 'engage with them in denying ourselves the drinking of foreign tea, in hopes to frustrate a plan which tends to deprive a whole community of all that is valuable in life,' and I have kept it as if it were writ in the catechism, that to drink a dish of tea, or wear even so

much as a thread of English-made linen, were falling into a snare of the Evil One.

“When Master Franklin said: ‘I do not know a single article imported into the colonies but what they can either do without or make for themselves,’ he did not consider that we do not all share his taste for sober grays and browns. If, to be sure, Virginia had not long since given up the cultivating of silkworms and mulberry trees for the raising of cotton and tobacco, we might have spun our own silk gowns, but as it is we must depend on what the foreign packets bring us. Even that is becoming so burdensome that I do not expect so much as another pair of silk hose until this war comes to an end. If it does not shortly, we two, Phyllis, will be like a pair of old-fashioned spinsters who have quite forgot that we ever walked one of these new French cotillions, curtsied in a minuet or tripped it in a Virginia reel.”

“Well, Anne,” smiled Phyllis, “despite all this, for the time being at least you are as fine and well decked out as any great court lady, and not at all like a simple New England maiden, born in Puritan Boston town.”

With face suddenly breaking into a mischievous smile and with a defiant toss of her powdered head, Anne continued:

“And to-night we will sip whip-syllabub and apple-toddy; nibble to our heart’s content at coriander comfits, seed cakes and spiced ginger-nuts, the men drinking their sack-posset and arrack-punch from great steaming bowls; and we will forget all else save the merry tapping of our heels to the maddening, pulsing music of the bands.”

Running on in her gay prattle, she glanced at Phyllis, whose heart was out of tune for such a mood, and complained:

“I prithee look not so demure, as if you were a prim Quaker maiden, instead of what I venture to suspect, the betrothed of Captain Basil Temple, in ball attire. These grey skirts, though of this lovely Indian taffeta, seem more of the Quakeress than suits one of your blood and breeding, not to mention what, if I am not wrong in my conjecture, will be your future rank as the wife of an English knight, who is in the direct line of a peerage.”

Phyllis, embarrassed how to reply to the sally, sighed:

“I care little for gauds or fangles now, and am not likely to wed,” but not regarding her words, Anne still ran on:

“But despite this obstinacy in dressing in this sombre tint and eschewing gay colors, you are none the less rarely sweet to look upon, for ne’er was maid more comely than my sweet cousin, for such I hope ere long to claim you. In truth Basil is not blind if he hath chosen Mistress Phyllis Davenant as the future lady of the old hall in Kent.”

A smile at the kind raillery and the caress which accompanied the words, struggled with a sigh that Phyllis could not but give, that at the wish of one calling herself her future kinswoman, she had laid aside her black dress and consented to accompany her to the ball. Anne assured her that they were under debt of gratitude to that fascinating Colonel Arnold, whose wit, romance and bravery were on every tongue, who thus sought to provide a diversion for their minds from the continual dwelling on battles and bloodshed.

“Come, let us banish the thought of them,” she said; and picking up her petticoat between finger and thumb, the French in her blood tingling to

the tips of her little slippers, she caught Phyllis round the waist and skimmed about the chamber, saying:

“Let us see that we have not quite forgot the glide and languish of the minuet,” then letting her go, she sank low in the circle of her skirts, saying:

“Now sink deep in the curtsy, from which, until we rise, no gentleman may lift from his bow;” then whirling around alone, her color coming, as her heart beat faster and faster, her red lips parted, she exclaimed:

“I feel as if I could dance on and on till daylight breaks, and my heart is as light as my heels.” Suddenly stopping, she bent towards Phyllis and whispered:

“Tell me I too look fair to-night, for I have set my heart on captivating this friend of yours, this Major Vanrosfeldt, whom I have met before, for his handsome blue eyes have caught my fancy. His steps are ravishing, no other gentleman can dance a minuet with grace like his, and none is more sought after in the drawing-rooms. ‘Tis well you are already as good as pledged, else I might fear a rival. So tell me

truly that my looks please you.”

Phyllis, startled, the patch-box she held fell from her hand, scattering the contents on the floor, which, to cover her embarrassment, she stooped to gather up and replace ere she could trust herself to speak. Then, with a sharp pain clutching at her heart, and the color fading from her face, she answered softly: “In this land or those across the sea, there is no fitter frock, nor one more prettily worn.”

Lifting up her face to kiss her for the sweet words, Anne said hastily, noting her sudden pallor:

“But, cousin, these cheeks of thine are too pale for one of your fair looks and years, and much too white, I trow, for the giddy air of the ball-room.” Turning to her dressing-table, she said coaxingly: “Here is my rouge-pot, come hither an’ I will make them bloom with the English rosiness that fitly belongs to them. We must not have the vapors to-night, an’ it is time we set forth.”

An hour later, descending from their chair as it was set down at the Penn House, they joined the gay company entering the garden-paths, which

were sweet with the scent of the rose leaves scattered upon them by the evening breeze.

In the confusion of the coaches as they rolled up, the jostling of the footmen and chair carriers, and dazzled by the chaise lamps, Phyllis for a moment stood bewildered among so many strangers. Seeing her evident timidity, a quietly but elegantly dressed gentleman separated himself from the crowd of arrivals, and with graceful but studiously formal courtesy, tendered his finger-tips to conduct her to the house, which was ablaze with candles and a-tremble with music. In the fading daylight, as she gratefully gave her hand to her conductor, she looked daintily sweet in her soft, grey silks, with petticoat and slippers a-sparkle with silver. In her low-cut frock, and sleeves to the elbow, beyond which it was considered indecorous to bare in ladies of gentle breeding, her neck and arms gleamed fair as the white flowers in the darkening night.

Discovering in the light of the hall lanthorn that she was leaning upon the arm of Edward Vanrosfeldt, the color that flashed into her cheeks was so engaging that she attracted the aim of the quizzing-glasses of the gallants who considered themselves judges of a pretty face and

well-turned ankle, which last the short petticoat then in vogue gave opportunity to display. In her turn for being received, as with demureness and gentle dignity she made her deep reverence of sweeping curtsy to the dames, who in pity of his wifelessness, matronized for their host, a pleased murmur came from some of the men nearest in the brilliant throng.

One especially, a marvellous fine gentleman, fixed his bold, dark eyes upon her with a debonair, impudent stare. He was handsomely dressed, in a way that showed him possessed of uncommonly good taste, in claret-colored velvet coat and small-clothes, and vest of white satin, richly embroidered. With hose elegantly clocked, shining pumps with silver buckles, and full ruffles of delicate Mechlin lace on the bosom and at the wrists, he was one of the most conspicuous and dashing figures in the room. After the roughness of camp life, and the retirement which she had voluntarily sought, the scene to Phyllis seemed bewilderingly enchanting, for Benedict Arnold was lavish in his tastes, a very prince in hospitality, and stinted no expense when bent on entertaining. The pink color tinting her cheek deepened to the hue of the blush-rose, in the pleasure of beholding the splendor of the rooms, filled with the changing effects of the varied damasks and brocades of

the dresses and flashing petticoats of the women, and the handsomely-cut velvets and shapely silk stockings of the men. The witching flutter of fan and scented kerchief, the swish of skirts, with the archness of paint, powder and patches, in the air heavy with the odor of green myrtle-berry candles, thrilled her senses with the unquestioning glamor of youth and innocence in unrestrained delight.

Towards midnight, as the dancers moved in tempered grace to the swaying music of the players, the company was vastly entertained by a series of novel evolutions, which had been especially arranged for the occasion. The figures were led by Colonel Arnold and Mistress Margaret Shippen, with whom he had opened the ball, and whose names the gossips had linked together, whispering that it was plain that the Penn house would shortly have a sweet young mistress. The dance was intended to symbolize the happy union of sentiment existing between France and the United States, whose independence had been first recognized by that country some two years before, and as a compliment to the French noblemen on the field, alliance with whom was making their language the fashion of the day.

A company of eight couples formed in an ante-room and entered the dancing-hall, two by two, four of the gentlemen dressed in the

regimentals of the French army, and four in the blue-and-buff of the American. Four of the ladies appeared in blue ribands and American flowers, and four in red ribands and French flowers. They danced with clanking of spur and rustle of gown, sometimes two and two, sometimes in figures of four couples, and then by a sudden movement, all blended together in ordered rhythm to the music of flutes, viols and drums beating on the heated, perfumed air.

As the strains died away, and the dancers gracefully withdrew, a loud murmur of admiration broke from the men, with some soft clapping of mittened hands and waving of kerchief or fan from the pretty groups of women. A young sprig of fashion, airing his travelled graces among them, posed against an ombre-table in the latest London affectation, addressing the man who had so boldly admired Phyllis on her entrance, exclaimed with a favorite oath:

“Egad, Burr, that was monstrous fine and—cleverly done! Paris could scarce do better.”

Stroking his ruffles as he admired the cut of his waistcoat, and slightly flushed with wine, Burr agreed, saying:

“‘Twas assuredly an uncommonly happy conceit, and one carried out with consummate tact and charming effect.” Hailing a guest standing a few feet away on his right, who with a measureless gloom in his eyes was gazing at a slender figure in grey gauze draperies, he laughed, raising his voice:

“This Vanity Fair, Vanrosfeldt, seems not to your mind. You appear to have obtained little pleasure from the pretty show of grace and skill, or from Mistress Peggy’s lightness of foot, as it was meet you should.”

“Have you observed,” he continued, “that she seems not to stint the smiles she bestows on Arnold, cripple though he be? I would not be averse to such favor myself. I have long coveted the winsome Peggy’s sweet lips. I had her to wine a half hour since, and would willingly have tiddled mint-julep with her till morning, just to gaze on the brightness of her eyes. It seems a strange and cursed piece of fortune that a man with two good comely legs, and not called ill-favored, should have less chance than that limping apothecary and erstwhile pill-monger. If all we hear be true, I trow he would be more at ease walking the deck of a smuggler than treading a minuet or whispering a love-sonnet in a

woman's ear."

Suddenly changing his tone and lowering his voice, he asked, with a broadly flattering glance at Phyllis:

"Vanrosfeldt, who is yonder fair damsel in grey? I would beg her for a reel. A plague on't! but since her entrance, I am pursued by the conviction that we have met before, by one of those tormenting memories which sometimes capture the fancy and yet elude the mental grasp."

Receiving no answer, he followed his companion into the curtained alcove, to which, on being thus questioned, he had withdrawn, as if desirous of being alone, and quickly slapping his satin-clad knee, ejaculated, with a sinister look in his handsome eyes:

"Ha! I have it at last! She is a certain Phyllis Davenant, and as I rightly surmised, we have met before."

Winching at the lack of respect in thus speaking her name, Vanrosfeldt said slowly, but with a menace in his voice unnoticed by the other:

"Your mode of address, Captain Burr, betokens unwarrantable and undue

familiarity.”

Glorying in always painting himself guilty of intrigue, even when innocent of it, he replied: “Split me, familiar or not, just as ye may call it, but yonder demure and innocent-looking maiden was my guest for a full week in the barracks-convent at Quebec. She would not take it amiss were I to press her hand in the dance which I will shortly crave; albeit I would lay odds that she is not a whit more lavish in her favor to suppliant lover than others of these prudent-looking dames now comporting themselves with such decorum before us.”

Realizing that at last the persecutor of Phyllis Davenant was before him, his listener, in a blind anger, the blood rushing crimson to his temples, hissed under his breath:

“She did it not willingly, ye foul filcher of the fair name of woman! You lie, Aaron Burr!” and raising his right hand, with a blow swift and sudden, he savagely slapped the sneering, laughing lips, from which a warm, red stream of blood fell on the satin of his vest. With face as white as the lace handkerchief with which he stanching the blood, Burr muttered through his clenched teeth:

“A curse on ye, ye shall hear from me, and that before sun-up!” to which, as he withdrew, Vanrosfeldt flung back:

“Nothing under heaven would give me keener pleasure than to hear from you or any other such slanderous villain. If not afraid to fight, choose our weapons, pistols or blades, but be warned, take not her name upon your perjured lips, nor let a thought of her rest in the blackened pit of your accursed heart!”

With eyes blazing with a wrath which swept over him like a hot flame, and before which the effrontery of the other cowered, Vanrosfeldt passed quickly through the ball-room, and hastily took his leave. With the bloodstains upon his clothes and desirous of finding a second, Burr found a low window affording egress to the garden, through which he passed out unobserved. Although possessed to an unblushing degree of the baser passions, and an inordinate audacity, he was not without the nobler attributes of bravery and physical courage.

Before the last merry-maker, therefore, had returned home in the soft summer night, the time and place for an exchange of shots were fully

arranged; Edward Vanrosfeldt accepting with impatient readiness the opportunity of meeting the traducer of Phyllis Davenant, and making him answer at the pistol-point for his most foul and dastardly slight of her innocence.

Through the remaining hours of the night a light burned in the quarters occupied by Vanrosfeldt. Brother Jerome, who lodged with Father Carroll in a religious house on the opposite side of the street, seeing the tall shadow of a man pacing to and fro in the room, watched it sleeplessly until just before dawn, when he saw a covered coach drive quietly up and stop at the door of the dwelling. The man in the long military cloak who emerged and entering the vehicle, drove away, he knew to be Vanrosfeldt. Suspicious of the nature of their intention, the priest hurriedly drew his cowl over his head and was quickly in the street. There was no need for caution, as seeing his clerical habit and haste, the night watchman concluded the holy brother was hurrying to receive a dying confession from some poor sin-burdened soul, or to administer “extreme unction” to one who fain would die within the pale of the Church.

Following the direction the coach had taken, and guided by the sound of the wheels in the quiet of the early morning, the priest hurried on. By

crossing some garden-spaces and fields, and taking a by-path through the woods, he shortly arrived at a sheltered spot behind a church, where the determined men stood face to face.

Hiding among the trees, aghast, yet fearful of uttering a cry, he breathlessly watched the ground paced off, and the two principals, pistol in hand, await the signal.

There was an awful pause, then on the dewy air, sweet with the first twittering of nesting birds, it fell. There was a shot, a puff of smoke, and the monk in the shadow, pale, trembling, with hands pressed upon his lips to keep back the quick, gasping cry that almost started from them, reeled against a tree, and saw, as the smoke cleared away, both men standing.

There was but one report; Vanrosfeldt's weapon was still in his right hand, but undischarged. Burr, though an excellent marksman, had, by a hair-breadth, missed his aim.

Vanrosfeldt stood unhurt, with his brown hair burnt by the ball which had passed through it. Looking contemptuously at his opponent, he said

with a bitter sneer:

“I would not do you the honor to take your miscreant life. I leave that to the hangman, who doubtless will some day do for you the deserved service,” and turning he pointed his pistol at the trees of the quiet churchyard, where nothing living was visible, and fired. A wild shriek of agony pierced the still air. Looking at each other in amazement, and then in the direction whence a sound of groaning came, the matter in hand was suspended, and with the attending surgeon, the men together made search to discover its meaning.

A few moments' quest, and half hidden under a leafy bush, they found the prostrate form of the priest, with a red stream oozing from beneath the fastenings of his robe. In spite of his faint efforts at resistance, and the desperate clutch with which he held it, the gown was unloosed and torn away to find the wound, which happily was found to be not a vital one. The men, with the hot anger of the feud forgotten, gazed in each other's faces, dumb for the moment with astonishment, for the life-blood was trickling down, not the spare breast of an ascetic, but the soft, white neck of a woman.

As the head and features were fully revealed, the two men looked with bewilderment into each other's eyes, and Edward Vanrosfeldt, hurriedly but ineffectually trying to hide his discovery from the rest, ejaculated in horror under his breath: "May I perish, if it be not Sister Thérèse!"

Burr, with a grating laugh, sneered: "Swamp it!—by all the saints in the calendar, 'tis that angel of piety, Saint Thérèse! Methought, pure vestal, we would meet again." And leaning toward Vanrosfeldt, who was supporting her in his arms, he said mockingly:

"Consider, my chivalrous friend, if ye are not over-hasty in your knight-errantry. Perchance Aaron Burr's estimate of female deviltry and craftiness is not so far wrong as ye deem it."

"Peace, fiend—'tis most surely through no virtue of yours if it were otherwise," he retorted, infuriated, as Burr, with an exasperating laugh, continued:

"Ye put it roughly, friend; say, rather, if these fair, frail creatures will adore me, 'tis surely through no fault of mine."

Angered to passion, and throwing his pistol away, lest he should shoot him in cold blood on the spot, his antagonist muttered in Burr's ear:

“I would to heaven I had my horse-whip handy—'tis the only weapon fit for such as you. Begone, and leave this unfortunate to me, to whom I owe a debt of gratitude I would fain now repay.”

Then once again Thérèse de Lérie found herself borne in the arms of the man she loved, and in a very abandon of joy she forgot her pain and humiliation, grudging not a moment of the misery of the past and the suffering of the present in the rapture of the few moments in which he carried her to the coach, which was awaiting the result of the duel.

Before the city was fully awake to the work and anxieties of another day, the only woman to whom he remembered she was known, in all tenderness was bending, with Edward Vanrosfeldt, over a bed in a corner of the lobby of the State House. Although as yet unused for the purpose, it had been temporarily fitted up for a hospital, should an emergency arise requiring its accommodation.

With tears falling down the sweet, flower-tinted face, from which the

color was slowly ebbing with the strong tide of emotion with which she was struggling, Phyllis looked down with compassion and shrinking pity and asked:

“Thérèse, wherefore have you done this? Must I tell you that your mother, believing you to be lost to the paths of right, is bereft of reason, and your father, his home now desolate, has buried his griefs in a cell in the order of which Leon is a Brother.”

Suddenly a suspicion flashed across the mind of the man silently looking on. An ecstasy, a great, mad, joyous hope sprang into life. A very delirium of joy possessed him at the mere thought of a possibility, and interrupting, with face white as linen on the bleaching green, he asked hoarsely, with withering scorn:

“Tell me, woman, calling yourself Sister Thérèse, did ye lie when ye said that Phyllis Davenant sought to fly from Quebec with Captain Temple because she loved him, and would risk her fair name to be with him? Was it not a black untruth? Speak, and for once be free from dissembling and deceit.”

A breathless silence fell, his heart knocking as it never had at leveled muskets. Phyllis, with hands clasped, and lips pressed tightly as in an anguish of fear and pain, every trace of color fled from her cheeks, awaited the reply of the girl, who, with a look in which baffled cunning and tardy contrition struggled for the mastery, turned slowly away in silent acknowledgment, tormented with the agony of unrequited love which rent her woman's soul.

Receiving his answer, Edward Vanrosfeldt turned to Phyllis, and holding out his hands, his heart in his voice, asked:

“My Phyllis, if ye do not love him, tell me what I craved so long ago; can ye love me?”

Laying her hands in his, the crimson surging into her pale cheeks as the full meaning of the girl's cruel lie dawned upon her, she answered simply and solemnly, raising her eyes to his in the sweetness of shyly-lifted lids:

“Till death doth us part.”

“An’ ye will marry me, Phyllis, my own, my love?” he whispered, drawing her closer and closer until her heart beat against his own; but the face hid against his blue coat was wet with tears, as she wept in mingled joy and pain. Lifting it to look into his, in her sweet surrender, but with a tender reluctance, she said with a quake in her voice:

“I own I have fought against my heart, in a sore and bitter struggle ‘twixt love and duty. Love has conquered me, but alas! duty forbids me to vow to one who wears this sword, which is crossed in bloody strife with those of my country and kin.”

Looking down into the starry eyes, in which smiles and tears strove for mastery, his own dark with longing and the sharp struggle ‘twixt his love and loyalty, he asked:

“When this blade is sheathed again in peace, if I live to come back, I will ask this question once again; an’ whether it will be yea or nay, and the time be seven times the years that Jacob served for Rachel, it will seem but a few days for the love I bear you!”

Thérèse, lying forgotten in the crudest pain a woman's heart can bear, bursting into bitter weeping, called forth all the tender pity of her childhood's companion. Drawing away from her lover and whispering to him to leave them alone, Phyllis bent down and asked, her face pale with wounded feeling:

“Thérèse, what have I done that thus I should be served? What could have moved you to commit the sacrilege of assuming mock vows, and spreading suspicion of my purity of purpose in seeking Captain Temple's ship, which, thank heaven, he never so misjudged!”

“I will tell you, Phyllis Davenant! Because I hated you!—hated you!—and loved to madness the man to whom you are pledged. I have followed him through hardship, battle and bloodshed, only that I might sometimes look upon his face and hear his voice! Now it is your hour—wreak out your vengeance—proclaim my imposture on the house-tops and on the street corners—and be happy!” she cried, with the fire of one demon-possessed flaming from her passion-lit black eyes.

Shocked and striving to restrain the vehemence of her emotion, Phyllis said soothingly, with soul too sweet to harbor malice or anger, but with

lips quivering:

“Peace, Thérèse, I have no thought or wish for vengeance, of which I will give you all the proof in my power. Mistress Knox, who has taken me to her home, in these terrible times of war, when all are drawn together by a common misfortune, will, I am assured, extend her kindness and the protection of her roof to one who is friend of mine. My lips will be sealed and none shall know that you and the pretended Jesuit who was carried here wounded are one. We will forget the bitter past and there may still be happy days in store for you, too, Thérèse. As your poor, heart-broken mother hath often said, Raoul St. Leger loves you, mourns unceasingly for you, and seeks without weariness to find you, and wreak swift and certain vengeance on the man who, through some woeful error, he thinks has wrought you ill.”

At some sudden thought, which seemed to sting like a poisoned dart, she gasped with quickened breath:

“There is one more question I would have answered, and I adjure you speak to me naught but the truth! A nun, one of the sisterhood in the convent at Quebec, where I have heard from your mother you were at the

same time in hiding, told me a most wretched tale of weakness and dishonor; that a novice, one called Agatha, had disappeared and fled the vows she was about to take for love of a soldier there encamped. Was ever proof found of their guilt?"

"Nay, 'twas an idle tale, a jest—believe it not. There was a novice, Agatha, whose veil I wore when she was laid away beneath the altar in the chapel," was the reply; for knowing that nothing was then to be gained by falseness or further deceit, she determined to throw herself on Phyllis's kindness and unmerited offer of shelter.

Despite the reprehensible part played in the disguise and the abhorrent duplicity of trying to cast aspersion upon her, and compromise her in the eyes of others, Phyllis, in the joy of learning that the story about her lover had been false, made no reproach, but with a sigh of relief, exclaimed:

"I thank heaven for these words, for 'tis sweet to know that where we love we can also trust!"

An overwhelming gladness filled her soul that the one she had at first

loved for the manly beauty of his face and form, was, like true knight of old, brave, chivalrous, without reproach and too noble to stoop to aught unworthy his manhood and the place he held in her heart. Even though it broke with longing for him, though a cruel fate should part them, she would have him keep faith with what he deemed the right; for she knew were he even for her sake to desert his post, her love would at that instant be slain, her respect for him forever dead and buried. She told herself that she would rather never look upon his face again than go to his arms if he were recreant in his allegiance to that to which he had pledged himself. But the woman in her would not always be silenced, and, in spite of herself, a plaint would at times rise to her lips, and with streaming eyes she would vainly wish that the coat he wore were red instead of blue.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WHO SHALL WIN?

Under the leading of Arnold as Governor of Philadelphia the city was caught in an uninterrupted whirl of social dissipation, which continued without slacking through the ensuing months of summer and autumn, in an

extravagance hitherto unknown in the quiet city of Master Penn, the place seeming at last to go wild in a sort of midwinter madness of frivolity and folly. With the approaching springtime, however, the skating on the broad Delaware, in which sport the gentlemen of Philadelphia were unrivaled in grace and skill, the gambling away of golden guineas, the pleasant drives along the country roads in the sunlit days and moon-bright nights, and even the routs and revels, began to lose something of their charm. In some of the more ardent and adventurous spirits there was a stirring of the blood for the allurements of the field, the running of the fox to cover, and the wild joys of the racecourse.

Benedict Arnold loved a good horse, from the delicate, expanding nostril and intelligent eye to the firm, powerful quarters and steel-strung hocks. He knew how to find the points for speed and good breeding in the deep shoulder, clean-cut head with breadth between the eyes, and well set ears, as well as any fox-hunter in the copses of Virginia or the blue-grass meadows of Kentucky. His blood thirsted for a taste of the old sports, which even the dash of battle had not slacked. There had been some running on a road they called Race Street, but with a longing for a fuller enjoyment of speed tests he caused an old racecourse on his

estate, which had become grass-grown, the track hidden by a wild growth of weeds, to be reclaimed, leveled and rolled and made ready for a purpose dear to the lover of horseflesh. Even the warring clash of steel was not to him a delight more keen than the glint of a steel hoof flashing along the course in the sweet scents and sounds of early morning, as the horses trained for the racing, which was set for a day in early April.

His wound at Quebec prevented his doing anything more than supervising the schooling of Mars, the favorite mount of Mistress Peggy Shippen, who was the best and most fearless horsewoman in her native state, and whose skill and daring in the saddle had caught the fancy of the Governor of the city. He had charged himself with the preparation of the animal, a spirited bay, and saw personally to the details of the horse's training, out of his regard for his young mistress' favor.

The grooms, filled with a devoted loyalty to that man who had such a power over men's hearts, were careful to carry out his minutest order. After the regular morning gallop they diligently rubbed down the horse's coat, bandaged his limbs, walked him cool before stabling, and for several nights before the race slept by his side, rigidly measuring his

food and water.

There were several entries for the different events and high stakes laid. The horse whose capacity and performances were most feared as a rival to Mars was his half-brother, Saturn, another bay and extremely like him in points and markings, to be ridden by Captain Aaron Burr, the former by a sporting gentleman of Philadelphia.

The day arrived and dawned clear and propitious, with the moist, delicious fragrance of the night lingering on the April air. The course was in ideal condition and the horses in excellent form. At an early hour everyone possessing a chaise, gig or carriage was rolling along the river road to the country mansion of Colonel Arnold, many pleasure seekers in twos and threes going afoot. Among the ladies, every trick of toilet and fascination of streaming riband and floating ringlet were brought into play for the occasion. With wide, flaring-rimmed bonnets and hats *à l'Espagnole*, the latest mode in Paris, and frocks the gayest the ladies' wardrobes possessed, there never was a braver show of beauty and fashion. In the golden spring weather and sweet-smelling land, and on such a quest, it seemed easy to forget for the time the crash and horror of war.

In the great Shippen coach was the group of sisters, their bright eyes peeping from beneath the sun-masks that shaded their pretty faces. Peggy's time and attention were fully occupied along the way in casting coquettish glances at the occupants of the saddles riding by, attired either in uniform or the vesture of private citizens, with well-fitting shorts and gold-trimmed beaver, some wearing "spatterdashes" to protect their fine breeches. As they passed the coach Mistress Peggy could not but pout with vexation that the staid respectability of her father's equipage would not permit of the horses increasing their ordinary genteel gait to suit her impatience to arrive at the course.

On overtaking at a turn of the road the modest chaise of Mistress Knox she nodded prettily to Phyllis, whose bright face, as sweet as the day, was aglow with the fresh air of the morning, and something astir within her which had come down from sport-loving squires who for generations had hunted the brown glebes and ridden through the country lanes of the green shires of England. She looked not unlike an English flower, in her daffodil gown and great lengths of white riband tied under her chin, with a rose fastened in her scarf throwing the sweetest sort of a pink shadow on her throat.

At last the Shippen coach rumbled grandly into the space arranged for the accommodation of the onlookers. Among the “silks and satins” of the field Peggy soon descried her horse carrying the black and white of the Shippen colors, which also fluttered from her bosom, and for the first time in her life, in her gay, wilful young heart she felt she would right gladly forego the sovereignty of her beauty and come down from her throne as queen of Philadelphia belles to be for one half hour a man. Then she might leap on her beautiful bay, whose shining coat she caught a glimpse of on his way to the weighing-paddock, and make a dash for victory.

The gentlemen of her acquaintance gathered at her carriage steps, laying odds on the favorites, and, as was expected from men of gallantry and breeding, complimented the ladies on the color of their gowns and the pretty fashion of their hair. They assured her with certainty that her horse was the best in the field, gracefully uttering the well-turned phrases by which men of fashion affected to embellish their conversation.

The witnessing of the trial had to be made principally from the seats of

the carriages, which, with the coaches and chariots of the gentry, were ranged on either side of the last quarter of a mile of the run. The course, which was between three and four miles in length, was kept clear by two mounted men from the city garrison. The contestants varied much in appearance, but none showed the mettle of the two half-brothers, Mars and Saturn. As Peggy watched their gaily decked riders, well matched in weight and skill, bring them to the starting-point, she pressed her hand upon her heart to quiet the throbbing which was sending the flushes of excitement flaming to her cheeks.

Arnold, who was regarding her mantling color with looks of passionate admiration, exclaimed:

“A hundred guineas on Mars!” and as her gratified smile flashed upon him he said in a low voice to the girl to whom he had already paid court:

“Would to heaven I were as dear to you as is yonder dumb beast!”

Turning to him in a delirium of excitement she replied:

“If he win to-day I will not say you nay.”

He grasped her hand and almost prayed that the little bay horse lined up with six others in front of the starters might win with such a priceless wager upon him.

There was some little delay, but at last the signal fell, and the red, green, yellow, black and white colors of the men, and the bay, chestnut, roan and grey of the horses, mingled in a mad rush of color, life and motion, with Saturn in the lead. The first jump was a stone wall with a ditch on the take-off side, of small dimensions, but formidable enough to make every horse but Mars and Saturn refuse. Both got over, none too well, but enough to get on the right side, and racing well together they soon opened a gap between themselves and the other five competitors that widened at every stride.

Meanwhile the two chestnuts, with the others, the grey, roan and black horses, pulled themselves together and after repeated attempts to take the jump finally succeeded, a quarter of a mile or more separating the leading pair from the stragglers behind, who, between baulking and falling, were spread all over the course. The bays went merrily over the next post-and-rail, the hedge and ditch at the far side, the hurdle

going into the ploughed land, and up over the hill, where they were momentarily lost sight of. On reappearing the two leaders were seen to be separated by a couple of lengths, Saturn in front.

They then headed for the water jump, which was just south of the long line of carriages, in which there was an anxious straining of necks among the spectators, many jumping upon the cushions to get a better view. The going on the turf at that point was good and a little downhill, Mars gaining steadily as they approached the water. As they rose for the brush-and-rail in front of it Arnold turned a deathly pale, for they were almost together, too close in fact, and a shriek came from the white lips of the girl as clasping her hands wildly she gazed. Her horse came up with every brave nerve and sinew strung to its utmost in a tremendous rush in his rider's effort to get on even terms with his rival. They cannoned in mid-air, and crashing together fell short of the bank and went headlong into the brook.

All that could be seen or heard was the confusion of the bystanders rushing toward the drenched and half-drowned men, the consternation among the carriages and the groans from the crowd. The horses struggled to their footing, and the riders, disentangling themselves, wildly

scrambled out. The colors of both horses and men being then the dun of the miry water, and as the latter were about the same size, and both their horses bay, it was almost impossible to identify them as they emerged half-blinded and confused by the shock. Just as those nearest in the rear rose to take the jump and ride over them, the plucky men leaped into the wet saddles, scarce heeding whether they had the stirrups or not, and dashed for the drop jump at the head of the field. Turning then to the right and taking a diagonal course across the meadow to a big stone wall in the inner circle, and on over another, they ran out upon the course that was flagged for the run home. The animals were then coming on as one horse—neck and neck—all eyes were strained, and the air rang with cries of “Mars!” and “Saturn!” which at last ended in one prolonged cheer, as Burr, gaining on the other, passed in front of the judge’s stand winner by half a length, and the great event was over!

Mars’ mistress sank half-fainting among the cushions as shout after shout rent the air. Arnold was white as the cambric of the kerchief covering her agitated face. He fully believed that had her horse won, the girl he loved with all the intensity of his fierce nature would have been carried away by the victory of the animal he had trained for her, and in the moment of elation have found her favor, already in a measure

caught, blossom into love, and would willingly have paid her wager.

Both riders were quietly dismounting, and in the act of removing their saddles, when shout after shout rose, more deafening and prolonged than even before, seeming to rend the very sky. There was a hurrying of grooms to and fro, hot words and even oaths among the crowd, the commotion extending to the judges' stand itself. Breaking away from the excited groups, Mistress Peggy's black stable boy, with eyes rolling with delight, rushed madly up to the carriage, and, pulling off his cap, panted out:

“Oh, Mist'is Peggy, our hoss dun won afte' all! Marsa Burr down dar at de water jump dun git all mixed up in de mud an' jumped on our Mars 'stead ob his own Saturn an' dun won de race fur us! An' laws-a-massa, he's jus ragin', swearin' mad down dar!” and flinging his torn cap in the air, he shouted as he ran, “Hooray fur Mars!”

As they then comprehended that in the confusion of the fall at the twelve-foot brook, the riders had mounted each other's horses and tried desperately to beat their own, Arnold turned to the hysterical girl and said brokenly, his heart beating like a smith's hammer: “Peggy, ye have

won!” and holding out her hand with a smile shining through her tears like a rainbow on a storm-swept sky, she answered, “And, Benedict, so likewise have you!”

Although Arnold had already been married and had several children, he thus caught and won the love of sweet Margaret Shippen, and so enamored was he with her beauty and his own good fortune that he scarce could keep his eyes from her face as he rode home beside her carriage wheel.

A few weeks later, when the April showers had made bloom the flowers of May, as in all the wealth of her youth and beauty, she stood beside him at the altar, the heart of the lovely girl was only the more tender, that he was compelled from the weakness of his old wound to lean upon the arm of a comrade.

As she walked in her virgin white, among the fluttering ribands of her attending bridal maids, with the promise of summer glowing around her and the song of the goldfinch overhead, perchance she thought it could not be possible that clouds could ever darken skies that on that day shone so fairly.

In the months which followed his nuptials, in all the glamor of his new-found happiness, Arnold loved to sit in state at his lordly banquets, attended by his aides, with henchmen at his beck and call, and look with pride upon his bride reigning at his board. Lovelier than even in her maiden days, she queened it right royally as mistress of the Governor's mansion. The magnificence of their style of living, with their retinue of servants, four-in-hand coaches and liveries, was so reckless at a time when the country was in such sore straits that rumors of it reached the ears of the Chief, and met with his pronounced disapproval and stern, open rebuke.

This, with the resentment at not receiving the official recognition and promotion which he considered due to him, set all the worst in the man's nature afire; and there were hours in his pleasure-fraught days and in the wakeful, solemn dawns that were filled with dark, solitary brooding. A fierce desire for vengeance embittered his insulted, ambitious soul, which at first was, with a shudder, thrust aside, then argued with, considered, and finally nourished.

Asking for and receiving the command of West Point he forthwith went thither. Mistress Arnold, with her secret British leaning, had much

avored and constantly sought the companionship of Phyllis, and when making ready for her departure wished that she make one of the party going to the banks of the Hudson. To make known this desire she stepped from her coach at the threshold of the Knox homestead and tripped into the garden where she saw Phyllis, who greeted her with a smile so sunny that her guest inquired:

“Wherefore so happy-looking this morning, Phyllis? Methought to find you somewhat pensive with not a redcoat in town.”

Pointing to the flowers that crowded and blossomed around her, the girl, as she stood in her white dress among them, replied with a tremble in her voice:

“‘Tis that the garden seems like a bit of dear old England as I dimly remember it, and as my mother hath often described it. In this strange land these dog-roses and gillyflowers, with their sweetness and homelike English faces, bring to mind my childhood.” Stooping and gathering a pansy she went on: “Here too is ever dear heartsease! These delicate flower scents that in the dusk of twilight or early morning hang over this garden vale, bring to me, Peggy, as odors ever do in some subtle

way, memories of other days and thoughts of my mother. Here are the foxglove and marybuds she loved! Even these homely herbs, savory, thyme and spearmint, bring me heart-pangs of how she longed once more to see them growing by the door-side far away. Alas! she never did again behold them;” and the brightness left her face in a dew of tears.

Putting her arms around her, Peggy, who loved her, then spoke her wish, saying:

“This brooding is not well or wise, Phyllis. ‘Twere better not to harbor thoughts such as these; so ‘twill be best that the boon I have come hither to crave meet with your pleasure. ‘Tis that I have your companionship to New York State, to which, as ye know, I shortly go. A sojourn there will, without doubt, be to your benefit, and not without the power of diverting your thoughts from dwelling on the past and being fearful of the future. The city of New York is in the hands of the British, and their vicinity would doubtless be more to your mind than this town from which some time ago they marched.”

Restless and wearying with suspense of the chances of war and her solicitude for the man she loved, fighting on the field, a change for a

time seemed welcome; so when the great coach started on the first stage of the journey she was one of the travelling party.

Arnold, on being joined by his wife, with her guest and servants, fixed his quarters in a picturesque dwelling on the banks of the Hudson, a short distance from the post. It had been whispered that under the shade of its trees, in days gone by, the awkward young Virginian, George Washington, had sued in vain for the favor of a maiden's hand. There then in those same shades, in what seemed a perversity of fate, walked his friend, trusted for faith and honor, but with a consuming anger in his heart, and within his soul a nursed lust for retaliation. The hatching of a traitor's plot—the foul and deep deceit he contemplated—gradually took tangible shape and ultimately practical form.

When the time for action had fully come, in the city of New York two British officers, Sir Henry Clinton and Major John André, were in close and earnest converse. The former, thin-lipped and with face hardened to decision, said impressively and abruptly:

“On obtaining possession of West Point, André, with its well-stored

magazines and supplies, we shall gain an incalculable advantage of the enemy. I have long had suspicion of the personality of our disguised correspondent, and now know with certainty that the man who is secretly to meet you is none other than General Benedict Arnold, the hero of Saratoga, and a valorous leader at the siege of Quebec!”

“He is a man of uncommon courage, Sir Henry, as we have too well known throughout this campaign, and in no case hath he shown so utter a disregard of fear as in the interview which we are about to have,” was the guarded and somewhat uneasy reply.

“Aye, André, thus it appears, but I counsel you notwithstanding to maintain the utmost caution and vigilance in dealing with him. A man of his nature might be as treacherous to us as he is to his own cause, so I would counsel you to beware, for if the slightest hint of danger to himself should menace this scheme, I warrant he would ruthlessly sacrifice both us and our project to save himself. In no case,” he said emphatically, “permit him to draw you within the enemy’s lines, accept no papers nor written communications at his hand, and,” raising his voice, “above everything else avoid acting in the slightest degree the character of a spy.”

“A spy! Nothing, sir, would be more abhorrent to my nature and breeding!” was the dignified rejoinder; and with face hotly flushed and a sudden haughty lifting of the head, he continued, “and as our meeting is to take place in the cabin of one of our own boats, this contingency is not likely to arise.”

The next morning at dawn the *Vulture* moved up the river, with Major André aboard. Reaching the place of rendezvous, he anxiously scanned the river for the skiff in which the recreant Patriot was expected to arrive, but throughout the day no sign of it appeared. It was not until midnight that there was heard the faint beat of muffled oars, and soon a light boat glided noiselessly and stealthily alongside the *Vulture*.

Instead, however, of the wily “Gustavus” he was looking for, André received a message from him with the request that “Master John Anderson” would come ashore and join him at a place designated, these names being the fictitious ones they had assumed for the carrying on of their secret correspondence.

A look of uncertainty and misgiving clouded the face of André at this unlooked-for change of plans, and Sir Henry Clinton’s words of warning

flashed over his mind. Uncertain and hesitating, he conferred with Captain Temple. On finding in the messenger's hands passes, signed by Arnold as commander of West Point, permitting "John Anderson" "To pass and re-pass the guard near the King's Ferry at all times and at such hours and times as the tide and his business suits," he decided to descend into the boat in waiting, his face pale with misgiving and some feeling of suspicion.

It was a quiet, starry night; not a ripple disturbed the calmly flowing Hudson, not a sigh of wind moved the leaves of the trees under whose dark shadow they cautiously glided, fearful of encountering a guard boat at the various stations along the river. Landing at last on the edge of a wood, André was led to a gloomy thicket, and had scarcely crept into its eerie shades when a tall figure was at his side, and in terse and abrupt phrases the fell scheme was laid bare in all its hideous, naked treachery. Knowing that the sword of a relentless vengeance hung by but a thread over their heads, should the slightest miscarriage occur in the laying of their plans, the remaining hours of darkness were spent in carefully perfecting them. The grey dawn light stealing in revealed each other's features for the first time, and still the full details of the plot lacked the necessary completeness for success. Mounting the horse

which Arnold had brought, André rode by his side to a dwelling-house hard by, in order to have further conference. The sharp challenge of a sentinel breaking on the silent dusk of the passing night startled André in his saddle, and again he recalled the words: "In no case permit him to draw you within the enemy's lines." He felt the danger keenly; he knew it was then too late to turn back, but hoped that a long blue surtout, which covered his person, would hide the fact that he was on hostile territory, without a flag or satisfactory excuse for his presence. To further add to his uneasiness, a sound of firing was heard in the direction of the *Vulture*. That vessel being within range of the American guns, they had opened fire, and she was forced to hoist her anchor and drop further down stream.

During the morning the whole matter was arranged. The British troops were to be in momentary readiness; the American garrison to be scattered throughout the defiles and passes of the Highlands, or sent into the mountain gorges, and a link removed from the great chain which prevented vessels from having free access to the river.

The last detail was at length complete, and every possible and probable circumstance carefully provided for. With the papers containing

descriptions of the works, the armament and the number of troops holding it, placed between his stockings and the soles of André's feet, they were ready to separate. They accordingly bade each other adieu, Arnold saying with affected cordiality: "Farewell, Major André, when next we meet West Point will be yours." Turning away, he went up the river to his barge, and André, with disquieting thoughts for company, and with a burning impatience for the return of the sheltering darkness, passed in hiding the remaining hours of the day ere he could again embark.

But the firing of the guns on the ship in which he was to return had awakened fears in others besides the man so feverishly anxious to stand once more upon its deck. The boatman refused to touch an oar to pull him back, but offered his company and a horse if he would take a land route, which perforce seemed all that remained to be done. Following the advice of Arnold, and assuming the disguise which he had given him, André doffed his uniform, and setting out endeavored as a private citizen to reach neutral ground, where he would be safe in his own person, and nothing could prevent the carrying out of the plans lying snugly beneath the soles of his feet.

After proceeding about eight miles he and his companion were stopped by

an American patrol, but the pass with Arnold's signature was satisfactory, and on accepting it the officer said:

“I would counsel you, even with these credentials, against proceeding further until daylight, as by pushing on through the night, suspicion may be excited in regard to your honesty of purpose.”

Taking the advice, a halt was made for the night, and at early dawn the journey was resumed. Every mile passed brought the cheerful conviction that all danger would soon be over, so that a frugal breakfast, obtained at a farmhouse by the way, was partaken of with relish and in excellent spirits. Bidding each other good-bye, the two men then separated; the one returning home, feeling relieved that he was out of what had seemed a hazardous business; the other to make his way as speedily as possible to New York. As André moved along toward the Continental outposts in the vicinity of Tarrytown, his mind was full of the great results of the compact which he had with so much boldness and circumspection completed. Already he began to feel merry, that, while disregarding his instructions, and actually having been within the enemy's lines, he was about to pass into safe territory. Descending into a glen which was pleasantly shaded, he suddenly perceived three figures in the path in

front of him. The men had been lying in the bushes near a stream to watch the road and prevent the driving of any cattle southward, for the use of the “Britishers,” and to see that not a truss of hay or ear of corn reached their lines. After remaining hidden for some time, and allowing several persons with whom they were familiar to pass unheeded, they at last saw what seemed like a stranger enter the glen, and one of the men said:

“There comes a gentleman-like man, who appears to be well dressed, and has boots on; ye had better step out and stop him, if ye don’t know him.”

“What about this old British overcoat in which I escaped three days since from their clutches,” said one of them, but before he could receive an answer the rider was upon them. A firelock was at once aimed at his breast, and the order shouted:

“Stand, and answer as to where ye are going.”

Seeing the familiar coat, and being completely thrown off his guard, André answered cheerfully:

“I am a British officer, and thank God I am once more among friends!”

“Dismount, sir!” then came sharply from the man before him. Taking out his watch, André said, still without suspicion:

“My God! do not detain me, I must get along.”

Again the sharp command, “Dismount! We will take nothing from you, but there are many people of doubtful reputation passing this way and such a one ye may be.” With one man holding his horse’s head, the other two led the traveler into the shelter of the bushes, and he was commanded: “Take off these clothes, sir!” and the laced velvet coat, the hat, small clothes, fine vest, neckcloth and stock, were one by one laid on the grass under the trees, and every pocket and fold carefully searched.

“Gentlemen,” said André, “you had best let me go, or ye will bring yourselves into trouble.”

“You are a fair and honest looking gentleman, and we will gladly release you from this most unpleasant fix if you will oblige us a little

further,” continued one of them, who seemed to be the leader, adding suspiciously, “I prithee, remove these pumps from off your feet, we would see what kind of hosen is within them.”

Apparently with alacrity and indifference he pulled his feet out of the shoes and stood in his stockings on the bare ground, when one of the men watching closely said:

“For thread hose, these look uncommon clumsy on the sole; what is this concealed between them and your feet?”

“Remove them, sirrah,” said another, “although we are distressed to incommode so fine a gentleman by this rough handling.”

Then the delicate fingers which had so often, with deft use of pen and brush, brought the flush of pleasure to fair faces, were forced, by the rough men into whose hands he had fallen, to do their bidding and strip off the stockings. As he saw the priceless papers seized by them and examined, he knew that his liberty, his cause and his country’s fate were in the power of their horny hands, as in a breath they cried:

“My God, he is a spy!”

In silence, the order to put on his clothes was obeyed, the three men looking on, hardly recking the far-reaching effects and vital consequences of their morning’s work. In their own rough clothes they watched him curiously as he stoically dressed, putting on the nankeen breeches and waistcoat, the boots that had lost their secret, and then the claret-colored body coat, with its buttons and button-holes laced with gold tinsel. When he donned his blue overcoat and round hat, he announced himself, saying:

“Gentlemen, I am ready. What is your will and pleasure?”

Their pleasure was to deliver him up, and with one at his horse’s head, and one at either side, their will was forthwith carried out.

Meanwhile the confident Arnold reached his headquarters, where he was solaced by the cheerful companionship of his wife and babe. He passed the evening apparently without anxiety in her happy society, evincing no concern even when she informed him that she expected General Washington, who had ridden to Hartford to hold council with the French General and

the Marquis de Lafayette, to breakfast in the morning.

To keep this appointment, and cover the intervening eighteen miles, Washington and his suite were in the saddle before dawn. When near West Point, the General turned his horse down a lane toward the river.

Vanrosfeldt noticing it, said in respectful remonstrance:

“General, are ye not going in the wrong direction? Mistress Arnold is waiting breakfast for us, and that road will take us out of the way.”

The Chief, with one of his rare smiles, answered with unusual humor:

“Ah, I know you young men are all in love with sweet young Mistress Arnold, and wish to appear before her as soon as possible. Vanrosfeldt, ye may go and take your breakfast with her, and tell her not to wait for me, as I must ride down and examine the redoubts on this side of the river. I will be there in a short time.”

The other officers remained, but Vanrosfeldt, aware that Phyllis was the guest of General Arnold’s wife, eagerly rode off with an aide, to explain as quickly as possible the cause of the delay. Breakfast was

waiting when they arrived, and when it was understood that the remainder of the party would not follow for a time, the meal was served. During the course of it the host seemed to be moody and preoccupied, with spasmodic attempts at being cheerful and at his ease. If the plans had been acted upon, the weakened link in the chain, which had been forged strong and true to prevent British vessels from entering the river, should ere that have been broken, and the British be in sight. They tarried unaccountably, with the further complication that Washington had arrived two days earlier than he was expected. Not observing that his gaiety was forced, the others around the board talked pleasantly and freely, Phyllis unable to conceal her happiness. The meal was yet unfinished, when a soldier was seen coming up the river path, holding a despatch in his hand; who, entering, presented it to the General, saying he had been instructed by an officer in one of the outposts below to deliver it into General Arnold's hands. With an iron grasp on his emotions he broke the seal, and hastily read, but not a feature changed; there was not a tremor in his voice, not one at the table regarding him with close interest had a shadow of a suspicion that the hair had snapped, the sword had fallen! for on the page were written the momentous words: "Major André, of the British Army, on whose person suspicious papers have been found, is under arrest and in my custody."

Calmly folding up the sheet, he made some jesting remark to Mistress Arnold about the inconvenience of being the wife of a soldier, whose duties scarce permitted him time for the necessities of life. Fingering the paper carelessly, he requested Vanrosfeldt to inform the General on his arrival that he had had word that his personal attention was immediately required at West Point, and that he would return as soon as possible. Rising without haste from the table, he called a servant and ordered his horse, and going up to his wife's chamber sent for her to join him there. The fair young creature, scarce twenty years of age, catching up her pretty boy, but one year old, hastened to the man whom she so passionately loved and admired, and entering smilingly asked him:

“Wherefore have you sent for me, Benedict? Is it to permit Major Vanrosfeldt to woo our sweet Phyllis? I trust the General will soon arrive, as breakfast will be none the better for waiting,” but the words were not finished when mother and child were wildly clasped within his arms, and casting aside his mask, he whispered hoarsely:

“Peggy, I must fly! I have plotted with the enemy and unless I reach their lines as fast as horse and boat can carry me, I am a dead man!”

A stifled cry fell on his ear, and bidding her for the love of heaven to be silent or he was undone, he embraced his child, who cried with fright at what he could not understand. As his mother fell upon the floor in a swoon, the father placed him within her arms, and not daring to call for assistance, kissed her unconscious lips, saying bitterly: “Good-bye, my Peggy, good-bye forever!”

Jumping upon his horse, and taking his pistols from the holsters—for he would not be taken alive—he dashed down a steep hill, raced along a by-path as if every fiend in hell were at his heels, and soon reached the river. He leaped upon his barge, and commanding the six oarsmen to pull out into the stream, said to them: “I must needs go on board yon British ship with a flag, and am obliged to make all possible haste in order that I may return in time to receive the General; so pull your best, my lads, and ye shall have two good gallons of rum for your pains.” On reaching the ship he turned and said to his crew and boatswain: “Ye are prisoners! I have gone over to the British!”

They protested with fierce indignation; when he endeavored to bribe them, saying: “Come with me, and I will make you all corporals and

sergeants in the British Army”; and turning to the boatswain: “Ye shall have even more than this,” but the man with the rough hands of a boatman, but with the high soul of a true patriot, replied, the angry blood surging into his cheeks:

“No, that I never will; one coat is enough for me; I’ll be cursed if I’ll wear two.”

Arnold had but ridden a few minutes from his door, when the Commander-in-Chief arrived, and hearing that he had been suddenly summoned to West Point, ate in haste, saying:

“I will not then wait, but will go and meet him there. Vanrosfeldt, ye may remain behind until I return hither to dinner.”

As his barge floated down the stream, Washington looked toward the fort, expecting, as Arnold was aware of his intended arrival, the usual salute from his guns, but nearer and nearer in silence the barge approached the landing-place. As soon as it touched the shore, an officer, looking much disturbed, approached, and saluting said:

“I beg that your Excellency will pardon our seeming lack of courtesy in the omission of a salute from the guns, as, being uninformed of your intended arrival, it had not been ordered.”

Looking in surprise at the man, Washington asked:

“Sir, is not General Arnold here?”

“No, sir, he has not been here these two days, nor have I heard from him within that time.”

A deep flush of mingled surprise and suspicion mounted to the General’s brow, but giving no further evidence of either, he proceeded with the inspection of the works, and about mid-day was again upon the river, returning to Arnold’s home. As the dock was reached, Major Vanrosfeldt hurried down the path and spoke in low tones to his Chief, when proceeding together to the house, he laid before him the papers which had been found on André’s person a few hours before.

Accompanying them was a letter from the prisoner revealing his name and rank, and stating with the utmost candor the circumstances by which he

had been snared to his destruction.

Silently the man whose bosom was stung by the serpent he had cherished, signed to Vanrosfeldt to follow him into an inner room, when in extreme agitation he exclaimed, as the tears ran down his cheeks:

“Arnold gone over to the enemy! Whom now can we trust?”—and adding in the bitter scorn and loathing of an upright man—“I begrudge him not to the British!”

A sound of bitter sobbing coming from a chamber near by, he went toward it, and knocking, stepped within, where the fugitive’s wife, in uncontrollable grief, was weeping and calling on her husband’s name. On seeing the General and his officers she upbraided them with being in a plot to murder her child. One moment she was raving wildly, and the next softly weeping, pressing her infant to her breast, and lamenting the fate his father had brought upon him. Her sweetness, innocent youth, wifely tenderness and fondness for her child, called forth their deepest pity, and the man whom her husband had sought to betray to his enemies spoke words of gentle sympathy to her, desiring her to take comfort that she and her unconscious babe were pure from the foul taint of treachery

and dishonor.

Not many hours afterward, André was conducted to army headquarters. On the way, apparently not realizing the grave position in which he was placed, he conversed affably with Major Vanrosfeldt, who with another officer was in command of his escorting guard, asking them at last:

“According to your army’s code, what is the nature and extent of the penalty required for an offence such as I am charged with?”

Vanrosfeldt dropped a step behind, and turned his head away, unable to meet the ingenuous questioning of the handsome eyes, filled with the light of genius, hope and love of life. The other, with tears springing to his own, and finding it impossible to put the cruel, cold truth into words, and utter what he well knew was his inevitable doom, said slowly and reluctantly:

“I once had a much loved friend and class-mate, Nathaniel Hale, brave, honorable and gifted. Detailed by the General to seek information of the British movements after the battle of Long Island, he went to Brooklyn. Just as he was passing your outposts he fell into the hands of your

troops. You remember, Major, what followed.”

“Yes, perfectly; we hanged him as a spy, and what a loathly fate for a soldier who might have died in battle!”—when suddenly starting back with a pallor of surprise and alarm upon his countenance, he ejaculated sharply:

“But surely, gentlemen, ye do not consider his case and mine in any degree alike!”

Shaking his head sadly, the officer almost whispered:

“Your case and his are precisely similar, and similar to his will be your fate.”

The terrible silence which followed the words was not again broken. On arriving, André asked to be brought into the presence of the Commander-in-Chief, to explain that it had not been in any wise his intention to act the contemptible part of a spy, that rather he had been lured into apparently taking that guise, which was one from which his instincts as a man of honor recoiled.

Washington declined to receive him, but ordered: “Let Major André be treated with every courtesy and civility consistent with absolute security.”

Lamentably true the forecast of his doom proved. In spite of letters of entreaty from Clinton and even from Arnold, and the sympathy and efforts of both armies, John André, Adjutant-General in the British service, was condemned by the inexorable code of war, in the words of his judge, “to hang by the neck until you are dead, and may the Lord have mercy on your soul.” The prisoner—the artist, the soldier of rank, young, handsome, and of most engaging disposition—was then removed under a strong guard to await the hour that justice named for the pitiless carrying out of its fiat.

“Hanged!” he cried; “hanged as the vilest felon! My doom is sealed, and I bow to it; but let me die a soldier’s death; let a bullet, sure and straight, rid me of life, but, my God, not the rope! That is too bitter a drop in this cup of wormwood that I must needs drink!” Turning suddenly, he requested: “Grant me the use of quill and ink-horn, Vanrosfeldt, and I will entreat this grace from your Chief.” Sitting

down, the hand, which so oft in other days had penned the rounded sonnet and fair lines of poesy, with nervous haste then moved over the page, to crave in touching phrase the boon he sought, not the saving of his life, but as to the manner in which it should be taken from him. He wrote:

“Sir, buoyed above the terror of death by the consciousness of a life devoted to honorable pursuits and stained with no action that can give me remorse, I trust that the request I make Your Excellency will not be rejected. Sympathy toward a soldier will surely induce Your Excellency to adapt the mode of death to the feelings of a man of honor. Let me hope, sir, that if aught in my character impresses you with esteem toward one so unfortunate, that I may be informed that I am not to die on a gibbet.

“I have the honor to be Your Excellency’s most humble servant,

JOHN ANDRÉ.”

*

Sanding and sealing it, he requested that it be delivered without delay,

and on no answer being received, the hope that his prayer would be heard became a certainty in his mind.

On the morning of October the second the sun rose on a smiling world, dawning clear and fair. It found John André ready and not afraid to die. A solemn hush as of the Sabbath brooded over the banks of the Hudson, glowing with the soft hue of the lulling Indian summer. Above the palisade-like heights and sloping bluffs of the river the sky was ethereal blue, and below the water was bluer. The air was salt with the scent of the distant sea, where white gulls spread their wings and gallant ships their sails, and to which fleecy clouds slowly drifted. The world was beautiful on such a day, and to none sweeter than to the eyes of the artist-soldier, in love with life, but whose last sun was gilding the scene into the serene calm of heaven. On every winding pathway of the hills and valleys, quiet groups, solemn as if going to church, walked to a common centre, to see how a brave man could die; whom he who signed his death warrant, with tears on his cheeks, had pronounced to be “more unfortunate than criminal, an accomplished man and a gallant officer.”

Partaking of the breakfast, which had been sent as usual from the

General's table, with composure and no evidence of perturbation, he rose quietly and proceeded to perform the details of his toilet. He completed it with as much care as if it were for a ball at the Shippen homestead in the old happy days in Philadelphia, instead of to march to that ghastly thing waiting for him yonder, gruesome even in the dancing morning sunlight. Deliberately, and with the same precision as if it were for dress parade at Windsor, he put on his regimentals, as an Adjutant-General in the British army. The brilliant scarlet coat, with beautiful green facings, was buttoned over the vest and breeches of light buff color, but the spurs, sword and gorget were omitted. His long and beautiful hair was bound with a black riband, which fell down his back, and the natural beauty of his features was heightened by the paleness of his face and the calm serenity of his eyes. Turning to the officers and guard who were to do the duty of leading him forth, he placed his hat upon a table and said cheerfully, with right soldierly spirit: "I am ready at any moment, gentlemen, to wait upon you."

As the sun on the dial cast the mark of high noon, the cortège prepared to set forth, the prisoner between two subalterns with drawn swords, with a captain's command of some forty men immediately encircling him. Five hundred infantry, surrounding the whole, formed a hollow square,

and almost every officer in the garrison rode behind, but neither the Chief nor any of his staff were present. In all the houses along the way silent onlookers filled the doors and windows, except in one, and there, behind closed shutters, with two sentinels pacing slowly to and fro before the door, the Commander heard in silence the weird, wild strains of the “Dead March” as the procession filed by.

As if by a resistless fascination every eye was fixed on the wearer of the scarlet coat, as keeping step to the muffled beating of the throbbing drums, he leaned on the arm of Major Vanrosfeldt, who walked beside him. On every face was a fixed look of gloom and melancholy, the silence broken only by the tramp of feet, the clank of sabres, and the sigh of the wind over the hills. The mien of the prisoner was calm and resolute. He turned his eyes from time to time toward the crowd, and recognizing faces that were familiar, he gave them quiet, courteous looks of greeting.

Suddenly, surrounded by the muskets from which he expected his death volley would be fired, an abrupt turn in the road was made—and there a hideous gallows-tree met his view! Recoiling in horror, he started as if stabbed, then tottering a step, stopped. The officers near regarding him

with pity, Vanrosfeldt asked huskily:

“Why this emotion, sir?”

Clenching his teeth and convulsively moving his arms he stammered:

“I am not loth to die—I am reconciled to my fate—but to this mode of death I cannot be!”

“It is unavoidable, sir,” was the reluctant reply.

Turning to Vanrosfeldt, whose distress was scarcely less poignant than his own, he questioned in tones of suppressed anguish:

“Am I not to be shot like a soldier and a gentleman? Must I die in this ignoble manner?”

“It is so ordered. Ye are a soldier, sir, and brave, and know how to meet it,” was the low answer.

“Alas! how hard is my fate!” he cried.

“But it will soon be over,” Vanrosfeldt whispered, as they resumed the pitiful march. With this encouraging thought, André recovered, and boldly approaching the gibbet, he leaped lightly into the wagon containing his coffin, which stood beneath the cross-tree. The uneasy rolling of a pebble under one of his feet, and the sinking and swelling of his throat, alone gave evidence of the mental suffering he was enduring. Holding out his hand to Vanrosfeldt and his fellow-soldiers to bid them farewell, the man who had been detailed to attend to his wants since his arrest suddenly broke out into a passionate fit of weeping. Calling him to him, André said quietly, “Be a man; show more resolution,” and throwing aside his hat, he removed the stock from his neck and opened his collar.

The hangman, hideously disguised, a prisoner who had bought his own life by performing a task which no other was found willing to undertake, then approached. Snatching the rope from his awkward fingers, André drew it over his head, adjusted the knot, and pulled it tightly into place, his sensitive face filled with the disgust and loathing of such an instrument of death. With his own handkerchief he bound his eyes; for if a soldier’s life teaches aught, it shows a man how fitly to face death.

Vanrosfeldt, his face white as the prisoner's, inquired:

“Is there anything, Major André, that ye would wish to say?”

Raising the bandage, and turning to the speaker and those surrounding him, with a bow he might have learned at court, the doomed man said with dignity and firmness:

“All I request, gentlemen, is that ye will bear witness to the world that I die as becomes a British soldier and a brave man.”

Immediately it was curtly and necessarily commanded:

“His arms must be tied.”

Raising his voice, he pleaded in piteous accents, that pierced the hearts of all within hearing:

“Let me be unpinioned, I pray you, sirs; 'tis degrading to go to one's death tied like a beast in the shambles.”

Silence was the only reply. The hangman with a cord attempted to lay hands on him, but with a quick movement the prisoner struck the rope from his arm, and with another of his own handkerchiefs his elbows were tied loosely behind his back. The signal was given, and with the words on his lips: “‘Tis but a momentary pang,” it was over, and the brave redcoat swung into the air, while tears from friends and foes alike kindly dimmed the sight of it from their eyes, and over it all the trees waved calmly in the golden autumn sunshine.

In a dwelling hard by, two fair women, with their young eyes dry with horror, and lips white and trembling, sat clasped in each other's arms, striving to crush down the horrible thoughts of the present and the keen memories of the past. Phyllis, with an ache in her heart for the gifted, handsome young soldier in such sore extremity, was fain not to think of the English home over the seas where dwelt his kindred, all unwitting of the tidings so soon to desolate it. More bitter were the thoughts of Margaret Arnold, as she strove to forget that her erstwhile friend and companion of her mother's drawing-room had been betrayed to this awful thing by the man whose name she bore.

When news of the execution reached New York a frenzy of passion

possessed the whole town. The troops and people, with the exception of Arnold, went into mourning, and the soldiers were scarcely restrained by discipline from marching at once to wreak vengeance on the spot where he died.

Then all that was seemingly left to the disgraced wife and unhappy young mother was to return to the shelter and refuge of her father's roof. The Commander, with the chivalric compassion of a great and kingly soul, treated with the utmost consideration the forlorn wife of his once trusted friend and general, who had but just played to him the part of the kisser of Gethsemane. One of her husband's aides, who for his devotion to their child had been dubbed in the ranks "the nurse," was given her for escort, to ride with her to Philadelphia, whither, in a carriage, with her babe, her attendant and Phyllis, who refused to desert her, she set out as the wife of an attainted and pilloried traitor, the people's abhorrence of whose black deed was everywhere apparent on the way. Being compelled to remain over night at a small town on the route, it was her misfortune to arrive at sundown, the hour appointed for the burning there in bitter scorn and loathing of the effigy of the man, the horror of whose guilt with her was still lost in her woman's love.

Everything was ready, the bands of music to play the “Rogue’s March,” and the wagon in which was his figure in effigy, dressed partly in British and partly in American uniform, the latter with the epaulets and every distinguishing mark of rank removed. Upon the head was a mask with two faces, and one hand was reaching out towards a representation of the devil handing him a bag of gold. The banners and transparencies, with every epithet of opprobrium of which the language was capable, were already in the hands of the bearers, when a covered travelling-coach rolled up the street. Word reached the crowds that it contained the traitor’s wife, who, with her family, had always been known to hold Tory sympathies, and a growl of execration muttered along the lines of faces. Suddenly the door of the chaise opened, and there, in her disgrace and loneliness, with her innocent babe clinging to her neck, stood the pale, sad young mother. Her helplessness and beauty at once sent a pang of pity through every heart, and one by one the banners were furled, the shouting ceased, the bands of music became silent without even a drumbeat, and those assembled marched away until the morrow, when the demonstration might be carried out.

On the way the travellers lay overnight at the home of a lady who many

a time had sat and feasted at the Shippen's family board, and who received with open arms and much lamenting the unfortunate and once sprightly Peggy Shippen. To divert her mind from the misery of her situation, her hostess, with blushes and smiles, confided to her that Colonel Burr, whose lively conversation and ready wit had beguiled the embarrassment of the supper table, was, she had reason to hope, soon to offer himself as her betrothed husband. The host of happy thoughts stirring in her heart and the glamor of his presence made her unaware of the marked contempt with which Phyllis regarded him, which she could not wholly conceal under an icy manner, and which she would fain have hidden.

“Ah,” sighed the belated wayfarer, “may your heart never be torn ‘twixt love for the man and abhorrence of his conduct, as it is my own unhappy fate to be. May children and generations yet unborn never have cause to curse his memory for treachery to any he has ever called friend.”

“Heaven forbend, my dear Peggy. ‘Tis strange, though, that by an odd chance the same lettering should mark their names—an A and a B—albeit reversed. With all due respect to you, my poor illused Peggy, I trust it is not an omen that their two names will be ever held in memory as

clouded by like unworthy deeds.”

“For your sake, I truly hope not. I pray you let not my misfortunes darken with superstitious fears your dreams of future bliss. Aaron Burr must be a true and honest gentleman, else he would not have won regard from such a man as Betty Schuyler’s lover, Alexander Hamilton. His talents rank him with the aristocracy of the country, with the Van Rensselaers, Livingstons, Morrises or Chews, and he comes of excellent praying stock, his sire and grandsire both being scholarly divines. Aaron Burr, too, has had wise counsel from my mother, who ever sought to be his guide,” answered her guest, with a deep-drawn sigh.

“These are sweet words coming from your sore heart, my Peggy,” said her hostess, embracing her. “If it were not too much grace to ask, Colonel Burr would be glad to be permitted to take a seat in your travelling-coach to Philadelphia, whither he must now hasten, having, as he says, already, at the allurements of love, remained too long away from the stern demands of duty.”

“I am truly glad,” was the reply, “that it lieth in my power to do favor for any friend of yours. If Colonel Burr, who ever seems full of life

and spirits, can put up with such dull company, he is welcome to a seat. Thoughts of you could doubtless beguile for him a journey even sorer than this most lamentable one upon which I am embarked, which he will, peradventure, in the kindness of his heart, endeavor to beguile for your sake.”

Betimes the next morning the coach stood ready at the door, and the last stage of the journey was undertaken. The varied feelings on the part of the travellers made it difficult to maintain unconstrained conversation, the circumstances of the meeting making such efforts seem forced and necessarily formal. Each thinking their own thoughts, throughout the long, slow hours of the day, the carriage bore them along the gently rolling countryside, until, as the sun cast lengthening shadows before them, and the evening star hung out its silver torch, the hills by the Delaware, which as Margaret Shippen she had so well loved, rose soft against the blue.

With sight of them came memories of her happy, lighthearted maidenhood and queenly married months, and tears fell hot and fast as the desolate young creature tremblingly gathered her babe closer to her breast in benumbed despair.

It is truly said that there is nothing in the universe so like a splendid angel as a splendid devil, for the gifted son of the gentle, pious Esther Edwards was as sorry and unscrupulous a scoundrel as ever hid false heart under velvet coat. Never losing an opportunity of taking advantage of moments of sensibility; moved by the spell of her beauty and the witchery of the hour, and spurred by that passion which ever drove him as by whip of cords, Burr drew nearer. Suddenly placing an arm caressingly around her, regardless of Phyllis's presence, and with scarcely veiled passion, he whispered in a low, thrilling voice, and with a look that he thought might lure even a vestal from her vows:

“Mistress Shippen, for I will not call you by that other unworthy name, spoil not these lovely eyes with tears for him, he is not worth them. I beseech you to put him from your thoughts. You are young and passing fair, and there are others who would better appreciate your charms. I have long envied him these sweet lips,” and unheeding her struggles and low cry, which were drowned in the peevish wailing of the frightened infant, he kissed her with a breath of the hot flame that ever smouldered in the deeps of his selfish heart.

Repulsing him, her tears dried in a burning, biting scorn, that would have stung to the quick a less base man, she was transformed from the timid, tearful girl into the woman blazing with the wrath of insulted dignity. Turning, with cheeks burning red, in a loathing almost too deep for words, she said witheringly, her voice broken by anger:

“I would have you to know, sir, that even a man traitor to his country is a very saint, an angel of light in virtue, as compared with such a villain as ye are, who could by so much as a word be false to the loving, trusting woman whose bread we have just eaten! Mark me, Aaron Burr, the day may come when your own misdeeds and dishonor will be a sword to pierce her heart, even as mine is this day wounded!” and leaning against the leathern curtain, she bowed her face in her hands with bitter crying, her shoulders shaken with sobs.

Phyllis, white with rage and disgust, looking him full in the eye, said in a low voice in unutterable disdain:

“To witness such manners, sir, is not to an honest maid’s liking, and to my mind they bar you forever from the rank and standing of gentleman, but ‘tis only what might be looked for from Aaron Burr! We approach the

town; have the grace to alight, and relieve us of your unwelcome presence!”

Thus broken in spirit, the once famed beauty and belle, Margaret Shippen, passed to her early home through the streets and by the red brick homesteads loved and familiar from her childhood. Even its shelter was denied her, for, by order of the council of Philadelphia, which commanded: “That the said Margaret Arnold depart this State, fourteen days from date hereof, and do not again return during the continuance of the present war,” she was shortly banished from it.

Accordingly she went to join her husband in New York, where he had taken up his residence in a fine house on Broadway, next door to my Lord Cornwallis. She was received into exile there with much cordiality by the officers of the Royal Army, who had been familiar and welcome guests in her father’s home, as well as by the cultured and exclusive Knickerbocker gentry who still held their allegiance to the Crown, and stood for the King. She endeavored to be gay as she joined the fashionable society that each afternoon sauntered out to promenade under the avenue of lime-trees which shaded the square, homelike dwellings on Broadway, Wall Street, and around Bowling Green; or made visits in the

Dutch-built houses, with their patterned bricks, glittering weather-vanes, stoops and quaint corbel roofs. She drank British tea in the afternoons, and with the coming of summer gave garden parties and kettle drums among her dog-roses and sweet-williams, as merrily apparently as the rest. Whatever of heartache she bore, she hid bravely under a smile, taking the air in the fashionable drive to the Battery with as great dignity and state as any of the idle crowd in their velvets, laces and pin-cushion hoops.

The blue-and-buff uniform, 'broidered with gold, of the American army, with the epaulets his chief had presented him when giving him his sword, which Arnold wore on his arrival, was doffed for the scarlet and gold of the British, and among the social exquisites, in their high-collared coats, ponderous white cravats, pumps and frills, he cut as dashing a figure as the best of them. In Fraunce's tavern and Broadway hostels and coffee houses, he gambled to the clink of British coin, and over a bottle at private boards, or in the tap-room, the arch traitor drank toasts to the King as lustily as the staunchest Tory among them.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BITTER END.

A year later the staid “Rebel Capital” was afire with excitement. Crowds thronged the streets, every window was filled with eager faces, and all eyes were turned to catch the first sight of the Continental army, which, after a forced march from the Hudson, was entering Philadelphia, led by Washington and Rochambeau. The leaders, anxious to prevent reinforcements from reaching Cornwallis, had kept secret their purpose of marching against the British posts at York, the soldiers even being unaware of their destination until almost within sight of the place.

In the golden light of the morning sun, which flooded a deep-seated window in the Knox mansion, three women watched anxiously for the head of the column, Mistress Knox scarce able to restrain herself, so impatient was she to exchange glances with her loved spouse, who would ride on his Chief’s right hand. Thérèse, quivering with delight that she was about to behold the Chevalier de Rochambeau and the soldiers from her beloved France, waited restlessly beside Phyllis, who was strangely silent with deep emotion, knowing that she would soon look upon the great General, under whom the man she loved served, and of whom, too,

she dared to hope she might perchance catch sight as he was passing by.

Soon from the distance came a faint sound as of hoofs on the highroad, which every moment became louder and sounded nearer and nearer. As the women leaned forward to listen to the strains of martial music, which came faintly on the air, two men, meeting beneath the window, accosted each other. One of them, wearing the plain drab vesture and broad hat of the sect of the Quakers, as he unfastened the horn buttons of his straight-collared coat, said to the other:

“Friend, I am a man of peace, and meddle not with these carnal strifes, but I would fain ask thee, if thou hast knowledge of it, what is the meaning of this movement of the troops?”

The other, who was shrewd enough to make a good guess, replied:

“If it offend not too much thy drab piety to hear a carnal truth, know that the Generals are going to catch Cornwallis in his mouse-trap.”

Scarcely was the sentence finished, when the setting of the church bells ringing, and cheer upon cheer from the people, rent the air, as at the

head of Front Street appeared a glitter of steel. Onward came the march of feet, and mounted in advance of his men rode the noble figure of Washington, his military cloak falling over his horse's flank. The hair was pushed back from the square, massive brow, from which at intervals he gravely lifted the three-cornered hat in response to the plaudits of the people. A look of deep and unshaken purpose lighted his features; the lines of a relentless devotion to truth and duty beaming from the calm grave eyes. Although his sword of battle was by his side, and his arm rested on the neck of his war-horse, yet his countenance was softened by an expression of gentle beneficence.

At his left rode Henry Knox, who of all in the army perhaps came nearest to the heart of Washington, who had no son of his own upon whom to lavish his affection.

As they drew near, the welkin rang, and fair and tender women, some in tears and some in smiles, at the sight of the veterans of so many fights, scattered blossoms under their dusty feet. First came the war-weary Patriots in their worn-out clothing—"soiled with mud, stained with blood and rusted with storm"—which told of the struggles through which they had passed. Over them their poor, plain battle-flags, rent

with shot and grimed with smoke, floated as bravely as did the waving plumes and lofty standards of the allies, whose brilliant white silk was emblazoned with the golden lilies of the royal house of France, and who were led by Rochambeau, Lafayette and de Noailles—the officers in white and gold, the ranks in the handsome uniforms of the troops of King Louis' army.

Rochambeau's officers were men of noble birth, gay, valorous and fearless, who, with their heroic ideals, rode to battle and approached an enemy with the same well-bred courtesy with which they would have mounted guard over their young Queen in the palace of the Tuileries. With their elegant side-arms flashing in the sun, they were a worthy part of an army, the lustre of whose splendid deeds could be traced back for ten hundred years, beyond the Crusades and beyond Charlemagne, years in which they had gallantly achieved victory, or as gallantly sustained defeat, on almost every battlefield of Europe. Though descended as they were from the proudest and knightliest chivalry of Christendom, from generations of chevaliers famous in tilt and tourney, yet not one of them could sit a horse like the planter of Virginia, George Washington. Calmly he rode, unmoved by all the honors surrounding him, for neither the voice of adulation nor the din of battle could disturb the king-like

equanimity of his deportment. He went through all with the same gravity and dignity, deeming his cause as holy a war as ever red-cross knight drew lance for.

With eyes that gleamed in a fierce delight that they were about to meet and vanquish the old-time enemy of France, the allies, as they passed, aroused a frenzy of patriotism, a very passion of loyalty, in the bosom of Thérèse. Her eyes filled with quick tears, as she cried impetuously:

“Oh, Phyllis, my heart goes out to all French people!” and leaning out, she waved the white lilies in her hand, crying, “Vive la France!”

The Count de Rochambeau, the courtly old soldier, as he heard his mother tongue fall from the lips of the fair girl with the sparkling, flushed face, saluted, and doffing his plumed hat to his young compatriot, and holding it in his right hand, rode unbonneted past her window.

More than one soldier, as they passed, looked up at the chiselled features and golden hair of the girl at her side, who, with wet lashes and wistful eyes, was scanning the ranks with such dumb anxiety.

Suddenly, with hands clasped on her bosom, Phyllis saw her brown-haired soldier riding at the head of his dragoons; alas! she thought, her enemies and her King's! Raising his eyes, he saw her, and with a joy which would not be restrained, the bronze of his cheek flushing red, he gave her the look and smile which had won her heart so long ago; and then country and king were alike forgotten in the love which filled her soul. Bravely she smiled back, waving her kerchief gaily, though her heart seemed breaking, as with the tramp, tramp of feet he was lost in the moving maze of blue. Then only did the tears fall hot and fast.

Sinking down in the shadow, she wondered with a dull ache of pain how the sun could shine so mockingly bright, and the birds sing with such happy sweetness, when he might be marching to his death, to those cheerful strains of the distant fife and drum. In her heart she could only cry, "God guard him on the field of battle!"

Carried away by the patriotic fervor of the hour, and the spell of martial airs, the people streamed through the streets and out into the country beyond, cleaving the air with shouts and cheers, and the hope of liberty beat and surged through the heart of the nation. From the State House and every public building and house-top flags floated, and in every coffee house and tavern where toasts were drunk, the cry was:

“Long live George Washington!”

Yorktown, the British post to which the allied armies were proceeding, was a small village on the northern side of a long strip of land which ran between the James and York rivers, and which at that point was some seven miles wide, the banks on either side being high and the current deep and swift. The fortifications which Cornwallis, the ablest of the British generals, had strengthened, consisted of earthworks in the form of batteries and redoubts, with a strong stockade supporting the parapet in the rear. There, with the main division of the army, he was entrenched, the left flank covered by the mountains, the right by the waters of the ocean. On indications of the approach of the Continentals, the troops, who had been encamped on the open fields, were ordered to concentrate within the walls, and the outer defences were abandoned.

On September twenty-eighth the English commander became aware that the combined armies, by different routes, were marching toward his position, and two days after the place was completely invested by the allied armies, sixteen thousand strong. They encamped in a commanding position, and Washington, fixing his headquarters under a mulberry tree, its outcropping root, though rough and hard, served him at night as a

pillow. The American line was drawn up in a half-circle, about two miles distant from the British works, the French fleet cruising near, ready to cut off any help that might attempt to approach by sea.

Vanrosfeldt, knowing full well that the crucial hour was upon them, felt that the passing moments were big with fate, and his thoughts of Phyllis were pregnant with pain and apprehension. Every blow he struck was against the king who had her leal love and the country to which she gave her loyal duty. Might not, he asked himself, disaster to them mean likewise disaster to himself? Should this final charge, for which such deadly preparations were hourly being made, result in defeat and humiliation to the army in which her father had served, how would she receive one who came to her red-handed from the field, his sword gory with the blood of her countrymen? Would not his part in crushing the cause she held dear not harden her heart against him? Would he not be drummed out of her love forever, and the blue-and-buff, and one wearing it, be henceforth hateful in her eyes? Such thoughts were a very hell of torture! He remembered that long ago she had said: "I will not say you nay if it is not against my duty;" and the dreadful struggle imminent seemed less bitter to him than that which was making a battleground of his heart—the honor of the man striving to master the passion of the

lover—the fight unsuspected under the impassive, calm face of the soldier. Knowing her and knowing himself, he was conscious there would be but one course possible; and as the decisive moment drew nearer he never for a single instant swerved, but told himself that he would rather a thousand times fall dead in the trenches, which were creeping so relentlessly toward the doomed fortress, than win her with his manhood tarnished by even a thought of disloyalty or a moment's shrinking from his plain duty. So with face set as flint, he knew to the storming he must go.

Accordingly, with Knox commanding the artillery and Lafayette the light infantry, the besieging parties brought up their heavy ordnance and otherwise prepared for action. The evening of the sixth of October was dark and gloomy, and under its cover trenches were dug and entrenchments thrown up to within some hundred yards of the British lines, and shelter thus obtained from their guns. Three days afterward, with several batteries and redoubts completed, a general discharge of cannon was begun by the assailing force, which was kept up incessantly with red-hot shot and a continuous roar of discharging mortars. Rochambeau opening his batteries upon some British ships in the river, they were soon wrapped in a sheet of fierce flame. Day after day the trenches

persistently crept closer and closer to the British works, from which a deadly and brave resistance was maintained, until it was decided to carry the place by storm. On the evening of the fourteenth of October, both armies, French and American, each anxious to excel the other in intrepidity, marched unflinchingly to the assault, Edward Vanrosfeldt well up in front. At a given signal they rushed simultaneously and with fury to the charge. Over the abattis and palisades of a redoubt the bluecoats leaped so vehemently, that in an incredibly short time, and with but trifling loss, the position was taken. Rushing forward, the Frenchmen, with their old battle-cry of “Vive le Roi!” upon their lips, which sounded strangely enough among those fighting against their king, assailed the English breastworks, and swarmed into the trenches. The garrison there was stronger, but after an hour’s furious fighting, in which both sides deported themselves like tigers, one hundred of the allies lay dead—but the redoubt was taken.

The condition of Cornwallis was then desperate. He soon was compelled to arrive at the intolerable conclusion that the Continentals, backed by the power of France, were too strong for him. With the conviction that evacuation was the only course left, he resolved to attempt to cut his way through and form a junction with the army in New York. This was

secretly tried, and the river at Gloucester, about a mile distant, reached. Although the retreat was not yet perceived, and a portion of the men succeeded in effecting a crossing, the very elements appeared opposed to its success, for a perfect tornado rushing down made the passage of the stream fraught with so much peril that it had to be abandoned. All night long the storm beat upon them, and before dawn, by that strange ruling that men call “chance,” the unfortunate leader was compelled to bring back his discomfited and disheartened men.

At daybreak a hail of shot and shell fell on them, fiercer than any preceding it, from which it was plain there was no escape. Accordingly, before mid-day there came forth a flag to Washington, requesting that hostilities be suspended for twenty-four hours, when terms of surrender might be negotiated.

Washington, with his eye on the sea, whence at any moment a British fleet might appear to his enemy’s assistance, stipulated that the time be restricted to two hours instead of twenty-four.

Cornwallis was obliged to submit, and at an appointed hour, after a siege of thirteen days, his shipping, ammunition and stores were given

over to the united armies of America and France, and his army's fate sealed.

For the final ceremonial of the surrender, the allies were drawn up in lines opposite to each other which extended a mile in extent, involuntary pity and irrepressible admiration marking every face. At the head of the column was Washington on his white charger, and opposite to him Rochambeau on his powerful bay. Although the neighboring country poured in its inhabitants to witness the event, a deep silence prevailed as the conquered troops—crushed at last—slowly marched out of their entrenchments. With shouldered arms, the cavalry with their swords drawn, and as at Saratoga, with colors cased, they advanced to the sound of drums beating and bands blaring, according to an established rule of military etiquette, an English air—and which strangely enough chanced to be the quaint old tune, “The world turned upside down.” The capitulating troops passed between the lines of the two armies, one of which, they could not but bitterly remember, was England's hereditary foe, with whom she had fought valorously, and beaten, too, on many a bloody old-world field.

Arriving at that part of the line where the commanders had taken their

position, an officer, with uncovered head, apologized for the absence of Lord Cornwallis, who, he explained, was suffering from indisposition, which statement found ready credence under the peculiar circumstances. On his presenting to General Washington his Lordship's sword, a few of the soldiers nearest attempted to raise a cheer, but he who has been called "The greatest of good men and the best of great men," turning to them with stern rebuke in his eye, said, "Peace—let posterity cheer for us!"

The royal troops were then conducted to a field for the laying down of their arms, and the man who for over six years had fought, sacrificed and starved, waiting for that hour, said, turning to Vanrosfeldt and Knox, who, with Alexander Hamilton, had been by his side throughout the trying ceremonial: "The work is done!" and he handed back Cornwallis' sword, to be returned to the Earl, who at that moment was poignantly realizing that, despite the years of valiant struggle and the brave blood that had been shed, those fair Colonial lands were forever lost to his king and country.

As the momentous words fell from his General's lips, Vanrosfeldt laid his hand on the hilt of the sword at his side, knowing that at last the

blade was sheathed in peace; that no more crossing swords with England, he might once again crave the boon which was of greater worth and value in his eyes than even that dearly-won, blood-bought victory.

The delivery of the colors of the regiments immediately followed; and then and there the flower of the British army, and some nine hundred sailors, with reluctance and pain well-nigh unbearable, laid down their arms and gave up their accoutrements; for thus it was writ in God's wise purposes, which cannot err, and which it were futile to strive against, that instead of the flag of England—the flag of their fathers—there should float over those colonies the one enwrought from the stripes of adversity and the stars of hope, and borrowed from the escutcheon of Washington's English forefathers.

And then how bitter the truth of it all! How terrible the tidings as they spread from camp and court—from palace to cottage—through the length and breadth of England! America had won!

All over the world men's minds were so filled with wonder and admiration at the achievements of the Potomac planter, that soon upon the high seas sails were set to carry friendly salutations from kings and princes in

their distant realms; and the greeting from Friederich der Grosse of Prussia, which ran, “From the oldest General in Europe, to the greatest General in the world.”

CHAPTER XX.

JOY-BELLS AND BONFIRES.

The darkness of night lay over Philadelphia, and the dawn breeze was beginning to stir, when a man on horseback rode in hot haste down the streets, the clatter of the animal’s hoofs awakening the sleepers in the darkened houses along his way. Phyllis was suddenly roused from slumber by the figure of Thérèse in her night-rail rushing affrighted into her chamber, and exclaiming in a terrified voice:

“A courier, in breathless haste, has but just ridden by! His errand must be urgent at such a time as this! He seems to wear the blue of the army, and hark! Phyllis, to the cry of the watchman. He is calling something more than the number of the hour of night! Some news from the field must surely have come. He speaks, I think, in broken German, in words I cannot get the meaning of. I fear it is to alarm the city—that the

Generals are defeated—and soon the enemy will be upon us. Hearken, I pray you, for I know not his tongue.”

Throwing open the window, and leaning out to catch the next call, Phyllis listened in the chill night, in that hour that tests the courage most, and she heard the watchman cry:

“Basht dree o’clock—und Cornwallish ish dakendt!”

Then knowing that the cause for which her lover had fought so long had triumphed at last, she turned, and throwing her arms around Thérèse, cried, laughing and weeping at once:

“No, no! He is calling, ‘Three o’clock, and Cornwallis is taken!’

Thérèse, the war is ended; the bitter, cruel strife of years is over!”

“And now you are free to wed the man who loves you,” she answered coldly, forgetting in her jealous pain to rejoice that France’s arms were victorious, only remembering that her love for Edward Vanrosfeldt was as strong and hopeless as ever.

Soon messengers on the fleetest horses were speeding with the news to every hamlet, town and homestead along the quiet country roads of New England, and over the white turn-pikes of Virginia and Kentucky. There was a sudden hush of the spinning-wheels in the chimney-corners, and tired, brave women, who had fought the battles by the firesides, with tears of joy told the little ones, who could not remember their fathers' faces, that soon they would sit once more upon their knees. They ran from door to door crying that the war was over at last; that soon the plowshares, which had lain rusting, would once again cleave the furrows of the fallow fields, that had so long been unturned; that they and their children were free, for the fight for liberty was won!

Then there was wistful watching over the dusty roads, and longing looks towards the hills for the sight of a bluecoat coming home. By many a cabin hearth there were tears at the bitter cost of it all, from those who knew through the lonely silence of sorrow-laden hours, that those under the sod and the dew "they would only again in the light of eternity meet." In the cities the people streamed out into the streets and thronged the churches to sing psalms of praise and thanksgiving. Students in Cambridge, New Haven and all the college towns threw down their books and marched forth singing triumphal songs, and on every hill

and village green from Lexington to Charleston bonfires blazed. On the green peaks of New Hampshire and in the mountain gorges of Vermont, burning pine logs lighted up the overhanging skies, and in a joyful glow along the beaches, from Eastport to St. Augustine, beacon fires told those far out at sea that the enemy was vanquished.

Among the vessels which some time after left the shores of America Englandward was the *Vulture*, in which sailed Lord Cornwallis. The man standing on the deck beside him was Benedict Arnold, gloomily watching his native land fade from his sight, despised by both armies, and lost forever to his own respect. He had sacrificed honor, principle, friends, peace of mind and the one coat he could with honesty wear, only to be at last on the losing side. On going on board he had offered his hand in greeting to the captain, but Basil Temple, remembering André, and loathing dishonor, refused to take the traitor's proffered hand, even though he wore the red coat of the British.

In the gloom of defeat the prisoners of war were brought into the capital, to await events as arranged by the terms of capitulation. As they marched dejectedly to the quarters assigned them, with eyes filled with tears of commiseration for their misfortunes, Phyllis and Thérèse,

with arms entwined, again looked into the street. They saw a beaten army, without arms or colors, tramping heavily past! At the head of a column rode one with a look such as the Roman Valerian may have worn when forced to bow his imperial neck to his conqueror, Sapor the Persian, might step upon it to mount his horse. His defiant and unbroken mien fastened their attention, when suddenly, with eyes fixed upon the unhappy wearer of the battle-worn red coat, Thérèse, clasping Phyllis convulsively, shrieked:

“*Mon Dieu*, it is Raoul St. Leger!”

The hysterical cry reached the ranks below, and a dark, handsome man, in the uniform of a Brigadier-General, looked up. Swaying in his saddle, it was with difficulty that he kept his seat; but the recognition was mutual, and Raoul St. Leger forgot the misery of loss and the bitterness of defeat, for in that brilliantly beautiful face looking down upon him, with the amber lights in the dark eyes, he had found again the only love of his life.

Mistress Knox at once engaged her kind offices to bring them together. Her fondness for romance was always captured by a love tale, she herself

having refused the scapegrace son of Sir William Peppersell to wed the choice of her heart, Henry Knox, the obscure bookseller of Boston. Accordingly, although she had ever forbidden a redcoat to cross her threshold, not many hours had elapsed ere St. Leger appeared at her door.

As Thérèse stood before him in a filmy muslin gown of pink, with the dainty snares of riband and lace of other days, her eyes filled with an irresistible softness, he was well nigh overcome by the wealth of his suddenly recovered happiness. Claspng her hands, his senses spellbound by her beauty, he cried:

“An’ ye did not, as was falsely told me, fly with a soldier, one Vanrosfeldt?”

“Nay, Raoul, Colonel Vanrosfeldt is the betrothed of Phyllis Davenant, whom ye doubtless remember.”

“Why, my Thérèse, did ye leave no trace behind? Ah! the tortures of doubt and misery I have suffered these wretched months and years which one word could have dispelled!”

Unwilling to meet his eyes, her lashes fell, and stroking the bow-knot on her bosom, her cheeks as red as the scarlet of his coat, she said, with a pretty hesitation:

“Listen, Raoul, I will explain,” and looking up innocently, as she regained her composure, she related why she had thus done and what had taken place, apparently without dissimulation, and with the captivating graces he knew and loved so well, saying:

“It was the eve of battle. In the convent were quartered the American soldiers, and at any hour we knew we might be at their mercy. One of them, thinking me to be one of the Sisters, tempted me to fly with him on the fall of the city. I determined to escape from his persecution.

Hearing that Leon was about to be sent to France on a secret mission for the Church, to save myself, knowing how like we are, I resolved to act his part. In the barracks in the cloisters, where had lodged this man I tell you of, I found after the failure of the siege, the habit of a monk, which I suspected had been used as a disguise, mayhap to act as spy. Donning it, I fled to Montreal, thinking to find my parents there, only to learn they were still in Quebec, so deeming myself safer to

continue in disguise, I called myself Brother Jerome, and wandered with the troops; the rest ye know.”

“Who is this man from whom ye fled?” he demanded fiercely, his fist clenched, “I swear nothing short of cold steel will avenge you,” and with brow dark with anger he awaited her answer.

Her long lashes sank, and without a flickering of conscience for her falseness, she took a piece of paper from beneath the lacing of her bodice, and handing it to him, he read a page from the letter which Burr had written to Phyllis, and which she had found on the floor of the cell where it had fallen when the girl had fled from the convent. It ran:

“Before dawn to-morrow, or never, the city must be ours! Howe’er it falls out, I will no longer be amenable to a woman’s whim. With my duty here fully discharged, I will hasten to your relief, either in person or by messenger, and take you under my protection, whether ye will or no. Such devotion as mine must ere this have touched your heart, and doubtless I will find you not only willing but anxious to remain in my loving care until such times as means of carriage can be found to Boston or Philadelphia; for if there be a

post-chaise about this luckless town, it shall be confiscated to the claims of love and gallantry. So hold yourself in readiness—a few more hours—when the cloisters are wrapped in slumber and you shall welcome your ardent and impatient lover,

“AARON BURR.”

As he finished reading, not doubting her verity, he looked into her face with every trace of suspicion banished from his own, saying tenderly:

“Ah! my dearest one, I am torn with remorse that when you were fleeing from this man, I almost came to doubt your truth, but this Aaron Burr shall answer to me, if we e’er meet face to face!”

“Nay, Raoul, I entreat you, prove your love for me by seeking him not, for ‘tis my wish. Have I not seen blood enough in my short life, even as the Indian seer-woman foretold I should? Instead, carry me hence, far from this land. We will go to the one most dear to us, sunny, beautiful France, and there find joy and gladness, and forget the bitter memories of this.”

Mistaking the hot shame which dyed her cheeks at her own duplicity, for pleasure at the thought of that for which she pleaded so sweetly, he caught her to his heart, and kissing her red lips in a passion of joy at his unexpected and overpowering happiness, and thinking of the days and years to come, he promised rapturously:

“That or aught else within my power to grant shall be as you will, my love, my queen! Soon as my fair bride ye shall dwell in peace and happy love among the sun-kissed vineyards of the St. Leger domains of our sires!”

Ere long a frigate, with the colors of the victorious colonies at its masthead, was flying to France with the tidings of the conquest of her arms in America, and on deck was the Chevalier de St. Leger and his dark-eyed bride. After thirty days of racing with wind and weather it was with beating heart that Thérèse St. Leger watched the white cliffs of the land of her forefathers rise out of the distant horizon far over the blue sea.

The gallant ship had no sooner tied up at the seawall of Boulogne than, swift as the fastest couriers could carry it, the word went out, and

soon the land, from Calais to Marseilles, was ringing with shouts of triumph. When, as the Marquise de St. Leger, by her husband's side in the great Cathedral of Notre Dame in the Paris she had longed to behold, Thérèse heard choirs of priests in rich vestments chanting the *Te Deum Laudamus*, her heart swelled with pride and exultation. As she saw in the royal pew the idol of her girlhood, Marie Antoinette, Queen of France, and King Louis, surrounded by the chevaliers and noble dames of the court, her thoughts flew back to the picture of the beautiful *comtesse* in the *salon* of the Canadian château, and whose fortunes she once had envied; and looking down at her magnificent robe and gems, she felt proudly that the day was the crowning of her lifelong ambition.

No pang of regret for the double part she had played to those who loved her best, marred the supreme satisfaction of that triumphal hour! There came no thought of remorse that she had forced her brother to sacrifice his love and life-happiness to accomplish her own aims and purposes! Well was it for her on that sunlit day that nothing presaged another, a dark one, scarce ten years later, when shrieking she would be dragged from the same creaking tumbril that had borne her Queen to the gory guillotine. There was no foreshadowing that in that dreary orgy of blood a priest, gaunt and wild-eyed, in his bloodstained cassock, would rush

from the frenzied crowd to her side, and willing once more to suffer for her, offer to die in her stead as she wildly shrieked: “Save me, Leon, save me!” but be powerless to take her place as the knife fell on the neck of Thérèse, Marquise de St. Leger.

CHAPTER XXI.

MARRIAGE BELLS.

Over the colonies, at peace at last, the gentlest time of the year, the vernal spring, was again breaking into bloom. Nature had put on her most alluring and gracious aspect. The air was heavy with the scent of blossoms, and happiness and love seemed to breathe in the air and murmur in the streams. The breeze, as it blew in from the sea, was fresh with the spice of the deep pine woods and the spray from tide-washed beaches, and the chill winds of winter were but a memory. The leaves were budding full a month earlier than usual, and the grass was as deep and green as in English meadows. The delicate bloom of the “ground-sweet,” as it was called, already filled the bosky hollows of the woods and hillsides with its tender grace, as fragrant as when a hundred years before lovers of Plymouth had gathered the Mayflowers blooming around them; “Puritan

flowers” they called them, and the very type of Puritan maidens, modest, simple and sweet.

Over the sea, in an old Tudor mansion among the sweet fields of Kent, a solitary man, Sir Basil Temple, sat by his lonely fireside. On his return from active service in America he had found that by the death of his father the title had come to him, but it brought him little sense of elation that the broad acres stretching from the green downs to the sea were his patrimony. As he sat by the hearth-side, with his head leaning on his hand, his heart ached with the bitter pain of haunting memories, which made his life stretching out before him seem as dreary as the rainy April night. The mist blew up white from the ocean, the sound of the waves rushing on the rocks mingling with the dull patter of the rain on the casements, and the sighing of the wind through the trees and wet ivy on the walls. The melancholy hoot of the owl seemed but the echo of his solitude in the silence of the rambling, empty house. He thought bitterly that the great halls and stately rooms would never hear the sound of the footsteps of the gentle English girl he loved so well; that the garden paths would never ring with the gay laughter and young voices of merry children—his children and hers; that no lullabies would ever be sung for them in his own old nursery-chamber, where his mother’s

remembered voice so oft had hushed and soothed him to sleep in the soft, grey English twilight long ago; and he groaned aloud, "God help me!"

On that same evening, as the sun was setting over American woods and valleys, a goodly and brilliant company was gathered in the drawing-room of the Knox homestead, in the capital of the new-born nation. A soft glow of candlelight filled the stately simplicity of the white and gold paneled room, and fell upon the faces of brave men and gentle women. The hearth, in the warmth of the unusually early spring, no longer aglow with the blaze of the winter fire, was transformed into a green altar to Hymen, the perfumed incense from the censers of a bank of white blossoms filling the air. In front of it, in linen bands and surplice, with prayer-book open at the marriage ritual, stood the venerable Bishop White, as holy a man as ever wore a gown. His words of godly cheer and prayers to the "God of battles" had been as an anchor of hope in many a storm-wracked hour on the turbulent seas of past conflict.

Before him was a soldier in the full regimentals of a Colonel of the army of the young Republic. Above his head was draped the flag with its thirteen stars and stripes, for which he had well and nobly fought. His blue eyes, and brown, unpowdered hair made him a marked figure even

among the gallant men assembled. A moment's expectant hush, in which not a fan waved, not a gown rustled, and there was a glimmer of flowing silken garments—a footfall soft as a moonbeam, and Phyllis stood beside him. In a simple white satin frock, with pearls a-glisten around her slender throat, her cheeks flushed pink and her eyes bright with the wondrous light of happy love and a heart at peace, she was gracious and wholly adorable in the flawless loveliness of full womanhood.

Beside the divine stood President Washington, grave and calm, in black velvet, pearl-colored satin and wig; and by his side, in delicate lace kerchief and cap, and gown of lavender brocade, stood Mistress Martha, his wife. On their right was Alexander Hamilton, and by his side his bride of a few weeks, little Betsy Schuyler. Her eyes were as black as the velvet of the General's body-coat, and 'twas well that, beside his tall form, the extremely high heels of her dainty slippers added an inch or two to her five feet two inches in height. Her furbelowed petticoat of yellow satin seemed to dim the lustre of the hundred candles shining throughout the rooms, although its amber gleam was softened by the fall of filmy lace, which had been bought in Flanders for the wedding gown of her great-grandmother Van Rensselaer. Her husband wore a suit of puce-colored velvet, close fitting, exquisitely

cut and trimmed with a profusion of fine lace. Extreme elegance of attire sat with a peculiar fitness upon Alexander Hamilton, with his sensitive, patrician face, ease of bearing and charming, high-bred manner; his figure, though delicately fashioned, being full of dignity and repose. Near to them, with placid countenance and still comely figure, stood Mistress Phillip Schuyler, who, with the General, her husband, had come by easy stages from Albany.

Mistress Knox, standing a little behind them, was almost as happy-looking as the girl on whose golden hair she had fastened the sweet-scented orange blossoms a half-hour before. They had required so much care and skill in the adjusting that she did not hear Anne Temple, with a rosy flush, whisper to the bride-elect:

“When I said your brown-haired warrior had caught my fancy, ‘twas but in pique, because I thought the man to whom I had given my heart unasked cared naught for me, but only yester-even he pleaded his suit so humbly I know he never could have guessed my heart has long been only his. So kiss me and give me joy, for there are no happier maidens than we two in all the colonies.”

As all assembled, the minister began, "Dearly beloved brethren," and as the words of holy wedlock fell in the soft evening air upon the hearing of those to whose ears the hiss of bullets and roar of cannon had been more familiar through the past years of strife than the chime of church bells, the fair bride plighted her troth in happy joyance and perfect trust. To the words: "Phyllis, wilt thou have this man to love and to cherish?" she answered in her stately beauty and gentle gladness: "I will till death doth us part," and Edward Vanrosfeldt and Phyllis Davenant were man and wife.

With her husband's first proud kiss warm upon her lips, she bent her cheek, all pink and sweet with blushes, to receive the embraces and felicitations of those who had sheltered her in the forlornness of the years that had passed. Conducted to the state dining-room, with the smiling guests gathered at the board, they sat side by side. As, in a murmur of voices, amid the feasting and merry toasting to their future happiness and weal, the happy bridegroom stood, glass in hand, to respond for his bride, memory recalled to his mind another feast in an old French château, in a walled Canadian town, where, seated by her side for the first time, he had pledged to the "silken chain of love which might one day hold him in a sweet captivity which he would be loth to

flee," of which, he said, they that day saw fulfilment.

With the fading of twilight into night, the bridal robe was laid aside, and as anon the doors of the mansion flew open Phyllis Vanrosfeldt appeared in rose-trimmed hat and coaching cloak ready to follow her husband to his home. The company of guests and time-tested friends had gathered in the hall, and around the walls circled an ebony background of the shining black faces of the servants, the men staring in wide-eyed delight at "Young Mist'is," and the younger negresses, with a show of white teeth, simpering in an excitement which threatened at any moment to break the bonds of strict decorum.

Leaning on her husband's arm she went out into the star-studded night, the air soft with the scent of bursting buds and coming summer, her path strewn white with blossoms. Down it she passed under the crossed swords of his gallant troop, which lined the way, the young moon turning the true blades, which had been so often red with blood, into an arch of light above her head. At the gate, ready for their service, stood Mistress Washington's state-chariot, drawn by four horses, the body-servants from Mount Vernon in the red and grey of the Washington livery. The horses were gay with white favors, the long streamers from

the whip in no wise being allowed to endanger the dignity of the sable coachman by so much as a smile. As Phyllis mounted the three steps by which the blue-cushioned seats were reached, a tiny embroidered slipper, which only Anne Temple could have worn, flew out into the dusk, and catching on one of the great leathern straps on which the body of the coach was hung, nestled there and went, like the wearer's sweetest wishes, with them.

A crack of the beribboned whip, a lurch of the coach, and to those in the dazzling light of the doorway, the soft, pearly mist from the river enfolded them, their good-bye coming back with the hush-song of a thrush in the dim retreat of the magnolias and the faint notes of drowsy robins in the fringing woods.

Gathering her in his arms, the silver horn of the moon giving her an almost unearthly beauty, her husband whispered in an ecstasy of happiness, in a tenderness untellable:

“My wife at last!”

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| Transcriber's note:— |

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| The cover design mentioned in the introduction was not |

| included in the scanning for this transcription. |

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| Punctuation errors have been corrected. |

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| Printer's suspected spelling errors have been addressed. |

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| Page 24 'garison' to 'garrison' |

| 'subaltern of the garrison' |

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| Page 24 'madamoiselle' to 'mademoiselle' |

| 'Mademoiselle is late.' |

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| Page 40 'than' to 'then' |

| 'Mistress Devenant then whispered' |

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| Page 132 'shoud' to 'should' |

| 'should be endangered' |

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| Page 142 'illy' to 'ill' |

| 'whose slight form ill fitted' |

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| Page 207 'accomlish' to 'accomplish' |

| 'that he could accomplish' |

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| Page 246 'strugle' to 'struggle' |

| 'clasped in a death struggle' |

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| Page 375 'ruth' to 'truth' |

| 'how bitter the truth' |

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[End of Crossed Swords, by Mary Wilson Alloway]