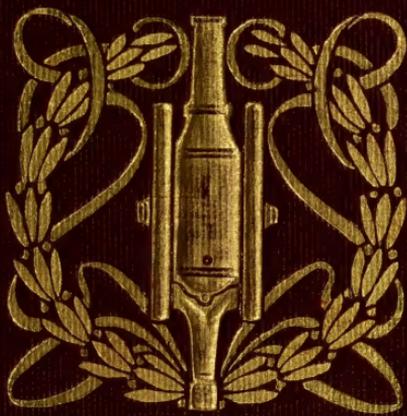


A
Beautiful
Rebel



By
Wilfred Campbell

Mrs. Thos. Harris.

Christmas, 1909.

A BEAUTIFUL REBEL

A Beautiful Rebel

*A ROMANCE OF UPPER CANADA IN
EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND TWELVE*

BY

WILFRED CAMPBELL

TORONTO
THE WESTMINSTER COMPANY
LIMITED

Copyright 1909, by
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

PREFACE

It has long been one of my ambitions to write this tale or somewhat like it, re-creating in romantic form the early vicissitudes of fortune in the life of my native province. I have long felt, as the result of a close study of old Upper Canadian History, that no portion of our continent contains more fascinating and tragic material for the novelist, than does the triangular peninsula bounded by the Great Lakes, the Ottawa River and the Upper St. Lawrence.

Here, our early settlers, many of whom for principle forsook homes to the south, found a bracing and temperate climate and a land, a veritable garden of the gods. Here Simcoe, that wise and practical idealist, scholar, soldier and statesman, founded a province which happily has become the nucleus of a vaster British Canada, and nourished it in the stability of British law and the arts of peace. Here, later, that other great saviour of Canada, Brock, during the summer and autumn of 1812, in the face of fearful odds, held this valuable outpost of empire for Britain and the Canadian people, and, in the struggle, laid down his life as a brave soldier of the Empire.

When our history is truly written, as it must be some day, it will be found that the Canada of to-day owes more than she can ever repay to the memory of this great soldier and man. In a dark hour for the country, when few remained steadfast, when the secret

traitor and open enemy had perverted or cowed those who should have been loyal; and when many despaired: he, by his firmness of purpose and decisive action, drove back the overwhelming tide of invasion, and made possible the birth and development of a new, young and independent nation, under the British Crown on the northern part of this continent.

Happily, all of the old bitterness has long since passed away, and our Anglo-celtic brothers in the Republic to the south will be as interested in the struggle of the Canadian people as an element in race-development as the Canadians have been in that of New England, Old New York, Virginia or Louisiana. To the many readers of Hawthorne, Howells, Cooper, Cable, Mitchell, Miss Johnston, and Wister, I dedicate this slight addition to the historical fiction of our continent. To the British over-sea, but in the Empire I present these pages, in the hope that they will realize that the true strength of Empire depends not on trade or commerce, not on force or political diplomacy; but on the common loyalty of her children at home and abroad to the highest instincts and traditions of a great people.

Ottawa, Canada, Feb'y, 1909.

WILFRED CAMPBELL

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE ENVOY	9
II. THE INN IN THE FOREST	14
III. THE PIONEER PREACHER	20
IV. THE AMBUSCADE	32
V. THE DAUGHTER OF A REBEL	39
VI. THE PLOT	53
VII. PIONEER HOSPITALITY	61
VIII. MR. FOX'S LITTLE GAME	70
IX. IN THE ENEMY'S HANDS	80
X. PIONEER WORSHIP	88
XI. THE ESCAPE	94
XII. ANOTHER BATTLE IN THE FOREST	100
XIII. THE ROAD TO CASTLE MONMOUTH	109
XIV. A WARM RECEPTION	118
XV. THE LORD OF CASTLE MONMOUTH	125
XVI. AN ADMIRAL ON HIS OWN QUARTER- DECK	132
XVII. DIANA PHILPOTTS	140
XVIII. THE NIGHT MEETING UNDER THE OAKS	150

XIX.	HOW LYDIA DISARMED TREASON	157
XX.	THE TWO GIRLS IN THE FOREST	167
XXI.	THE RIVALS	179
XXII.	IN WHICH FATE PLAYS MR. FOX A CRUEL TRICK	191
XXIII.	IN WHICH MR. FOX PERSISTS	198
XXIV.	THE WARNING	207
XXV.	SHOWING HOW CAPTAIN FOX WENT FORTH TO SHEAR AND CAME BACK SHORN	214
XXVI.	ETHERINGTON CONFRONTS DESPAIR	222
XXVII.	BROCK	231
XXVIII.	IN WHICH MR. FOX INTRIGUES WITH CAREY, AND IS WORSTED	243
XXIX.	MR. FOX TAKES HIS REVENGE	253
XXX.	QUEENSTON HEIGHTS	264
XXXI.	THE LOST PACKET AGAIN	277
XXXII.	CAREY DISCOVERS A PORTION OF THE TRUTH	285
XXXIII.	THE DUEL	293
XXXIV.	ETHERINGTON DETERMINES TO KNOW HIS FATE	301
XXXV.	ETHERINGTON CHOOSES	307
XXXVI.	ETHERINGTON DECIDES HIS FATE	314

A BEAUTIFUL REBEL

CHAPTER I

THE ENVOY

IT was in the evening of a beautiful day in the early summer of 1812, a year most memorable in the history of the fortunes of Canada, that a horseman might have been seen riding slowly along a rude road, or rather blazed pathway, which wound among and over some forest-clad hills and swamp-lands on the Canadian shore of Lake Erie.

He was young and distinguished-looking, slightly above the average height, with a handsome, sensitive face, over-refined for the struggle with the rough life of the frontier in which he was now travelling. His carriage and dress both showed him to be of the military profession, but not of the rude pioneer type, rather that of the environment of courts and camps of the old world.

In spite of a stern manner, rather habitual than natural, and his upright, soldierly bearing, there was about the young man's handsome, youthful countenance, when at rest, a suggestion of thought, of secret self-conference and melancholy, which indicated some inward influence which saddened his nature; though the pride and repression of the man of rank forbade that he

should show it openly. This was just sufficient to give character to, and to render interesting a personality which was otherwise frank and light-hearted.

Now, however, he was weary and anxious, as he was fearful that he had lost his way, and, for several reasons was desirous of reaching his journey's end as soon as possible.

Beautiful was the wild aspect of nature about him, appealing impressively to his slightly pensive spirit, as it continuously revealed itself in glimpses of far-stretching lake and marshy shore, this giving place in turn to shaded avenues and groined arches of vast primeval forest, under which his horse wended its way over needles of the pine, as though in the nave of a great cathedral. By this time, however, the traveller had become so worried that he barely more than noted that the country grew ever more bleak and lonely, and the road more difficult to follow as he proceeded.

He had ridden since early morning from the village of Newark, lately the military capital of the Province, and even at the time of the opening of this story, more than a hamlet; and though he was bound on a mission of a confidential nature, had foolishly, following the whim of over-confident youth and the daring of the old-world officer, refused the offer of a guide made by the official at that place.

"I came from York alone," he had returned in answer to the offer, "and it shall not be said that one who campaigned in Spain cannot follow the windings of a Colonial backwoods road."

But now, as he moved slowly along with growing

misgiving, he heartily wished that he had accepted the services of the Indian who was to have been his companion and conductor. As he descended into a dark gully under the trees, where the path, which the horse seemed instinctively to follow, lost itself in the increasing gloom, he carefully examined the priming of his pistols, and began seriously to meditate on the possibilities of his having to spend a night in the forest without any provision for himself or his horse, which, high-strung and restive, now began to show signs of the effect of the long and wearisome journey. His mind now reverted to unpleasant recollections of tales which he had heard at York, of the prevalence of wolves and other wild beasts, which at this time of the year were unusually ferocious. He also remembered, in the isolation of this solitude, that though the savages of the Province were disposed to be loyal, being of the Mohawk nation, and those of the neighboring country to the south broken in spirit since the defeat of the schemes of the great warrior and chief, Pontiac, yet the growing disquiet caused by the recent rumors of war between the young Republic and Britain was rapidly developing into what was soon to become a sort of guerilla warfare on the borders of the lakes. He realized that this part of the Province which he approached, was so close to the enemy's frontier as to be most probably the theatre of secret and open invasion and depredation on the part of both the Americans and those of the redmen who were their allies.

This conviction was not made more comforting to the young soldier by the knowledge he possessed that a

number of the settlers were said for many reasons to be disaffected, and some even suspected of being secretly in league with the Americans for the conquest of the country; and he had been warned that the section he was now approaching contained the headquarters of one of those disaffected, if not actually rebellious factions. Therefore, as the evening declined toward night, and he seemed to penetrate deeper and deeper into the dense mazes of the forest, in a place where, though he was unaware of it, the road crossed a neck of land, his suspicions and misgivings rose to the point of alarm at his lonely and helpless position.

Since the early morning, after he had left the more thickly settled country in the vicinity of Newark, he had rarely seen a sign of a human habitation, save a stray settler's cabin in some sparse clearing in the forest or on the lake shore, and few persons had he met or overtaken, he was not sure which, on his tedious journey.

The first of these was an Indian, who in the middle of the morning had risen like a shadow at his side, as he threaded a gloomy pine forest that skirted a deep ravine. The dusky savage, though of a lithe and panther-like movement and appearance, showed a friendly face when he lifted it to the other, as he strode beside the horse for a few moments, keeping pace with its advance; and the rider, with the reserve of the soldier, merely let his hand slide toward the pistol at his holster. But the Indian following this motion by a sort of intuition, only said, pointing to his breast, "Mohawk, friend, love Great Father;" and after walking or rather

gliding beside the horseman for some time in a dignified, sedate silence, reiterated the word "friend;" then, in a thickly wooded declivity, disappeared as suddenly and mysteriously as he had appeared, and was swallowed up in the lonely gloom and inky depths of the dense forest round about.

CHAPTER II

THE INN IN THE FOREST

WHEN the surprise, occasioned by the Indian's sudden disappearance had passed, the young soldier's mind reverted to the latter's personality, which was so utterly different from what he had been led to expect. His experience of the natives had been one only of casual observance, as they but rarely visited the Capital, when they moved with silent mien, alien from the place and its inhabitants.

He was surprised to see that this Indian was dressed rather as a trapper or guide might have been, very simply; and that the only weapon he carried was a light gun, with a narrow barrel. This last, the soldier in him perceived, while he realized that the aborigine seemed more a mere denizen of the wood than the romantic befeathered and bewampummed savage which he had expected.

It was while he was pondering on this and the savage's appearance and disappearance in so dramatic and shadowy a manner, that he emerged from the pine forest, under which he had been threading his way, and suddenly saw before him a wide far-stretching arm of the lake, smiling and pulsating, blue and illusive in the

sunlight; while between him and the forest which partially hid its wind-stirred bosom, stood the rude inn or stopping-place, where he had been told it would be necessary to halt for rest, and to refresh both himself and his beast. So once more urging his horse, he soon drew rein opposite the tavern door. The building was a rude log hut, standing in the centre of a rough clearing, with a single door and window in its front, the latter without glazing, and a chimney built of sticks and mud, which rose slightly above the centre of its low sloping roof of grooved, hollow logs overlapping each other, and from which a faint curl of blue smoke was now ascending. Near this building was another of a similar appearance and structure, but with no chimney or window, which suggested that it was a store-house or shop of some sort, in that lonely spot in the wilderness.

As the young soldier instinctively cast his eye over the water before alighting, he saw with some astonishment, a small schooner or large lugger, spreading her canvas to the fresh breeze which had begun to ripple its surface. While he gazed in surprise, she disappeared into the open lake around the slope of a wooded bluff; and he fancied he saw an American flag run up to her peak, ere she dream-like swept from his vision.

With a startled exclamation, which he immediately regretted, he sprang to the ground and gave the bridle to one of two men who had been seated on a rude bench beside the door. The men were smoking short pipes, fashioned out of corncobs; and as the one who seemed mine host of the inn came forward to the horse's

head, he knocked the dead ashes out against the beast's shoulder, and pocketed the pipe, while he surveyed the traveller and his horse with an eager curiosity, which, if vulgar, was but natural to persons reared in the lonely surroundings of pioneer life in the backwoods settlements. He was a short, thickset man, with a full beard, and was a fair type of the lower class of his day and environment. But just then he was mine host of the only inn to be found in all that lonely territory—and he played his part accordingly.

"I want a meal and some food for my horse," said the young soldier, as he turned toward the door.

"You can have both," answered the other, "but our fare is only for poor folks. Since this war has threatened we have,"—he was going on in a long apology, but the traveller stopped him.

"Give me what you have," he said shortly and sternly, "only provide my horse with your best, and have a care, for he is inclined to be restless."

"I guessed as much, sir," and he examined the animal with the hand of an hostler. "You will have come far?" he added, with a slight tone of interrogation. As he spoke, the other man, who had also been examining the rider and horse with a curious gaze, came forward. He was of a lank figure, with a long, crafty face and a furtive eye, in which lurked a low cunning, cloaked in an appearance of sly humor.

It was with an obsequious manner, which thinly veiled a coarse satire, that he addressed the young soldier. "A fine bit of horseflesh that, I reckon; none its equal this side of the States."

“He has had hard usage,” returned the other, tersely, ignoring the intended flattery.

“Come far?” The sly inquisitor’s smile and insinuating tones jarred on the traveller’s nerves, as he answered shortly, watching his interrogator’s crafty face, “From Newark this morning.”

“From York to there, I reckon,” continued the man in a sort of half question.

The young man merely nodded, and remained silent.

“And where might you be bound for?” continued the other, with that freedom of the pioneer, and that amazing inquisitiveness which so irritates the soul of the European in the New World.

The traveller hesitated. He liked neither this man’s appearance, nor his sly insinuation, and he resented his familiar manner of seeking knowledge about what was none of his business.

But he was asked a direct question, and he felt that to refuse to answer might be construed as a desire to hide his destination, and so might create suspicion, so he answered as before, shortly:

“To Castle Monmouth. Do you know of the place? Is it far from here?”

At his answer, a quick, shrewd glance of intelligence flashed between the two men. But the one who had asked the question paused to take a slow pull at his pipe, ere he drawled:

“That we do. Ain’t the owner fair king of all the blamed country hereabouts?” and there was an under current of spite in the man’s manner and words, as he

added, "We ain't like the Yanks. We're still under the rule of King Garge."

"What do you mean?" There was a sternness in the traveller's manner which made the other step back.

"Oh, nothin', he's main friendly when he ain't otherwise; but he's got a tidy lot of King's land, most as large as the State I come from. But I hain't got nothin' agin him. Fact is I'm bound for his place myself soon. I've got my eye sot on some of his land."

"Why? Does he sell it?"

"Naw! Don't you know the Colonel? He jest gives it away. But you hev to be on his soft side to get it. But you hain't after land then?" he added slyly.

The stranger started at his mistake; and with a cleverness not to be expected, parried the question with another.

"Then you are from the States, are you not?"

"Ya'as, but sometime back," replied the man suspiciously, taken aback in his turn; "since the war. My folks was Britishers, they was—not that they was any too well treated and got their desarts. Now, as for me, I was well edicated, I was, and made a school teacher down to the States. But here there ain't no show for book larnin', except for those 'Piscopalian and Presbyters, and Romans. They have the hull gol darn show."

"Ah, the Government hasn't appreciated your scholarship," observed the young man, with a sense of the ludicrous aspect of this New World doctor of learning.

"That they didn't; though I say it, I'm as clever at figures, and parsin', and spellin' as any one in these here

parts, and I kept a singin' school one whole winter down to Jersey. Though I'm lyal as sez it, it's only a Scotchman or an Irishman who can keep school here. There's no room for the nateral born genus of the nateral born son of the sile."

"Then why do you not cross the line?" asked the other.

"Because, darn me, as sez it, Silas Fox is lyal, spite of how things is goin'. But say, stranger," he asked quickly, "you wouldn't care to trade that beast of your'n, now would you?"

"No," returned the soldier, "he is not for sale;" and so saying he turned with a contemptuous indifference, and went toward the house.

The other looked after him for a moment, then he slapped his thigh with a sly chuckle of cunning and self-satisfaction.

"Ye don't know me, but I know you," he ejaculated in a spiteful soliloquy, "and Silas Fox can lick tarnation off every darn subject of King Garge, and the day is comin' when King Garge and King Monmouth and Gov'ner Gore, and the whole jam pack will be swept out of this here country and the Stars and Stripes flyin', and then Silas Fox will have his share of a tidy mess of land, and a fine gal for a wife. But I must be off, for I'm goin',"—and he shook his fist in the direction of the inn door,—“my starched friend, to prepare the way for you.”

So saying, or thinking, he lifted a light pack, which lay near, on to his back, and taking up a gun, stole like that beast whose name he bore, into the absorbing deeps of the neighboring forest.

CHAPTER III

THE PIONEER PREACHER

THE young officer approached the rude building and stood for a moment in the open doorway, gazing with some interest on its equally rude interior. Two small windows, in opposite walls, one unglazed, and one covered with a bit of coarse, thin, white cloth, which kept out the inclement weather at the chill seasons of the year, gave a dim light to an apartment which would surprise the Canadian of to-day, but which was only too common in those early pioneer years of the infant colony.

A square place in the center of the house, under the opening in the roof which served as a chimney, was set apart to contain the fire, which was built on a sort of hearth. Here an iron pot was simmering over the embers above which it was suspended; and a woman now and again stirred its contents with a wooden ladle or spoon, when she was not engaged in placing a rude meal on a table under the open window. The floor of the apartment, which comprised the whole building, was made of rough logs hewn flat on their upper surface. The walls were of logs, plastered with clay and moss, and there was no furniture save of the simplest and rudest. A few stools made of blocks of wood, about the fire or at the table, served for seats. Several children, half-naked, played on the floor with a dog,

which rose and growled as the stranger entered, while they stood, finger-in-mouth, gazing at him in childish awe. A space at each end of the room was allotted for sleeping places, one for the family, the other for chance travellers, benighted at this primitive inn. These places were raised slightly above the floor, and heaped with the soft branches of the pine, spruce, cedar and hemlock, which gave a pleasant odor to the otherwise close atmosphere of the place.

It was an interior which, though lacking in all that refinement demanded, yet provided, no doubt, on many a bleak night a simple comfort to the hardy pioneer, who, travel-worn and weary, and sheltered from the inclement storm, lay or half reclined, wrapt in a single blanket or a fur covering, upon its branchy couch, and watched the showers of sparks shoot upward from its flaming cheery hearth, which gave both light and heat to the apartment.

The woman of the house had a careworn, faded appearance, pale eyes and hair, and dark, sunburnt face. She wore a simple homespun dress and no foot covering. At her invitation he entered and was about to take his place at the rude table, when the doorway was again darkened, and a voice came in a benediction:

“The Lord be with all in this house.”

“Amen to that, Parson Webb,” cried the woman, her face lighting up with a homely welcome; and forgetting her other guest, she went forward and received the preacher with a warmth that showed her appreciation.

He was a small man, somewhat over middle age, with

hair heavily sprinkled with gray, and a wiry frame which endured much and was inured to travel. He had a kindly, gentle face that mingled a wise shrewdness with its spiritual expression. His pleasant gray eyes could grow rapt in religious emotion, or twinkle with a kindly humor. Parson Webb, as he was called, was a Methodist circuit rider, one of those worthy, earnest men who carried the gospel, and with it much consolation, to the rude homes of the settlers throughout the lakeside region, and penetrated into the remote wilderness beyond.

What Presbyterianism and Anglicanism have been to the pioneer West during the latter half of the nineteenth century, Methodism was to the older Upper Canada of its first three decades. The Churches of England and Scotland both accomplished noble work in their different spheres, especially in the education of the youth, as well as in the ministration of religion. But the Methodist preacher was their forerunner in the more remote, more sparsely settled districts. Needing no orders of command beyond the order of the Spirit to spread the Gospel, these earnest men penetrated everywhere, and brought the comfort of the simplest tenets of Christianity, so dear to the poor and humble, into the lowliest places; and beside the primitive firesides of the forest-dwellers, gave hope, inspiration and comfort to living and dying, whom no other form of Christianity could then reach.

Much has been truly written by Parkman and others in praise of the early Jesuit missionaries among the Canadian Indians; but, strange to say, the heroic work

of these early missionaries of Protestantism has been sadly overlooked by our writers. A type of such a class was this man who now advanced into the apartment and, with his presence, seemed to bring so much pleasure and comfort to the poor female inmate of that lonely cabin.

After enquiring in kindly and thoughtful terms as to herself, her husband and children, for each of the latter of whom he had a few words of kindly admonition or pleasantry, and who met his advances with no shyness or fear, he addressed the young officer with a certain homely dignity, which, while it showed the self-possession of one who is accustomed to confer more than he receives, yet revealed a recognition of the other's profession and rank.

The other, to whom the newcomer appealed in an unexpected way, rose and returned his salutation in a manner, which, if more formal than that of the preacher, showed that he appreciated his presence, and in cordial tones requested that he would share his meal.

"That I will, and right gladly, sir," said the preacher; "for, as this good woman knows, I am of those who believe the laborer is worthy of his meat;" and so saying, he followed his companion's example in seating himself at the table, while the woman bestirred herself and, with many apologies hastened to supply new dishes and certain dainties which, though but rude, she knew her guest would appreciate.

"This is indeed a lonely part of the country to travel in, sir," said the preacher, addressing the young man, "and I fancy you are but new to it."

"It is," returned the soldier, "but so far I have found my way. Men of my profession learn early to rely upon themselves and love to encounter new dangers and difficulties alone."

"And men of my calling," returned the other, "learn to lean upon others, and to face troubles and trials not alone, but trusting in a higher power."

"You speak the truth, reverend sir," said the young officer, appreciating both the truth of the rebuke, and the gentle manner of its administration, "but my profession is a hard one, and self-reliance is one of its first and most difficult lessons—but here comes our meal."

As he spoke, the woman who had been stooping over the pot at the fire, approached the table with two wooden bowls, each containing a savory mess. It was simply a mixture of meats and vegetables, but it seemed acceptable to the nostrils of the refined European, and he was about to attack his share of the viands, when the little man raised his hand, and said solemnly, "Let us, sir, first ask a blessing on what we are about to receive."

The other paused and bowed his head, while the woman hushed the children and stood silent, as the preacher, in fervent and quaint terms which, though new to the young officer, did not offend, as he had apprehended, his sensitive, cultured ear, besought a blessing on the household—father, mother, children, and the stranger beneath the roof. Man of the world as he was, and by social and other prejudices averse to any but the forms of the Established Church, there

was somewhat about the whole action and personality of this man, his quaint manner of expression, and the simple earnestness of his petition, covering, as it did, all the wants and needs of the rude household so as to sanctify them, and with so kindly a wisdom and thoughtfulness running through it all, that the young soldier was surprised to find himself entering into the spirit of this primitive service and realizing, for the first time, a domestic and everyday character in religion which was new to him.

When it was ended, having been punctuated by fervent "amens" from the woman, he found himself somewhat sobered in mood, and less inclined to converse as he resumed his meal.

But if he was so disposed, not so was the preacher, by either instinct or inclination. He was in the wilderness, not only to instil religion, but also to comfort and solace; and this he proceeded to do while he ate, directing his conversation now to the woman and anon to her husband, who had come in during the prayer; and it was not long before the whole place was radiating with the cheerfulness and quaint humor which he seemed to bring with him.

He appeared to know all the people in the remote locality, their joys and their sorrows, and he carried, besides, a stock of news and information which made him welcome everywhere, though occasionally his religious ministrations were not.

The presence of the young officer, however, on this occasion placed a certain restraint on the conversation, and the man and woman retired with some of the chil-

dren out of doors, so that the travellers might converse, if they cared to, in quiet.

When they had left the apartment, the preacher turned to his silent companion, and asked in a totally different tone of voice:

“You are from York, are you not?”

“Yes,” returned the soldier shortly.

“From the Governor, and on his commission?” suggested, rather than queried the other, significantly.

“How know you that?” answered the young man sharply, as he rose to his feet.

“I mean no intrusion on your affairs,” returned the preacher. “I would only warn you, and perhaps save you from trouble, and even danger.”

“Trouble! Danger!” cried the other. “What mean you?”

“Are you not Captain Etherington of the Governor’s staff? Have I not seen you at York? And it is well known that none goes this road from that source, save to one place hereabouts.”

“And that place?” sternly questioned the young man.

“Castle Monmouth.”

“How you have guessed my mission, if indeed you have,” answered Etherington, earnestly, yet with some heat, “I know not; but I command you, I entreat you, in the Governor’s, in the King’s name, in the cause of freedom, for the safety of this Province, that you will do nothing to injure or oppose my object.”

“None need preach loyalty to me, young sir,” said the other calmly. “I am true to the King and the country, even if I do not see eye to eye with all his

representatives, and though I am not blind to faults and petty tyrannies of some of their officials, I merely meant to warn you, to help you. Your secret is safe in my keeping, though I doubt if it is a secret in these parts by now."

"How can such information have leaked out, and have been carried so far and so soon?" asked the young officer, in amazement, and abandoning his reserve in the presence of this man who knew so much, and whom he believed to be at least kindly disposed and, so far as he could judge, loyal, "I left York but two nights ago."

"By means of spies, sir, spies, and false friends. Not all of His Majesty's enemies are outside of his councils. At a time like this, when the whole country is threatened, when the common people are speculating on which side will win, can you wonder that there are men, even in high places, who, without any principle, are anxious to be safe with President and States, in case the King's cause should go down. Then in a country like this, where every man travelling past a door is either a post or regarded as one, where there is little to observe or occupy the attention save the silent ways of nature, men become keenly alive to all that goes on in the life about them, and they grow quick to draw conclusions."

"This is inconceivable," returned the young man, warmly. "But you, sir, what do you think of the present serious situation? You travel this country widely, do you not? What do you think will be the outcome, and how stands the loyalty of the people?"

"You have a right to question, you hold the King's

commission, so I will speak plainly. I have, as you suppose, advantages whereby to learn much of the prejudice and opinion hereabouts, and I will answer your first question straight. I have, as a loyal subject, and knowing the folk of this Province, no doubt of the final issue, that the loyal cause will triumph; though this war is likely to be a serious one and may last for years. But the greater portion of our people are loyal, and true to those institutions which their fathers, and many of themselves, forsook so much to maintain. There are too many United Empire Loyalists in this Province to let it get into the hands of the Republic without a hard struggle. I come of that stock. My father was killed on the King's side at Bunker Hill, and my mother early instilled in our minds the old British traditions, and I can safely speak for the greater part of our people. Then the heart of New England, as that of New York, is not in this war. They prefer peace, and a chance to trade with our people. So that we will likely reverse the conditions of the last war, when England was but half-hearted, and the Colonies fighting for their independent existence, as we will now be."

"Then you seem to forget that you have the British troops on your side this time, without which you could not hold out a week," returned the other with a slight asperity of tone.

"Very true," admitted the preacher, simply; "do not think that I underrate the King's army. As you say, sir, it is our safeguard. But I also value the patriotic spirit of a devoted people attached to their homes to

encourage and aid that army. But there are evils also, and while I have said that the majority of the people are loyally inclined, there are many, especially in these Western parts, lately from the States, and many disaffected, and a few of them rightly so. These are open to the advances made by the traitor, the conspirator, and the spy in the country."

"Do you mean that the country is not wisely governed?" asked the young man.

"I do, and yet I don't," returned the other. "It is not for such as me to criticize those in high places; but the truth is we have had only one Governor, who really controlled the situation, and that was Simcoe. Were he here to-day, this trouble might be more safely tided over. Official evils, of which there are far too many, would not have existed. There are too many men holding office who have got the Governor's ear and hold it, keeping him apart from the people, so that a petition can rarely reach him, and a real grievance is often made to appear as the vagary of some fool or the attack of a rebel. Then I am, you know, a Methodist, but the people not of the Established Church or of the Roman faith feel that too much power is granted to these two Churches in both Provinces. We believe that Church and State should be separated, and that all religions should be placed on the same footing. Then all through this region there is too much land given to favorites and office-holders, who secure grants, which should belong to the people—not that I want to be a grievance-monger," he added, "but I know what the people think."

"I thank you for your frankness," said the young officer. "I am, as you perhaps know, not long out from the Old Country, where my life in the army has prevented my studying over much of civil affairs. But I find the present Governor a brave, wise soldier, and a kindly gentleman, one desirous of doing his duty in governing this country by settling it, and holding it for his King. If it is as you say, that there are those about him who keep the emoluments to themselves, he can scarcely be blamed, seeing these men are also of the people, and represent them in his councils. You would not surely have him govern without his advisors. But the hour grows late, and I have my journey before me."

"You will find it the worst portion, too," said the preacher significantly, "and, if I might make so free, beware of those whom you may meet on your way. I have said enough. May the spirit of the Lord go with you," he added devoutly.

"Thank you," said the young soldier. "Do you know aught of one Silas Fox?" he questioned as he rose.

"Aye, and a cunning, self-seeking man he is, who professes overmuch of that sanctification I would fain were in his breast. He is one worth watching. He shows a double front, and continually sneers at Colonel Monmouth. It is also said that he is not so well considered over the border, whence he came."

"And are such men tolerated here?" cried the young man.

"Oh, you will find some strange characters here," re-

turned the other. "Under the shadow of the forest men have to mingle with social conditions which are not of their choosing."

"Such conditions must always be," cried the young soldier and offering his hand to the other he left the house.

Shortly afterwards he was once more riding along the forest path, continuing his journey; but he had much to ponder over. He was by nature thoughtful and introspective, and he had only just commenced his Canadian experience, and the whole personality, the plain common sense, the wisdom and tolerance of the backwoods preacher, had impressed him strongly and favorably.

CHAPTER IV

THE AMBUSCADE

THE afternoon had passed slowly and uneventfully, and hour had succeeded hour as Etherington journeyed, now under deep gloomy woods, now by vast marshy opens skirting the lake shore. The monotony was relieved at times by the necessity he was under of now and again dismounting, and leading his nervous and high-strung beast around or through some quagmire or stream, which impeded or crossed his path. The roadway, also, as the hours passed, became less a trail, and more and more a series of blazes on trees, or was only to be detected by broken limbs of shrubs; a task for an experienced woodsman, but exceedingly difficult to our traveller, who now began, as the evening approached, to doubt the possibility of proceeding much farther.

Once he had heard a long, low, significant howl, or moan, that seemed to penetrate to him there, from the distant deeps of the forest, and made his heart beat faster with a sudden apprehension, as he remembered the stories he had heard of wolves. But that had died away, and as he again came nearer the shore, and the road became easier to follow, his thoughts took another channel, and reverted to his past life in the old World, and his short campaign in the Peninsula before his exchange to his present position, as an extra aide-de-

camp to the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada.

This had been his father's dying wish, and the Governor, who had been the latter's military companion under the Duke of York in that disastrous campaign in the Low Countries, had brought the young man out as his military attaché. Captain Etherington, for so we may name him, was possessed of considerable fortune, but though an only son, owned no estates; and he was now an orphan. He had always understood his father to be the younger son of an old Lincolnshire family, but there had been some mystery connected with him, and as Etherington now rode along out there, so remote from all the vast whirlpool of social influences, he pondered deeply on what it might mean. He had often wondered why there had been so little communication between his father and his people; and when other young men of his regiment had spoken of their families with pride, and had invited him down to their country places, he had once or twice tried to approach his father on the subject of his family; but the latter had been a stern, rather morose man, who kept much to himself, and who, since his retirement from the army, had lived in chambers in London, mixing only with those of his own set, a small military clique, whose leader was a prince of the royal blood. He had, on these occasions, evaded the question, and the young man never quite understood what was peculiar about their family history.

His mother had died when he was very young. He had a miniature of her, showing a beautiful woman, from whom he, no doubt, inherited his delicate features.

His father had died suddenly while Etherington was abroad in Spain, and the mystery still remained unsolved. Here he was now at the other side of the world, and by that parent's wish, taking part in the beginning of a young Empire, and yet amid all the influences of a new and virgin environment and the physical struggle for a day to day existence, which is so deadly in its destruction of all interest in the past, amid all the difficulties of his present position, and the rigorous duties it imposed, this strange silence as to his ancestry, this mystery pursued and haunted him. He had wondered why his father had desired that he should come to Canada, but now he was convinced that it had something to do with this secret.

When, after his father's decease, he had felt free to do so, he had written a letter to the head of the house, to which he understood he belonged, announcing the former's death; but up to the present had received no answer to his communication, which circumstance, he felt, rather added to than cleared up the mystery which surrounded him. Ancestry has ever been a natural pride to the British gentleman, associated as it is with rank, position and personal honor; and it wounded and worried Etherington to realize that he was cut off from an exact knowledge of his family line, and that he could get no nearer to the problem which confronted him. He had written to his father's lawyer, now his own, a respectable solicitor, the head of a firm of long standing, asking for any papers or other information which might relate to his father or his family; but beyond the fact that he had become heir

to his parents' personal effects, including a certain amount of plate, jewelry, and other articles of interest and value, some of which belonged to his mother, he could discover no sign of any document or other clue to what he desired to know. He had, personally, searched in every conceivable place where such evidence might exist, but all without avail. Could he have so lowered his pride, he might even have gone down into Lincolnshire, and bearded his supposed relatives in the old Hall of the same name as the family. That of Etherington was one of remote nobility and landed position for centuries, and raised to a baronetcy by the late King. Thus he might have discovered what gulf it was that had separated his father from his kin. He must, he realized, have cousins of his own age, and this idea appealed to his sense of loneliness, as was natural. But he had not done so; and here he was now, embroiled in what appeared to be a long and bitter war in the New World, and he realized that there were chances that he might never see the old land again. He might even die without solving those doubts as to his origin which now and again began to take strange shapes in his brain. He now, however, made one resolution, that so soon as an opportunity offered itself, he would, without revealing his suspicions, question the Governor, his father's old friend, and discover through his aid, some clue to the mystery.

As he made this resolve, he emerged from a dense woodland, where the shade of the oak, maple, beech, elm and basswood, under which he had just passed, gave place to a low shrubbery, and there in front of him lay

a vast stretch of marsh-land, beyond which shone, like a silver shield, the waters of the great lake.

He reined in his steed instinctively for a moment. Never, in all his Old World experience, had he dreamed of the possibility of such vast opens as nature provided here, in all the luxuriance of delicate leafiness, bursting blossom and wide water. It was a revelation to his nature, hitherto influenced by other more conventional ideas, and a thought had sprung up in his mind during the journey, which now grew even stronger. Why not, he mused, do what others are doing, and become a dweller in this vast and beautiful land? Here were thousands of acres for the asking, and in spite of their primitive conditions and surroundings the people appealed to his fancy. Had the preacher already influenced him, or was it his secret doubt which was beginning to build a barrier between him and those of his own class? Certainly he already felt that there might be something in the attitude of the people against this over-aggressiveness of might and official influence. Then he could not but contrast the natural life about him with the over-strained conventionality which held Old World society in its toils. Certain it was, at least that, while he was no less the aristocrat at heart, and while his loyalty was untouched and his social prejudices as strong as ever, his pride, affected by his secret which preyed on him, was almost unconsciously bringing him into closer affinity with that great unconventional, and more natural, if less cultured, life about him.

He remained in the place for a short time, lost in a condition of reverie, which, it must be admitted, was

more to be expected of a thinker or naturalist, than a trained soldier, accustomed to prompt action; when he was suddenly brought to himself, with a quick perception of his unfaithfulness to his duty, by a sight which surprised, while it also alarmed him. It was the coming once more into his line of vision of the schooner which had startled him in the other bay at noon. She now flew no ensign, but he realized that she was either the same vessel, or else her twin sister. He felt certain that she was a Yankee ship, and wondered what she could be doing along this coast, if she was not in touch with confederates, and carrying supplies and information to and fro? Perchance she was even landing men and arms, for this was a very important point, lying as it did, between the eastern and western districts of the Province.

While he watched her, she slowly slipped across the patch of sunny waters, and while he quickly backed his horse into the shadow of the wood, she moved on, borne by the brisk breeze which stirred the white foam at her prow, and once more rounding a point in the land, disappeared from his anxious vision.

He now felt confident that he had made a discovery of the greatest importance; but realized that he had blundered in questioning the men at the inn regarding the boat. He thought of the man, Fox, with his secretive manner, sly questions and innuendoes, and of the preacher's warnings, with some uneasiness. Supposing, he mused, he had come into a hotbed of traitors. The preacher had hinted as much at the tavern. If this were true, what chance was there for the holding of this most important portion of the Province? Had

he acted injudiciously in refusing a guide? He suspected so, now that it was too late. Revolving all this in his mind, he once more put his horse in motion, and descended the hill, where, to his relief, the road, for it was now more like one, showing that he was coming once more to the vicinity of a settlement, took a turn inward from the shore, and ran along the borders of a deep gully, by which it wound away from the lake and the bare hillside.

Now he had become once more the keen soldier, alert and watchful, and he carefully examined his pistols to make sure that they would not fail him.

He rode on deeper and deeper, as it seemed, into the sunset forest. All about him was as still and lonely as though the virgin isolation had been inviolate since the beginning of time. There was a smoky, resinous odor in the air, and the great trees brooded about the path in a peace which only lonely remote fastnesses such as this can hold.

On and on he went, and as he travelled, his fears and suspicions began once more to vanish, and his anxious care to relax into a hope that after all he might reach Castle Monmouth that evening, though late. As this thought entered his mind, the road took a quick turn at the top of a wooded hill, and as his horse entered the defile and began to descend the slope, there rose out of the growth near by, a loud cry as of a wild beast. The horse, recoiling in terror, plunged forward and struck some unseen obstacle that obstructed the path, and before he could prevent himself, Etherington was thrown violently forward, and as he struck the ground, lost consciousness.

CHAPTER V

THE DAUGHTER OF A REBEL

THE locality in which Captain Etherington's journey had come to so sudden and unexpected a termination, constituted in itself a growing settlement in that part of the Province where two prominent points or headlands jutted out into the shallow and often tempestuous waters of Lake Erie.

Among those who had chosen it as their place of residence were three personages, who were regarded as the most important individuals in this remote community. The chief of these was Colonel Monmouth, of Castle Monmouth, as his place was called. His close friend and near neighbor was Captain Philpotts, a retired naval officer, who, with the Colonel, headed the Loyalist party in the neighborhood; that is, he made a very bold and enthusiastic lieutenant, where the other more remarkable personality led in all matters civil and military.

But among a portion of the settlers, and chiefly among those who were non-conformists or known to be dissatisfied with the present conditions, or doubtful or lukewarm in their loyalty, the leading family was one of the name of Bradford, the head of which, while standing aloof from the other families who were regarded as aristocratic, was looked upon as the leader of

the malcontents in the locality. Ambrose Bradford had removed with his family, consisting of his wife and one son and daughter, from New England some time after the close of the Revolution, and had secured a grant of six hundred acres of land in a beautiful spot skirting a cove at the side of one of the headlands.

Here he had settled and dwelt in a lonely morose manner of life, taking little interest in the clearing of his land, wrapped up in a cloud of abstruse speculations regarding society, and otherwise alien from the life about him.

Here, his wife, who luckily was of a more practical temper, had toiled to make a home, assisted by two faithful negro servants, a man and his wife, whom they had brought over as slaves, but who, receiving their freedom under Simcoe's régime, had refused to leave their mistress, who depended so much upon their aid in clearing and tilling the land and carrying on the household.

Here the two children grew up, the boy into a silent but restless youth, tall and slight like a young Indian. With somewhat of his father's morose character, he found it more natural to his instincts and pioneer habits to excel as a hunter and supply his family with game or to adventure on the lake, than to till the land. The girl had likewise grown up into young womanhood, inheriting her mother's instinct for toil and her father's intellectual unrest, and love of reading. She was, like her brother, slender and dark, but with a beauty which was unusual and compelling in its rich, wild, almost startling quality. Lydia

Bradford had inherited from her father, who was direct in lineal descent from one of the famous or infamous regicides who condemned Charles the First and afterwards fled to the New England Colony, a strong spirit of uncompromising hostility to the Tory idea of government and social caste. Young as she was, she had even as a child imbibed his extreme ideas concerning church and state; and nowhere could there be found a more intensely disloyal contemner of the whole principle of king, aristocracy and state church than this beautiful young Roundhead of the commencement of the nineteenth century.

It may not generally be realized that there may be another kind of aristocracy than that which recognizes rank and monarchs. But there is; and it was the instinct of this class or order which, to a great extent, was influential in the founding of the New England Colonies; and it was from a stock possessing this peculiar heredity that Ambrose Bradford and his children were descended.

He was a tall, dark man, who rarely conversed, save when roused on the subject of his peculiar tenets regarding society. On other occasions he showed a dignity and reserve, the natural outcome of a shy and abstracted nature, which marked him out from those about him, and which, added to his superior attainments and holdings of land, gained for him the appellation, among the commonalty of his neighbors, of Squire Bradford,—just as many of them dubbed his noted antagonist, “Lord Monmouth.” This, however, had no effect on this remarkable family, who lived simply in

their own manner and affected no claim to superior recognition other than their naturally overbearing character commanded. Their only attitude toward their better class neighbors was one of shy reserve, which was really a form of pride.

The son, who had had little or no education, save in the experience of woodcraft, showed an instinctive dislike for those who made any pretense to gentility, and it needed little to change him into an active antagonist toward all which pertained thereto. In the case of the father, however, in spite of all social prejudices, it was a different matter. He could not have explained why he had come back to dwell under British rule; and it certainly was a mystery, one of these problems of seeming inconsistency of character and principle so hard to solve, save from the standpoint that the man was a misanthrope and restlessly weary of all governments. Something had probably disgusted him with the life in New England, and he had fled to this place farther into the wilderness, without realizing that the hated arm of king, or lord, or church could reach out to disturb his ideals of human individuality and personal liberty in this remote fringe of society on the edge of the American forest.

In truth, Ambrose Bradford was a dreamer, and like many recluses, in his way, a mystic, as so many of the best of his early New England compatriots were, a sort of aristocracy of the spirit, too proud to bend to any, be it God or man, but having in them all the qualities of the spiritual tyrant, that hardest and most unyielding of all despots. But away from his former

environment of decaying Puritanism, Bradford had lived with his books and his theories, and here he might have lived and died as harmless an idealist as ever uncrowned shadowy kings, had he not been influenced by another personality. The individual referred to was one of the stormy petrels of those times, and in a small way, the forerunner of a far greater, a more sincere, and yet as unfortunate a man, William Lyon McKenzie.

This man's name was Henry Struthers; and as this is rather the drama of a few lives than a history of the period, it will be merely necessary to paint his character in a few words. He was an enthusiast, and an orator of a sort; his enemies called him a quarrelsome demagogue. But he was something more, and he might have become of value to the community had he not come under the sinister influence of Joseph Wilcocks, a man who had for years been sowing systematically the seeds of dissension and rebellion. Struthers was, in his way, a strong and restless character, who with personal ambitions, saw clearly what he could not cure; something which, sad to say, ever exists in this imperfect world, and especially on this continent of new communities and rude conditions; a system in state and country, whereby a few men were aggrandized at the expense of the whole community. This condition of things, which they exaggerated in the minds of the people, gave Wilcocks and his associates a lever for their agitation for a change; and this change was nothing less than the bringing of Canada under the rule of the American Republic.

But Struthers and Wilcocks over-estimated their own power and that of the Americans, and underrated the loyalty of the majority of their fellow-citizens, and the strength of the British forces then in the country. Struthers was a sort of relative or rather connection of Bradford's; and soon by means of his eloquence and arguments made the latter one of his most ardent supporters. Thus Bradford's house had become known as a head-centre of rebellion in its incipient stage for that section of the country, which, as the war became more and more assured, came to be regarded seriously as a possible point of invasion, as it was on a part of the lake where the enemy might land with impunity. Here it was that Struthers, as Wilcocks' lieutenant, stayed when visiting the community, and it was in connection with this very matter that Etherington had been despatched to Castle Monmouth.

Struthers, like all schemers and plotters of this nature, had local agents, who aimed to carry their theories into practice, and such a man was Silas Fox, to whom we have already been introduced in a former chapter of this history, and who was his most active assistant in this district. This man, for purposes of his own private ambition, desired the possible change. He had several schemes in his crafty brain to carry the matter locally to a head and convert the result to his own private advantage.

The Bradford place was a plain, square, timber-built dwelling, larger than common, and having roof windows facing the water, with an addition running out at the back containing the kitchen, some upper rooms and the

outhouses. There was in this building an attempt, as in some of the better class pioneer residences, to arrive at, if not pretension, at least dignity and family seclusion. While the approach to the place entered the common yard at the rear, where the kitchen door became the public entrance, the real front of the house opened on to a small paled-in garden, which was carefully kept and stocked with old-fashioned herbs and quaint flowers, such as hollyhocks, larkspurs, southernwood, and other blooms now regarded as common, but at that time so pleasing to the refined instincts of the more delicate womanhood of the period.

In this garden, where the last year's growth was now shooting up from the roots in luxuriant green, was an old seat, made of a rude rustic work, over which a vine was now bursting from bud into leaf. Here, on this afternoon which had seen Captain Etherington leave the inn, Ambrose Bradford sat, book in hand, now poring over a page, then again lifting his eyes to take in the pleasing aspect of marsh-meadow and gleaming lake beyond. Near him, in the open doorway, sat Lydia Bradford, her darkly beautiful eyes and hair gleaming in the misty air, as she spun yarn on a small old-fashioned spinning-wheel, of that quaint kind our grandmothers and great grandmothers used, and which had been brought with many other relics of new and old world life from their former home in New England. Now and then she would pause in her work and in the hush of the magic hum of the whirling wheel would speak with her father, in low but earnest tones, and there was that in their manner of conversation which

showed a deep undercurrent of sympathy between father and daughter. Then she would resume her work, with deft delicate fingers drawing out the fleecy rolls of carded wool into fine tense yarn, revealing as she toiled a snowy whiteness of wrist and arm beneath the neat simple sleeve of her woollen gown. After they had sat there for some time, the girl busy with her spinning, and the other in a dreamy reverie enjoying the afternoon, a man came silently out of the doorway and stood beside them watching the girl at her spinning. It was Henry Struthers, the agitator. He was tall and spare of frame, slightly stooped in the shoulders, with a studious attitude; but he possessed a keen face, with large, strongly marked features, and a sensual mouth which weakened the lower part of an otherwise powerful face. His eyes looked out from under bushy penthouse brows which proclaimed the orator, and his hair, which was long and luxuriant, hung over his forehead, giving him a poetical appearance of careless self-forgetfulness.

He was much more youthful looking than Bradford, though really older than he appeared, as he stood abstractedly studying the young girl, who lowered her gaze beneath his all too ardent scrutiny; for deeply as this man was engaged in his scheme for a Canadian republic, his heart as earnestly coveted the girl who sat so coldly demure and engrossed in her work before him. But his wooing had been, so far, not so successful as he had desired. Her father was not averse to his advances in this direction, but the girl, while she admired his ability as a speaker, had no attraction

towards him as a man, and he, with that tact in love which he seemed to lack in politics, perceived that it would be the wiser course not to hasten a definite encounter with his fate, but to await a more favorable development of her inclinations in his direction; in short, to play a waiting game, letting time, as he fondly hoped, perform a magician's transformation in his favor.

One thing, however, irritated him; she could not be brought to have any faith in the success of his plans to free the country from the tyranny which, she had been taught, held it in bondage. She openly showed that she disapproved of his attempt to drag her father and brother into the vortex of the agitation. It was this that she had been discussing with her father in the conversation of a few moments before.

Bradford broke the silence by saying, "Lydia has again been attacking your plans, Henry. She sees no good in your schemes to save the country;" and as he finished he smiled a half-humorous challenge to the other, who stood in rapt contemplation of the girl's dark eyes and delicately rounded contour of face. This challenge, however, from whatsoever quarter, never failed to rouse this energetic, if self-deluded man; and coming from the girl through her father, it touched him especially at a weak point in his armor, and he retorted at once with some heat and firmness:

"Then she will soon have reason to change her opinion; because I have news, just arrived, that we are to have a sudden attack all along the frontier; and so many Canadians will rally to our cause that the war

will be over almost immediately and the country in our hands; so that it cannot fail."

"Then," interrupted the girl, rising and confronting him, "if that is so, why not wait and let the Yankees conquer the country if they can, and not drag people like my father and my brother, who have so much to lose, into a struggle which, if it fail, means not only ruin and loss of property and liberty, but even of life itself."

A more sanely balanced man would have perceived the force of her words, but Struthers was of those who never see the side of a question which it is not to their interest to see, and he answered her quickly and in a tone of rebuke.

"Would you consider it honorable and patriotic to sit still and not strike a blow for freedom, when the hour was ripe for it?"

"As for that," retorted the girl, with some heat, "I am as strong a hater of monarchy as you are; but I cannot but feel that you over-rate the evils which beset us, while you magnify the advantages of a change. Why not stay as we are, and strive to bring about a reform in the country by more gradual and peaceful means? Is there as much liberty and fair play over the borders as you expect to enjoy here? If so, why did father leave there?" and she looked at each of them in turn enquiringly.

"Hush, girl," cried the elder man, "or Mr. Struthers will think that you have been consorting with Colonel Monmouth and his royalists. Women cannot be expected to understand such matters. Leave them to me

and to our friend here, who, I doubt not, may be President before he dies;" and he waved her argument away, while the other man flushed slightly at the prophecy and allusion to his gifts as a leader.

But the girl was not thus to be put aside. "I do understand such matters!" Her young face showed her feeling. "Have you not taught me that we are free to reason questions for ourselves; then why should not women as well as men have an opinion at a time like this, when we have so much at stake?" Then she turned sharply to her middle-aged wooer, "I understand more than you suspect. What is the meaning of that American vessel that has been coming here off and on ever since the Spring opened? Do you intend to turn my father's farm into a battle ground, and have us all murdered, and our house burnt over our heads?"

"Girl," cried Struthers, losing his presence of mind, "what know you of this? Has Robert or have you been talking?" he questioned sharply of Bradford.

"No one has said anything," she returned coldly, ere her father could reply; "but do you think I have not eyes or ears as well as you? Do you imagine that all your preparations are not known to all the country round? Then," she added, "what is that man, Silas Fox, with his sly, dishonest face, hanging about here for? Certainly for no good! I detest that man, father," she cried, turning to Bradford bitterly, "as much as I do"—here her sentence broke off in a half sob, as she questioned "Why do you tolerate him here as you do?"

"Be quiet, Lydia," said her father. "You take

things too much to heart," he added appealingly. "The man is not of our kind, but he is clever—"

"You don't appreciate Silas as you should," added Struthers, trying to keep his temper and convince the girl of his superiority; "he's a valuable aid to the cause; you don't understand his ways as I do."

"His ways!" she answered with a fine scorn, as she addressed her father. "I should think a girl might well suspect the ways of a man like that, who has the impudence to make love to her."

It was Struthers' turn to be astonished and alarmed. He was now as pale as he formerly had been flushed. "What?" he began.

"I've got no more to say, Mr. Struthers," she answered, turning her back upon him and giving him the snub complete. Then placing her wheel within the doorway, she proceeded to examine some flower-roots beside the garden walk.

When a pretty girl turns her back upon a man there is nothing he can do, if he has a weakness for her, save to bear with her mood and wait patiently until it changes, laying it all to a strange perversity of her nature as inherited from our first mother, Eve.

But this particular wooer stood there with some misgiving. Her last words had given him a terrible shock, not only as regarded his heart, but also in the foundation of his self-esteem.

It was all very well to preach equality of man, as he was forever doing, and to quote the French Revolution as one of the great events in human history. It was all very well in the abstract, and he, Henry Stru-

thers, had felt his bosom swell with conscious power on more than one occasion, when he had, in burning rhetoric, roused the feelings of his audience to a sense of the unnatural curse of human caste and precedence. But here it was another matter, and fate had struck him a nasty back-handed blow in furnishing this cruel, practical application of his daily preaching. Equality was very good in theory, it sounded well in platitudes; but when such a character as Silas Fox dared to lift his obsequious ambitions to the level of the woman whom he, Henry Struthers, honored by his advances and intentions, whom he virtually regarded as his own possible possession, it was a very different matter. The proclaimer of man's equality and the hater of aristocracy and caste was suddenly absorbed in the wounded feelings of the self-lover and the mere man.

"The impudent hound!" he muttered to himself, as he strove to hide his emotion. "A fellow of his class,"—for Mr. Struthers was now driven to admit the possibility of such a thing as class—"to dare!"

Yet, as he pondered the matter, his indignation mingled with caution. This same Silas Fox was very much, too much, he now mused, mixed up in his plans, and could, if he willed, and thereby risked his own, have placed Mr. Struthers' more elegant, more discriminating neck in close proximity to a running noose with Justice at the other end. No, Mr. Struthers had to realize the sad fact, intolerable as it was to have to come to such a conclusion, that, great as had been the insult to his own personal vanity, Mr. Fox was too valuable an ally to part with just yet. "No," he

pondered, "he would curb his feelings, but a day would come when—"

Just then a negro lad came out of the doorway, and said, "Mistah Fox is heah, an' ses he's got important news for yeh."

CHAPTER VI

THE PLOT

FOLLOWING the little bomb which Lydia had thrown into their midst, the name just announced fell with no pleasant sound on the ears of the two men, especially upon those of Struthers, who was wounded in the very deeps of his personal vanity. But their common realization of Fox's part in their plans had paralyzed both; moreover the suggestion of important news was one which could not be delayed at this sharp crisis in their affairs, when personal scruples and relations were for the time being set aside in the face of grim national undertakings, so that Bradford, who had remained silent since the girl's revelation, merely looked at his mentor for his cue. The latter nodded in the affirmative, and Bradford curtly bade the boy bring Mr. Fox into the garden.

Now, though this place was regarded by her as her own special sanctuary, sacred to her and her father or a favored one such as Struthers appeared to be, yet after what she had in the heat of the moment revealed, if Lydia had consulted her own inner feelings, she would have left the two to receive their fellow-conspirator in the solitude which the place afforded and they so much desired. News such as they now anticipated was of a nature for only a very few ears in an undertaking like

theirs, and even in a household such as Bradford's no one was trusted.

She would have left them under ordinary circumstances. Heretofore, close as she had been to her father, she had never forced herself upon their councils; though in a vague way she had an inkling of what was going forward. But now, whether it was destiny forcing her for some reason, or that with a woman's vindictiveness against Struthers and Fox for daring to approach her against her inclinations she desired to punish them both in this manner and make matters generally unpleasant for them, she now resolved to stay and, if possible, be present at their meeting. Perchance it was a spice of Mother Eve in her which held the old curiosity attributed to the sex; at any rate, she did not leave the garden; but as Fox came through the doorway with an obsequious manner of deference that was overdone, she went quietly on with her casual examination of a bunch of sweet-william, which was in a healthy condition of spontaneous growth and did not need her attention.

Fox, who never felt really at ease with Bradford and would have preferred to have made his communication to Struthers' ear alone, was disagreeably surprised at the girl's presence. No doubt he would have liked to have interviewed her alone, as he too had social ambitions of a kind in his dreams. Realizing, however, that the conference could not begin until she had retired, he saluted all present, each in turn in a manner that was ludicrous, and then proceeded to pick his teeth with a small penknife, while he inspected the land-

scape with an assumed air of indifference to the fact that Struthers was wild with impatience to receive the news he had to convey.

After his assumption of indifference had been maintained for some time, and the lovely obstacle to their conference had failed to remove herself, even Silas became anxious and amazed. He looked at Struthers, and the latter looked at Bradford and frowned. All felt the awkwardness of the situation. Both lovers, if we might call Silas one, wished her away, yet neither dared offend her, and the demure and coldly indifferent maiden lingered and enjoyed their discomfiture.

At last her father raised his eyebrows severely and said:

“Lydia, Mr. Fox has a communication to make to Mr. Struthers and myself.”

The girl waited to examine the larkspur plant over which she had been leaning, before turning to her father with a superb air of indifference to the presence of the two men, as she said:

“Well, what is it to me if he has? If he has anything important to say, he has my permission. Why doesn't he say it?” And she turned her attention to a neglected portion of the vine over the seat, which evidently needed pruning.

If a gunshot had been fired into their midst, it could not have astounded the two uncomfortable conspirators more than did her speech. For a moment there was a painful silence, then Mr. Fox said:

“Well, Henry, I had best go for the present, or will you come out?”

“No,” cried the girl, “you shall not, Silas Fox; or if you do, you shall not come here any more.”

This roused her father. He rose to his feet.

“Lydia, girl, what do you mean?” he asked excitedly.

“I mean,” she returned sternly, but with a cold composure which astonished her auditors, “that what Mr. Fox has got to say to you or to anyone here he had better say now in my presence, or he shan’t say it at all.”

“But, girl,” cried Bradford, with some indignation, while the other two looked at each other and at the sky in a fog of amazement, “this is a matter for men. It is a deep affair, and one of much danger, and not for the knowledge or meddling of women.”

“I don’t know about that,” she answered. “As I have said, I have a general knowledge of all that is going forward. I have strong suspicions also of much more, and I am not going to let you or Robert be dragged into anything which I cannot help you in. You are old and not strong, and my brother is, already, too much under certain influences. As for affairs which are only for men”—and she looked askance at the others—“I suspect that I am the most capable, sincere Republican in this garden, and I am not going to have you sent to jail, or perhaps killed, without knowing the cause. I have no faith in anything which cannot be discussed openly.” Here she eyed Mr. Fox in a manner that made that gentleman inwardly curse his unlucky stars and all obstinate women.

“She may be right, Henry,” said Bradford to his leader. “She is my daughter, and I will be her surety.

She is a Bradford all over, so you may as well let her have her way."

"No one doubts Lydia's loyalty to the cause," said Struthers carefully. "However, you had better tell us what you have to say, Silas," he added, looking at his follower.

The latter was cursing his fortune and the girl's determination, while he could not but admire her spirit, as also did Struthers, each thinking in his heart how he would enjoy curbing that high will, which it might give an ordinary man some difficulty to restrain.

"Darn her!" muttered Silas, under his breath; for never was a man less ready to speak than he in the girl's presence, and for many reasons. He had something to reveal and to propose, that, scoundrel as he was, he felt was not of a nature to be discussed in her presence. Then, with all his cunning ambition, he carried a secret fear of this young amazon, who, though so slight and elusive, had the soul of twenty such as he was. So he stammered, and finally faltered:

"I reckon, I reckon, Henry, as I had best speak with you alone."

"Speak now, or not at all," thundered Struthers, irritated at her, at Fox, and the whole difficult situation, and impatient to receive the other's tidings, which, he surmised, by Fox's evident hesitation to proceed, were out of the ordinary.

"Wall," ventured Silas, in a passion of fear and doubt as to the wisdom of complying, "ef I must, then I must; but remember," he added desperately, taking in the group, including young Bradford, who, in his

Indian manner, had just joined them and stood leaning on his gun listening silently and abstractedly, "that all here is takin' ecal risks in this matter, for it's a hangin' business ef this war don't succeed,"—and he paused and glared at them all in turn from his small, cunning eyes, which blinked from one to the other of the group, but could meet none openly. Then he proceeded to relate the story of his meeting with Etherington, and his prior knowledge of his position and the object of his mission or his suspicions regarding it. To this he added, with many sly innuendoes, the fact that the young officer had discovered the presence of the schooner and had shown suspicions of her real character.

"Ef he reaches Castle Monmouth with them orders an' what he knows, I reckon as our goose is cooked," he concluded.

"He knows too much," ejaculated Struthers; "but what is to be done?" he added appealingly; for when it came to a matter of real action, this man, who was a born agitator, was of little use.

"He must never reach thar," said Silas. "He knows an' carries too much by a long sight. He mustn't leave these parts either."

"And he shan't either, by Heaven!" cried young Bradford fiercely, starting forward. "Leave him to me! The cursed aristocrat!" and there was a wild vindictive resolve in the young man's look and attitude.

The girl had been an astonished auditor of all that had passed, with at first slight interest, then wonder, then fear at Fox's sinister decision; but when her

brother, evidently influenced by the other's story, broke out with his vindictive exclamation, she moved forward and clutched him by the sleeve with amazement and horror on her face.

The experience was all new to her and it took her by surprise. Revolution had sounded very plausible in her girlish ears when it was afar; but when it came down to real action such as was here hinted and plotted and she had read in Fox's evil innuendo and in her brother's fanatical response, it not only startled her; it appalled her. She had no liking for any of those whom she had been educated and trained to regard as tyrants and trampers of the liberties and rights of the people and enemies of the common freedom; but this present implied intention was a different matter. It looked to her no better than a vulgar, cruel and secret murder, or the doing away with a man, who, whatever his proclivities, was only, as she now saw it, carrying out what he considered to be his duty.

"No, Robert," she cried impulsively, "you shan't do this! You shan't!"

"And why?" he retorted fiercely, and rudely shaking off her arm.

"Because," she answered sternly, "it would be a crime, and a Bradford may be a rebel, but none has yet been branded as a criminal."

At this the young man started back as if struck, and her father showed also that her words had gone home.

"No," she continued earnestly, "anything but that. War in the open may be honorable, but this secret

plotting and striking of men in the dark is contemptible."

"This is what comes of lettin' wimmin-folk meddle with men's affairs," grumbled Fox aside to Struthers; but he as well as the others saw that the girl would have to be humored or she might do something desperate and thus upset all their plans; so he added quietly, as if convinced by her protest:

"I reckon as Lydia is right."

"Miss Bradford," corrected her father sternly.

"Wall, Miss Bradford," the man added, "she is quite correct. I respect her feelin's, I do, an' I have a plan which I reckon will suit all hands and do no harm. We'll get him on board the schooner."

"Yes, and ship him a prisoner to the States," added Struthers.

"Yaas," agreed the suggester, with a queer lack of honesty in his shifty eyes.

"But where will we wait for him?" cried young Bradford impatiently.

"At the foot of your hill yonder, in the deep cut," laughed Fox, "whar we will jest say 'how de do' to King Garge and offer our respec's to his good-lookin' representative. He'll make it about dusk, the way he was travellin';" and as Silas said these words, he accompanied the others out around the house, leaving the girl standing alone in the garden, helpless, and exceedingly troubled in her mind.

CHAPTER VII

PIONEER HOSPITALITY

LYDIA stood there in the garden, wondering what she should do next: for do something she felt certain she must. Now that the others had left, she remembered with misgivings the evil look in Silas Fox's eyes and the fierce hate against the unfortunate stranger which had animated her brother. She now more than suspected that they had merely deceived her as to their real intentions, which, so far as Fox was concerned, she was assured were evil and ominous for the Governor's messenger, for whom by now she had come to have a sort of sympathy, which she would not have acknowledged to herself, nor could have explained. He had been described as young and handsome, and youth by some divine mystery ever dreams toward youth; and bitter as was her inherited and educated dislike toward the class to which he evidently belonged, wide as was the gulf between them, there rose in her imagination a strangely romantic interest in this unknown, who was unconsciously riding to danger, perchance to death.

The more she considered the matter, the more she realized that Silas Fox's declared intention of conveying the young man to the States was all a pretence, a mere blind to deceive her, and that he was in imminent danger. The conviction was made more bitter by the

thought that this cruel attack lay at the door of her own house, and was to be made by the hands of her own family, and she firmly resolved to do all she could to frustrate whatever plan Silas Fox—for he, she felt, was the real conspirator—had in view.

She lingered there for some time, gazing abstractedly, in a sort of dream or reverie, at the hazy distance of land and water before her, drinking in with her thoughts the large wild beauty and peace of the early summer afternoon. Nature had done much to make this place appear more like an old-world locality than a mere settlement in the wilderness. In front of her where she stood, and beyond the small paled flower garden which adjoined the house, there loomed a group of large oaks, so situated that between their immense trunks, as down an avenue, could be seen a stretch of wild marsh meadow-land extending to the lake shore, beyond which the smiling waters sparkled and gleamed in the sun.

Living here from her childhood, the place had appealed to her whole nature, and she had grown to love it and regard it as her home. The little garden with the room behind it and the wonderful outlook in front had grown to be to her and to her father their chief pleasure in life. Here she had spun and sown or tended her flowers, and here he had read to her, and had dreamed his strange dreams of life and nature, or had inculcated in her younger, perhaps more practical, nature, somewhat of those ideas which he held so strongly, and to which both father and daughter had an affinity by reason of their heredity of blood from

their regicide ancestor. The girl's mother, a woman instinct with duty, which meant toil and administration, forced by the impractical character of her husband, rarely, if ever, found leisure for thought on abstract matters; her whole time being occupied with the many cares of the farm and household, over which she presided with a fidelity that absorbed her whole being. She was the embodiment of a quiet patience tempered by some asperity, which dealt only with the practical aspect of things. This quality she gave to her daughter by precept, example and heredity; but, as is often the case, she had no power over her son, who, devoid of all culture in a worldly sense, repeated his father's impractical nature in his fondness for the mere excitement of the forest and open, to which he added a fierce, almost morbid, prejudice against all conventionality, which must have had its source in some remote ancestral strain.

The girl, as she mused there in that quaint Canadian garden, the fated inheritor of this tragic heredity, the doom of life already written on her brow and animating her imagination, mingled her father's dreams with her mother's practical thought. For the nonce, the mere beauty of the scene entranced and held her, and the mystical conquered or appeared to dominate; but when she turned to go within, there was a set look on her young face, a determination of eye and mouth, that boded ill for Silas Fox's conspiracies.

Entering the doorway, which was open, she passed through the front apartment, and thence through a short passage reached the kitchen, at that day and

for some years afterwards, the general workroom and place of public entertainment in a pioneer home even of the more well-to-do middle class. Here we will enter with her and introduce our readers to its interior and to the household characters and the strangers therein.

It was a large, low, oblong room, more commodious than was usual at that period. Its floors, walls and ceiling were built of rough hewn timbers and rudely sawn lumber of the native pine, which gleamed here and there, reflecting the firelight which, rather than the evening sun, illumined the interior. Another sign of superior ambition in the builder was shown in the large stone fireplace and chimney which occupied one end of the apartment, and about which were grouped those occupants of the room who were not engaged in the household duties.

The chimney was spacious and solid, extending out from the wall, leaving a cavity on either side, each occupied by articles of furniture or of household use, prominent among which was a tall, dark, smoke-stained wooden clock, the sombre face of which was quaintly carved with some old lettering, and which ticked out in a loud, slow, sedate and solemn manner the passing moments to those unheeding, warning them of the passage of time and the inevitable end of all things. From the dark raftered ceiling, in the vicinity of the fireplace, there depended rows of brown and white streaked hams and sides of cured bacon and venison, mingled with festooned strings of dried apples and pumpkin rinds, bunches of savory, sage and such like herbs, with rows of corn-cobs, pumpkins and other

gourds, whose golden and garnet ears and ruddy and orange rounded forms lent a suggestion of warmth, color and creature comfort in the dim firelight to the room and its homely appointments.

The only furniture of importance consisted of two tables, one, long, narrow, and rudely fashioned, on which the women of the household were engaged in placing the evening meal; and another small square one near the fireplace, containing some drinking utensils, suggesting entertainment of a bibulous character, a sign of hospitality never at that period absent from the pioneer household no matter how otherwise austere and rigid in its character.

The mistress of the house, assisted by a middle-aged negro woman, was preparing the meal, and therefore passing to and fro between the hearth with its glowing embers and steaming kettle and the larger table, and in those household duties the girl proceeded to assist, after having surveyed rapidly but keenly the group of persons near the fire. These were four in number, her father, her brother, who sat apart and silent, with dark, melancholy face regarding the embers in lonely soliloquy, and two other persons who, being strangers, we will describe at greater length. One of these, who had the dress and manner of a seaman, sat with his stool tilted back, a short pipe in his mouth, and a mug in his hand, and retained his seat while the fourth man rose hurriedly and turned as her father said:

“This is my daughter.”

The latter was a short, stout man of a rubicund visage, with a frayed-looking adornment of whiskers at

the sides of his face; but he carried, nevertheless, an air of respectability in his dress and address, that would have ranked him in the society of the land of his nativity somewhere between the sporting small farmer and the rural gentleman.

“Glad to see you indade, Miss. It is so little wan meets with the gentry on this side. It’s kind you are to a stranger, indade, and it’s long the journey and weary the way I have travelled,” he continued, growing eloquent at sight of her youthful beauty, “and saving that this gintleman,” and he denoted the sailor who smoked taciturnly, “gave me a passage in his vessel, it’s the divil’s own chance, beggin’ your pardon for the word, I’d have of reaching these parts at all, at all.”

Then mistaking her silent gaze for shyness, he added gallantly:

“May I drink to your happiness and good fortune, Miss?” and without waiting for a reply, he raised the vessel to his lips and drained a deep draught.

The girl surveyed him in silence, then she said shortly:

“We don’t drink healths in this house; and as for gentry, you will need to go farther, we are only plain people and Americans.” She then turned her back and proceeded with her work, leaving the little man to sink back on his seat, his broad Hibernian face expressing amazement.

“You must excuse my daughter,” said Bradford, in apology, “she is very set in her opinions. But indeed we are, as she says, of those who are opposed to an aristocracy in this country.”

“Sure,” said the man, “am I not just one of the plain people myself? But it’s the land ye have here in plenty, have ye not? It’s the land I’m after. Haven’t I always scorned the false pride of the Sassanach in my own land at home?” added this worthy, who had arrived in the company of the master of the mysterious schooner, and who had introduced himself grandiloquently as.

“Phineas Patrick O’Donohue, of Balleykilly, Ireland.”

“There is much waste land about here,” returned Bradford, ignoring the disclaimer of aristocracy, “but it is all in the control of one man, Colonel Monmouth, and he has got strong interest with the home and local governments.”

“Aye, I have queer accounts of the same Colonel,” returned the stranger. “Is he not, by all accounts, own cousin to royalty itself, and of the great old family of the ancient Monmouths, as were kings themselves in the old times beyant? Then it is himself I’m seeking, please God, for it’s the land I’m after, an’ I’m told he has lashin’s of the same to give.”

“I know not and care less who he is or was,” returned Bradford sternly, as though resenting the other’s appreciation of rank and birth; “but he is a hard man to deal with, and if you fail to please him and have no interest at York, you will have your journey here for nothing. It is the curse of the country that men like this have got supreme control.”

“They won’t have it so very long,” muttered the sailor, taking his pipe from his lips and spitting into

the fire. "You'll need a new title tarnation soon, if he gives you one of his word o' mouth ones."

"Amen to that," ejaculated young Bradford, starting from his reverie so fiercely that the O'Donohue, who sat next to him, jumped from his seat.

"What d'ye mane?" he asked them all, enquiringly.

"What side are you on in this war?" returned Bradford evasively.

"Why, I'm on the right side, av coorse, if that's what ye mane," answered the puzzled Irishman, who began to feel doubtful as to the political leanings of his company, and was anxious to keep the peace.

"Well, it's just as well for you," retorted the master of "The Scud"—which was the vessel's name—"for in this here war the right side is going to win, and win tarnation quick."

Before the stranger could reply to this half assertion and half threat the meal was announced as ready, and at the same moment Struthers and Fox entered the room. They all sat down, both guests and family, on long benches on either side of the table, with Bradford and his wife, one at each end, and after a short prayer from the master of the house, the meal proceeded. There was little conversation, as the Irishman felt rather out of his element in this mysterious, and apparently Puritan household, and the rest of those present, except Mrs. Bradford, who rarely spoke, were occupied with thoughts concerning the intended capture of the Governor's messenger. The meal, however, if homely, was appetizing, and consisted chiefly of dried venison steak, pork, wild fowl, vegetables and corn cake,

baked in the ashes and served with wild honey. This fare, the men, all except Bradford, partook of heartily, washing it down with spring water.

Lydia, however, ate but sparingly and in silence, as her mind was occupied by worry concerning the coming ambuscade; and when, at a given signal from Silas, he and Robert and the sailor rose and left the room, her heart beat painfully with apprehension. She sat a moment to collect herself and to give them time to set out, then without a word she rose from her place and followed the men out into the evening.

CHAPTER VIII

MR. FOX'S LITTLE GAME

WHEN the girl was outside, she stood for a moment in the kitchen yard, among the heterogeneous assortment of farm utensils and piles of firewood. The sun was now well down on the horizon, so that his rays slanted, casting a ruddy tinge over the woodland edge. But she seemed oblivious to the sublime metamorphosis of nature which was taking place about her.

She gazed intently in the direction which she suspected the men had taken and was filled with a subtle dread of what they were about to undertake. Then with a sigh of resignation, she turned and went round the corner of the log building and came to an enclosure which was used as a sort of kitchen garden, where, in the black rich swampy soil, among rows of plants, the negro lad had been pretending to toil, but in reality had been considering the fate of a squirrel he had caged and which had bitten his thumb in retaliation. He was now leaning against a frame and admiring the call of a whip-poor-will, which was uttering its plaintive note from the neighboring swamp.

"Banco," she called, "Banco!"

"Dat you, Miss Lydia. What you want?" the boy said, as she went forward among the plants.

"I'se here, Miss," he added laughing. "Dat bird been callin' sence de las' hour most, an' he ain't tired yet," and he looked with a good-natured, very open countenance at the girl, whom, in his African manner, he worshipped.

"Banco," she answered quickly, ignoring his reference to the bird, "do you know the place where the road from Newark comes past our hill?"

"Don't I, Miss Lydia?" he cried more gravely, reading her evident gravity, "cose I do, but you ain't done want to go thar this evenin'? It's a good spell away," he continued, with some doubt in his face and speech, for he knew the forest dangers only too well by repute, and had the primitive man's inherent horror of the wild creatures and lonely haunted silences of the vast beyond.

"But I do, Banco, and I must go immediately, and you must show me the way," she returned decidedly.

"'Fore God, Miss Lydia," he gasped, "I'se done scared, I is." Then, seeing the resolute look on his young mistress' face, like a faithful dog, without another word, he turned and preceding her from the garden, led the way in the direction of the forest and the lonely road beyond.

Crossing the clearing that lay behind the homestead and barns, they skirted the swampy marshland, dotted with willows, from one of which had come the whip-poor-will's song, and peopled with an innumerable chorus of piping frogs, and soon came to the forest edge.

It was a woodland of the New World, untouched

from antiquity by the hand of man, which they now entered. Wide spreading oaks, branchy butternuts, and straight, pillar-like beech trees, with stately elms and giant hemlocks, maples and basswoods, reached up into the misty distance of the quiet evening, while underneath, the shadows of night were already gathering in grotesque and inky masses of mysterious gloom.

In these deeps, to the child-like imagination of the African boy, and even to that of the fearless girl, there lurked and hovered the threatening and malign personality of tooth and claw, with other no less appalling, though shapeless presences of the lonely night.

But the strong, unswerving resolution of the girl, together with her sense of apprehension lest they should be too late to prevent what she more and more realized might be a cowardly and dastardly deed, led them on, while only the sound of their tense breathing and their hurrying steps broke the great stillness about them. Still they continued to press forward deeper and deeper into the heart of the unbroken forest, following the untrained but natural instinct of the youth, while ever blacker and more cavernous, the vast solitude wrapt its folds of loneliness and mystery about them.

Meanwhile Mr. Silas Fox had planned, with some ingenuity of brain, his desperate and equivocal scheme to trap the unsuspecting man whose mission, no doubt, if successful, meant ruin to their plan of campaign.

It is true that the capture might have been accomplished in a more warlike and less brutal manner; but the elder Bradford had practically no part in the

matter, and Struthers, whose mind was too abstract for the small details of a campaign, had left it all in the active control of his trusted lieutenant, and Silas Fox, like all his class, had no qualms of conscience or ideals, save to carry out his purpose and perchance vent his spite on the person of a hated Britisher. A human life more or less meant nothing to him in such a game as he was helping to play so long as his own was not endangered. Therefore he proceeded with the aid of his two conspirators, one coldly callous, the other a fiery youth under his influence, to carry out a scheme, which, if successful, meant the trapping of a human being as one would a wild beast and perchance the breaking of a man's neck, with no more sense of pity or humanity than if he were setting a dead-fall for some vicious beast of prey.

It is quite possible that if Bradford or Struthers had known the whole significance of what was going on or had personally to participate in its carrying out, or if Silas Fox had known that he would have to bear the whole responsibility for his action on his own single shoulders, his plot would never have matured, beyond its conception in his crafty, unscrupulous mind. But of such strange, cowardly combinations are social upheavals and revolutions, in their coarser, more brutal aspects brought about. The Struthers of the world supply the moral suasion and the larger responsibility, under the cloak of which the Silas Foxes with the more practical, more contemptible, motives have plotted and perpetrated deeds and atrocities which their leaders would have shuddered at and would have shrunk from

undertaking themselves. Thus often does crime itself stalk forth to its hideous work, under the protecting ægis of what claims to be the nobly incensed enemy of all tyranny and evil.

But Mr. Fox was troubled by no such ethical considerations. His mind was, no doubt, occupied with several dreams of petty ambition and desire and spite, but his only agent for his present work was a good stout rope, borrowed for the purpose from the schooner. This rope, when they had reached the place of ambush, he proceeded to place across the road, halfway down the steep declivity. Fastening the ends to the trees, in such a manner as to throw a horse descending in the gloom and unseat its rider in a sudden and precipitate manner, his cunning scheme, as the result of the startling cry uttered by the master of "The Scud," was carried out to the satisfaction of the presiding genius on this occasion.

When Etherington had been pitched heavily forward to the ground, Mr. Fox speedily produced a horn lantern, and with his companions leaned over the prostrate man, chuckling with a sly humor at what he considered the success of his trick.

"I reckon King Garge has been licked this here time," he said, as he passed the lantern to the sailor. "Catch that air beast," he commanded Robert, as the poor animal, recovering its feet, luckily unhurt, started, plunging and terrified, until secured. Meanwhile Mr. Fox had knelt by the body of the young officer, and deftly searching all his pockets, had conveyed the other's personal effects to his own. But he received a

slight shock, when the master of "The Scud" said coldly:

"Guess you've done for him, Silas; his neck must have been broke by that fall, and it's a hanging matter if you are caught."

The other went pale as he straightened himself and asked apprehensively:

"What do you mean? Ain't this a war, and ain't we all in it together?"

"Wall, that depends," said the sailor; "but meanwhile what are we to do with him?" he added significantly.

"Get him to your vessel, then chuck him overboard; the lake tells no tales."

Just as Mr. Fox uttered these words, there was a stirring of the bush and a quick step behind them, and the girl hurried forward, followed by the negro boy.

"Oh, you cowards, you brutal cowards!" she cried passionately, confronting them, "to waylay a single man; and you to do this, Robert," she added reproachfully, "and you a Bradford. I am ashamed of you."

"I didn't touch him," returned the young man sullenly, "ask Silas; it's his work, though the fellow deserved it all. Isn't he our enemy?"

"Enemy! Enemy!" she moaned. "And this is war! Is he dead?" she questioned eagerly, stooping over the body. "No," she cried, answering her own question. "Thank God! No," as the man stirred and moaned. "Quick, Banco," she added, "water, water, from the stream below."

"Ain't got nothin' to carry it in!" wailed the boy, his eyes rolling and his teeth chattering.

"In your cap, anything, quick," she cried; then turning sharply to the sailor, "Fetch that lantern close down here;" and as he did so, she knelt down and turned the injured man's face toward the light.

"He's all right, Miss Bradford," said the sailor, "he's only stunned; but he's our prisoner, and we must take him aboard 'The Scud.'"

"You'll do nothing of the kind," she answered with a white face. "You have done enough, if you have not killed him already."

"But, Miss Lydia!" protested the disappointed Silas.

"You!" she retorted, "You keep your place, sir! To plan this, and in my father's house! He shall know it all; and more than that"—and she looked sternly at Fox—"if this man dies, I shall tell the whole story to Colonel Monmouth."

At this threat the man shrunk back in apprehension, for he was not sure how far this half-crazy girl, as he regarded her, would not go, and he did not care to offend her yet; but there was an evil look on his face as he asked in seeming resignation, "Then where will we take him?"

"To my father's house, of course," she answered as she faced them.

"By Heaven, no!" cried her brother fiercely.

"But he shall," and she looked him down; "and you shall carry him, too, you and Winters here," meaning the sailor.

As she said this Etherington's eyes opened, stared up at the group in stupefied amazement, then closed again, while a moan escaped his lips. The negro now came up, his cap streaming with water, and the girl took it quickly, and again kneeling, bathed the young man's face with some of it and got a little between his lips. This evidently revived him, for his eyes opened again, and he raised himself feebly on his elbow and looked up at her with a strange, questioning gaze.

The fall had stunned and badly shaken him. When he had fallen his brain and imagination had been filled with the rich tints and softness of the Canadian lake-side forest, and as he looked up at her there, as out of or into a dream, he fancied that this beautiful girl was but the embodiment of it all.

"Where am I?" he asked feebly. Then his gaze wandered past her, as if unwillingly, to fall on the negro and then on to those others, so ominous and threatening in the shadows.

"You've been hurt some, I reckon," said Silas, breaking the silence, and, thinking it was as well to be on both sides in case of emergency, resolving that he could afford to wait.

"You have had a fall," said the girl quickly; "but fear not, you are among friends, or those who will help you," she added.

"Oh!" he said; then looked at her again, long and searchingly. Their eyes met, his blue and questioning, hers dark, and melting with pity and filled with a beauty that made him forget all else,—his strange position, and the presence of those others. He con-

tinued gazing until her eyes dropped, and she rose to her feet with a new shyness.

Then he remembered where he was, his accident, as he supposed it, and his mission, and instinctively staggered to his feet, trying to thank the girl as he did so. As he rose he read suddenly that it was to her alone he owed his safety, recognizing as he did, with the soldier's instinct, the signs of danger in the brother's fierce, vindictive scowl, the callous hostility of the sailor, and the even more suspicious crafty personality of Silas Fox. As his gaze took in the latter, he recognized him and remembered the parson's warning. With a quick movement, his hand went to his belt and breast, and he discovered with alarm that both his packet and his pistols were gone.

Now it dawned upon him that he was in a serious position indeed, and that, without doubt, he owed his life to the girl, who, as he could see, was foremost in offering him assistance, and who seemed so out of place among these men who surrounded him with their unsympathetic and almost hostile looks and manner. He realized immediately that this girl was no common personality. There was a strange, commanding, innate pride in her bearing which lent a quality to her beauty and impressed him in a manner he could not have explained.

As this flashed through his brain, and he still gazed at her, she said:

"You are weak, and it will be impossible for you to ride where we are going. But you cannot stay here, and you must make an effort to walk to my father's.

It is some distance through the forest, but these men will help you."

"Thank you," he answered, "I am much better and can walk with some assistance."

"Then," she said shortly, "we will help you," and ordering the sailor to give the lantern to the negro, she bade him help the young officer, and they all left the place, she going ahead with Etherington, while the two others followed, Silas leading the horse in no happy condition of mind.

"To whom am I under so much obligation?" Etherington asked the girl, as they went along under the woods. "My own name is Etherington. Captain Etherington."

"My name," she answered hesitatingly,—“my father's name is Bradford. Ambrose Bradford, of Bradford's Cove.”

He started at this, for the name mentioned was that of the man whom he had been warned was the local leader of the disaffected party in the locality; and it flashed over him suddenly that he had been trapped.

His letters and arms were gone; and had it not been for the reassuring presence of this remarkable girl, he would have despaired, as he went forward there toward he knew not what, under the mysterious silence and solitude of the forest and the night.

CHAPTER IX

IN THE ENEMY'S HANDS

ETHERINGTON awoke next morning with a confused feeling in his mind, and at first had some difficulty in realizing where he was.

Gradually the events of the past night came back to him with the remembrance of his fall from his horse and the strange denouement. He recalled his sensations when he had first opened his eyes and beheld the girl kneeling over him, with her remarkable beauty, and the wondering pity in her dark eyes. The memory surged back to him of those cold, hostile faces (one of which he now knew was that of her brother), and of her evident protection of him from some ill they had intended. He pictured their looks of baffled design, as they had accompanied him through the gloom of the forest, and he speculated upon what was yet to happen; for he realized that he was as much a prisoner as a guest in that remarkable and mysterious house. Nothing had been openly said to him upon the subject. He had been simply brought by a devious path through the forest, in a worn out and half-dazed condition, caused by the shock of his ugly fall, which he now was certain was brought about in some way by the cunning of the man Fox. Here he had been assisted to bed by a rather sad-faced but dignified elderly man and the negro boy,

after restoratives had been administered to him under the direction of his slender, flower-like young protectress, who had exerted herself so much on his behalf. And now that the confusion had gone out of his head, he realized that he was not merely a stranger to her, but one whom she must regard in the light of an enemy. Etherington, as has been shown, was of an impressionable nature, in spite of the prejudices of his cast-iron English social and military training and environment. He had received also many lessons in his new world experiences; but this adventure was by far the most remarkable and startling in its influence. He was simply amazed at the girl and her surroundings. The situation was so impressive, and yet so completely outside of all his former experience of people and social conditions; and already it gave him an inkling that there might be another sort of refinement than that of mere polish; a pride, indeed an aristocracy, apart from the mere forms of social rank and culture, as he had known them,—which she, that old man, the wild brother, and this place suggested.

As he lay there, on a bed in the corner of the room, he let his gaze wander slowly, in curious interest, over the dimly lighted apartment.

It was the front room of the house, opening on the garden; and near the door, which was slightly ajar, letting in a cool breath of summer morning, was a little square window set in the log wall, and glazed with very small panes of glass, which gave a warm, though feeble light.

Opposite to him was a diminutive and quaint spinning

wheel and an old oak cabinet, much battered and dark with age and clamped with curious wrought iron; and above it, where the light of the opening fell on the hewn log wall, hung a small kitcat sized, gloomily-colored oil painting. It was a portrait of a grim looking old Puritan, in cap and ruff, who scowled out of the frame, in strange contrast to his surroundings. A couple of straight-backed old oak chairs, a quaint old table, and the bed he was on, an old four-poster, with high twisted poles and frame, devoid of curtains, completed the furniture, which gave a strange, old-world atmosphere to this otherwise rude and primitive apartment, and which other evidences of pioneer life, such as bundles of wool and hanks of yarn, rendered out of place. Yet the whole made a not unpleasing and quite suggestive impression on the mind of the young man as he lay there, wondering at the strange, oddly assorted representation of present simplicity and evident former pride. It is not the part of this chronicle to explain historical inconsistencies, yet Etherington was face to face with an example in this family of a colonial condition which has influenced history.

New France was colonized by sixteenth and seventeenth century France, therefore it is necessary to go back to that period in the old France to understand French Canadian characteristics. Likewise New England was the child of the period of the Cavalier and Roundhead, and we have to go back of modern, democratic, party-ruled, commercial England to understand many of the idiosyncracies of the stronger New England character.

When New England was colonized, the aristocracy

of the Motherland was one of blood and lineage, of continued descent in one place, rather than that of rank and mere wealth. It carried with it strong and often bitter and narrow prejudices; but they were principles for which men were ready to give not only wealth but life itself. It was the true old aristocracy, though ruder than the modern society-culture which takes its place; and Puritan as she was, New England transplanted much of this seventeenth century feeling. In truth, like New France, being isolated from the main stream, just as the main current was to receive a new impetus and undergo a radical change, New England stood still, like an historical side-pond or reservoir, while the modern England flowed on swifter and broader into a new phase of being; and the Bradford household, which was an enigma to Etherington who belonged to the England of the later Georges, was an isolated instance of this old strain of broken-off Roundhead England still lingering in the New World. There was a pride of the Roundhead as there was of the Cavalier, and the American Civil War was, in a sense, a repetition of the old civil struggle of Charles and Cromwell.

Upper Canada, though settled later and receiving somewhat of this New England blood, also received families of the date of the late Georges, whose descendants are to-day as much a surprise and enigma to the twentieth century Englishman as the American Roundhead was to Etherington.

But Etherington was neither an historian nor a philosopher in that sense. He was, however, a soldier,

with a strong and quick sense of duty and its responsibilities to his superiors; and his first instinct, when he had drunk all this in through his newly awakened consciousness, was to dwell with painful reflection and apprehension on the consequences of his misfortune and the loss of his despatches. He realized that, having refused a guide, he would stand in no enviable light in the opinion of his fellow-officers and those over him. He was now fully convinced of Fox's part in his capture (for such it really was), and the abstraction of his papers, arms and valuables, which he now found were all missing. He wondered if he would be allowed to proceed to his destination. He very much doubted it; and even if he were allowed to go, what of his papers? Though the war was virtually on, as yet, so far as he knew, no outward, active rising had occurred in this locality, unless his capture in this ambiguous manner could be construed as such. He felt that he must attempt to retrieve partially, at least, the position which he had lost by his reckless folly. With him to resolve was to act, so he quickly rose, determined on several things; namely, to throw himself on the girl's generosity, appeal to her sense of justice, demand his papers and valuables, and endeavor to leave the place as soon as possible. Every hour that he delayed he felt was lost until he made his report. He found himself little the worse for his tumble, save for a slight giddiness when he first stood up, and a general feeling of soreness and stiffness which soon passed away as he hastily dressed. While he was thus engaged, the negro lad entered with some washing material, which he left on

a bench near the door, and vanished quickly, ere he could be questioned. Etherington then completed his toilet as carefully as he could under the circumstances, and pausing for a moment to satisfy himself as to his appearance and collect his thoughts, opened the door still wider, and stepped out into the garden.

There was a slight haze in the air of the pure, sweet morning, where the early summer filled as with a glamor the whole aspect of leafing woodlands, greening meadows, and marshland, and gave new freshness and color to the vast expanse of wood, sky and water beyond. A delicious breeze, which stole up through the oak boughs from the limpid lake, acted as a refreshing tonic to his nerves and his young spirit received new confidence for the coming struggle. His glance, instinctive as it had been to the landscape and skyline, came back as swiftly to the garden; but to his bitter disappointment, the latter was quite deserted. The girl was nowhere to be seen.

His first conscious feelings were those of anger and discomfiture at the delay in his departure; but under these lay another more remote sensation, a desire to satisfy his longing to see the girl once more.

In spite of this feeling he realized that it was his duty to go as soon as possible, and he had a strong impulse to depart at once without his belongings and to make the best of his way on foot to his destination. But he soon saw the folly of this, realizing that he was unused to such travel, and that it would be useless to proceed without arms, horse or money. He was also quite ignorant, save in a vague way, of the direction he

should take until he was on the road once more. He had been brought to the place in a half-dazed condition by night, and through, what seemed to him, a perfect labyrinth of woods. Then he felt almost certain that the fierce brother, or the crafty Fox, was somewhere secretly on the watch to shoot him, did he attempt to escape.

These somewhat hopeless, irritating cogitations were at last brought to a close by the reappearance of the negro boy, who, with a wide grin, announced that breakfast was ready in the kitchen; and Etherington followed his sable Mercury with a determination to demand his papers and horse, and thus to discover his true position in this mysterious place.

But the kitchen was as deserted as the garden had been, save for a negro woman, who waited assiduously on him, while he ate indifferently what would have been, under other circumstances, an appetizing breakfast of fried rashers of bacon and fresh corn scones, which she dished up, in a magical manner, smoking from the hot embers of the capacious hearth.

But Etherington was in no mood to dally, and doing but scant justice to the repast, he demanded, in a manner and tone which appealed to the woman, word with the master of the house, as he desired to continue his journey immediately.

Leaving him to pace the floor in agitation, the negress shuffled off to do his bidding, and after an interval, the lad stuck his head in at the door and announced that "Massa would see de genmun in de garden."

Etherington, feeling that he should now end this intolerable suspense, followed the boy back through the dark passage into the room he had slept in, and thence out into the garden beyond. His mind was wrought up to a determination to force his demands. He was by nature, custom and training, inclined to be imperious, and to expect a quick compliance with his demands. But here he encountered something which discomfited him, and put, for the moment, the whole idea of departure quite out of his thoughts.

CHAPTER X

PIONEER WORSHIP

THE picture which now met his gaze was a strange one indeed. He had forgotten, in the excitement of his journey and its abrupt and ominous termination, that this was the Sabbath Day; and of this fact he was now suddenly reminded by the scene in front of him. The garden, which he had left lonely and deserted in its cool morning solitude, was now peopled by a throng of men and women, who were, with a quiet demeanor, taking their places on rows of rough planks placed on wooden blocks, which had been arranged in order along between the narrow flower beds; and from far and near, from the shore and from the forest, in little knots of two or three, others were slowly approaching, conversing, as were those in the garden, in low and seemly tones with one another.

There was neither noise nor tumult; no hurry or unseemly behavior, though many of them, he noticed, both men and women, were poorly, if neatly attired. Some of the men were clothed partly in the tanned skins of animals, and a few of the women, like the peasantry of the Old World, had no shoes on their feet, though the majority wore a sort of moccasin. But all came and gathered under the old oaks in this New

World garden, impelled by the same religious motive and spirit, though more enlightened, which prompted their remote Druid ancestors in the Old World to worship under the ancient oaks of Britain; that eternal human desire to commune with the Infinite and escape from the merely material issues of this world.

Some of these men had been soldiers in the colonial or disbanded regiments, or yeomen in the old land, while many had come across the borders from the South for loyalty's sake, or in search of that elusive liberty of the forest edge, which some men flee to from the more complex civilization. The most of them had little else in the world than the clothes on their backs and the land which they tilled; their faces were seamed with care and their hands calloused by rude toil; but, in spite of this, Etherington noted about them all a certain dignity found only among those who live on the soil and have, to a certain extent, emancipated themselves from the soul-destroying, manhood-crushing servitude of centuries of servility, which is the fate, sooner or later, of the poorer classes in the life of the great cities of the Old and the New World.

As he stood watching this sedate gathering, a voice spoke at his side and roused him from the momentary reverie which the scene before him had produced. It was the elder Bradford. "I am told," he said, "that you desire to speak with me;" and he led the way back into the room, partly closing the door, and stood waiting for the other to speak. There was a quiet, solemn, but cold dignity about him, as he stood there, slightly stooped, and resembling remarkably, as Etherington

could not help noticing, in look and manner, the grim old Roundhead in the picture behind him on the wall.

He showed no intention of treating Etherington as a guest. He did not enquire how he had slept, or how he felt after his mishap. It was a cold, formal, almost indifferent dignity, which, while it showed no malice, yet signified that the man before him was not of his world, and the young officer felt the implication more keenly than if it had been expressed in words. However, he had to act, and though he realized that this man was no common man, such as Silas Fox, whom he had now to deal with, he restrained his indignation sufficiently to announce, in simple terms, that while he was thankful for the night's hospitality, it was very necessary that he should immediately resume his journey, if the other would kindly see that his horse was brought out and he was set on his way.

"My daughter has told me somewhat of your accident," said Bradford shortly; "but by your manner and speech you seem to show but scant courtesy and little gratitude to me and my daughter for the aid rendered and the hospitality shown you. However," he continued, "it is quite as I should have expected from your class and upbringing, ever returning evil for good, and with high words and actions for the plain folks of this world."

"You misjudge me," returned Etherington, warmly, "I do deeply appreciate your hospitality, and especially do I realize what your daughter has done for me. But you are evidently ignorant, or choose to be," he added significantly, "that I am an officer of the Crown,

travelling on important business, that I am delayed here, while I am anxious to finish my journey."

"Of all this I know not, nor do I care," answered Bradford. "I am a simple man of the people, shut out from much that troubles the worldly and those in high places, who abuse their prerogatives."

"Then why may I not proceed?" inquired Etherington hotly.

"Why not?" returned the other coldly.

"But where is my horse?" he asked.

"Most likely in my stable consuming my provender, you overbearing young worldling," returned Bradford in a tone of mild rebuke.

"Then if you will not understand me, I must speak plainly," cried Etherington. "Do you deny that I am Captain Etherington, a king's officer, and a government messenger in this time of war; that I have been waylaid, my life attempted, my despatches, only for the eye of His Majesty's officer, taken from me, my horse gone, my arms abstracted, my money, jewels and private effects all stolen, and do you realize what this means?"

Bradford had remained passive and indifferent while the other referred to his capture, the loss of his papers and arms; but when he mentioned his money and other valuables, he was visibly affected.

"What, sir?" he gasped, surprised out of his cold indifference. "You dare to say that you have been robbed?"

"I do," retorted Etherington firmly.

"In my house?" demanded the other sternly.

"Before I arrived here, if I remember aright, but while I lay unconscious," he answered, "and by those men, one of whom, I understand, is your son," he continued indignantly.

"My son," returned Bradford passionately, "would shoot you in your tracks did he hear you. He is no contemptible thief. Let me tell you, sir," he added proudly, "that he comes of blood that has judged and condemned kings, but no Bradford was ever a robber. I will see into this," he added more quietly, "and if anyone about my place has taken anything which is your property, he shall restore it or suffer for it. More than this I cannot promise."

"Then am I to understand that I am virtually your prisoner?" asked the young man suddenly.

"Of prisoners and prisons I know not," returned the older man, "they are far removed from this remote place, where, thank the Lord, the liberty of a new world shelters and protects all. But I am aware of what you, in your blood-thirsty worldly spirit, seem to forget, namely, that this is the Sabbath, and that it is a day of peace and prayer, and not for unseemly topics such as this. You are, without any fault of mine, my guest, and as such must do as all on my lands are accustomed to do, revere and respect the Sabbath, while you stay here. To-morrow we will look into those other matters, to-day is the Lord's."

"I sincerely appreciate your daughter's kindness," said Etherington, who saw no chance of moving the father, "and I would see her and thank her for her services."

“My daughter?” answered Bradford coldly. “You may perchance see her later. But speak not of what little she hath done, she hath a kindly heart toward all of God’s creatures, even a wolf she could not see suffer. But we delay here, sir,” he added, “the service is waiting. Will you precede me?” and with a dignified air of command that impressed the young officer, he stood aside and held the door for Etherington to pass out, and when they entered the garden, he conducted his prisoner or guest, or both—for such he appeared to be—to a retired seat at the rear of the gathering, where he might observe and hear and take part or not, as it suited him, in the service about to commence.

CHAPTER XI

THE ESCAPE

AS Ambrose Bradford went forward and seated himself near a rude table in front of the audience, the preacher rose, and advancing toward the table, opened a book and gave out a psalm, reading it line by line, in a sing-song style, with a peculiar intonation prevalent among the religious sects of that day, and extending among some of them down to this.

He was a tall, thin man, with a sharp, hawk-like face, and a prominent nose; indeed, except for his pale, sallow complexion, resembling an Indian. His dress was of a slightly more clerical cut and hue than the usual simple dress of the period in the pioneer communities, giving him a more sombre aspect.

But what chiefly impressed Etherington was the man's eye, which was dark and piercing, like that of a bird of prey, and which, while he led the singing, never ceased to wander over the audience in a startling manner. Suddenly his gaze settled on Etherington, on whom it remained fixed for a short time, with a curious, inquisitive expression, then resumed its inquisitory round until the psalm had been sung loudly and fervently by the whole congregation, everyone joining in.

Then he offered up a prayer, in which he invoked a

blessing on every family present, and in an involved, but earnest manner, engaged in what appeared to Etherington to be a one-sided argument with the Deity. But throughout it all, Etherington felt impressed by the man's personality. There was something at once so individual and almost fierce, as he referred to the punishment of the wicked and the evil-doer, as to suggest vengeance rather than justice in his appeal. The prayer was a long and rambling one, but it was significant in its frequent call for the putting down of those in high places and the raising of the poor and lowly, so as to lead one to infer that the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven, as he desired it, was in the nature of the triumph of a fierce and inveterate democracy. That this violent supplication, with its reference to the scarlet woman and the man of sin, had its desired effect on the audience, Etherington could plainly see by the frequent and fervent "Amens," which followed the references from some of the rows of worshippers.

But if the prayer was radical and incendiary in its fiery appeal, much more bitter and denunciatory was the sermon which this fanatical preacher delivered. After giving out and leading another psalm, even more dismal and militant than the last, he moved forward a few steps and announced his text, "The Lord is a Man of War"—a most suggestive one at such a time. Then, with wild gestures and fierce invectives, he launched out in a bitter attack of the principles of monarchy and state church, with continued denunciation of those in high places. The chief burden of his theme was, as he put it on the old uncompromising basis of two

hundred years before: "There are two opposing kings, King Jesus and King James, and King Jesus can never pay tribute to King James."

Underneath it all lay a thinly veiled attack on King George and the Established Church, and virtually upon the whole British rule in the country. Amazed and indignant as Etherington was, yet the audacity of the attack, and the man's whole antagonistic attitude were so evidently earnest, though so bitterly one-sided, that the young officer, who had never heard the other side of the argument put so daringly and forcibly, was stunned by its vindictive invective and scorn, and realized with a shock the terrible result throughout the country, if such doctrines were spread broadcast in this resolute and insidious manner.

At first, a superficial observer might have thought that this decidedly disloyal harangue had no real influence on those staid and solemn men and women; but the close observer would have noticed, by a hardening of their faces and a fierce tense look that now and anon passed over them, like a storm-gleam over a still pool, that this clever and impressive religious demagogue understood well the great human instrument he was playing upon. But worse was to come, and Etherington was about to receive a very real and alarming evidence of the man's influence upon his hearers. As the preacher continued, he noticed with misgiving that certain of the men occasionally turned and glanced in his direction, with looks which, ere the sermon was closed, the final prayer ended, and the benediction pronounced, were changed into fierce scowls and meaning

glances, such as to render him exceedingly uneasy with regard to his personal safety.

When the assembly had broken up to indulge in what Etherington now perceived was a mid-day meal, which each family had brought to partake of out of doors, he saw that while all had deserted his vicinity, and were grouped in small coteries to discuss the sermon; yet by the occasional glances in his direction, especially from a small group in which Silas Fox and young Bradford were prominent, that he was the general subject of conversation, and that something serious was being plotted, and he vainly wished for his pistol or his sword, that he might at least sell his life dearly.

Assuming an indifferent front to the open looks of aversion of which he was the mark, he determined to reach the house, looking, as he proceeded, for a sight of the one sympathetic face he had met in that place. But, to his surprise and chagrin, the girl was now nowhere to be seen. He had noticed her at first in front, with her back to him, sitting demure and motionless, her face hidden from him, but evidently fixed in rapt attention on the preacher and the service. But when the meeting broke up, she had suddenly and unaccountably disappeared, and he realized with a pang that, though it was scarcely soldier-like to look for protection from a young girl, even she had deserted him.

While he was pondering this and racking his brain for a means of escape from this increasing hostility that surrounded him, he drew near the door, and as he did so, the negro boy stole suddenly out, shoved a piece of paper into his hand, and disappeared again as

quickly within. This had been accomplished so rapidly and unobtrusively, that no one who had seen the boy would have suspected his motive and act. But Etherington knew that a crisis was imminent, and stepping quickly behind the shade of the garden seat, he opened the paper and stealthily read what was written therein.

It was in a woman's hand, whose, he at once divined, and ran as follows:

"Sir, if you value your life, go at once with the bearer. Go without apparent hurry, but waste no time."

There was no signature, but he knew it was from the girl; and risking the possibility that it might be a trick to lure him from the place, he walked leisurely to the door and entered. He found the boy awaiting him.

"Come, massa," whispered the negro, "they no guess. All eatin'. Come!" And he quickly led the way to the kitchen, where the old negress was alone at work, and thence out into the deserted backyard and round a corner of the building, in the direction in which the girl had gone the night before.

This place was sheltered by a log fence and a clump of bushes from view of the house.

"Massa lie low here," said the boy. "Banco see if de road clear." Soon he called in a low voice:

"Yes, Massa, come! Him all right," and Etherington, rising, followed him rapidly through the low willow-dotted marshland, requiring all his energy to

keep pace with the youth in front. They were soon hidden in the dense bush, which skirted the forest; but the boy, keeping in front, never slackened his pace until they reached the forest edge. Here he paused for a moment to listen if they were followed, then once more waving his hand to his companion, he cried, "Come!" and disappeared in its gloomy depths.

CHAPTER XII

ANOTHER BATTLE IN THE FOREST

LYDIA Bradford had been that day, for the first time in her life, seriously frightened and realized that she was placed in a position altogether too grave and difficult for a girl of her age and experience to cope with. Reared as she had been, there under the shadow of the forest in this remote community, beyond the excitements common even to pioneer life—for she had been shielded from the worst of these—no rude alarm had disturbed the even tenor of her existence, until this, the first incident of what seemed to her a brutal struggle between man and man, the surprise and capture of the young officer.

Thoughts concerning him had allowed her little sleep during the preceding night, for she dreaded the sinister designs of Fox, the fierce unreasonableness of her brother and the cold apathy of her father. She had therefore racked her brains to discover some means of preventing any extreme measures being taken against Etherington, without becoming a traitor to the cause which she had been reared to believe was that of liberty and justice. She found it hard to satisfy her conscience with regard to this difficulty, and when she had thought out a scheme to aid him, it would rise up, like the ghosts of her Puritan ancestors, in grim reproof. She had been taught, and firmly believed in theory,

that his class were her natural enemies, the tyrants who had enslaved the Old World, and were striving to dominate the New. She had heard it asserted more than once that nothing less than the total destruction of this class could save, not only the country, but the modern world.

This idea had been instilled in her from her earliest childhood, and even now she held it to be true. She could have argued its truth with all her New World heredity and training; but when it was placed before her in brutal action, and she could read behind that action such meaner motives and incentives as actuated Silas Fox, when she also realized the unreasoning fanaticism of her brother, which rendered him the mere tool of such men as Fox and Struthers, the whole question assumed a different aspect in her mind, especially when the foe had materialized into the handsome officer, whom chance, or Fox's sinister plans, had brought into her life.

This latter was an influence which no one had counted on. But nature is stronger than parties or sects, class or religious animosities; and though she did not realize it in its true light, the look in Etherington's eyes, his handsome pale face, his unfortunate condition and evident danger had appealed to her strongly, and haunted her thoughts and imagination all through the night, so that the dawn found her anxious and restless upon her pillow. Yet she fought the whole question over again with herself as she rose, said her prayers, and hurriedly dressed.

In spite of her prejudices, she thought of the whole

episode with an indignation which reddened her young cheeks with shame for her party; and her former contempt for Fox began to harden into a vindictive hate. She, however, could not forget that the young man represented that horrible Governor at York and his obsequious satellites, who enriched themselves at the expense of the country. Moreover, he was or had been on his way to aid that proud, overbearing, almost royal recluse, Colonel Monmouth, who, as she had long experienced, held despotic sway over her part of the country. All this she believed to be true, because she had heard Struthers go over it again and again. And were not kings and lords unscriptural and standing armies a menace, as her father had so often explained—his theory being that war would gradually disappear as nationality vanished and men all became as brothers, and the world be ruled by religion in truth and liberty. This had all sounded well and had appealed to her youthful ideals, as was quite easy to imagine and conceive possible out there under the edge of the forest where men were few and the boundaries of the earth wide between them. Then it might even be right to spoil the Egyptians in theory. But when it meant that the special Egyptian was to be waylaid and maltreated by a Silas Fox, it was with no pleasant feelings that this young daughter of a rebel descended from her room that peaceful Sabbath morning.

She, however, realized that her action of the night before, in interfering as she had done, had been a daring and, in the eyes of the others, an unwarranted interference; so that she determined, sorely as she felt the

situation, that it would be better to wait and watch the trend of events before taking any further action. But the fierce attitude and wild invective of the preacher, hurled almost directly at the person of the young man, and its consequent sinister effect on his hearers, filled her with such horror and dread that it drove her to plan and execute on the spur of the moment what she would otherwise never have been led to do. She realized that if he did not leave immediately the young man's life was not worth an hour's lease. This she read in the faces and utterances of those about her, and she felt that she, and she alone, could save him; so she resolved to act boldly and instantly.

She left the garden immediately on the close of the service, slipping out quickly in the confusion, and went to her chamber where she wrote the note, and finding the negro boy, whom she could trust, instructed him and despatched him to Etherington. Having done this, she hastened, without staying to consider the consequences, out to the stable at the rear of the house, carrying one of her brother's pistols with ball and powder flask; then, with a nerve which would have startled her, had she time to consider the situation, she saddled the stranger's horse and led him quickly but silently out through the yard and up the road into the forest beyond.

It was all done so speedily that she could scarcely believe that she had accomplished it so easily and without discovery. But she had acted on the supposition that, as all the people were at their meal in the front yard and the prisoner in full view, no one would suspect

her design. Yet when she had entered the forest, leading the animal by the bridle, she felt all her limbs a-tremble, and it was not until she had got so far on her way that she knew she was secure from immediate intervention that she had time or thought even to realize what a rank traitor she had become, by this act, to all her former education and prejudices. This, when it smote her, she put rudely aside, as she paused for a moment to recover her breath, and then, resuming her flight, hurriedly panted on deeper and deeper into the forest, following the path by which they had come the night before. On and on she went, encouraging and guiding the horse, which seemed to know what she was doing, for it followed her as docile as though its master held the bridle.

She finally reached the place where she had met Etherington, and here she sat down, still holding the bridle, and with a wildly beating heart, awaited his coming.

She sat there, it seemed to her, hours, though it was less than a quarter of an hour, listening for his approach, dreading that he might not escape, and that they might even then be doing to him what it made her shudder to contemplate; and yet, in all her agony of apprehension, striving in vain to justify herself to herself for what she had done and was doing. Of course, she hated him, and he really deserved the worst. Was he not a British officer? Yet she could not see him murdered at her father's place. It was her bounden duty to save him, and if she was a traitor, it was those others who, by their extreme acts, had driven her to it.

Would he never come? Then it was with a glad and guilty start that she stood up as there came the sound of approaching footsteps, and Etherington emerged from the forest into the little roadside opening and stood beside her.

He came forward quickly and tried to thank her. He was all emotion now. He could only think of her action in its right light, as it seemed to him. It not only showed heroism on her part, but, as he fondly thought, bore evidence of a secret, if not open attachment to the loyal cause. Then she was very beautiful as she stood there, more beautiful even now in the daylight, in her delicate pallor, than she had seemed the night before; and it appeared to him, as he stood and looked at her, that it was more than worth the agony he had gone through to be thus rescued and befriended by this lovely creature, with face and eyes, figure and carriage more exquisite than he had ever seen in all his experience of women.

"Miss Bradford," he said with fervor, and advancing with outstretched hand, "how can I ever thank you?" He got that far, but his words froze on his lips.

The former trembling, shy girl, anxious for his coming, had now vanished, and in her place there stood before him a cold statue, whose eyes and whole attitude radiated a fierce but frigid pride, almost repellant in its intensity, and such as he had never seen on any face of woman before.

"Stand back, sir!" she cried imperiously. "I ask no thanks; take your horse and go," and she threw the pistol and ammunition at his feet.

“But may I not assure you of my gratitude? Will you not accept my—” he almost stammered, taken aback by her obvious determination to be hostile in spite of her evident desire to help him.

“I want nought save your absence from this place,” she cried coldly, but with a strained intonation, as though she were acting a part. “’Tis a life, a life!” she cried. “I would do the same if it were an animal they were after. Now go, ere it be too late!”

But though he took the bridle from her hand, he still lingered. He felt that he would have stayed, if a whole battery of artillery were being levelled at him. He could not leave with such a dismissal from this girl, whose action had so belied her words and present attitude.

“And you,” he said, “would have me go in this manner, knowing as I do, all you have done for me.”

“You must not say that, you must not think that,” she returned hoarsely. “You don’t understand, you don’t understand, it was only to save a life.”

“What! my life?” he questioned.

“Yes, you don’t know some of these men,” she cried appealingly, her eyes softening, and her lips a-tremble.

“I think I do,” he answered, still looking into her face, and even then wondering why there were not women so beautiful as this in Europe; for the sunlight fell on her, glinting, and she looked like a sylvan goddess as she stood there.

“I think I do,” he repeated, “for they robbed me of everything.”

“Of your arms and papers?” she cried, with some discomfiture at his words.

"Everything—my private papers, my watch, even my mother's picture. I would not like to lose that," he said half jestingly; "state matters may be of little account—'tis proper it seems to rob kings and governments; but surely one's mother should have some consideration."

He was sorry he had spoken, and yet glad; she blushed crimson and looked down, in her shame; but it revealed a new phase of her character and beauty to him. Then she looked up.

"Your mother?" she said.

"She is dead," he answered with a sigh.

"Oh!" It was all she answered for a moment. Then she seemed to awake to his real danger.

"Oh, go, go! they will be seeking you now. Go, they shall be returned to you, all your papers, only go!" and there was a world of apprehension in her voice.

"Some of them were government despatches," he continued, "and I need them. My honor is at stake if they are lost," and he still looked down into those liquid wells of light, until they fell before his gaze. "Rebel or not," he mused, "she is a queen."

"You shall have all, at least all that belongs to you." She spoke quickly, now, as though she were afraid of something. "It was not my brother who took them. He would shoot you; but he is too honorable to steal."

"Not a government despatch?" he asked ironically.

"No, he would take it," she replied proudly.

"And I would take something else," he answered eagerly, "and it is your regard. Will you let me thank you?"

But she was eager to have him go, both for his sake and her own. She was afraid of herself and his influence over her. It made her angry that it should be so. She once more assumed her old icy composure.

“Regard!” she cried scornfully. “Sir, you presume! Because I saved your life—you dare. Why, sir, you are nothing to me—don’t you understand? Will you not understand? I hate you, and I hate your Governor, and I hate your King! There!” she panted. “Now, go!”

He was surprised at this strange, passionate outbreak. All that now remained for him to do was to go, and go quickly. He was a gentleman; so he mounted, and with a low bow to her as though she were a queen, he rode slowly down the road into the woods and was lost to her sight.

She stood watching him, like a beautiful statue of youthful tragedy, until he had disappeared from her view; then she flung herself down on the sward, and, strange inconsistency of woman, burst into tears!

CHAPTER XIII

THE ROAD TO CASTLE MONMOUTH

MEANWHILE Etherington rode on his way, under the woodlands, which were clothed in all their beauty and glory of early June. His imagination, as he went, was still occupied with the picture the girl had made as he last saw her, and he marvelled at it all, that a young maid like this should have shown him so much kindness, yet mingled with so much hate and bitterness, as she had revealed in her heart toward him and his that morning. He revolved it much in his mind, with some irritation, because he could not but feel a distinct slight in her scornful repulse of his friendly advances. Then, after long reverie, he gave up the problem of the strange inconsistency between her words and her deeds. But her beauty, which was no mystery, only a continual wonder to the eye and heart when in her presence, and now a delicious dream in his memory, he dwelt on with a fondness and a fine remembrance of its delicacy and perfection, which seemed scarcely loyal to him as a King's soldier, after her last words, which still continued to ring in his ears. He could shut his eyes, and hear them again distinctly: "I hate you, and your King and your Governor."

But though he was young and the season early

summer, and he under the influence of as fair a maid, though a rebel, as could be found within the King's dominions, he now, with the re-awakened instinct of the soldier, through all his reverie and fine reflection, still remained anxious and watchful; for though he had been deprived of his papers, yet must he not forsooth report their loss as soon as possible to him to whom they had been posted? So he addressed himself cautiously once more to his journey, following the windings of the road in and out, up hillsides, under spreading beeches and oaks, then down into ravines of ash and elm, and through marshy places, where it was difficult to guide his beast without foundering.

As he went slowly, he took his time to examine and load the pistol the girl had given him. In so doing, he found his mind reverting to her and his late experience with a strange pleasure, which was followed by a cold wave of apprehension, when he realized that he had to report, at the end of his journey, to a man who was known to him by repute as somewhat of a martinet, that he had failed in his trust, and that the Governor's message was in the hands of the enemy. He had heard of this Colonel Monmouth as an eccentric of strong, original character, who had great power in the colony and out of it, and as one not over cordial to strangers. At moments, he would fall to wondering what had been in the Governor's package, for he now remembered that it was of greater bulk than an ordinary letter, or even one upon state matters; and he had some grim doubts as to how, in its absence, the Colonel would receive him.

When he had been on the road an hour, he perceived

by the sun that it was high noon, and the heat in the opening became oppressive; and having not altogether recovered from the effects of his fall, he began to feel a dizziness and an aching in his head which grew worse and worse, until, coming to a pleasant place in the cool woods, where a stream trickled across the road and fell on the other side with a musical sound into a bower of shadows, he halted, dismounted, and watered his horse, tethering it where it could browse upon some low shrubs. He took a deep draught of the water himself, and bathing his face and head, laid himself down under a tree on some soft moss. Here, lost in a reverie concerning the events of the day, he slipped by a gradual transition from his day-dream into a sound sleep.

It was fully two hours later that he was awakened, disturbed by what seemed voices in his dreams. Hastily rising to his feet, he realized that he had slept long and heavily. The shadows had declined from the meridian, and the horse had trampled the ground all about the tree to which he had been tied and had wound his bridle about it. Etherington's conscience reproached him for having slept on duty, and as he untied his horse and remounted he blamed himself once more for his remissness. The sounds now grew louder and soon became distinguishable as the voices of persons approaching along the way which he had come, and engaged in loud altercation or heated argument. He examined his pistol and, backing his horse aside under the trees, awaited their approach.

The travellers soon came into view on the brow of

the hill, and he perceived that they were two in number; one to his astonishment being his late captor and robber, Silas Fox, and the other a stranger to him, but who was none else than the garrulous Irishman, who had arrived at Bradford's the day before. They were both mounted on sorry looking hacks, which they sorely belabored in their efforts to expedite their movements. Etherington was meditating on how he should receive these men when they descended the hill and came abreast of where he was waiting. Fox's jaw dropped with a strange, ludicrous movement when he recognized his late captive; but Etherington, with his pistol in hand and a glance of cold indifference at Fox, waited for them to pass on, so that he might have them in front, and proceed at his leisure and alone. But he was to receive a new experience of Mr. Fox's assurance.

"Wall, do tell now, ef it ain't the Captain! Up and out again, after us a-rescuing him last night!" and he reined in his steed.

"It is," said Etherington, sternly and shortly, as if not desiring further converse. But Mr. Fox was not to be repulsed in this manner.

"And how's the head and shoulders, Cap?" he asked, with what the other felt was a touch of irony. Then, ignoring the fact that Etherington made no reply to his considerate inquisitiveness, he added, "Captain, this here gentleman," denoting the Irishman, "is Mister Donnyhoe."

"Patrick O'Donohue, of Ballykilley," added his companion, with a strong brogue, and with an air of importance, "at your sarvice, sur. Happy to make

yer acquaintance, sur. In His Majesty's foorces, sur?" he continued with a warm inquisitiveness.

"Yes," replied Etherington curtly. "But I detain you!" and he made as though to let the others proceed. He had a half mind to demand his papers and other effects from Fox; but, on consideration, deemed it useless under the circumstances, realizing the man's equivocal character. "We are scarcely travelling the same way," he added.

"I reckon you lie, sir," said Fox with a sly chuckle, "seeing it's your way, too, for my friend here is going to pay a visit to the Honorable Colonel Monmouth."

"Yes," corroborated the Irishman, "it's the duty of an Oirish gintleman to call on another Oirish gintleman in a furrin land."

"And you, sir?" Etherington demanded sternly of Silas.

"Am bound the same road, I reckon," and he grinned slyly and impudently.

"You?" questioned the young man in amazement. "You going to Monmouth?" and he stared at the other, astounded; for the fact that the man, after robbing the Governor's messenger, should dare to show his face there, revealed an audacity that was astonishing.

"And why not?" returned Fox coolly.

"Oh, perhaps you are about to deliver the Governor's despatches in person," suggested Etherington, meaningly.

"What's your little joke, Cap?" asked the other innocently.

“I refer to my letters and other effects, which have not been returned to me.”

“Oh, all them things which I reckon you lost when that beast spilled you; they were gathered up, and are now in the hands of old Bradford, awaitin’ your return.”

Mr. Fox did not explain fully the manner in which he was made to disgorge his plunder, which, however, will be described later on. But Etherington realized the man’s clever evasion of his guilt and saw that nothing was to be gained by delay; so, as his wily companion evidently intended to accompany him for some occult reason, will or nil, he suggested that as the day was advancing they had better proceed. This they immediately did, the young officer ignoring Fox and addressing himself, when compelled to speak, to the Irishman, whom he discovered to be not only garrulous but disputatious.

Mr. Fox, however, though he carefully disguised his feelings, was in no too happy a mood, and the appearance of Etherington’s horse in the possession of its owner did not lessen his discomfiture. He had fully determined to possess the animal, which he had coveted ever since he had first cast eyes upon it that day at the inn. Then he had undergone a certain humiliation, as a more sensitive man would have regarded it, a decided loss as he felt it, that day at Bradford’s, when the combined influence of father and son had forced him to disgorge all that he had abstracted from Etherington’s pockets. This explained his being now already on the road, and why Etherington had not been pursued and

overtaken. Just now he was accompanying the son of Erin upon what many would have regarded as a daring undertaking, having over night imbued the former with a strong distrust of the eccentric Colonel and now ostensibly going as a paid advocate, having cautiously received his fee in advance, to forward his companion's fortunes and his own schemes into the bargain.

Silas Fox was what he himself would have called "a slippery gent," and rather prided himself on the fact. He was, in a degenerate sense of the phrase, "all things to all men," and aimed to make the greatest personal profit out of the misfortunes and weakness of his fellow-men. Being deep in the plottings of the invaders in so far as his self-interest went, but now having a grudge against the Bradfords, father and son, and against Struthers, who had abetted them in what Mr. Fox considered a traitorous trick and a heinous act against a friend and ally, he deemed that it might be no harm, perchance, to make secret terms with some one of the enemy. Colonel Monmouth, whom he feared and hated, was out of the question; but there was a certain Captain Carey, a reputed nephew of the former, whom Mr. Fox had studied by sight and by rumor, and it was with this gentleman that he hoped he might come to some secret understanding, and thereby leave a loophole for escape no matter which way fortune might go.

Of such remarkable astuteness, indeed, are patriots and statesmen often made; and, with more education, three-quarters of a century later, Mr. Fox might have been a successful public man, as he had by nature a perfect contempt for those most inconvenient qualities

called principles, and he could change his opinions, or rather his fighting position, quite as rapidly as some present-day grafters and politicians.

Now, as they went along, partly to throw dust in the other's eyes, and partly to satisfy his innate love of talking and his inquisitiveness, he proceeded to unbosom himself to Etherington, to the latter's no agreeable surprise.

"I reckon, Cap," he said ingenuously, "as you're kinder mystified concernin' my object and this gent's in payin' this here visit to old Monmouth. I reckon you are. I know I'd be if the case was your'n. Ain't you now?"

"It's none of my business," Etherington returned shortly, though privately he was wondering.

"Wall, it's what all go to the Colonel for, it's land. Now, I'm a trader by profession; one day it's cattle, another it's cargoes, sperets and notions for the women folks, and then agin it's land."

"And sometimes human life and liberty," thought the young man; but restrained himself from uttering the thought, as he answered shortly: "Oh, indeed!"

As he spoke, he strongly suspected that something sinister underlay this man's audacious visit to Castle Monmouth, and his supposition was right. But his wonder at Fox's effrontery would have increased seven-fold, could he have read the other's inner thoughts; for that gentleman's schemes were never wholly single, and in addition to his hopes already hinted at, of getting in touch with the other side, he had one tremendous and long contemplated scheme.

The truth is that, with the courage of a greater

man so far as daring plots went, he intended no less than the eventual capture of Colonel Monmouth himself and the personal acquisition of the castle, as it was called; and one of his objects at present was a visit of inspection, in order to study the place and discover how this might best be accomplished. With all his astuteness of a certain low calibre, Silas Fox was one of those who saw only the surface of really great movements, as such men happily or unhappily always do. With others, he was deluded into the idea that the Americans must eventually win and capture the country, and he, with a vast ambition, which in him was rank folly, had long coveted this place, and, like many pretended reformers, was really envying and secretly desiring to emulate the actions of those whom he most vigorously condemned. He had a craving to hang the Colonel and take the place in the country of one whose pride and power he openly cursed as "derved British uppishness." This was Mr. Fox's secret dream. Had the war ended as he desired it should, the result would have been, even had his personal schemes failed, that the people would merely have changed their masters.

Meanwhile, inwardly plotting and dreaming, and parrying words, the travellers jogged along until they at last climbed an ascent and came to the brow of a hill; then passing through a considerable clearing, they rode down a lane and came suddenly round a corner into a large, untidy farmyard. Here the deep clamorous barking of several dogs, kennelled somewhere near by, told them that they had at last arrived at their destination, and were about to encounter a personality which few understood and many feared.

CHAPTER XIV

A WARM RECEPTION

ETHERINGTON, who had been growing more and more dubious regarding the welcome he would receive, coming as he did without his letters and credentials, had gradually fallen cautiously into the rear, letting his companions advance alone into the yard in front of him.

Rumor concerning the owner of the place at which they had now arrived had led him to expect something more dignified and becoming the approach to the residence of a gentleman than the scene which now confronted him. He reined his horse in at the yard entrance and watched his companions while, with some trepidation, they dismounted and tethered their beasts to a fence at one side of the enclosure. It is true that the place contained a greater variety of vehicles and implements than was then commonly employed in rural life; but the whole yard was as rude-looking and primitive as, and the building forming the side of it opposite to the entrance was no better in appearance, though on a larger scale than, any pioneer house he had seen elsewhere, and the yard was neither so decent nor so well kept as that at Bradford's Cove.

As he surveyed the place his heart sank in disappointment, for he was weary, and, in spite of the failure

of his mission, had hoped for some of those refinements of life, such as he had not seen since leaving York, save in a very simple form at the house he had lately left. As the place repelled him, he resolved to stay where he was and await the issue of events and learn somewhat of the character of his future host and of his residence from the manner of reception accorded to his companions.

He was not destined to be kept long in suspense. Silas Fox, having dismounted after having, with characteristic caution, made sure that the still clamorous curs were safely kennelled, advanced whip in hand, followed more timorously by the Irishman at a respectable distance, and hammered boldly and loudly on a rude door, which seemed the only entrance to the windowless wall of the house in front. At the sound of Mr. Fox's knocking, the dogs from some enclosed apartment near by, became more clamorous than ever; then a harsh voice broke the silence and called from somewhere within:

"Who the devil is that, James?"

"Some more fellows after land, sir, I would say, by their looks," came back in answer from someone, probably a serving man, who spoke from an invisible point of vantage, with a view of the yard and its approaches.

"Well, I will deal with them. Go, and keep the dogs ready," came in answer like a deep growl.

"Yes, sir," echoed the other; and as this strange conversation reached this stage, with Mr. Fox and his unlucky companion listening in wonder, a small, hitherto invisible sliding panel opened in the wall near the door,

leaving a square, window-like opening, through which a man's face could be plainly seen as he peered out at them.

As the owner of the face stared out at his visitors in a keenly quizzical manner, taking in with a rapid survey the appearance of the two candidates for possession of the soil, a sharp voice peremptorily demanded: "Well, my men, what the devil do you want?"

It was a somewhat ruddy but grim-looking face that was thus framed in the opening, and what seemed like an old nightcap, which the speaker wore, rather added to the eccentric picture presented. At this sudden and somewhat inhospitable salutation, which threw a damper on his sanguine hopes, the Irishman slunk back; but Fox, knowing more of the personality which he was bearding, answered:

"It's just land as we're looking for, I reckon, me and this gentleman; and I reckon as the Colonel has lots for us both, seein' as we are lyal," he added, pretending that he was not aware of the other's identity.

"Oh, you want land, do you? You are lyal, are you?" he returned, sardonically mimicking Fox. "Well, about how much land do you think you should have?" and he paused with a cynical expression, awaiting the answer.

Fox hesitated a moment in some surprise at this easy capitulation to his demands, then he said:

"I'm not sure regarding this gent, who's ambitious, but as for me, I reckon, say about one thousand might do for the present, anyhow."

"Feet?" came the sharp interrogation.

"No, acres!" returned the amazed Mr. Fox indignantly.

"Oh!" The controller of the lands seemed to consider, then he asked, "Are you sure that that will be sufficient?"

"Wall, p'raps twelve or fifteen hundred might be nearer the mark," returned the covetous Silas; while the Irish gentleman, hearing this, took heart and drew nearer.

"Twelve or fifteen hundred, and seeing you're lyal!" added the grim inquisitor meaningly.

"Ya'as, seeing I'm lyal," echoed Mr. Fox dubiously.

"Well, let me tell you, my good fellow," cried the owner of the face at the window, with sudden vindictiveness, "that you are just an impudent Yankee, and that 'spy' is written all over your scoundrelly countenance."

"You hain't no right to talk that way to me," cried Silas, in rage and discomfiture at the other's clever unmasking of his individuality, after playing with him, "you hain't; this is a free country."

"Not while such scoundrels as you pollute its soil. You get none of my land; so you had better go, before my dogs show you the way."

Silas would have liked to have been able to answer this retort; but he knew the Colonel's dogs by repute, and had no desire to experience a practical example of their peculiar qualities. As their clamor grew fiercer, he shook his fist at the Colonel, and, with curses and threats that he would see him again, stayed not on the order of his going, having dared, as he afterwards boasted, "the cussed Britisher in his den." Now,

however, he covered the ground with exceeding rapidity and, freeing his hack, mounted, and with execrations, passed Etherington, and disappeared down the lane as fast as his sorry beast could carry him, his long legs clinging to the animal's sides, his whip belaboring his steed as he went, and making a picture which was absurd in the extreme.

The Irishman, in his panic at this hurried retreat of his vanguard and ally, would have followed in his companion's wake, but the voice enquired from the opening:

"Well, where is the Irish gentleman?"

The O'Donohue stayed in mid-flight and, turning at this sharp command, hoping to win a more favorable reception, faced the window, endeavoring to recover his dignity.

"Well, my good fellow, what can I do for you?" enquired the other irritably.

The "my good fellow" roused all the soul of the O'Donohue in the holy ire of insulted dignity.

"It's the land I'm wantin', sure!" he answered, endeavoring to match in brusqueness the other's manner.

"That is what they all want, but what are your qualifications?"

"Qualifications! My soul, what d'ye mane? I thought the land was to be had for the askin'! And is it me, an Oirish gintleman, as ye'd be askin' for qualifications of, like any dirty thafe of the wurrl'd?"

"Oh, come," cried the other, "none of that nonsense. How much land do you want?"

"D'ye ask me how much Oi might want? Oi'd

be doin' wid about twelve hundred acres, about."

"Twelve hundred acres!" returned the other. "And what would you do with all that?"

"Why ain't Oi an Oirish gintleman, wid as ould a coat of arms as any Monmouth av them all? An' ye'd be askin' me what Oi'd be doin' wid me land. Would ye have me wurrk it, loike any thafe av the wurrld?"

"Listen, my man," cried the other. "I have six dogs close here, and three are mastiffs; they are fond of hunting. Do you understand? So I advise you to go while you can in safety, as my dogs do not understand heraldry." As he said this, the window-slide was shut with a bang, and the Irishman, who had some sporting knowledge, uttered a yell of terror, and was scarce across the yard and on his beast's back, striving to loosen it, when a large dog with a voice like a deep bell came round the corner, held in leash by a serving man.

"Hould him back! Oi'm a goin'. Marcy, saints, don't ye see Oi'm a goin'?" and tearing the halter from the fence, he followed in quick retreat his vanquished companion, whence they had come.

The scene was so ridiculous that Etherington forgot where he was and everything, in his amazement and mirth, and laughed heartily at this summary method of keeping undesirables out of the community. He was thus indulging his humor, utterly oblivious of the man and the baying dog, when a stern voice spoke at his side.

"Well, sir, what do you want?"

The words, and something in the tone in which they

were spoken, brought Etherington back to a sense of his position, and he turned from the fleeing son of Erin, and perceived a man of about middle age standing near his horse's head. He was about medium height, with a smooth-shaven, military face, strong and rather handsome in its outline, with a full, protruding blue eye. He was dressed simply in a shooting coat and cap, and wore homespun breeches; but there was that about him, an innate air of command, which made Etherington instinctively doff his hat, as he answered with bended head:

“I am Captain Etherington, aide-de-camp to His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, on state business to Colonel Monmouth,” and he dismounted as he spoke and remained uncovered. Why he did so he could not have explained, save that it seemed the natural thing to do in this man's presence.

“Well,” said the other sternly, “come this way then, I am Colonel Monmouth.”

CHAPTER XV

THE LORD OF CASTLE MONMOUTH

CALLING to the man to put up the dog and take Etherington's horse, his host led the way across the yard, and opening a door in a high close fence at one side of the house, ushered Etherington into what seemed to him to be another world. On one side of this barrier, which from where they now stood was hedged and hidden by shrubbery and low bushes, was the rough squalor and carelessness of a primitive backwoods yard, while on the other existed a condition showing infinite care, toil and ideality, a refinement of garden, hedge and orchard-wall, which suggested England. Passing through what seemed a well kept kitchen garden, they came to a lower fence, beyond which they entered a sunny enclosure sloping toward the lake, which made Etherington start with new surprise. It was one of those places rare even in Europe, a veritable rose-garden in all the glory of crimson bud and bloom. The place was beautifully kept, with gravelled walks and garden seats; while in the middle was an old sundial, fashioned out of some dark brown metal and standing on a block of wood. It was like a bit of the Old World, with all the old world associations placed out there in the confines of the western wilderness, and for a moment he was actually sick for a sight of England.

“Here,” said his host, “is my favorite spot; a few days hence they will be in full bloom. They were all planted by my own hand, with some assistance from my man; and when the air is heavy with their scent, I feel nearer to the old land. You should see them then, they are the real children of my heart. I have all the common varieties and several rare ones, which a friend of mine sent me from her rose-garden in the north of Scotland, facing on the North Sea, as mine does here upon this pleasant water. No rose garden in the world has, I am sure, a sunnier aspect and a fairer outlook than this of mine,” and he bared his head and looked out and down between a sloping avenue of oaks and walnuts over a grassy park, to where, beyond them, in front and on both sides of the point, the blue waters of Lake Erie lay, mist-like, in the late afternoon sunshine.

Etherington now realized that they were on a sort of plateau or bluff, which stretched out into the lake, with a bay on either hand. The spot had been well chosen by one devoted to the life of a recluse and desirous of fellow-ship with the great spirit of nature in the open, where self-communion was all, and life and its myriad ills and ambitions far away. The care devoted to the whole place, which already owed so much to nature, gave it a strong resemblance to the grounds about some old English manor house, and Etherington found it hard to realize that this man and this place were the same as those of the unpromising approach at the other side of the garden door, that this was that cynical, almost coarse individual, who

had peered through the opening in the wall and mocked the two unsuccessful applicants for Canadian land. Here he was quite in keeping with his surroundings, and there also he had not been out of touch with that other aspect of ruder conditions. It was as though this singular character had two identities, living two different lives, one for the common world, cynical, and careless of all outside opinion, the other leading an inward existence, where he was really himself, and giving play to his higher ideals.

As Etherington puzzled over this strange personality, his companion led him by shrubberies and hedges, many of them brought from the old land, around to the front of the house, which he now saw from a new aspect. It faced on a smooth lawn or sward, well cut and bordered by a quick-set hedge, and from this plateau the avenue of oaks sloped by a natural declivity toward the lake below. The house also presented a different appearance on this side. It was well built of timber, with some attempt at decoration. It was long and low, with three roof windows facing the water, and had a wide verandah running along its front and at one side open to the garden. In front of the door, in the centre of the lawn, stood a tall, strong flag-staff, from whose top floated the British standard.

"This," he said, denoting the grounds, "has been the work of some years, and that," pointing to the flag, "will float there as long as I am above ground to keep it there, in spite of all traitors and rebels."

Then he said, "Come within," and led the way up the steps. It was a large, low-raftered apartment which

they entered, walled with finished pine, and having a large fireplace at one side. There were a few engravings on the walls, representing battle scenes, naval and land. Over the mantel, between two crossed swords, hung a small portrait of a young man, who was just then becoming famous as Britain's greatest military hero of modern days; but there he was represented as an extremely youthful officer, and underneath, on a slip of paper, was written in a boyish hand—"Arthur Wellesley." The few articles of furniture in the room were of the Old World. They were an old spinet with yellowish ivory keys, some tables and old cabinets of mahogany and oak, with a couple of couches. The whole air of the place caused Etherington to draw a sigh of relief. But ere he had leisure to more than drink it all in, his host brought him suddenly back to a sense of his unhappy position, as motioning him to a seat and seating himself, he said:

"Now, Captain Etherington, where are my letters from His Excellency?"

There was an imperious character about this man which brooked no delay when he demanded an answer, and Etherington, with much misgiving, in as few words as possible, related his misfortune.

"The truth is, Colonel Monmouth," he began, "I have no despatches."

"No despatches? What mean you, sir?" returned Monmouth sharply.

"Simply that I have been waylaid, and have lost them all."

The Colonel started to his feet with a great oath.

“Waylaid? In this locality? You waylaid?” and the veins stood out on his forehead. “In my country? ’Tis treason! Rank treason! And my letters gone, sir, explain yourself!”

Then Etherington gave him an account of the whole matter. The ice was now broken, so he told it all, his host, after the first outburst, throwing himself back in his chair, and listening in silence.

In the telling of his story, the young man said as little as possible of the part played by the Bradfords, except regarding the action of the girl in getting him away. But his duty as a soldier forced him to relate all he knew concerning the ambush, the public service in the garden, and the incendiary preacher.

“I have had my eyes on that family,” the other said when he had finished; “summary measures should be taken. That young man is a rebel, and as for that scoundrel, Fox, I have heard of him, but have never caught sight of him before to-day. But, sir,” he added severely, “you were distinctly remiss in your duty. Why did you not warn me, and hold that fellow when he was in my yard? I only wish I had set my dogs on him in real earnest. Had I known what I know now, I would have hanged him to a tree out yonder.”

“But,” protested Etherington, “while we suspect him, we have no actual proof.”

“Proof!” retorted the other hotly, “did I not see ‘spy’ written all over his gallows face? Hanging is too good for such as he. But,” turning on the other sharply, “you of course know what all this means to yourself.

All of your correspondence being in the enemy's hands, they will know all our plans; now we will be unable to check what I have long feared was their intention, namely, to land forces here, make this their basis of operations, cut off the east from the western portion of the Province, and then march on Newark."

"I had not thought it so important a point or the danger so imminent as that, sir," lamented Etherington in some discomfiture.

"Well, we must at least consult with our friends here, and notify the Governor of your loss; meanwhile, one thing must be done to checkmate them and perchance recover the papers."

"And what may that be?" questioned Etherington, looking eagerly for some loophole out of his trouble.

"Well, we must call out the militia, or at least a squad, capture Bradford's place, and arrest the family with all suspicious persons. Do you not think so?" and the elder man observed his companion shrewdly.

"Yes," agreed Etherington, who had to admit the advisability of this plan, though he thought of the girl and grimly deplored the distasteful necessity.

"Well," added Monmouth reflectively; "by George, sir, but you have been unfortunate; but we must remedy matters. First, to notify the Governor, then we will see Captain Philpotts. He is my flag lieutenant here." As he said this, he pulled a knob and rang an unseen bell, and a serving man appeared.

"Send James at once to the Captain's, and tell him I want two reliable men to post at once to York, and that he may expect me and a gentleman over to-night."

"Yes, sir," said the man, and he was about to retire, when his master detained him.

"Wait, Jones; get a meal ready, some—some fowl and a bottle of wine."

"Where will I serve it, sir?" asked the man. "In the kitchen?"

"No, on the side verandah."

"You must be worn out," he continued to Etherington. "Will you have a glass of wine now, and a wash and rest before dinner?"

As the latter replied gladly in the affirmative, Monmouth led the way to a chamber, while the young man followed, worn out by fatigue, and dazed by a confusion of ideas. His strange adventure, his misfortunes, the personality of the girl and that of his remarkable host chased each other in a sort of nightmarish dream through the phantom chambers of his imagination. But his chief thought through it all was a grave apprehension regarding the coming attack on Bradford's Cove and its consequences. For between Colonel Monmouth and his late host he perceived that there existed a wide gulf of mutual social and class prejudice, hatred and distrust, which could not be bridged, and which was now likely to grow wider and wider.

CHAPTER XVI

AN ADMIRAL ON HIS OWN QUARTER-DECK

SHORTLY after dusk, when they had finished their dinner on the cool and shady gallery, by the light of several horn lanterns, the Colonel, who had been lost in thought over his bottle of wine, for which he showed a certain fondness, rose and went to a desk within doors and prepared a short account of what had happened, and to this Etherington added an apologetic statement of his loss. Both of these Monmouth sealed with his own seal, and rang for the messengers who were ready waiting in the kitchen.

They were two sturdy, honest-faced men who entered. Both had been soldiers and held land under the Colonel, and were ready to die for the loyal cause.

“Are you both well armed?” asked the Colonel sternly.

“We are, sir,” said the elder, as they advanced and stood stiffly at attention.

“And you will give any scoundrel rebel his own if he molests you?”

“That we will, sir,” answered the man respectfully, but warmly. “We’ll get to York and back or die in our tracks.”

“That is right, my man, loyally said. Jones,” he added, “give them each a good dram to drink His Majesty’s health and warm their hearts.”

"Yes, sir," said the serving man, as he saw them out.

"There go as sturdy and loyal men as you will find anywhere," sighed the Colonel, when they had gone. "If only that rascal, Wilcocks, and his man, Struthers, would leave them alone. I won't be easy until the latter is in jail, and that Bradford's rebel nest destroyed," he added as he prepared to go out.

"Have you thought that there are some harmless women there?" suggested Etherington diffidently.

"Women of that class are worse than the men; but," he added in a cynical manner which the other did not like, "I forgot you were rescued by a young amazon. And did she give you her glove, or something kinder at parting?"

"Her last words," cried Etherington frankly, and yet bitterly, "were scarcely of the nature you suggest. They were—I hate you, and I hate your King and your Governor!"

"By George! I like her spirit, the jade!" cried the other. "She said that, did she? And yet she sent you away, and gave up your horse. It must have been a sacrifice, indeed. That class are born poachers and horse thieves. The young man is, I am told, more Indian than white."

"I think that you are mistaken there," said Etherington. "They are not at all the class of people you think they are."

"Oh!" said the elder man. Then he looked enquiringly at his companion in the dusk without speaking, but in a manner to make him feel uncomfortable, and Etherington thought that the other had exceedingly

strong powers in that direction, when he cared to use them.

After a pause he arose, and taking two stout walking sticks from a corner, gave Etherington one, then examining his pistol, took down one of the lanthorns and led the way out of the house. They went across the lawn, which by now was glistening with dew, and down a path which led into the cove at the side of the great bluff. In a few moments they were in the woods, where they stood for an instant, while from afar came the sound of a whip-poor-will, or, near at hand, of some creature whirring past them in the dark. Then following the side of a gully, they advanced again, Etherington's remarkable guide picking his way with an intimate knowledge of his surroundings.

After walking for some time, they came through the woods into a small clearing, and suddenly, in the dim light, saw by a gate two men in converse, as though in heated discussion. The voice of one was loud and peculiar, and that of the other low and dictatorial. As they approached, one of the figures moved rapidly past them toward the nearest woods. As he did so, Etherington gave a quick start and cried:

"Colonel, that is our man! It is Fox!"

The other said nothing, but he wheeled about, and his pistol cracked in the gloom. But it was too late, the fugitive had already disappeared in the forest. With an oath at his failure, Monmouth moved forward and confronted the other at the gate.

It was a curious spectacle which presented itself to their gaze. A loutish looking man, with round and

swollen, dissipated features, was leaning against the fence, as though thereby supporting himself; and close to him was propped a small keg, from the spigot of which the youth was engaged in sucking something by means of a hollow reed.

"What have you got there, Tom, you young hound?" cried Monmouth sternly, going forward and shaking the other roughly by the shoulder.

"Rum," answered the youth thickly, withdrawing his lips from the reed, and staring at them stupidly in the light of the Colonel's lanthorn.

"Oh, it's the Colonel! It's you, hey?" and he tried to stand straight. "Come, come aboard, Colonel!" he added, but he was too drunk to make the salute.

"And who taught you that?" Monmouth asked sternly, and pointing at the keg from which the rum was trickling.

"Why, why, who elsh, bu' my good frien' Silas. Silas Fox, the bes' smuggler of good rum in the—hic—province," and he smiled feebly and sheepishly, with a drunken man's manner of trying to appear sober on being caught.

"So that was the scoundrel who has just left?" said the Colonel.

"Yesh, jus' lef' me this min'. Shay, Colonel, you shouldn't shoot at Si," the other appealed in maudlin tones.

"None of this nonsense, you young blackguard," retorted the Colonel. "You know he is a confounded rebel. What if I tell your father or your sister that I saw Tom Philpotts sneaking in the bush with a scoun-

drel spy? Tom Philpotts who should be in His Majesty's navy, fighting his enemies?"

"M' sister? You've no right to speak m' sister," said the other more soberly.

"Yes, I have, she's a good girl, whose heart you are breaking by your beastly conduct," said the other sternly.

"And who's blame?" said the young man, more sensible of his position. "Who's blame, but m' father, for bringing me to place like thish."

"That is no reason why you should keep such rascally company as that fellow who uses you to get information."

"If y' mean that, I'm no traitor," cried the young man.

"Well, don't let me find you in his company again," answered the Colonel; "if I do, I'll arrest you, Tom, by George, I will," and as he said this, he, with one blow of his stick sent the offending keg crashing to the ground, spilling its contents.

"O my rum! My rum!" cried the drunkard, sprawling after it, as the two others passed on.

"There," said the Colonel, "is a wreck, who would have made a good naval officer, but for his father's folly in bringing him here. He has had no proper companions or surroundings, and being naturally weak, he is the victim of men like that scoundrel, who use him for their purposes."

As he spoke they crossed a ploughed field, dotted over with stumps, and through a fringe of woodland came to a square opening in the forest, about three

acres in extent. In the centre of this stood a large square log house, two-thirds of it roofed, and the other third still open to the winds of heaven. It was in reality two buildings adjoining each other, one completed, and the other still in process of construction, in which condition it had remained for some time. This and the bare, untilled look of the place, gave it a bleak, almost deserted appearance.

The owner of this place was a retired naval officer, who, through a desire to turn land-owner in the New World, had come out here, as so many of his class had done, bringing a family used only to refinement into the rude conditions of the wilderness, far from all the comforts and luxuries of civilization, under the mistaken idea that it was the proper thing to do, but which, as in most cases, brought utter ruin on the children so sacrificed; and often killed, or rendered broken-hearted, the women who accompanied them.

Captain Philpotts was a rubicund, bronze-faced sailor, of a good family in Devon, a county which has provided some of Britain's greatest sailors and naval heroes. But he was the most eccentric of men, and ran his house there in the wilderness as though it were a ship stranded ashore. He had hammocks instead of bedsteads, in all the rooms, and divided the day into bells instead of hours; and having built his house near the shore, his common daily habit was to ascend a neighboring hill, commanding a wide sweep of the lake, where he had a flagstaff, which flew the Blue Peter as faithfully as Colonel Monmouth floated the Royal Standard. He prided himself on his perfect govern-

ment of his household on quarter-deck principles, and he it was who met the Colonel and his guest, as they were announced by a pack of yelping and baying curs, ere they could knock at the door.

“Come aboard, Colonel,” cried a voice that suggested the speaking trumpet. “Avast there you, Tiger,” he shouted to the leader of the dogs, as he came forward with a seaman’s rolling gait, a stick for the curs, and a hearty greeting for his guests.

“I’ve great news for you, Colonel!” he cried, as he grasped his friend’s hand; “war has been declared, and we may expect the varmint about our ears any time now.”

“War declared!” said the Colonel soberly. “I was expecting this news, but why was I not notified?”

“Your messenger is here,” said the other apologetically. “It is your nephew, Tom Carey, he has just come post to you with letters, but turned in here with mails for us.”

“Oh!” said Colonel Monmouth, his face darkening at his nephew’s name, with an ominous look; but he said no more as he and Etherington followed Philpotts into the house.

They entered a square apartment at one side of a narrow hall. It was simply furnished, but with evidence of Old World refinement, mingled with the inevitable crudeness of the New. The only original adornment consisted of a full rigged line-of-battleship, which stood above the mantel, and on one of the walls was a large, rudely painted picture of the same or a similar ship, which the Captain had once commanded.

Three persons were in the room, the mistress of the house, a placid invalid, who reclined in a large easy chair, a young lady who sat over some needlework by a small table, and a tall, fair young man in military undress costume, who now rose from a seat near the young lady, as they entered.

Colonel Monmouth advanced with a courtier-like grace to the elderly lady, and taking her rather limp hand, asked her how she did. Then he bowed over the hand of the young lady, who rose at his approach, and gallantly kissed her fingers with all the grace and lightness of a court dandy; then with a sudden change of manner, which impressed all in the room, he wheeled about to the young officer, who stood diffidently near.

“Well, sir,” he asked coldly and sternly, “where are my despatches?”

CHAPTER XVII

DIANA PHILPOTTS

HERE they are, uncle," answered the young man in a conciliatory tone, as he produced the letters, though he resented the look and tone of the other, "and here is a packet from my grandmother."

"The Governor's letters first," he commanded coldly and shortly. "War is now declared and you have scarce been true to your duty. How came you to be the bearer of these despatches?"

"I had just arrived at York," said Carey, "when the news followed me of the declaration of war, and General Brock, thinking it wise in case that something might have happened to the first letters, asked the Governor to give me duplicate instructions and with orders to push on, knowing that I was coming straight here."

"General Brock is a true soldier and a wise prophet," said Monmouth. "His suspicions were only too true. Captain Etherington was waylaid last evening near here, and barely escaped with his life, and while unconscious, was relieved of his letters."

They all started at this intelligence, and looked in astonishment at Etherington, who stood silent.

"Robbed!" shouted Philpotts. "Robbed, sir! Near here, you say? By whom?"

"By that scoundrel Bradford's gang," returned the

Colonel. "That agitator, Struthers, is there, the very man we are after, and they held a rebel meeting addressed by an incendiary preacher. And that rascal spy, Fox, had the impudence to come to my place to-day, and pretend to ask for land; but I sent him about his business."

"Not Fox, the trader," cried Philpotts, "the fellow who sells calico to the women?"

"Trader be hanged!" said Monmouth. "He is a Yankee spy and a horse thief, and from what Etherington tells me, is at the bottom of all of their schemes in this locality; and he and that half Indian, young Bradford, are up to no good."

When he mentioned young Bradford's name, the face of the young girl became suffused with a deep blush; and to hide her confusion, she requested Monmouth and Etherington to be seated.

She was a pretty, fair girl, with a delicate but not very strong looking face, of an oval cast. Her beauty lay in her eyes, which were of a liquid blue, and her hair, which was a shining gold, and fell in soft wavy folds about her brow. She had been left at school in England, and had not come out to Canada until about a year before the date on which this history opens, and so was new to the whole place and the life about her, to which, as a dutiful daughter, she did her best to adapt herself, and as she was of a romantic temperament, the wild and adventurous aspect of the life appealed to her. Her imagination had been stimulated by Mrs. Radcliffe's and kindred fiction, and though a timid girl, she loved to roam in the forest and, like girls

of her nature, to cherish a secret, and a short while before she had had an adventure. It was not one of great importance, but it lingered in her memory.

One afternoon in the spring, she had crossed in a canoe, which had been given her by her father, to a small island in the bay which was hidden from the house, and to which she retired at times, when she desired to be alone with a book or her thoughts. In some way the canoe got adrift, and when she found herself cut off from the shore, she had called aloud in the hope that some one would come to her relief. There, as she stood on the beach, looking in vain for help, she suddenly saw a young man with a gun come out of the woods on the opposite shore. He stood looking at her and her drifting canoe for a moment, then leaning his gun against a tree, he waded into the water, until out of his depth, then he swam to her canoe, and towed it to the shore where she was; then, without a word, he plunged in again and, swimming across, secured his gun, and with a single glance back in her direction, disappeared in the woods.

She never went to that place again, though she often desired to do so. By careful enquiry, and by what her father and brother let fall, she discovered that her rescuer was none other than young Bradford, the son of the rebel neighbor. In spite of her education and social prejudice, she often recalled the young man with his dark, proud face, who had come and gone that afternoon so quietly, and rendered her such signal service without staying to receive any thanks. Of course, she realized that it was wrong even to think of

such a person; but nature is nature; and it was this remembrance which she had often dwelt upon in her solitude of late, which had caused her to blush, as Etherington noticed, so beautifully at mention of his name.

The other young man also noticed her blush, and did not like it. He had met her in England, and was her devoted slave when in her vicinity. He was a practical youth, of a careful, worldly type, and while he liked the girl, was not blind to the fact that her brother was a wreck, and that her father's property lay next to that of his uncle whom he courted so assiduously. Thus Lieutenant Carey had two ties to this, to him, otherwise outlandish place, a young maiden of property and a bachelor uncle, from both of whom he hoped to reap a profit as time went on.

"Captain Etherington," said Monmouth sarcastically, "this is Lieutenant Carey, who professes to prefer an old man's society and the remote wilderness, to the charms of the British mess-room and other gaieties of civilization."

But Carey seemed not to notice the sarcasm. He merely rose and returned Etherington's bow, and then continued to pay his court to the young lady, who motioned Etherington to a seat near her. The latter, who already felt a sympathy for this young girl, who reigned with such refined grace in this rude place of the wilderness, gladly accepted the seat offered, and joined her and Carey, who seemed not over-pleased at his intrusion. Carey, however, was too intent on his own schemes to let the other's presence affect him, though he saw, as

suitors often do, a possible rival. But he had just arrived after an absence of nine months, and was anxious to discover how he stood, or what had happened to injure his prospects during his absence. His uncle's manner he was accustomed to, and he made up his mind to suffer it because of the reward for his subserviency, which he eventually expected in that quarter. But with regard to the girl, he did not feel so philosophic. He was, as much as he could ever be, in love with her, and when she had blushed at the mention of young Bradford's name, he was filled with a suspicion that there was something serious between them. The young man he had seen once, but not to remember distinctly; he was of another class, and out of his world, a different species as it were. But now this disagreeable possibility gave him a new significance in Carey's eyes. He secretly wondered, as he sat there, what it could mean. He knew that there had never been any intercourse between the two families, and he believed that Diana Philpotts was too proud to stoop to anything clandestine, and yet the suspicion rankled. He did not like to ask any distinct question, and yet he would have given much to know the exact truth, and he determined to sound her feelings further in the matter.

"Your father has had no trouble with your neighbors over there?" he asked her as Etherington sat down.

"No, of course not! Why should he?" she asked, with a slight imperious questioning, raising her eyebrows. "They leave us alone, and we leave them alone. I understand they are not like the rest of the people

here, and yet not like us. I often wish they were. I wish there were some girl of my own age here whom I could know," she continued, with a slight sigh, as she said this, and Etherington asked:

"And why have you not tried to know these people, Miss Philpotts?"

"Why do you ask that, Captain Etherington?" she returned.

"Because I think you would find them far different from what you have supposed." Here he felt that perhaps he had gone too far, so he paused.

"How could they be anything else than what they are?" asked Carey sneeringly, "just common, vulgar rebels."

"You wrong them," answered Etherington with inward indignation, thinking of Lydia Bradford and her fine pride, and he spoke so that his voice attracted the attention of some of the others in the room.

"Captain Etherington thinks that we have not done justice to our neighbors, the Bradfords, Henry," said Mrs. Philpotts to her husband, over her knitting.

"Do them justice!" cried the old officer. "Who could do otherwise than avoid that cantankerous psalm-singing old hermit? But no child of mine shall ever associate with those not of our rank—especially such confounded rebels as those are. Shiver my timbers! but it's rank treason even to suggest such a thing," he almost shouted in his excitement.

"Then Captain Etherington is the traitor," said Carey, with a malicious smile, "for it is he who has suggested it."

“Captain Etherington has reason to know those people,” said Monmouth, looking up from his letters. “He has been their enforced guest. Not only did they waylay, capture and plunder him, but they even entertained him, and bound up his wounds, and, for some reason, played the good Samaritan, and let him escape with a good opinion of them and their ways.” He was speaking in a half-cynical humor, but his face darkened as he added, “However, this is a serious matter; this war will end in driving them from the country, so they are not worthy our notice save to study how to frustrate their knavish plots.”

“Believe me, Miss Philpotts,” said Etherington, who felt exceedingly uncomfortable at this thrusting aside of his ideas, and addressing the young girl as the one who seemed most open to sympathy with his feelings, “I admit that all that Colonel Monmouth says is true; but I must confess that from that family, themselves, I received nothing but practical kindness, and care for my hurt, and to one of them, I owe, I believe, my life itself.” He spoke with more heat than he intended; for he felt that, whatever their ideas and views, those people were much misunderstood and maligned by the circle he was now in.

The young girl said nothing; but it could be seen by the flashing of her eye, and the look she gave him, and the heaving of her breast, that he had gained her sympathy at least.

But Carey viewed this influence with no kindly interest, and he determined to spoil the good effect the other had made.

"And what particular member of the family was that?" he asked, turning to Etherington sarcastically, for his own case made him suspicious.

"That, if Miss Philpotts will pardon me, I decline to answer," said Etherington coldly, but with some inward perturbation.

"But I am not so bound to chivalrous secrecy," said Monmouth, a cynical smile playing about his grimly handsome lips. "The fact is, ladies, that Captain Etherington has had an adventure, and there is a lady in the case."

"Not that cold, black-eyed girl?" said Philpotts.

"If you mean Miss Lydia Bradford," answered Etherington, flushing in his turn, "it is;" and still addressing the young girl, he added, "and in spite of all the circumstances, I believe that Miss Bradford is the young lady whom you have been looking for as a companion."

"What, sir," thundered Philpotts, "my daughter to associate with the daughter of a common rebel?"

"Captain Etherington!" was all Mrs. Philpotts could ejaculate, but the tone in which she said it expressed volumes.

"And these are the people who robbed you!" said Philpotts indignantly.

"Not the Bradfords, I am certain of that," answered Etherington.

"Did they pray for the King at their rebel service? Did any of them express a loyal sentiment?" he continued.

"I cannot say that they did," answered the young man.

"And you, sir, a King's officer, sit here in my house and recommend such people as associates for my family!" cried the old sailor in a passion.

"I admit that you have me at a disadvantage there," returned Etherington, while Carey smiled sarcastically, and enjoyed his defeat.

"Captain Etherington," said Monmouth standing up, "is young and enthusiastic, and we must expect him to speak as he has done. He has been the guest of these people; but these purely social ethics are out of place here, and it is too late to apply them now. By these letters I hold, gentlemen, I am Colonel of this district, and I hold here warrants for the arrest of one, Henry Struthers, and others, among them Ambrose Bradford and Robert Bradford, traitors to His Majesty the King. Captain Etherington," he suggested sarcastically, "will have an opportunity to renew their acquaintance; because sir," he added, turning to him, "I hereby order you to the command of the troop which shall execute these warrants."

All in the room, even Philpotts, were startled at this sudden order. Miss Philpotts turned pale, but said nothing, and Etherington for a moment seemed stunned at the news, and his own appointment to this most disagreeable mission. Then he answered firmly but quietly:

"And what, sir, if I should refuse?"

"A soldier of the King needs no answer to such a question," returned Monmouth; "you know the penalty."

"Uncle," cried Carey eagerly, "let me go, I will take his place," and there was a look on his face that showed no dislike of the office. Etherington was in a quandary. If it were only Struthers and Fox, he would have had no compunction, but the Bradfords were another matter. It would be, he considered, a cruel and brutal action on his part to go there, under the circumstances, and arrest her father and brother. And yet, would it not be even worse to allow Carey to go instead? For a moment his glance met that of the fair young girl, and he read an appeal in her eyes, which seemed to suggest that she too dreaded lest Carey should go. But Monmouth saved him the trouble of a decision.

"No, sir," he said to Carey, "I have other employment for you: and, Captain Etherington," he added with that remarkable assumption of command which he on occasion evinced, "I order you to undertake this duty."

"I accept it, sir," said Etherington submissively. As he met the vindictive glance of Carey, there was a low moan from the chair near him, and with a quick movement, ere Carey could reach her, he caught her in his arms. Diana Philpotts had fainted.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE NIGHT MEETING UNDER THE OAKS

MEANWHILE the actual declaration of war, for which preparations had been made for many months by certain parties on both sides of the lake, came as no surprise to those at Bradford's Cove; they had long expected it. To one man it came as a great relief, and that man was Silas Fox. He now felt that he no longer needed to postpone his long wished for raid on Castle Monmouth. This he had looked forward to for many reasons. He coveted the place for his own, with what might be called an insane ambition. He had a foolish idea that the war would not last long, that the Americans would come over in large numbers and occupy the whole frontier, and that those who were first in the field would be able to hold possession of what they had secured; so that his original idea had been to organize a small raid in the locality under the pretence of pushing the cause. As Monmouth was the leader of the loyal party in the community, it was not difficult to convince his followers of the importance of the capture of the Colonel and his stronghold.

Now that war was declared, Struthers, who had been formerly regarded as the leading rebel, sank into a second place in the real activity of their schemes, and Fox became the leader in a practical sense. Struthers

had already fanned the flame of insurrection, and there were only too many who were ready to follow Fox, for they disliked Monmouth, and were jealous of his power. Looking forward to this possibility, Fox, while Struthers had been rousing the people, had, by the aid of the master of "The Scud," privately smuggled a lot of muskets and ammunition into the country, and these practical aids to insurrection were now stored in a remote cave on the Bradford property, not far from the boundary which separated it from the Philpotts' place.

This place and the secret magazine were known to but a few; but now that the time was, as he thought, ripe for action, Mr. Fox was anxious to waste no time in using them to his own advantage, in what he considered "getting even with the tarnation friends of King Garge."

The result of all this scheming and preparation was that, on the night following the events related in the last chapter, a crowd of men could have been seen coming from different directions and gathering together under the trees in front of the garden at Bradford's Cove. They had a stern and furtive look, as of men who are determined on some dark project, to which they are impelled rather by those grim passions of hate and envy, than by any sense of duty.

Struthers, who was in his element as an orator, made an impassioned appeal to their class and other prejudices, and cried out to them to take advantage of the hour to strike a blow for those liberties and rights which he called the glorious rights of mankind.

"In one week this land will be in the possession of its liberators," he cried, "if you will but rise and assist them."

They listened in a sullen silence, which was now and then broken by faint growls of applause. Only one man put a practical question.

"But shouldn't we be wise to defend our country against the Yankees?" he asked.

But this heterodox idea was howled down as monstrous by the majority, who clamored for information as to how they might assist the cause.

"That question," said Struthers, with a superior air, "I leave to Captain Fox to answer. He will explain the lesser details of the glorious, liberty-granting campaign;" and with a flourish like the historical Roman orator, whom he loved to emulate, he closed his speech.

"Captain" Fox, as he was henceforth to be designated, now came forward. He was no orator, but a cunning schemer, as we have shown.

"Men, you ask what's to be done! Well, we all guess that, I reckon. How's it to be done? Well, I'll answer you. I reckon that less'n a mile from where we stand, thar's guns, powder and ball for mor'n a hundred of you."

At this announcement, there was first silence; then a sort of fierce yell—it was not a cheer—went up into the night. It was a strange feeling to those vindictive men, some of them suffering real and others fancied grievances, and all stirred by Struthers' wild rhetoric, to realize that they had now, at last, the power to

retaliate upon those who they thought tyrannized over them.

Some of the men were really honest, sturdy yeomen, who suffered more or less under the conditions which then existed, and, sad to say, exist to-day; while others of them were restless, turbulent spirits, who had not succeeded, as they considered they should have done, under the existing government, and fondly imagined that a change would, perchance, be to their advantage. Many also were Americans who had come into the community. All of them were, however, affected by religious and class prejudices against the Established Church and the more fortunately situated members of the community.

When the growl, which represented a cheer had died away, Fox continued fanning the flame.

"Now," he said, "that we have the barkers, you may ask who is the inimy. Is it King Garge? I reckon it is, but he is over the water. Is it the Government? It is down to York. But who is it stands for King Garge and the Government in these here parts?" he repeated suggestively.

"Monmouth, Colonel Monmouth!" repeated several who were in his councils.

"Yes, Colonel Monmouth!" he repeated. "Who is it we all hate like pisen? Ain't it Monmouth? King Monmouth? And who has all the land, and keeps it from those as should have it?"

"Monmouth, Colonel Monmouth!" yelled his hearers.

"Then who desarves hangin'?" he shouted.

"Colonel Monmouth!" they yelled once more.

"Then," he said, "it's Monmouth and his gang we're after; and it's our duty to take his place, and pay him off fer old scores. That's our plan of war," he cried. "The guns is ready, the powder and bullets is ready, and ef we ain't ready, we deserve to rot in our boots, we do."

"We are ready! We are ready!" yelled the majority, in loud response. If there were a few who doubted the wisdom, or the true morality of this proposed raid on a man's place, they were silent, being in a minority, and not sure of themselves.

"When shall it be?" clamored several excited voices from a portion of the gang who had recently been broaching a keg of rum. "To-night? Shall we go to-night?"

"Naw," said their astute leader, decidedly, "to-night's too soon; then the moon is full; to-morrow night will suit better, I reckon. Now, boys," he shouted, in an attempt at a martial tone, "fall in!" and he proceeded to give them some orders and advice how to act, because with all his military ambitions, Mr. Fox was ignorant of all practical drill.

"Keep in the shadders, an' when your inimy fires scatter an' lay down," was his advice. "You can all fire a gun?" he questioned as an afterthought.

The most of them could. "And we can shoot a Tory, too," some one laughed grimly, "and old Monmouth in special."

"No," yelled Silas, "shootin's too good. I want to see His Highness hangin' to a tree, I do!"

At this statement there was a great guffaw; and

thus a body of otherwise law-abiding men were led astray by frothy words and foolish hopes, through the cunning and knavery of a scheming villain, to be his tools and, in some cases, to end in ruin, exile, and even death.

But these warlike preparations had not gone forward unseen, and a hidden spectator of it all was Lydia Bradford, who watched the proceedings from behind the low garden wall, and drank in everything, even to the revelation of Fox's brutal desire to hang Colonel Monmouth. The whole sinister conspiracy, for it was nothing less, filled her with loathing and horror. In what she had been taught, all the murder and rapine had been placed to the account of the tory and the aristocrat, and her friends had always been the sufferers. But here was a strange reversal of the situation. So far as she had experienced, the Canadian people had lived in peace and some comfort, and whatever their wrongs, no one had molested them; and she now realized that no matter how much the tyrant Monmouth might be, this secret night attack on him was nothing less than a horrible crime. Nor did she look with any true pleasure to the American invasion. She was, after all, a Canadian girl; and Monmouth was at least a dweller on the soil of Canada. All of this bringing of soldiers and slaying each other appealed to her as something mad and sinful; but this rising up of men in such a clandestine manner, and this proposed attack upon their neighbors in the night seemed to her a monstrous thing; and as she lay there and listened, it repelled her to have to realize that her father aided or abetted such

an act, and that her brother was dragged into it all, and by those two men, one of whom was regarded by some as her acknowledged suitor. It made her cheeks burn even to think of it, because ever since Etherington had come into her life, she seemed to have acquired a different conception of many things. It seemed as though before that she had been shut in behind a wall, and that now she had got a peep over, and found that all on the other side was not just as she had been taught. Then she could not but compare him with those other men, and to his advantage; and in the middle of all her trouble, she felt that he would never have proposed such a contemptible method of warfare.

She crouched there until Silas had finished his sanguinary harangue, and then stole away through the shadows into the house, and crept upstairs to her room, where she knelt at her small, square casement, and strove to solve the difficult problem set before her—how she might, without causing any more trouble or injury to her pride, foil Mr. Fox's scheme, and prevent this sinister attack. Then suddenly, as she gazed out into the night through the pallid gloom, a quick throb of her heart made the blood surge through her veins, for there came to her amid her misery and dread, like the flash of an inspiration, the remembrance of the one place of her childhood's fear and curiosity—the limestone cave, hidden in the remote gloom of her father's woods.

CHAPTER XIX

HOW LYDIA DISARMED TREASON

LYDIA BRADFORD fell asleep, dreaming of this cave, and the first thought that confronted her on awakening in the morning was a conviction that this must be the place which she was to seek, if she hoped to carry out her determination.

It was no pleasant undertaking which lay before her, because this cavern with its surroundings was associated in her mind with a certain amount of mystery and ill-repute, as a place remote, gloomy, and coupled with sinister associations. Her single experience of it long before, when as a child she had once visited it with her brother, had but increased the grimness of those associations in her recollection.

For reasons, not hard to explain to the reader, it was a place rarely mentioned, and entirely forbidden in her father's household. This fact, coupled with a wonder as to where all the things which the schooner brought were landed and stored, had often prompted her curiosity; but never until now had the real truth concerning the cavern dawned upon her, when it suddenly flashed into her mind with firm conviction that this must be the place where the muskets were stored, and she rose that June morning, fully determined to

pay the place a visit. She had inherited her mother's keen, practical mind, and had quickly realized that something should be done to defeat or prevent the intended assault.

Lydia dared not speak to her father or brother, as she felt that it would be useless; they would not see the matter as she did, and her mother was out of the question in such a crisis. By habit, and the force of singular circumstances, she now stood alone; and the more she considered the situation, the more she saw whatever had to be done must be done by herself.

She had thought of sending a warning to Monmouth Hall, addressed to Etherington; but the very idea of communicating with him, after the manner in which they had parted, appalled her, and she would just as soon have written to Beelzebub, himself, as to the Colonel. So with mingled feelings of doubt, pride and shame, she put this idea aside for the time, and addressed herself to the possibilities of the cave.

She resolved that the most suitable time for her campaign of discovery would be the forenoon, as Fox and the others interested would then be engaged in correspondence or arranging matters in the vicinity of her father's house; and as there were several men about discussing the war and the immediate raid, Fox, fearing treachery, would not want to reveal the hiding place of the arms until the last moment. So, after performing her self-allotted tasks in the daily routine of the household, she prepared herself for her walk, and taking a staff, which she was in the habit of carrying when in the woods, set out on her tour of investigation.

The cave which she was about to visit lay down in a dense part of the woods, remote from the cleared portion of her father's land, and near to the boundary of the Philpotts estate. It was in the face of a high stone ledge or cliff, which loomed above a marshy woodland, that lay between it and the shore of the bay. To reach it, she had to guide herself largely by her memory of its position, and therefore she set off through the fields, and thence through the unbroken, densely wooded forest, in the direction of the water.

As she hurried along, threading the sombre glooms, her feelings were not of the happiest. Not only did she dread and fear the locality toward which she was going, but she had a horror of the cave itself, as the possible abode of reptiles and wild beasts, and even of Indians, who often lurked in such remote fastnesses. To this, her imagination added a dread, that it might, on the other hand, be a rendezvous for the sailors and other rough characters from the schooner. In any case, the part of the forest she was now in, was dark and gloomy, and not a place to raise anyone's spirits, much less those of a timid maid, who was bent on such a project as she was contemplating. She realized that there was a certain personal danger, if she were discovered meddling with the cave, or even visiting it at such a time; and it was with some trepidation of spirit, that this brave girl wended her way under the woodland and forest arches that June morning, keeping her senses alert for sounds and apparitions alien to the beauty and conventual life of the leafy woods about her.

She moved with the grace of a young dryad, imagined of some Greek poet in Arcady, haunting the precincts of the temple of his favorite god. With a step as light as the delicate rustle of autumn leaves, the passing of wind on water, or the shadowy, billowing wheat, her dark beauty, so like that of the subtle tints of bole and leaf, consecrated to the intense idea which possessed her, she became the human embodiment of the great natural environment, which wrapt her with its mystery.

Deeper and deeper she penetrated this part of the woods, until at last she perceived the rocky ledge looming before her, like the great beetling front of an ancient ruin, built by some vanished Titan race, when the world was young, still standing sinister and forbidding out there in the primitive forest. She paused for a moment to scan its gloomy front, half shielded by woodland growth and clambering vine; then she skirted the fringe of the forest at its base, keeping carefully hidden under the trees, until at last, with a rapidly beating heart and bodeful spirit, she stood in front of a yawning, arched and inky gloom, which seemed like an abyss, to extend indefinitely into the depths behind. She stayed for a space to collect her resolution and recover from the absolute terror of the unknown which the place suggested to her. It was like looking into some gloomy deep or pool, wherein the imagination conjured up some monster or slimy creature crouching or coiling.

It was a feeling which she, in common with her race, had inherited from some dim experience, or from the natural horror of the mystery of hidden deeps. When

the first wave of revulsion had passed, she began to question whether any creature or human being lurked therein, and determined to screw up her courage to the point equal to the adventure before her. Brave as she evidently was, the vision of snakes, wild-cats, bears, Indians, or other horrors rose before her, as she stood with bated breath listening for evidence of life within that sinister gloom, which appalled her youthful imagination. It would have been repulsive to a sensitive nature out in an open, populous place; but here, in this sombre, remote gloom, it seemed as hideous, ghoul-creating, and haunted as black midnight. There was, however, no evidence of life either without or within the inky caverned deeps, though she perceived signs that the place was made use of, and her suspicions were not without foundation. So she glanced fearfully about her to make sure she was not secretly observed; then she clambered up over the loose boulders and low, scrubby bush-growth, and stood gazing timorously in the cave's mouth.

It was a great high cavity in the cliff front, extending back for some distance into the interior. Its roof as she found afterward, was high, and the cave cool, with a dry interior, save where a stream of water trickled down in one corner, and formed a small pool or spring in the hard sand, which in most places constituted the floor. As she stood thus, racked between fear and duty, dreading to enter this dark place, a bat flew down from the roof, and fluttered like a great moth into the darkness beyond. She started back with a sudden scream and a sense of horror, which was

quickly followed by a feeling of shame at her cowardice, and taking a candle and a tinder box from a small bag at her girdle, she struck a light and entered, remembering that she must be careful not to go near where she supposed the powder to be.

Her eyes soon got accustomed to the dusky twilight within, and as they did so the interior became visible, and she saw that it was littered with heaps of casks, bales, and other evidences of merchandise, especially barrels of what smelled like rum. But beyond, there in a gloomy corner, and more welcome to her sight, piled against the wall, were what she had expected to find—a large stack of muskets and, near them, several small kegs piled by themselves, which her knowledge of such commodities made her surmise to be powder and ball.

Now, dreamer and idealist as this girl was, her life in her Colonial environment had taught her many things which it behooved her to know, which a girl of to-day or of that period in the Old World might not have known. She understood somewhat about guns and powder and shot, though she surrounded the second of these with a superstitious mystery, and she now realized that something must be done, and that quickly, to get rid of those dangerous things, or to render them useless to Mr. Fox and his followers. Her first thought had been to wet the powder; but it was rolled up in kegs, and, womanlike, she had an innate fear of touching anything which she suspected might go off at any moment. Then she thought that she might smash the gunlocks, so she hunted about for some instrument with

which to accomplish this, and soon found a sledge hammer among the litter at her feet. Taking one of the guns from the pile, she proceeded to demolish its lock; but she found this a difficult and noisy task. The first blow she struck, while it made little impression on the gun, resounded through the cavern with echoes that startled her, and woke a sickening flurry of bats about her head. She laid the gun down and sat on a bale, waiting to discover if the noise she had made had betrayed her. Then, as she sat there, her memory came to her rescue, reminding her that there was another cave behind the one she was in, the opening to which, the tradition of her childhood taught her, had been walled up. This had been accomplished by Indians, or some other prehistoric people, who had lived there in remote ages. The legend connected with the place related that some tribe or clan had immured some of their enemies in this enclosure, leaving them to perish. It was not a nice memory to recall there in that gloomy spot, yet it suggested a possible way of getting rid of those guns effectually.

Without further hesitation, she rose and, candle in hand, penetrated to the remote end of the cavern, where after some search, she soon found the old wall, which she remembered being shown her as a child. Some of the stones she saw could be removed and replaced at will. She had never been behind this wall, nor did she know what was beyond it. It was all a weird mystery to her. But now it provided a means of carrying out her project. She took her stick and picked at the stones until one came out, showing a dark cavity beyond, which

had a sepulchral appearance, suggesting a burial vault, and made her pause with a strong desire to get away from it; but she persisted, and pulled out more stones, enlarging the opening. Then her difficulty was to plan how she was to get all those guns through and hidden from sight.

She thrust her staff in, with a shudder, lest some creature might rise up at her out of the dark; but it touched nothing; the place was evidently deep and wide. It gave her a creepy feeling merely to think of it; but she now realized that her disposition of the guns would be easy to effect. Placing the candle down on a ledge and bracing it with a few stones, she went to the pile of muskets and carrying one to the hole, poked it through, muzzle first. Then she gave it a final push, and down it went as if into a deep well, so far that she could hardly hear it strike the bottom. Woman-like, she heaved a sigh of satisfaction at this result. She never realized that she was ruthlessly throwing away costly instruments of warfare or of the hunt; she only knew that she was ridding the country of a means of death and destruction, and foiling the sinister schemes of Silas Fox. One by one she carried those muskets from the pile to the opening, going back and forth, until, after slow toil, during which her courage had forsaken her and returned a score of times, she had dropped the last of the half a hundred guns down into the yawning abyss. Then when the last one had disappeared, she had an idea of sending the small kegs after them, only she had a superstition that the powder might explode if it were jarred heavily against any-

thing. So she placed the stones back in the wall as she had found them, feeling that the opening would not be discovered, or that if it were, no one could get down through a hole so small into that unknown depth to recover the engulfed weapons.

Thus did Lydia Bradford despoil and defeat the invaders. It was not for many years afterward that the truth was discovered as to what had become of the guns, and that was when it was too late for any Silas Foxes or other marauders to molest the public or private peace.

When the last stone had been replaced and the opening closed, she stood up, weary, and, now that it was done, with a guilty sense of having performed a traitorous deed. She took up the candle, now burnt low, and stole backward toward the entrance of the cave. All her old terrors lest she should be discovered returned. Her one idea was to get away from the place unobserved, and she now dreaded lest some of the men connected with the sloop should come and find her.

She was moving toward the entrance when she heard a noise which might have been a moan, or the sound of someone speaking in low tones. She stayed as though frozen where she stood, apprehensive of the worst. As she did so, the sound was repeated, coming from beyond a pile of bales of cotton, and going forward, she saw to her astonishment, a man lying unconscious beside a small keg of rum, which he had evidently been broaching, while a strong odor of the spirits permeated the locality. The girl leant over him in some wonderment, and surveyed him closer, holding

the candle near his face, and saw that it was Tom Philpotts, and that he was dead drunk. She had seen him before, and was aware of his reputation from what Fox had hinted at times. She had an instinctive dislike to the drunkard, and this young man she especially despised as one of the other party, and because he had become so easily the victim of Fox. But as she gazed at his prostrate form, she had a feeling that he had no business there in that condition, and that this place, smuggler's cave, or whatever it might be, was on her father's land, and that her people were in a sense responsible for his degradation.

Then it occurred to her that he might be blamed for what she had done, if he were found there, and the guns gone, and that he might thus become the victim of Fox's vengeance. She felt that he should be removed, but how, was the problem. If he were only sobered in some manner, he would probably take himself off. She looked about her, and her eyes fell on a ship's bucket with a leather handle, and an idea came to her that men had been sobered by a plentiful application of cold water. She first removed the keg which was the cause of his condition, then she took the bucket over to the spring in the corner, and, filling it, carried it back, and dashed it over the man's head and face. He stirred and muttered in a sort of protest; but she got another and another, and poured them over him, until as he sat up, a sorry-looking figure, partly sobered, and amazed at this heroic treatment of a dipsomaniac, she tossed the bucket aside, and hurried out and down into the forest below.

CHAPTER XX

THE TWO GIRLS IN THE FOREST

MEANWHILE, Diana Philpotts, who had shown so much emotion at the proposed arrest of the Bradfords, had pondered deeply and feelingly what Etherington had revealed and suggested. Her young romantic spirit, fed, as has been stated, on a class of fiction well qualified to exaggerate an imagination already fired by her lonely and picturesque surroundings, sought for some realization of those dreams which her environment and influences had awakened. As the old ballad hath it,

*That sweet, sequestered vale she chose,
Those rocks, that hanging grove,
And like the lily or the rose,
Attuned her heart to love.*

Her heart, which had longed for someone of her age and sex to lean on and confide in, was drawn to the picture of this girl. In spite of her mother's prejudices, her father's hostility, she longed to meet this girl, to know her and offer her friendship, and, if possible, save her from the effect of that ruin, which threatened to overtake her family. It is doubtful, however, whether this romantic young lady would have taken so keen an interest in the fair unknown, had it not

been for the influence of the young man, whose act and personality had kindled her imagination. But Diana Philpotts was, if emotional and clinging in her nature, also, as we have seen, secretive; and moreover, like girls of her character, often over-daring when determined upon a serious project. The more she pondered the matter, the greater grew her desire to go and offer the olive branch to her rebel sister, and perchance convert her to a better view of political conditions and national ethics.

Diana, who was simple in her thoughts, did not put it to herself just in this language, but it was what she meant in her inner consciousness. She was proud after her manner, but not abnormally so. It is, after all, often the people who lack the social position, who develop this self-sensitive pride to the greatest extent. She never for a moment dreamed that she was doing an unusual thing, that she was overstepping the bounds of good form at such a time; nor did she imagine that her kindly offers might be repulsed. It was just the kindly, generous impulse of one young girl, romantic, emotional, and lacking social intercourse, toward one of her own age and sex. This desire occurred to her as a bare possibility, as she retired that night; but it had crystallized into a daring determination, ere the tears had dried on her lashes, as she laid her head on her pillow. She did not use a hammock; this was one thing, which, in spite of her clinging nature, she had refused to her father's authority.

The next morning, after breakfast, she made her preparations, with some doubt and tremulous fears, and

like the ancient classic maid, "tempted the wild solitude, a fair dreamer," and launching her favorite shallop on the wave, started for a solitary paddle, a thing which she had not done since her memorable adventure on the island. This time she paddled along the shore, and instead of crossing to the island, which lay, a woody crown of beauty in the light of the summer morning, turned her craft's bow in the direction of the more distant shore of the mainland, and after some energetic paddling, beached it at the exact spot where she had seen young Bradford appear and disappear. Yet so mysterious are the workings of the feminine consciousness, that she had persuaded herself that it was solely the sister, and not the brother also, that had drawn her upon this, now to her, perilous expedition.

She landed, and drew the canoe up on the soft sand, and feeling the strangeness of her situation, stood for the first time on the soil of the enemy. She made a very pretty picture as she stood there, doubtful whether she should re-embark and retreat, or go on. Her golden hair and her blue eyes glistened in the sun, and she looked very much what she indeed was, a stray sunbeam, weakly but kindly, striving for entrance into the darker, more gloomy, more impenetrable environment which compassed the lives of Robert Bradford and his sister.

Pausing a moment with a prayer for resolution to achieve her purpose, she put her small foot forward, and so entered upon that disobedient path of rebellion against parental authority and social conventionalities, which was destined to cost her so much. She entered

the woods and turned her steps in the direction in which she supposed the Bradfords' residence to lie. Passing under the leafy, overhanging, forest aisles, she soon came to another small bay or cove, where a marshy creek flowed down into the lake. Here she was surprised to perceive the hull of a large boat or schooner at anchor close to the shore, looming through the gloom and partially hidden by the surrounding foliage. Avoiding this place, though now having set out, she seemed to have little fear of interception, she came suddenly on a beaten path which went upward and inland, away from the water. Surmising that this probably led in the desired direction, she walked briskly on until she came unexpectedly face to face, in the middle of the bright, leafy woodland, with the girl whom she had been seeking.

They knew each other instinctively. Lydia had heard of the other, and now read the likeness, in a more delicate, girlish development, to the young drunkard, whom she had just so summarily awakened in the cave above. This meeting, however, was so sudden and unexpected to both of them, that they stood gazing at each other with that curiosity which young creatures evince, on beholding strangers of their own kind for the first time. On the part of the intruder, it was pure surprise and a certain confusion which overcame her and suffused her fair and delicate face, as she gazed into the dark eyes of the other, which now showed only a cold inquisitiveness, in which pride, anger and surprise were mingled; for Lydia Bradford was in no gentle or conciliatory mood. At that moment she had

just emerged from the completion of a task, which, while she felt its necessity, went sorely against the grain of her conscience, realizing, as she did, now that it was too late to recall, that she had gone very far in giving over her own people into the hands of the enemy. She also began to reproach herself that her thoughts had dwelt over-much of late on the memory of Etherington, and it jarred on her pride and sense of propriety that her fancy should have carried her so out of her normal dreams, and the interests of her class. This contrary mood was further aggravated by her recent encounter with the young drunkard; and it was therefore with no feelings of welcome that she met the sister, whom she had heard of vaguely as a proud lady of the great world, who would scorn the simpler, plainer ways of the backwoods.

It was, therefore, rather a surprise, when she was brought face to face with the girl herself, to realize her simple, frank beauty, so different from the proud artificiality which she had expected, and which, in spite of her prejudiced feelings, appealed to her favorably. However, the fact that she should be so easily affected, irritated her, and she froze all the more outwardly, as she gazed on the fair young Tory in front of her.

They made a fine contrast, which would have satisfied the artistic ideal of a Reynolds or a Gainsborough, as they stood there in the woodland, the one slight, with blue eyes and golden hair, and just a perceptible shrinking in her attitude, like a wave "trembling toward retreat;" the other tall and more lithe and dark, with a sort of rich splendor, like the beauty of the

nature about her; one representative of Saxon England, the other, of that darker, more passionate, more subtle heredity of the semi-Celtic British stock, banished to, and reared amid the primitive environment of the New World.

It was her father's land where they were standing, so that Lydia was at home; yet it was the intruder who first recovered herself, and broke the silence, but the sound of her voice drove the other back into her hostile pride. It was the face of a frank young girl which confronted Lydia, but it was the voice and tone and manner of the cultured woman of the world, which jarred on the other's simple prejudices and unaccustomed ear.

"Are you not Miss Bradford?"

"I am." The answer was curt and cold; but there was an undercurrent of resentment, which said as plainly as though she had spoken it, What right have you here? and the bearer of the olive branch felt a strong desire to take the impolite hint and retreat. But she continued with a determination to storm the fortress of the other's resentment.

"Then I—I was going to your home to see you."

"Oh!" returned Lydia, "to see me?" and she paused with a curious look at the other, in which resentment and pride seemed to battle for supremacy; then she added in a sarcastic tone:

"I thought that perhaps you had come after your brother."

"My brother! Here?" cried the other in amazement. "My brother! What would bring my brother here?" and a sense of his weakness overcame her at the

other's words, for he had caused her many a sad hour. But that he should be a visitor at this place without her father's knowledge, and at this grave crisis, gave her a shock, and a sense of guilt seized her because of her action in coming. But she repeated her question:

"What should bring my brother here?"

"Rum."

It was only one word, but the scornful manner in which it was uttered, and the contemptuous look on the girl's face, filled her with a sudden humiliation, a shame on account of her brother which seemed to envelope her. She blushed deeply, and for the first time realized to what a depth he had fallen. She had no words in which to reply. The retort seemed to strike her like a rude, brutal blow, and confused and baffled her. And yet she saw that this strange antagonist confronting her, was not only beautiful, but, as she realized, of a startling personality, which was fascinating and new to her experience.

Now this attitude on the part of Lydia Bradford was not a hardness; it was rather the fine pride of a high-strung nature, which was narrowed down into mere hostility. But she continued, seeing that the intruder was silent, with a far away look in her eyes, and in softer tones, though still coldly:

"Did you say that you wanted to speak to me?"

"Yes," said Diana simply, "I came to call on you, to—to make your acquaintance."

"To make my acquaintance? You? What do you mean?"

She looked in the other girl's fair flushed face for a

moment, and then the absurdly ludicrous aspect of the whole situation struck her, and she burst into a peal of rich laughter, which had just a spice of irony and bitterness in it, to jar its melody in the ear of the unwelcome visitor.

“Miss Bradford,” said Diana appealingly, “why should you mock me?”

“I am not mocking you,” she returned, “I am only laughing at the absurd idea of your playing at the pretence of equality.”

“And why so?” questioned the blue eyes reproachfully.

“Sit down here, Miss Philpotts,” said the other, half-ironically. “This must be my parlor; but you know that I am ignorant of what you call social forms. I am only a simple girl, living in the woods. Now, listen!” she continued, as Diana sank on the soft sward beside her. “My parents and yours have lived here many years side by side, but as much strangers to each other, as though alienated by vast distance. We have grown up near each other, and never has there been any attempt at communication between the two places, and you know why. Your father and mother regard mine as of an alien class; they detest our manner of life and our ideas, as we do theirs. They regard us as mere dissenters and traitors to the king and a government, which cares little, and knows less about our existence; and because we do not bend the knee to royalty, and place it next to deity, we are dangerous foes to the country and the state. And on the other hand, we regard your people as tyrants and Tories. There now, you know how we feel,” and she flung the words out, as if

they were gauntlets of challenge at her surprised auditor. "Then," she continued relentlessly, "there is nothing we have in common, and just now when war is declared, when my people and yours are about to separate even wider, you come here with a strange, most unheard of proposal to make my acquaintance."

"It may seem strange to you, I grant," answered Diana, plucking up courage from the other's eloquence, "but it was for that reason that I desired to meet you. Then you must know that I have not been at home all these years. I only came here some months ago; also I have only just heard of you in a manner to do you justice."

"Oh, to do me justice! and who is it whose influence was so great as to induce you to pay a visit to the obscure Lydia Bradford?"

"Captain Etherington."

The words were spoken simply and quietly; but their effect was instantaneous. Lydia's face became crimson, then pale, as she rose to hide her confusion and anger, while a secret jealousy of this fair girl, so like an opening rosebud in appearance, and who, she felt, was the embodiment of all the ideals and prejudices of such a man, seemed to seize her all at once.

"So it was because of Captain Etherington that you came here?" she said proudly, all of her former hostility returning with intensity. "What is he to me but a mere stranger, one of your own kind!"

"No, no, you mistake," cried the other, also rising. "He told me of how you saved his life. He spoke so kindly, so truthfully, of you—and I realize now what

he meant," she added with emotion—"that I just had to come and see you."

"Yes, I perceive, to please Captain Etherington. Well, I can only say, Miss Philpotts, that any acquaintanceship between us is impossible." She was now more agitated than she dared to admit to herself. This girl had seen her blush at that man's name. She was terribly ashamed of herself, and for a moment hated the other girl, the unconscious cause, and determined to punish her, and bring the interview to an end by dismissal, and she added with a superb air of indifference:

"I am sorry, but my mother needs me, I must go," and she turned as though to follow the path upward.

"Wait, wait, Miss Bradford," cried the other, "won't you listen to me?"

"No," said Lydia without turning, "I have stayed too long already, I must go."

Then the real underlying reason for Diana's visit surged up in her.

"Wait, wait, for God's sake, listen to me!" she cried almost despairingly after the other. There was that in the voice that appealed, for Lydia turned, and came back a few steps.

"Well, what is it?"

"The truth is," she cried brokenly, "I came here to— to warn you."

"You! to warn me? What do you mean?" and the taller girl drew nearer, and stared incredulously. "Warn me?"

"Yes," gasped the other, "you will please not betray me?"

“Speak!” Lydia commanded imperiously, “what is it you would tell me?”

“They are coming here to-morrow. Oh, what am I doing?” she added guiltily.

“They? Here? Who are coming?”

“The militia, to arrest— Oh, I don’t know whom else, but your father, and your, your—” she forced the word out, now crimson, now white, “your brother!”

Lydia’s heart leaped, and seemed to stop with apprehension. Her father was not well, and if this were true, it might kill him. This indeed was war, and she had disarmed her people but for this result. Then a wonder came over her at this other girl. She looked so delicate and almost child-like, one not used to matters of this terrible character, one by nature more fitted for protection, than to protect, and yet she had done this. A softer look came into Lydia’s face at that thought.

“And you,” she said; “your father and mine hate each other. We are in opposing camps, and yet you have come all the way over here, at great risk no doubt, to tell me this?”

“Because I am a girl, and you are one,” cried the other, “because I was frightened and—and—sorry for you.”

Lydia’s face lightened, almost with tenderness. “Thank you,” she said, but her voice had feeling in it, “but you have not told me who is coming. Is it Colonel Monmouth?” she asked with a recurrence of her old bitterness.

“No,” faltered Diana, “it is Captain Etherington.”

Again the words were lightly spoken but what a change they produced.

“Oh!” It was all she uttered, but the girl’s face became white and tense. And it was for this, she ruminated bitterly, that she had saved this man’s life, and this was his gratitude. She forgot the other girl at her side. For this man, and what he might think of her and hers, she had virtually sold her cause, cheated her friends, those who, whatever their faults, were of her kind and ideals; and this was her return. She, woman-like, in her bitterness, forgot the humanity of her sister-woman, who had come to warn her; she turned scornfully on her.

“Now, Miss Philpotts,” she said sternly, “that you have brought me this interesting news, I hope you won’t prolong your stay on my father’s land, as your brother has;” and she turned on her heel and left her.

“Won’t you understand me? Won’t you see that I did all for the best? I pitied you, I did want to save you,” almost wailed the other.

“Pity me? Save me?” echoed Lydia scornfully. “It is I who should rather warn you. You need not pity me and my people; we belong here; we have lived in this country too long. But you can tell your Captain Etherington from me, that he and his shall receive a welcome he little expects.” So saying, with a heavier and more despondent heart than the other girl suspected under her assumption of vindictive superiority, she strode off up the pathway, and disappeared in the woods.

Diana Philpotts stood there doubtfully for a moment, realizing the failure of her attempt, then she burst into tears.

CHAPTER XXI

THE RIVALS

GEORGE CAREY was an astute young man of the world, both cold and calculating. He had never until now allowed his feelings to interfere with his material interests. He had been brought up in a family which was ambitious, and without great wealth, wherein the axiom, "make the best of things," was the ruling principle. He had early realized that he must not marry save where there was the possibility of a fortune, for he was without expectations, except from his eccentric uncle, between whom and his grandmother, who had made or raised the fortunes of her family, there appeared to the young man to be some peculiar understanding. He continually chafed at his uncle's cynical manner, and cold indifference toward his whole family, including himself.

Carey had remarked with some inward wonder, his grandmother's advice to him, to passively ignore his uncle's peculiarities, as she chose to regard them. Being wise in a worldly sense, he had complied, though he found it excessively trying to play the assiduous hanger-on, and the dutiful nephew to one whom he considered an overbearing, cynical recluse, who barely tolerated his presence. His one other reason for enduring so much was the vicinity of Diana Philpotts and her father's lands, together with somewhat more

than a rumor that she would inherit wealth in the old country. He had returned with the determination to try his fate as soon as possible, and it was his anxiety to discover how matters stood as regards the girl, which had led him to be false to his military duty, and turn aside into her father's place, instead of going directly to his uncle's with the despatches.

He had intended to appear to have arrived late, and not to mention his visit to the Philpotts' place, so that he was deeply chagrined at being discovered derelict in his duty, and at being reprimanded by his relative and superior in so severe and public a manner. He also resented the presence of Etherington, for several reasons, besides the natural jealousy and suspicion of a suitor, who was not sure of his own standing. He saw that his rival, as he regarded the other, had a sympathizer in Colonel Monmouth; but what had disturbed him most of all was the strange interest shown by the girl herself, in the fate of the Bradfords. Her sudden fainting fit at the order for their arrest did not blind him, as it did the others, to the real reason. He judged her by his own standards, though he did not understand her simple innocence; and he began to suspect some secret love affair with one whom she and her people regarded as beneath her. This idea haunted him over night, and it was to a preoccupied listener that Monmouth said at breakfast:

"George, Captain Etherington is to have charge of the squad which goes to the Bradford place this afternoon, and I expect you to see that all is in readiness here in case of an attack. I have advised Philpotts to

bring his family here for the present; but he thinks there is no danger."

This gave Carey the chance he was seeking. He could now play the gallant defender, and so gain a special claim on the girl's feelings, so he suggested as he topped an egg:

"I think that I had better go over and lay your idea before them again."

"If you choose to," answered Monmouth; "only remember you are responsible to me for the safety of this place. I have ordered in about twelve of the militia, who need some drilling and knocking into shape. You can do that this afternoon."

After breakfast, Carey found that his new duties were temporarily absorbing, and by the time that he had examined the grounds and vicinity and had made out his report as to its strength and weakness, it was late, so that he had to hurry off, and was both disappointed and startled, when he arrived at the Philpotts', to find that Diana was absent.

"She has gone out in her boat," said her mother in answer to his inquiry. This added to his uneasiness.

"Do you think it safe for her to go alone?"

"She never has gone far," returned her mother, "and she will soon return. Won't you wait for her?" she added. She was ambitious to settle her daughter well and rather liked this suitor, who, in her eyes, had both prospects and a position; and it annoyed her that her daughter did not seem to take kindly to his addresses.

"No, I think not," he said. Then he repeated Colonel

Monmouth's invitation, and urged the advisability of their removal to the Castle for a while.

"What does my husband say?" she asked.

"He does not seem to care to leave here," returned the young man, "but it would be safer for you and Miss Philpotts."

"Well, he knows what is best," she answered, her placid temperament permitting of no doubts of her husband's wisdom; so Carey made his adieu, and departed with a secret anxiety, which he feared to communicate to this girl's mother.

But he did not return to the Castle; he was sure that something was wrong, and he determined to search for the girl. Following the path over the clearing to the forest, he arrived at the shore, where, in a small, sandy cove, her boat was usually kept. But there was no sign either of it or of its fair owner. He scanned the waters as far as he could see; but there was no living thing in sight. Then turning to the left, he proceeded along the shore in the direction of the Bradfords' place. After walking for some time, he reached the other side of the bay, and there, in a small opening, found Diana's canoe, pulled up on the bench, with the paddles in it, but the girl was nowhere to be seen.

He had, up to this, some slight compunctions as to his dogging the girl in this manner, and prying into her secrets; but now these all vanished. The sight of the boat alone on the beach turned his suspicions into sharp, bitter certainty; yet he was determined to win her at all costs, and he now decided that he would track her, and discover for himself the whole truth of

what he suspected was a liaison with young Bradford.

With muttered curses at her, her mother's folly, and his own ill luck, he proceeded, missing the path, but directing his steps up from the shore, listening for sounds, and watching for signs of life in the vicinity. Once he paused, as he fancied he heard voices in the distance; but the sounds died away, and after waiting a space behind the shadow of a tree, he again advanced as carefully as before, until he stood at last with some surprise under the entrance of the cave in the cliff's face. As he realized his discovery, he quickly started back under the shadow of the trees, whence peering out, he could study this interesting place, without himself being discovered. As he did so, there was a noise as of someone moving within, and the form of a man came stumbling blindly down the broken rocks toward where he was.

He saw, with some astonishment, followed by inward satisfaction, that it was Tom Philpotts. His hair, face and clothes—he wore no hat—were dripping wet, and there was a strange dazed look upon his dissipated face, as he stumbled down close to where Carey stood and without looking to the right or to the left, strode off in the direction of his own home.

Carey watched long enough to convince himself that Philpotts was really gone, and that there was apparently no one else inside; then examining the priming of his pistol, he left his shelter, and climbed carefully up the rocks to the entrance, and keeping as sheltered as possible behind some bushes, strove to peer into the gloom within.

As his eyes became accustomed to the dim light, he

soon realized from the silence, save of the trickling water, that the place was untenanted except by bats; so, gripping his pistol for possible emergencies, he advanced within, and discovered the interior with its suggestive contents, as has been described. He was now convinced that he had made an important and lucky discovery, which gave him the whip-hand over Diana and her brother. This place was, without doubt, a rendezvous for smugglers and traitors, and Tom Philpotts was, or appeared to be, connected with them, so that the young man's liberty, his very life, and the honor of his family now lay in Carey's hands.

The latter now decided to leave the place immediately, ere he was discovered, and descending the stones, followed the path down in the direction of the water, as Lydia had gone. He had not proceeded far, when he again heard voices, this time unmistakable, and then perceived, some distance down the natural avenue, the two girls facing each other.

Carey stood observing this remarkable scene, wondering what it could mean, when one of the girls turned, and as he stole behind the shadow of a tree, she came up the path, and, turning off abruptly to the left, hurried into the woodland out of his sight, while Diana, after standing for a moment, turned, and went slowly down the path in the other direction.

He had not caught the sense of the words which he had heard spoken, as he had arrived at the end of their interview; but he perceived that the girl before him had been repulsed by the other, and was now distressed. He followed her carefully, as she went pensively along

toward the shore; then striking off suddenly into the woods, he cut across, and managed to intercept her as though meeting her just as she reached the shore, near where her canoe lay.

“Miss Philpotts,” he said, “let me see you home.”

There were tears in her eyes, but she was determined that this man should not see her grief. She wondered also what he would think of her being here alone on the property of those other people; but she was now desperate, and determined to ignore or to pretend to ignore her situation, then suddenly questioned what he was doing there himself.

He answered her thoughts as he added frankly, “I came after you.”

“You followed me;” and she gave him a cold stare.

“Why not?” he replied. “Your mother said that you were out in your canoe, and I felt nervous about you, considering the unsettled condition of the community.” He paused, but her quick sense of guilt and apprehension read something more in his face and the tones of his voice.

“Then you followed me! You heard all!” she cried indignantly, facing him.

“I did, and I am sorry for you, Miss Philpotts, Diana,” he said tenderly, “your secret is safe with me.”

“My secret! What do you mean, sir?” she asked.

“Your fear for your brother,” he returned significantly.

“My brother! What of my brother?” and she turned on him in wonder and doubt.

“His connection with that cave up yonder, and with the smugglers and rebels who infest it.”

“What cave?” she returned. “’Tis false! My brother? He is weak, but no rebel or smuggler,” and she grew red to her ears with her indignation.

“I only wish I could agree with you,” he answered. “I would not have believed it of him, had I not seen him just now, with my own eyes. But, dear Miss Philpotts, Diana, why will you not trust me? Why will you not see that I would do anything, anything an officer of the King could do in honor, to protect you and yours. I would go even further than that,” he added, “will you not see that—that my regard, my devotion—”

“Lieutenant Carey,” she interrupted coldly, “if you mean that your duty and your inclination are at variance in this matter—”

“If you put it so cruelly,” he answered.

“Then,” returned she shortly, “do your duty;” and she turned to go, but he barred her way.

“Not surely,” he said meaningly, “when that duty commands me to report Thomas Philpotts as the associate of rebels and smugglers, and so bring disgrace and suspicion of treason on your whole household?”

Her face was as white as snow, as she asked wearily, “Then what would you have me do?”

“Do nothing,” he said eagerly, “only let us act together, let me help you to keep this secret, and save your brother.”

“And how?” she questioned wistfully, like a poor creature caught in the toils.

“By allowing me to show you how much I regard

your wishes, by returning some little of that devotion which I have given you, in short," he continued, " by agreeing to become mine."

She stood there, and looked out on the water without a word, torn by conflicting emotions, dislike of the man, and fear for her brother.

He took her silence for consent, and approached and took her hand.

"Diana," he said, "am I to be happy?" He might have seen that the girl was dazed with doubt and despair; but his selfish desire to gain her at all hazards, blinded him to the fact that he was taking advantage of her being in his power. He was about to draw her to him, when there was heard the click of the lock of a gun, and starting back, he perceived a man a few yards off with his weapon pointed in his direction.

"Leave that lady alone," came in quick, sharp tones, "or you are a dead man. Don't move your hands, or I shoot," he continued, as the other made a movement toward his belt. All Carey could now do was to stare in bitter chagrin and some alarm, while the girl turned in astonishment, and saw that it was Robert Bradford. In an instant the blood came back to her face in a rosy glow, then forsook it as she recognized him.

"Now, you coward," the other said to Carey, "you are what is called a gentleman, are you? And you are a British officer? You would stoop to frighten a girl. Well, a plain American tells you what you are, a coward and a scoundrel." He uttered these words in a harsh voice, with a fierce, wild look on his swarthy face, while Carey stood there like villainy arrested in mid-action.

For a short space they stared at each other, then Bradford said to the other man:

“Now go, before I shoot you like a wolf in your tracks!”

Carey had considerable courage of a kind, and his rage was so great that he seemed about to answer and defy the other, when a second click of the musket lock, and a look on its owner's face, convinced him that he was at a decided disadvantage, and that resistance for the moment was useless; so without a word, he turned and plunged into the woods.

The girl stood there white and startled, ready to flee, then she commenced to totter, and the young man, dropping his gun, caught her as she fell limp in a dead faint. All of his fierceness was now gone, as he bore her swiftly to her boat, and after bathing her temples and lips with water, waited for her to recover.

She soon opened her eyes, and they fell before his, so dark and ardent, and almost fierce in their worship.

“Where am I?” she cried wildly.

“You are safe now, lady,” he said with suppressed feeling, “you are safe.”

“Oh!” she said, sitting up, and endeavoring to look coldly upon him, “you should not have done that, sir.”

“Why not?” he returned. “I could not see a hound like that trap a—a—” here his voice broke in a stammer.

“Oh, you don't understand, you don't understand,” she moaned. “Please leave me!” and she stood up with a proud air of dismissal. It was her turn now.

He looked upon her darkly. “You are right, lady,”

he said bitterly, "I cannot understand. I should not have interfered, I might have known that it is your way for women to sell themselves. I might have known," and turning suddenly, he picked up his gun, and strode into the forest.

She sat there trembling for some time, trying to collect herself; and the more she thought, the more she realized that she was in Carey's hands; and that the only way to save them all was to acquiesce in his wishes. The thought was repellent to her, but she put this consideration aside; she felt that it was her fate, and therefore to be accepted. Her instinct warned her that this other man could never be anything to her; yet she was still under the strange spell of his gaze. She strove to shove the canoe into the water, but her strength failed her. As she was wondering what she could do, there was a step behind her, and there stood Carey; he had come back.

"Miss Philpotts," he said, as though nothing had happened, "may I paddle you home?"

"Yes," she answered, facing him demurely. He sprung eagerly forward, launched the canoe, and, helping her in, paddled along the shore in the direction of her landing. He was but an indifferent canoeman, but he did his best, and his fair companion was occupied with her own thoughts, and was not critical.

At the edge of the forest, on the shore behind them, stood Robert Bradford, gun in hand, and a fierce look on his handsome dark face. Several times he raised his weapon to his shoulder, and pointed it at their boat. He could have killed Carey with as little compunction as

he would have shot a crow; but each time he lowered the weapon.

“I am mad,” he said, “I am mad, she is not of my kind, she belongs to him.” Then he remembered what she said, “You do not understand;” but especially did he remember her eyes and hair, and the look on her face, as he held her for a moment in his arms.

Meanwhile the others had reached the shore, and Carey, avoiding reference to the episode, said tenderly as he helped her ashore:

“Miss Philpotts, your secret is safe with me.”

“Thank you,” she answered simply, as they went up the path.

CHAPTER XXII

IN WHICH FATE PLAYS MR. FOX A CRUEL TRICK

HISTORY has related many descriptions of sieges which have been successful or unsuccessful. But it is to be doubted if any military leader ever set out to capture a position and humiliate an enemy with more energy and personal desire to accomplish his end than did Mr., or Captain, Silas Fox, as he now wished to be designated.

He had laid his plans carefully and had enforced a strict command of secrecy upon all his followers, ere he had dismissed them the night previous. When the day dawned, which was to witness, as he "reckoned," the first great victory of the war and the humiliation of the aristocratic tyrant, whom he hated, feared and envied, he awoke late, but exultant from his over-night's drunken slumber. Captain Fox, like many another military or political genius, had a fondness for certain fiery stimulants, which endow ambition with courage, or add to that which martial genius already possesses. His place of rest had been one of two lofts over the kitchen portion of the house, one of which was used by the negroes, and the other allotted to Robert and any stray guest of the commoner sort, such as Fox. When the great commander had descended the ladder into the kitchen and had dipped his cadaverous face into a rude bucket of water, which the negro boy had provided for

him out in the yard, and had rubbed it dry on a rough towel, he felt, as he expressed it, "ready to lick any tarnation Britisher from King Garge down."

But it was not until after dusk, when his moonlight militia commenced to congregate, that his spirits rose to their complete condition of aggressive valor. He had borrowed from Bradford an old sword, which had hung, rusting, in the front room, and with a leather belt had strapped it to his waist; so that with the addition of two pistols and a knife, he looked that very picture of ferocity which, at the present day, is represented by the villain of the extremely yellow melodrama.

He had a foolish idea that this assumption of the fiercely martial would bring him favor in the eyes of Lydia. So he strutted in and out of the house in hopes of intercepting her. But that young lady, who had a secret premonition that Mr. Fox was not destined to prove the victor which he hoped to be, had kept carefully out of his way, believing that when the loss of the guns was discovered the expedition would be abandoned.

She hoped that her brother would stay at home, and was also busy revolving in her mind how to warn the family of the coming arrest, without revealing her source of information. Thus, busy with her reflections, she kept religiously to her room.

Bradford himself, though vaguely aware of what was going forward, was virtually outside of the whole matter. When it had come to real action, his mind failed to realize what it all meant. If it had, his intense bitterness toward Monmouth and all Tories, would have blinded him to the wanton criminality of such an attack.

Struthers, also, like many another popular leader, was willing that a fire should be lighted in the community so long as he, personally, did not burn his fingers. He also had retired to his room, a small one, where, by the light of a tallow candle, he was soon deeply immersed in a speech he was preparing in denunciation of the brutality and cruelty of oppression. The rest of the household, being used to such commotions, and not being in the secret of the attack, thought the gathering was for the purpose of one of the usual nightly drills, which had been so common of late.

As the night drew down and the long afterglow gave place to that time of peaceful earth and quiet stars, Captain Fox quietly set his train-band in some sort of order out under the oaks, which gloomed oblivious in their majestic peace of such ant-like undertakings as went on beneath their umbrageous shelter. There he proceeded to give them some final advice and to prophesy success.

“You’ve got your powder horns and your bullet bags ready, boys,” he said, “the guns are awaitin’; yes, the guns are awaitin’; at last freedom has come and King Garge and old Monmouth ’ll have ter eat dirt.” This was a favorite saying of his, and he chuckled as he uttered it. “I don’t jest want ye to kill him, boys,” he continued, “I don’t want him kilied jest yet, not in that way!”

“Oh, no! we won’t hurt him,” they cried; and there was a brutal laugh from some among the crowd, though a portion of those present, some of whom had served in the rangers, did not altogether relish either the

expedition or the peculiar antics of their quondam leader. But they said nothing. Their sympathies were with some sort of action. Their grievances rankled. They had been influenced by Willcocks and Struthers and were antagonistic to Monmouth's rule. Then they believed in a dull way, at least some of them did, that the Americans were sure to win eventually, and that, therefore, they were only anticipating a certain result. Yet, in spite of this, their better natures revolted against Fox's vulgar speeches and absurd actions.

But the latter was unaware of any doubt as to his methods. He was, he felt, on the eve of carrying out what he regarded as a clever scheme, which, in this case, meant nothing less than the raiding of a man's property and the capture, perchance the murder, of the occupant. O War! O Freedom! what petty spites, what small envyings and greeds have not masqueraded in thy name!

"Now, boys!" cried the captain of this valiant company, when he had made his final inspection and had crowed his last crow of expectant victory, "I reckon as we had better be gettin' after them guns. Two by two! Steady thar! I'll show the hull British army a wrinkle er two. It ain't nothin' to be a soldier when the nateral born genus of the nateral born son of the sile gets in its work."

So saying, the valiant commander proceeded, followed by his sturdy and expectant band, under the forest and up in the direction of the cave. As they neared its vicinity, some of the band began to catch somewhat of Captain Fox's excitement. None of them had as yet seen any of the guns nor were aware, save

Robert, of the place of their concealment. The weapons had been conveyed with great secrecy into the country, and the near prospect of being armed with real muskets, like regulars or militia, appealed with force to their imagination.

“And how did ye git them, Silas?” asked a young fellow who walked behind Robert.

“They b’long to the Continental army,” bragged the great man condescendingly, “and we’ve the hull States back of us.”

“I heard tell as Massachusetts and Vermont was agin this war,” retorted one quiet follower.

“And York State, too,” added another.

“It’s all a blame lie, a blame lie,” exclaimed Silas, “jist a lie of them Britishers. How else’d I git them guns? Didn’t they jist come in from York State?”

This was an argument that could not be gainsaid. So the opposition subsided and they proceeded in silence under the forest, only the light of their dim lanthorns, and, in open places, the remote stars, to guide them on their way.

After a space they arrived in front of the cave, which many of them knew by rumor, and a few by personal knowledge, as a sort of headquarters whence were distributed rum, tobacco, calico and other necessaries and luxuries of pioneer life, all of which failed to contribute to the revenue of the province.

Here Mr. Fox called a halt. “Now, boys,” he said, “we will wait here, and you Garge and Tom jest climb up thar and fetch some of them guns.”

He had several good reasons for not trusting the

rank and file of his following within the cave. First, it was a secret rendezvous for contraband stores. Then, there was too much rum stored in the place, and he feared that the sight of the kegs might have such an overpowering effect as to interfere with the proposed expedition. But he felt it wiser to temporize, so he added, with a wink, to one of his messengers. "And if you see a small keg of rum thar, which I think there is, a small one, fetch it along, and we'll drink success to this here business."

Then, while the crowd of men huddled under the trees in the dim light of several lanthorns, the two went up over the stones into the interior of the cavern. They were absent quite a few moments and could be heard muttering to each other as they moved about, their lanthorn, which the leader carried, swaying in the inky depths like a great will-o'-the-wisp.

Captain Fox waited, with a fine assumption of patience. He folded his arms and, leaning against a tree, struck an attitude of self-complacent, but grim expectancy. Soon the two were seen coming back, one carrying a small keg.

"Wall, Garge," called Mr. Fox exultantly to the leader, "what do you think of them guns?"

"Them guns!" answered the man addressed, "them guns!" and there was a foolish grin on his face as he drew near the group.

"Yes, them guns, don't be a fool. Wall?" thundered Mr. Fox, commandingly.

"I ain't no fool," growled the man. "It's you's the darn fool, for there ain't no guns!"

If one of the said guns had been fired off under the great leader's ears, it could not have roused him more than did the effect of the man's words.

"No guns! What you mean? No guns! It's a lie!—a lie!" he almost screamed; and, snatching the lantern, he scrambled up over the stones and hastened, lantern in hand, followed by his late orderly troop, now a confused rabble, to the corner of the cavern where he fully expected to find the weapons. There, indeed, were the kegs of rum, whose existence he had practically denied. But to Captain Fox's surprise and bitter chagrin, the place was otherwise empty. His guns had vanished as completely as though they had never existed.

CHAPTER XXIII

IN WHICH MR. FOX PERSISTS

A NOTED philosopher has said that the test of a man's greatness lies in how he is affected by a sudden disappointment. If this be a true revelation of character, that of Captain Fox must have shown unusual tenacity. He at first stood still for fully three minutes, staring, as one of his disillusionized followers afterwards quaintly expressed it, like a "stuck pig," at the place where the guns should have been; then for a short space of time, the cavern resounded with curses and objurgations sufficient to damn the whole community.

During this flood of invective, he performed a sort of war dance about the place, working himself up into a frenzy until quite on the verge of foaming at the mouth. Then suddenly he faced about, and confronted Robert Bradford with a snarl of bitter interrogation.

"Wall, Mr. Bradford, whar's them guns?"

"I think, Mr. Fox," said the young man coldly and sarcastically, "that is for you to tell us."

"Ya'as, Silas," cried several of the others; "it's for you to explain."

"I don't believe them guns was thar at all," piped up the man who said that New York State was against the war.

“Just a lie of them Britishers,” jeered another.

For when a man is down, he is down indeed. Thus, Captain Fox, who had had a fall realized the proverbial uncertainty of a leader’s popularity.

Robert Bradford was the only one present, except Fox, who had ever seen the guns, and he was as greatly surprised as Fox at their disappearance; but he did not like his overbearing, vulgar leader, with his tricky ways, and he rather suspected him of treachery; so he decided to say nothing, and let him be punished as he deserved.

But it was all gall and wormwood to the late enthusiastic general, and he glared at his jeering followers for a time in indignant amazement; then he realized that he was in a nasty position. His situation was similar to that of the poor wolf in the legend, which had killed a deer, and according to some fabled law of the pack, went to fetch his friends and relations to partake of his banquet, instead of selfishly indulging himself in solitude, as his brute nature might have suggested, and who, on his return with his invited guests, discovered that the quarry had mysteriously disappeared. The legend relates that the feast went forward just the same, and then the company separated, carrying their unhappy host along with them. There is no punishment worse than that which is meted out to the prophet or leader of his kind, who, in a modern, vulgar, mercantile phrase, “fails to deliver the goods.” This was Mr. Fox’s position; but he was not a man to submit tamely to an adverse fate—even the fox when driven to the wall will show his teeth—and his human name-

sake was not false to this Reynardian quality. He turned with a meaning look on Robert, as he shouted:

“I reckon as someone here is a traitor!”

“What do you mean?” cried the young man meaningly, and stepping closer to the other.

“I mean just what I say,” snarled the other. “Do you reckon as I moved them guns?”

“I don’t reckon anything about it,” answered Bradford, “except that you have brought us all here on a fool’s errand.”

“Yes, yes!” echoed the crowd.

“I guess as Cap. Fox just dreamed of them there guns,” suggested a wag, and the crowd laughed in a loud guffaw.

“It’s a lie,” cried Fox indignantly, “them guns was there, and blame me, Mr. Bradford, if you ain’t the only one as knowed of their being thar.”

It was a foolish thing for him to say; but Captain Fox was seriously discredited, his vanity had received a shock, and he was desperate. But he had scarcely made the statement, when Robert Bradford’s arms shot out direct from the shoulder, and the abused leader of men measured his length on the cavern floor.

“Come,” cried Robert to the others, as he turned in disgust from their late leader, “if we want to fight tyranny, let us do it in a manly fashion; let us go and join the American army and serve under men, not under such curs as that,” denoting Mr. Fox, who now staggered to his feet in rage and amazement.

“Bradford is right,” cried several of the better class among the crowd.

"Then come," he answered, "let us leave this place," and turning on his heel he left the cave, followed by the majority of the company.

But there is always a minority which remains true to the fallen. This is the age of minorities, and they are, strange to say, regarded as sacred by those who most fondly worship the democracy which was founded on the rights of the majority. Majority rule was the fetish of the nineteenth century; now it is minority rule which is ideal. It is remarkable how soon mankind tires of its gods; so Mr. Fox found to his cost. But were it not for the faithful minorities, where would be the compensation for stricken greatness, shorn of its power, in this uncertain world, which so easily rejects its heroes? So in like manner as doth some modern political leader, rejected by his unappreciative country at the polls, who rolls out of the party scrimmage like an ill-used football, (victim of cruel fame and crueler fortune) did Captain Fox pick himself up both physically and morally, and discovered that, if fate had been unkind, he was not entirely forsaken.

It is true that those who lingered near were of the baser sort of spirit, men after Captain Fox's own kidney, knaves or fools, or both, gentlemen who in civilized communities are sooner or later provided for, and looked after by a careful and paternal government, unless they have the extreme misfortune to come to a speedy end under certain painful circumstances, which need not be described. It is, moreover, sad to reveal, so imperfect is this social world of ours, that many of these gentlemen were as true to the vicinity of the rum,

as they were to their unfortunate leader; but at any rate, it was gratifying to see that even affliction hath its friends; so that when Mr. Fox arose and regathered his shattered faculties, he met the loyal and enquiring gaze of about one-fifth of his former force.

“Boys,” he gasped, with a string of oaths, “them guns was thar. I swear they was!” he said appealingly.

“We believe you, Silas,” they answered, to a man, to mollify his temper; but how far they really did believe, is doubtful. Some of them secretly suspected that he had sold the arms to the government; others, that their existence in the cave was a mere fiction on his part; for, they reasoned, if they had been there, what had become of them now? However, Captain Fox, for the present, rehabilitated himself, and with a revival of his former spirit, proposed that they should broach a keg of rum, and drink, all round, confusion to King “Garge” and traitors and gun thieves, which was immediately done, the result being that as the rum declined in the cask, the courage of these martial spirits rose accordingly.

“Boys,” said Captain Fox, when the liquor began to take effect, “I reckon as I’m goin’ to old Monmouth’s after all, guns or no guns. I’ve got two barkers and my knife, and we can get clubs. There ain’t only the old Colonel and his two men, and that officer fellow, and we’re more ’n a dozen. Who’ll go?”

They answered to a man in the affirmative; it was the rum which spoke.

“There’ll be lots of loot,” he continued, when he had

received their acquiescence, "an' some fine horses; then it's all for the cause."

They rose and yelled as one man.

"All right then," said the Captain, eyeing his willing followers, "then I reckon as it's time to start."

They collected some clubs and other choice weapons, and, preceded by their determined leader, started off into the night in the direction of Castle Monmouth, Mr. Fox still continuing to lament the loss of "them guns." But his spirits rose as they proceeded.

"I'm cur'us what old Monmouth'll think when he sees us," he chuckled. "I reckon as he'll be flabbergasted." Mr. Fox was right in his surmise, the Colonel was "flabbergasted," but not for the reasons the former expected.

Meanwhile it had been a busy day for those at Castle Monmouth. The local militia had been called out, and a fair quota of the force presented themselves, and were inspected in full parade by the Colonel himself, on the grounds in front of the Hall. The Colonel was accoutred in his regimentals, and was unusually active. He criticized each man in turn, in the quaint manner which he had, but in a few terse sentences which went home. He knew them all, and felt that, in a sense, he owned them, for the majority of them had got their lands from him; and though at times there were secret grumblings at what was called his "rank tyranny," all felt his personal influence, and submitted accordingly.

"There, Peter Holmes, don't swing your arms sideways! John, turn your toes out! George," he asked another, "how is your wife, is she better? Confound

you men! Eyes front! Philpotts," he continued, "how are we to make soldiers out of these men? Now all together, cheer for the King!" and they all hurrahed in a good hearty British cheer, ere they went off to get some rum in the back yard.

They were all good sturdy fellows, much like the best of Mr. Fox's "regulators," but with different convictions; and if indifferent soldiers, being more used to the plough and the axe, they were at least loyal, and had a strong prejudice against, and antipathy to what they called, "those half-Yankee rebels." If they had been asked what it all meant, they could not have answered, save that Colonel Monmouth knew, and that was enough for them. They were not great thinkers, not worrying over why one man was rich and another man poor, one great and another humble—as if such worrying had ever really produced any magic levelling; but they went to church or to "meeting," as it was called, cleared the forest, and did their duty to their families and themselves as sensible men should, as the parson put it weekly, "in that state of life to which it had pleased God to call them."

This shows that all sorts of people go to make up a world; that as there are two sides to a question, so there must be at least two parties in every community, not to speak of Churchmen and Chapel-goers, Round-heads and Cavaliers, Torys and Reformers, to the end of time. It would be a very uninteresting and dull world where there was no strife or argument, no hills to climb, no obstacles to overcome, with no consequent development of character and individuality.

So they had their drill and got their orders and their rum, and a hearty repast, and remarkable to relate, the rum was the same which the rebels drank, which, according to all philosophers, it should not have been. But it is a peculiar phenomenon in life, that men may acquire strength to leap at each other's throats from drinking out of the selfsame bottle, or dining upon the same cow.

A mid-day dinner was served to the officers in the house, while the rank and file victualled in the back yard. There were present, besides Carey, who was subdued, yet confident after his adventures, Etherington, Captain Philpotts, the local sheriff, and one or two squires, also the Anglican clergyman, who read service and preached from a drumhead on the lawn after the meal was over. He was a sound Tory, with an old country education, manner and intonation; and though himself the son of a small gentleman squire, was over-obsequious to his host, who, over his wine, was rather cynical toward the cloth. The clergyman also showed a narrowness and contempt for the "dissenters," which, though a condition of the time, was much to be deplored; otherwise, he was an earnest, sincere worker, according to his clerical vision, and, after his manner, a gentleman.

It was while they were at dinner, which was served in the parlor that the man, while helping Etherington to wine, whispered to him that a negro boy, who had ridden into the back yard, and would not dismount, had a message which he refused to deliver to anyone but to him. At the mention of the negro boy, Ether-

ington's heart beat rapidly, but excusing himself, he went out and found the boy, Banco, as he had expected. Placing his hand in the breast of his coat, the boy produced a letter and handing it to Etherington, without a word, turned his horse and disappeared down the lane.

The latter, much surprised, opened the paper, and examined its contents. It was, as he suspected from the writing, from Lydia Bradford, but bore no signature. Its message was startling, running as follows:

“Sir,—An attack by a large body of men will be made against Colonel Monmouth's place to-night. This is to warn you, and prevent the inhuman horror of bloodshed. Destroy this.”

That was all, but it brought the blood quicker to his heart as he realized that the warning was a serious one, and must be communicated immediately to those within. He was also keenly affected by the fact that this was from the girl, who already had sacrificed so much for him, and remembering the seemingly brutal cruelty of the act he was about to perform toward her and hers on the morrow, it was in no very happy frame of mind that he returned to the house to inform Monmouth of the proposed attack.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE WARNING

RE-ENTERING the dining-room, Etherington whispered in Colonel Monmouth's ear, and the latter arose and, with him, left the apartment. "You have good reason to believe this then?" he questioned sternly, when Etherington had communicated to him the contents of the letter.

"Yes, sir, I have."

"But have you no conception who the sender of this communication may be?"

"That I cannot answer," returned the young man.

"Then we must make our preparations to receive these scoundrels. But I must say that, for a king's officer, it is decidedly compromising to be so closely and mysteriously in touch with those people as you appear to be," and the Colonel looked at his companion coldly.

"I am sorry, sir, but I can say no more," replied Etherington, feeling his position the more keenly that this man, whom he respected, should have such grave reasons to suspect and doubt him. It appeared as though the whole world were against him. It was bad enough, he thought, to be compelled to go to her home on the morrow upon that most disagreeable mission; but the suspicion cast upon him made his position even more unbearable. Then he realized from different

allusions of Carey's, that he believed, or desired to believe that Etherington was, if not favorable to the Rebels, at least lukewarm towards the King's cause; a thought which caused him extreme pain and humiliation. If anything were needed to complete the sense of alienation which his own doubts as to his social status had implanted in his mind, it was this statement made by Colonel Monmouth ere they both returned to the dining-room.

"I have serious news to communicate to you, gentlemen," said Monmouth, standing at his place at the head of the table, while Etherington slipped quietly into his chair opposite Carey, who did not seem to like this secret consultation with his uncle and showed his feeling in his face. "I command you all to strictest secrecy beyond this room regarding what I am about to reveal," continued the Colonel, "but Captain Etherington has just received a mysterious message stating that this place is to be attacked by a large force this evening after nightfall. I can only say, if this be true, it is a first movement directed from without and probably anticipates the landing of a larger force and the establishment of this place as a post for invasion. Luckily we have made preparations, and we must do our duty in frustrating this disloyal attempt, and make the rebels pay dearly for their audacity."

"Have you any idea as to the source of this message?" asked the sheriff, who sat next to Carey, and who, while he spoke to Colonel Monmouth, looked at Etherington with some interest.

"I can only say that it came from Bradford's Cove,"

returned Monmouth, while Etherington grew crimson under the curious gaze which all at the table turned on himself.

“Captain Etherington seems to be in touch with those people,” said Carey, as he fingered a wine glass, with a laugh that thinly veiled a sneer.

“We owe this timely warning to Captain Etherington,” returned Monmouth sternly, “and all beyond that is a matter between him and his commanding officer,” he added significantly.

Etherington now saw that he had, for some reason, gained the dislike of Carey, and was losing the confidence of Monmouth. But he said, addressing the sheriff, “I have shown the note to Colonel Monmouth, and I can say no more.”

“This warning has a suspicious look,” said the clergyman to Etherington. “You cannot trust those people, sir. You are new to this country, Captain. But those dissenters are steeped in disloyalty from their birth; and honor, I fear, is sadly lacking among them; now the sender of that message—”

“Pardon me, sir,” returned Etherington warmly, “but while I deplore the sad differences of education and the prejudices against the Crown and state on the part of these people, I cannot agree with you in your opinion of their lack of honor.”

“What, sir? I am astonished,” cried the clergyman. “You are young, sir, and your slight experience misleads you, if you think that any of those disloyal people are worth one moment’s consideration. There may be loyalty of a kind, I admit; but no true sense of honor,

no proper idea of what is due to those above us, to law and rank, nor any genuine obedience of the subject, save in the Church, sir. For an officer of the King, sir, your ideas show undue latitude."

He said this with some unction, and in a tone as though he was preaching, and all at the table began to regard the young man with suspicion. But Etherington was irritated at his peculiarly false position. He remembered the Methodist preacher and he felt that, while the man at the table was, in a sense, a gentleman and a scholar, yet he lacked somewhat which the other could have taught him. His vista showed a certain narrowness. There was a failure to understand the people as a whole, and a way of putting aside or ignoring all who were, as he considered, outside of the pale. This was Canada, and England was afar off, but Etherington realized that Monmouth was the squire, and this the typical parish parson over-doing the obsequious and the loyal attitude, though unconsciously, as a part of his profession. He also realized the bitter intolerance of the other, the disaffected class, and he began to feel that, having a certain sympathy with each side, he was fast becoming alienated from both.

"Sir," he said to the clergyman, "I have met some representatives of your cloth, though not of your particular creed, and others, on my way hither, whose appearance and converse have convinced me, loyal as I am to my Church and to my political ideals, that not all loyalty, all honor and reason are confined to those of our way of thought."

"Then, sir, I can say no more," cried the clergyman

indignantly. "If you can see good in a dissenting rebel, I am sorry for you," and he refilled his glass and turned to speak to the sheriff, who, with the others, now regarded Etherington with distrust and cold curiosity.

Monmouth had remained silent during this argument, but sat with a cynical look on his face, as though secretly enjoying it from a point of view of his own; and when Etherington saw that he was gradually put out of the conversation, he sat for a few moments in silence, then, making his apologies, arose and left the room. He desired to be alone to contemplate his most unhappy and most compromising situation.

"Is that the man who is to command the party for the arrest of Struthers?" inquired the sheriff.

"Captain Etherington has been detailed by me for that duty," answered Monmouth curtly.

"Etherington is pretty deeply involved with those people," interjected Carey, "and I have my suspicions that there is a lady in the case."

"Then," asked the clergyman, "is he just the person to—to—to?"

"By Heaven, gentlemen," cried Monmouth, with an ill look at his nephew, "this is going too far. In spite of his peculiar ideas, Captain Etherington is a gentleman and I, at least, won't impugn his honor." This was said with a tone and an air that meant that his word was final. "And you,"—he turned sternly to Carey,—“remember you have your duties in preparing to meet this attack.”

At this the young man arose, and bowing, left the room. But for all his dismissal, he felt inwardly jubi-

lant, having successfully managed to cast suspicion upon Etherington.

"Now, gentlemen," said the Colonel, "we have stayed here too long; we have much to do. And Philpotts," he added, "won't you reconsider your decision and bring your family here for protection?"

"No, Colonel," returned the other, "I think that Navy Hall is as good a place as this to stand a siege. Then I think that we are in no immediate danger."

"Then, sir," said Monmouth, addressing the clergyman, "we will not keep you any longer from your office;" and they all arose and went out of doors on the lawn, where the people were once more collected for the purpose of joining in a short service of the Established Church.

Etherington had taken a station near the assembled group, and yet apart. He thought of the other service which he had so lately attended, and could not but contrast the two in his thoughts. The Rev. Mr. Haskins, now that he had assumed the part of the clergyman, seemed to lose for the time the character of the over-obsequious Tory which had jarred upon Etherington. He read with a dignified manner and a fine voice a shortened form of the church service, and once more, out there in the same wilds, the beautiful prayers, so stately and so fitting, fell with impressiveness on the young man's sensitive ear. Then the clergyman preached a short, plain sermon from the suggestive text, "Fear God and honor the King." It lacked the fiery oratory and the power of the sermon he had heard in that other garden. Some would have called it dry

and uninteresting, but it inculcated loyalty as a duty, making no appeal, and Etherington concluded that, while the man was narrow, he understood his office and preached what he believed.

After this service, the women and children dispersed, escorted by the majority of the men, while about twelve of the pick of the militia stayed to protect the place against its coming assailants. While Carey was ostensibly in command of these, Monmouth was their real leader, the sheriff having gone off with the clergyman on the way to Newark, being escorted part of the way by a squad of men.

As night drew down, the place once more assumed its wonted quiet aspect of lonely wood, gardens and shore. But the little garrison, though they kept a careful lookout and had made all necessary preparations, behaved outwardly as though there was nothing unusual about to happen. Carey would have let the dogs loose. He was slightly alarmed, remembering Robert Bradford's action of that memorable morning; but Monmouth curtly forbade it.

"I will show them that a British soldier fights like a gentleman and not with dogs, which are fit only to frighten vagabonds. We will give them a warmer reception than they think," he said, "without resorting to such methods." And his garrison, fain to follow what Carey regarded as his Utopian methods, awaited the coming of the foe.

CHAPTER XXV

SHOWING HOW CAPTAIN FOX WENT FORTH TO SHEAR AND CAME BACK SHORN

IT was somewhat after ten o'clock when Captain Fox and his valiant band filed up the lane that led to the entrance of Castle Monmouth. Pausing for a space to harken for the dogs and hearing none, and being bolstered up with that false courage which certain spirituous beverages lend to a man, they entered the yard at the rear on daring conquest intent.

Filled with that assurance, which confidence in his own strength and the seeming weakness of his opponents furnished, the martial Captain advanced to the door and pounded thereon with a stout club, and with sundry oaths demanded immediate admission in the name of liberty and the invading army. But there came no answer to this peremptory summons. A dead silence pervaded the place, as though it had been deserted, and Mr. Fox was somewhat surprised at the absence of the dogs, which had been his sole cause of uneasiness. As the last echo of his imperative clamor died away and there was still no answer to his insistent command, he redoubled his fierce tattoo on the door, and, with louder oaths and extravagant threats, demanded immediate entrance.

In answer to this second summons to the besieged garrison, the sliding panel was opened suddenly but

quietly and a voice asked, in ordinary tones, as though the clamor outside was not unusual, who was there and what was wanted. In answer to this, our military hero repeated his demands for immediate entrance in the same aggressive style.

“Go away, and do not disturb a respectable house,” came the answer; “you are drunk.” This only made the indignant leader all the more clamorous in voice and arm, and the hammering and cursing were renewed.

Then a face appeared at the opening. It was that of the master of the castle, and he leaned out with a lantern in his hand and a grim cynical look on his strong face, as he surveyed the disturber of his peace curiously. “What blackguard wants entrance?” he enquired contemptuously.

“I ain’t no blackguard,” cried Fox, desisting from his blows on the door, and striving to appear overbearing and warlike.

“Then who are you? Why do you hammer on my door with that club?”

“You’ll know soon, old cock, I reckon,” answered Silas, strutting and blustering according to his idea of military prowess. “I reckon as you’ll know as I’m Captain Fox, and I want that door opened mighty quick in the name of liberty and the Continental Army.”

“Oh! You do, do you?” Then the other turned and spoke to someone within. “James,” he said, “this is General Guy Fox of the Rapscaillon Irregulars, and he demands entrance in the name of the devil—did you not say the devil?” he enquired of the enraged besieger.

"I reckon I said the Continental Army," yelled that worthy, who, feeling that he held the cards, resented this unwarranted insult and delay, "and I reckon as you'll know it better soon, so quit that foolin' and let us in. You can't help yourself. It's my turn now, I reckon."

"Oh, then you are that Yankee scoundrel who was here the other day?" returned the besieged.

"D——n ye, I say, will you surrender or not?" roared Captain Fox.

"Not until I see the Continental Army."

"You'll see them soon enough," cried the other, enraged at this insulting manner of meeting his demands.

"Well, let them come forward, and perhaps I will make terms," said Monmouth.

"This way, boys!" shouted the intrepid leader, "show yourselves."

"Yes, show yourselves," echoed Monmouth, leaning well out and holding his lanthorn up so as to let its light fall on their faces as they came forward in a straggling group, not half liking the reception, so different from what they had expected. All had heard of this strange man, and most of them had seen him at a distance; but this was their first meeting with him in a personal way, and the peculiar circumstances and his manner did not detract from his grim reputation.

"Well," he said, after a critical survey, "so this is your Continental Army, is it?" and he smiled in a manner to have discomposed a more self-possessed company.

"Yaas, it is, and you'll feel their claws sooner 'n you think, I reckon," shouted their leader, who evidently had not even their wisdom.

"I will, eh?" questioned Monmouth. "Where are your guns, you boobies," he asked, addressing the men, "where are your guns?"

But the noble dozen only gaped speechless and inwardly cursed Mr. Fox. For there was something in the personality of this man who heckled them, an air of self-composure and command, which repelled and cowed them.

"Oh, come, none of that," said the captain; "open that door!"

"What if I don't?" questioned the Colonel innocently.

"We'll make you!"

"What! You and the Continental Army?"

"You'll soon see," yelled Fox, exasperated beyond all endurance.

"Will I? Now, you men," said Monmouth, addressing the silent group, "you have put your necks into a noose, for which you can only blame that low scoundrel there, who, I am told, was chased out of the States as a convicted horse thief, and sets up here as a representative of liberty. Now go! All of you make tracks!"

"Don't go, boys! It's a lie! He's only bluffing. We're twelve to two," cried Silas, excitedly.

"I give you three minutes," came the sharp warning. "Two! One! You won't go? Then take what you deserve. Ready!" he cried, in a quick military command, and there was a sudden click of gun locks behind them, and the astonished Captain Fox and his redoubt-

able twelve turned to find, by the light of several lanterns and pine torches now set blazing, a platoon of twelve muskets, in the hands of as many militiamen, levelled at them. As the poetical chroniclers of old have sung:

*Oh, here was a change, indeed
A quick surprise;
When hideous daggers gleamed
On frightened eyes,
The very blue, it seemed
Down-fallen from the skies.*

So it seemed indeed to Mr. Fox and his trapped followers, as they gazed in horrified amazement at those levelled gun-barrels, which appeared to be but waiting a single word to belch forth death to them all.

“O Lord!” cried the astounded leader, while he and his troop represented as fine a group of amazement and horror as would have satisfied the artistic instincts of Mr. Rogers. As Mr. Fox spoke, the door he had hammered upon opened, and Monmouth, Carey, Etherington and others came out into the yard.

“Well, General Fox, of the Continental Army,” cried their captor, “in the name of liberty, what reason have you to give why I should not hang you?” and he faced the crestfallen leader.

“Oh! Oh! I didn’t mean no harm,” cried the leader, “it was only a frolic, wasn’t it, boys? Only a bit of fun!” But there was no response to this appeal from the army.

"Oh, it was a frolic, was it? to come to a man's house at night with an armed force, twelve to two, you said, and demand entrance in the name of liberty and the Continental Army."

"Oh, let me go! Let me go!" pleaded the down-fallen besieger.

"Go! Oh, no! What is that rope for about your waist?"

Captain Fox went as pale as his leathery face would permit and his knees shook.

"Unwind that rope!"

The unhappy warrior did as he was bid, feeling that his last hour had come.

"Now, what is that? A noose?"

Mr. Fox surveyed it, but remained silent.

"Who was that for?" The other knew only too well, but his speech failed him.

"Now," said Monmouth, in stern tones, "shall I shoot you down, or string you up?"

"Oh, don't! Oh, don't! I will tell you all! I will tell you all! Mr. Etherington, won't you save me?" But the latter only surveyed him with contempt.

"Now, men," said Monmouth to the Continental Army, who were exceedingly uncomfortable under the aim of those muskets, "you deserve to be shot, don't you?"

"We do, sir," cried those of them who could speak, for they were all now quite sober.

"You have been taught a lesson."

"We have, sir, we have!"

"Oh! they made me come!" cried the despairing Fox.

"It's a lie!" they all cried in a breath, "it was him brought us."

"Those pistols!" cried Monmouth, "throw them down!"

Mr. Fox complied.

"That knife!"

It dropped also.

"Now, which of you men can load with small shot?"

"I can, sir," answered one of the militia. "It is pigeon."

"Oh, let me go; I'll turn Tory, I will," pleaded the agonized captain.

"No, by George! you won't," said Monmouth. "You deserve hanging with your own rope. But I will teach you a lesson. Go to the corner of the yard there," he continued, as the militia-man discharged his gun in the air and reloaded with a small charge of pigeon-shot.

"Oh, no! No!" yelled Silas.

But, at a motion from Monmouth, two men went forward and dragged him over into the required position.

"Now, stand up and turn your back, you scoundrel! Morris, fire low. Pepper his legs," and, as he gave the command, there was a report, and the bloodthirsty leader of the night attack was once more dancing an Indian war-dance about the yard, with several pigeon shot in his lower limbs, and making the night hideous with his curses and howlings.

"Now, you cur," said Monmouth, "you are not worth even hanging. And you," he said to the followers, "are but fools. But the next time you come here

in this fashion you will dance on nothing. Now go!" and with relieved minds the quondam rebels slunk off, cursing and reviling their unfortunate leader, who accompanied them, lamenting and blaspheming as he went. And thus ended the great night sortie which was to have accomplished so much, and with it the military and political ambitions of Captain Silas Fox.

Half an hour later the discredited leader lay groaning while, by the light of a lanthorn, a compassionate follower dug the shot out of his calves with a penknife.

"Wa'al, Silas," said the temporary surgeon, ironically, "you was the first to fall for the cause."

"Hang the cause!" groaned the victim of his own temerity. But his tricky mind was already plotting revenge, though it was now directed against the Bradfords, Tom Philpotts and Struthers; and the result of his sinister cogitations will be revealed later. Alas for the principles of great political souls! His one dream was how could he repay the three, and how he might profitably betray Struthers to the authorities. For, however strange it may seem, the pigeon shot had accomplished what no amount of moral suasion could have brought about, and Captain Fox was already at heart a Tory!

CHAPTER XXVI

ETHERINGTON CONFRONTS DESPAIR

LYDIA BRADFORD had gone home that bright morning, with no pleasant feelings, from her chance meeting with the girl in the forest. She was dissatisfied with herself and with all existence, including Etherington and the other girl. Her first feeling was one of indignation that the girl had dared to approach her. She felt that it was an insult after all those years of indifference. Then to discover that it was done really to please Etherington made it all the worse. But the deeper sensation, which hurt her most of all, was the humiliating thought that this man, whom she had scarcely seen, had taken such a hold on her imagination and could affect her so. The truth is that Lydia was, by reason of her intellect, her heredity and her retired life, a dreamer and an idealist. She expected much of life at its best. It was natural that she should. She was young, passionate and beautiful herself and, instinctively, loved and worshipped beauty and refinement. Much of this, she was surrounded with, in the great expanse of nature, and in the history and literature she dreamed over in her father's small, but classical, library. Though she would not have entered a theatre, having a prejudiced, though vague, notion regarding such a place, yet Shakespeare

had privately become her favorite study, and she read his plays in the old volume they possessed, first, as others would read a novel, for their story, and then grew to appreciate their finer qualities. These plays, with Milton, "The Pilgrim's Progress," her Bible, and the great book of Nature about her had combined to create in her mind an ideal of perfection; and Etherington, in spite of her instilled prejudices, had appealed to her as the nearest approach to this ideal in her social experience. Inwardly, she was now feeling the result of a moral shock. He was not at all what she had been led to expect from her education regarding his class and kind. She had already a growing suspicion that even her father might have been wrong in his estimate of that other social world; and it vexed her that she should have to make such an admission, even to herself.

Now, also, that she had both seen and spoken to Diana Philpotts who, to her, represented the women of that hated class, she was more than surprised. Instead of the haughty, insolent aristocrat which she had expected, this was a fair, gentle, natural and frank young girl who, she afterward remembered, had actually knelt to her and pled for her friendship.

All this puzzled her and gave her much to ponder over, the more that she had no one to go to for sympathy and guidance. Her father, she felt, would not understand her, and would only be horrified at her new outlook and amazed at the whole problem which confronted her regarding Diana Philpotts.

Etherington's name she dared not even mention. He, she realized, was coming in person to arrest her father

and brother, and he had been her ideal! It horrified and repelled her. For Struthers she cared little. But she felt she had to accomplish two things: She must save her father and brother, and she must show Etherington that she despised him. It hurt her to realize now that it was largely because of him that she had hidden those guns. Must he not have thought her whole series of actions traitorous and unmaidenly? Else, she reasoned, why should he repay her kindness in so callous and cruel a manner? She must show him, she would show him, that he was less than nothing to her. So she debated and worried. But bitterly as she felt toward Etherington, she could not but marvel at Diana Philpotts. Did not she owe her father's and her brother's chance of safety to the girl? She was forced to admit that the other had acted from motives similar to her own. Yet that demon of jealousy, insinuating that this was all done because of Etherington, crept in, suggesting that this girl in her fair loveliness was more fitted than she could ever be to win his favor. All these feelings, which it is so difficult to explain, had surged up in her brain in a sort of passionate protest as she had returned home that morning, and remained with her, though she endeavored to absorb herself in her household duties during that day.

She had, after some inward debate, revealed to her father the warning which she had received concerning his and her brother's intended arrest, as well as that of Struthers and Fox. But she absolutely refused to give the source of her information. On receiving the information, Bradford showed some anger and agita-

tion; but he informed the others affected, immediately, with the result that "The Scud" weighed anchor next day with a party on board, and Robert took down his gun and went on a hunting expedition. But the difficulty was with Bradford himself. He was, like Lydia, a dreamer, but without her practical, active nature to counteract this tendency. Though he was less culpable than those about him, as his part had never gone beyond his thought and feeling in the whole insurrection, yet he felt it more keenly than did the others.

"No," he said at the last, when all was prepared for departure, "no, I will stay here on my own place and defy those ungodly tyrants;" and not all the combined pleading of his wife and daughter could make him recede from this decision.

"You had better come and bring your family," Struthers had advised. "We will just take a short cruise until this blows over."

"No, I shall not go!" he said, and that ended it. So Struthers bade them farewell for the present and went alone, as Fox had never returned.

They had heard, with some chagrin, of his humiliation and failure, from one of his followers, and that he was on board "The Scud" striving to recuperate from his wounds and his injured vanity.

But when Struthers had been gone for some time, Bradford went out into the garden to his daughter, and she saw that he was not well.

"Lydia," he said, "I feel that I have not done right. You should all have gone. I have not done my duty by you." As he said this, he placed his hand suddenly

to his heart and would have fallen had she not caught him.

"Father," she cried anxiously, "are you ill?" But he did not answer, and she saw by his face, which was white and drawn, that he had fainted. She let him sink gently to the ground and hurried in for some water, calling for aid as she did so. They came out about him and carried him in and laid him on the bed in the front room and administered stimulants. But still he lay thus, while the girl held his hand and chafed it, and the mother, white-faced but firm, did all that pioneer knowledge could do to restore him, but he never spoke again. Still the girl sat there, dry-eyed and despairing, and chafed his hands and his temples, and awaited the coming of Etherington.

The latter awoke that morning with a sense of utter despair. He realized that he was in a terrible position. He was suspected of what he regarded as the most despicable of crimes, that of secret treachery to the Crown. He felt that Monmouth, though he said nothing openly, suspected him, and was giving him a final chance to retrieve himself by sending him on, what to him was, the most disagreeable duty it had ever been his fortune to undertake.

He found Monmouth and Carey already at breakfast and evidently not on good terms. Their common salutation was not cordial and Carey soon left the table. Then Monmouth gave him his instructions, whom he was to take, how to go, and that he was to bring his prisoners to Castle Monmouth.

After this interview, not a pleasant one for either,

Etherington went out and found his company awaiting him. They were on foot, but all armed with guns, being the firing party which had surprised Captain Fox on the preceding night.

Etherington had examined their arms, and they were ready to start, he being already mounted, when Colonel Monmouth came into the yard. "You will do your duty, men, and obey your officer, and I expect that Captain Etherington will do his," he added, sternly and significantly. He did not speak directly to Etherington, so the young man, sick at heart at this indirect warning, merely touched his hat in salute and preceded his men out of the gate.

It was well on in the afternoon when he arrived with his troop and warrants at Bradford's Cove, and dismounted in the backyard. His heart smote him as he approached the door and knocked. What would she think of him? How could he explain his position? Would she understand, could she understand, the stern sense of duty which animated the British officer? He felt that she would not, that it would be almost useless to explain, that his act in coming as he did would give the lie to all the arguments he could use. But still it was his duty, and his duty must be done, even if one died and all that was best in life went out with the doing of it.

There was no answer to his knock. So, knowing the house, he told the men to await him there and on no account to injure anyone, but to allow no man to escape; and then he went round by a side way and entered the little front garden. It was empty, and

coming as he did he felt like one intruding on a sacred place. The door was slightly ajar, and he at first hesitated. Then, remembering that he was there to carry out his orders, he approached and rapped softly.

At first there was no response; but after a few moments, with a sigh as of despair, some one stirred within; the door opened, and she stood before him. At first, he could only gaze at her in silence. He was startled at her appearance; she was so greatly changed. She was white and cold as marble, with a strange, far-away look on her face, as though she saw through and beyond him,—like a young queen going to the scaffold. He thought of Lady Jane Grey and the Queen of Scots, as he saw her there, and realized that something unusual, some terrible emotion, had affected her. But, as in a dream, he felt that he must justify himself, or attempt to do so.

“Miss Bradford,” he stammered, dragging out the words by a great effort—and in her terrible grief, pride and despair, she did not notice his haggard face as he spoke—“Miss Bradford, if you only knew!”

“I do know,” she answered, and her voice was like the winter wind in the icy trees, so cold and desolate did it strike on his ear. “I do know, sir, your mission here; but,—but,—” her scorn seemed to freeze into something more remote and awful, as she added, “he has, thank God, escaped you;” and, moving back into the room, she pulled aside the curtains of the bed. “You cannot take him now. My father is dead.”

The world seemed to whirl round as he staggered against the door-post. Then he pulled himself together

and found some words, though they seemed so poor and inadequate. "God is my witness," he cried, almost with agony, "that—that—"

"Go, sir! Go!" she said, with a quiet scorn. "You are not wanted here now."

He would have given all he had ever possessed to have been able to say that he was wanted; that now was the time when she needed friendship and protection. But the presence of that dead man, and the hideous purpose of his coming, and, more than all, her white scorn of face and contemptuous speech told him that he was not wanted there, that all was ended, ended forever, between him and her, who, he now fully realized, was the one woman whom he desired in all the world.

All he could do, and he did it promptly, was to make a low bow and withdraw with silent steps and sad eyes. So he left her, and that was the end.

He could never afterwards exactly recall what he did the rest of that day—how he went back to his squad and, in a voice which seemed to belong to someone else, gave the command to right-about-face and quick march. It was not until he was over a mile from the house that he remembered the others for whom he had warrants. It all came to him, like a flash of recollection out of a dream, that he had forgotten his orders. Even then he felt that, King's warrant or no, it would be hideous brutality to go back to that house and search for those men, with that girl and her dead father there. He could not, and would not do it, even at the risk of the loss of his commission, of being branded a traitor. His

very nature recoiled from the act. So he delayed not, but rode straight on without pausing, followed blindly by his squad, who wondered at this sudden termination of their visit without carrying out the object for which they had come.

Thus they arrived, leader and men, once more back in the yard at Castle Monmouth. Here Etherington immediately dismounted and, giving his horse in charge of a man, went in and came and stood before his host and commander, where he sat in his parlor, busy over his correspondence.

CHAPTER XXVII

BROCK

COLONEL MONMOUTH looked up as the young man entered.

“Well?” he said interrogatively, “have you succeeded?”

“No,” cried Etherington despairingly, “I have not.”

“And why?”

“Colonel Monmouth,” answered Etherington, “I must speak plainly or I shall go mad. I have again failed in my duty; but the truth is, that in spite of what you or others may think, I feel that I have been justified in my action.”

“Justified?” said Monmouth, rising to his feet, “in not doing your duty? In disobeying orders? You must be aware of the consequences to yourself,” he said significantly.

“I am,” said Etherington, “I realize that my military career is ruined. I will explain all, and you may then do with me as you please; but I would tell you at the start, that one of my intended prisoners escaped me by no fault of mine. Ambrose Bradford is dead.”

“Bradford dead? Dead?”

Then Etherington related the whole matter, not hiding his own feelings, and recounted what the girl

had done for him, and for them all; and in telling, by reason of his excitement, he probably revealed more than he had intended, for the older man looked at him now and again curiously. But when he had finished, Monmouth said gravely:

"Captain Etherington, as a man, I sympathize with you; but as a soldier, and your superior officer, I must tell you that yours is a most unfortunate position, and I am forced to do my duty. But before I say any more, I would ask you what you intend to do?"

"Why," said Etherington, "if I am not considered as under arrest, I will go at once to York, and deliver myself up to the Governor, and if nothing worse happens, resign my commission. I feel that my military career is ended."

"You have decided wisely," said Monmouth. "It is your only alternative. I will send a man with you; but you had better delay your departure until the morning."

"It is impossible," returned Etherington, "I must be in Newark by to-night, I cannot remain here."

"Well, in an hour I will have a man ready, and I will write the Governor an account of the matter myself, it may perhaps help you."

"Thank you," cried Etherington gratefully, "he is my father's old friend."

"Then I will write to Colonel Brock instead," said Monmouth, "he will have much to do with the case."

Again thanking him, though he fully appreciated the barrier which lay between them, Etherington left the room, and went to prepare for his journey. Hastily

putting his few things together, he went downstairs and out into the garden, and there came suddenly on Captain Philpotts and Carey.

The latter had heard of Etherington's return and his failure. He was annoyed that Robert Bradford was not arrested, yet he had a comforting reflection that Etherington was ruined, and out of his way; but he felt that he would not be satisfied until the other had left.

As Etherington went down the steps, he heard the voices, and knew that they were discussing him. He hesitated whether to go back or proceed, when Philpotts said:

"I cannot believe it. No British officer would fail in his duty for any trivial reason."

"The facts speak for themselves," returned Carey.

"Then you believe that Captain Etherington deliberately refused to do his duty?"

"I do."

There was a quick step, and Etherington, with a resolute face, stood before them.

"Captain Carey, I demand that you withdraw your words!"

But Carey only looked at him silently, with a cold sneer.

"Captain Etherington," said Philpotts, "I have no right to say anything to you, but as you value your reputation, explain what this means."

"Simply what I have already reported to Colonel Monmouth; but I will add what I am sure," and he glanced meaningly at Carey, "you have not been told,

that when I arrived at the house, I found a young girl grieving over the body of her dead father."

"Great Heavens! is Bradford dead?" cried Philpotts.

"Yes, and I respected the misery I found there, without creating more. If the service demands any more, let them send Lieutenant Carey."

"I suppose," said the other in a passion, "that this means that Captain Etherington is leaving here immediately."

"I leave within the hour," answered Etherington to Philpotts, "and when I am free from this matter, Lieutenant Carey can always hear from me at York;" and he turned on his heel, and walked into the house.

An hour later he had said farewell to his host, and had ridden away with the man, whom he suspected was as much his guard as his attendant, as he was aware that the letters for the Governor and Colonel Brock were in the man's keeping.

Etherington was weary and heart-sick with the whole affair. His one desire now was to get away from the place, where he had experienced so much misfortune, but in his recollection of which, would remain the one sweet and bitter memory of Lydia Bradford. He rode as fast as possible, intending to push right through, and not rest until he had arrived at Newark; but as he passed the place of his accident, now sacred, as the spot where they had first met, he became possessed of a desire to stop, and attempt to see her, or to speak with her once more. But the memory of her, as she had stood by the side of her dead father, and repulsed him with scorn, burnt all the memories out, and

he realized that he had come there to discover life's one chief prize, only to have it swept by a remorseless fate from his grasp; and it was like one tearing himself from the scenes of a whole lifetime, that he rode up the hill, and left behind him, her and her sorrow and beauty, wherein he was to have no more part.

When he had left the place, his one feverish impulse was to push on and reach York as soon as possible, and learn his fate one way or the other, as far as the army was concerned. So he hastened on, quite to his companion's discomfort and wonder, that "a young gent" should be so eager to meet his trouble, as this one was.

Wrapped in his own reflections, Etherington lived over his dreams and memories of the late events; or filled with misgiving for the future, revolved a hundred schemes, only to awake anew to the memory of the girl's scorn, Monmouth's distrust, and his own hopeless position.

They reached Newark early next morning, and partaking of a hurried breakfast, pushed on. Here the man made one protest.

"We will kill our horses, sir," was all he said.

"I cannot help it," was all Etherington replied, as they once more resumed their journey.

Late that evening, they entered the muddy streets of the village of York, and drew up before an inn. Here Etherington was so weary, that, hastily seeking a room, he threw himself on his bed and slept like a log until next morning. When he awoke, he found the sun high, and shining in through the small window, and all of

his troubles came back to him, like a bad dream. With a groan, he arose, and made his toilet, and went downstairs to find that his attendant had been up and gone for some time to the Governor's residence.

Hurrying through his breakfast, he went outside, to find a sergeant pacing up and down in front of the door, and he knew by this that he was practically under surveillance, if not arrest. For a moment, his heart failed him, as the significance of this circumstance dawned upon him; but recovering himself, he walked boldly up to the man, who saluted as he approached, and asked him if His Excellency was at Government House. The man stared at him for a moment, as though in doubt, then he asked:

"You are Captain Etherington, are you not, sir?"

"I am," said Etherington.

"Then I am to tell you that Governor Gore has left for England, and General Brock is acting, sir."

Etherington started at this intelligence, which destroyed his remaining hopes. Gore was his father's friend, and, consequently, his; and upon the Governor's aid and sympathy, he had relied. But Brock, he barely knew; besides, the latter was a military man, and less likely to look with leniency upon such a case as Etherington's. This all flashed through his brain, and he felt that he must act promptly, so he said:

"I will go to General Brock at once."

"Then I will go with you, sir."

The man said this respectfully, but Etherington knew what it meant, that he had his orders. But he acted as though all were right, and set off for

Government House, where Brock had his headquarters.

On his arrival there, Etherington, after waiting for some little time was ushered into the presence of the man, who was now Provisional Lieutenant-Governor, and who, as commander of the forces, was, in a few months, to end his life on the field of glory, as the great military hero of Upper Canada.

He was slightly above medium height, and as he stood there beside that table, in that large, low-ceilinged room, his face bore a faint resemblance, in its clear-cut, determined profile, though the forehead was loftier, to that of the famous Corsican, who was soon to go down before the Iron Duke. His hair turned back, in a sort of curl, from a lofty sloping brow; and his full soldierly eye, slightly aquiline nose, compressed lips, and firm chin, indicated a character of striking individuality in a countenance of a distinctly poetical cast. There was a sort of unconscious pathos in the personality of this man, who showed in every characteristic the spirit of the true soldier.

He had been consulting some papers with his aide-de-camp, Captain McDonnell, and signing him to withdraw, he immediately said, in quiet tones, which were not either cold or cordial, but frank and decisive.

“Captain Etherington, I have read Colonel Monmouth’s letter, and understand from it that you have a statement to make to me. . You will please to be seated,” and he motioned the young officer to a chair, and sat down himself.

Etherington, at once realizing that he was in the hands of a high-minded soldier and true gentleman,

immediately began to make a plain statement of his whole experience at the Lake Erie settlement, in as few words as possible, without any attempt at palliation of his failure to perform his duty, and Brock sat there, and listened without a word until he had finished.

“And what is your intention now?” asked the General. “Had you not personally formed any plan to anticipate any action which the Government might take?”

“My intention is to retire from the army,” answered Etherington, sadly.

“You will do nothing of the kind, Captain Etherington,” he said. “You are quite a stranger to me; but while I cannot ignore your action from a military point of view, I realize the extreme difficulty of your position. Then the account I have of you from Colonel Monmouth interests me in your favor. Colonel Gore had also spoken of you before he left; so I am going to do what some officers might consider irregular. We are just now in a dangerous situation, and we need all the true and brave soldiers which we have, and I am going to attach you to my suite, where I can observe and study you, with the object of, as soon as possible, giving you a chance to retrieve your misfortune, by taking the field in active service against the enemy.”

“Thank you! thank you, General,” said Etherington, in a choking voice. He was both surprised and relieved. This was not what he had expected, and it was a sudden shock to his feelings, just when he had been preparing to bulwark his pride against society, in a fierce bitterness, to receive such a mark of kindness and trust, at the

hands of so distinguished a man. Then he realized that Monmouth had all along been secretly his friend, and that beneath his cold cynicism was hidden a kindness he had not suspected. "I will try and do my duty," he added, "but I can scarcely understand your forbearance and leniency. I realize that an officer in his course of duty must let nothing interfere, he must have no personal feelings; but—but I thought that I was under arrest."

"Not exactly that, but all depended upon the sort of man you were discovered to be. If you had attempted in the slightest manner to evade, or gloss over your dereliction of duty, your fate might have been different," he answered somewhat sternly.

"Now you are to occupy your old quarters, and, in a sense, your old position, as under His Excellency. You have also a warm friend in Colonel Monmouth, who, I would have you know, is no ordinary man. It is seldom he has taken so keen an interest in a youth of your position. I would advise you to write him at once, and communicate your favorable reception. I will see you later at dinner, at Government House."

"I had intended to write him in any case," returned Etherington; "but I thank Your Excellency for the suggestion, and for—for the other kindness," he stammered, as he bowed low, in answer to the kindly, if formal dismissal, and took his leave.

He was more overcome by his feelings than he had thought possible. With Brock for a leader, he would have charged singly against a whole regiment, so

greatly had the latter's noble character and sympathetic interest affected him. Thus commenced a friendship, which, on the part of Etherington, grew to a sort of worship, an attitude which he shared with his brother officers, who were in touch with this remarkable man, and which only ended at the death of the elder, when it became a reverence to be cherished in the memory of the younger man as long as life lasted.

Etherington, relieved and elated, returned to his old quarters, no longer feeling that he was the object of surveillance, and glad to be once more in the quaint Provincial Capital, which, though to his eyes, but a rude, colonial village, was an outpost of civilization, and, in its way, a place of society and fashion. On his arrival at his quarters, he found several letters awaiting him, one of which had arrived from the Old Country by the last packet. One was from Gore, announcing his sudden departure, and saying that he had mentioned Etherington to General Brock. He then went on to relate what caused his reader some astonishment and uneasiness, namely, that he would by this time have discovered the contents of the package, which Colonel Etherington had, ere his death, sent to Gore, to be by him delivered to his son, and which the latter had sent on to Colonel Monmouth to hand to him, as the delivery of the packet was to be delayed as long as possible. This packet he had sent to Monmouth in Etherington's own custody, with the other despatches to the Colonel. He closed by hoping that all was well with him, and that he should meet him, either on his return to Canada, or in England. Then expressing his desire to be able

to serve him in any way in his power, ended, "Yours faithfully, Francis Gore."

Etherington sat and read, and re-read this letter in a sort of daze. What could it all mean? Here he had been almost on the verge of knowing what his father had to communicate regarding what he now believed to be the mystery of their origin; and the package containing the secret had suffered the same fate as the despatches, and was now in the hands of Fox, or else destroyed. It seemed as though an adverse fate pursued him, and baffled him at every turn. He picked up the other letter, and broke the seal, which bore the crest of what he had supposed to be his own family, a dragon's head on a mural crown. It was dated from Etherington Hall, Lincolnshire, and was short and cold in its style. "Dear Sir," it ran, "Your communication to my brother concerning the death of Colonel 'Etherington,' whom you mention, has been given to me to reply to by my brother Sir Francis Etherington, who is ill. I am certain that the gentleman was not a member of my family, and therefore am unable to gratify your desire. I am, Sir, Yours, &c., Frederick Etherington."

This letter Etherington perused with a blank face, and an increasing disquiet. If this were true, then he was not of those Etheringtons after all. Then, if not, who was he? Why did his father desire him to go to the colonies? Why also was the communication from his father sent through other hands, and delayed in this mysterious manner? Was his father anxious that he should get accustomed to simpler conditions of the New

World, ere he learned whatever he had to reveal, and which was so strange that its revelation was delayed until after his death? Then what was the mysterious influence which had seemed to pursue him, and to be driving him from the Old World surroundings, and interesting him in the new? Fate certainly seemed determined that his origin must ever remain to him a mystery, else why had he had that packet in his hands, and, through his own foolhardy carelessness in not accepting the services of a guide, lost it from his possession? He felt that he must discover the packet, if it were still in existence. He would not be happy until he had solved that ever growing mystery regarding his family, and his right to the name he bore. This, remember, was ninety-seven years ago; and the matter of the right to a name, and of one's social station, was a graver consideration than it is now; though even now it has some weight in the social scale, and mere money considerations have not altogether destroyed its value.

Etherington keenly realized what the loss of the packet meant; yet what could he do? He had just given his word not to leave York; and his troubles seemed to accumulate, for associated with the desire to find the packet, was an equally strong, if not stronger attraction in the direction of Lydia Bradford.

CHAPTER XXVIII

IN WHICH MR. FOX INTRIGUES WITH CAREY, AND IS
WORSTED

MEANWHILE, the events which had occurred, had produced a radical change in the affairs of the community at Bradford's Cove.

The mysterious loss of the guns, which had proved not only a check to any attempt to arm the dissatisfied in the locality, but had also created a certain distrust of one another among the leaders, was a tremendous blow to what some designated "the cause." Also the subsequent contemptuous repulse of Mr. Fox by Colonel Monmouth, destroyed the former gentleman's reputation as a leader among all save the rougher element. But the greatest fatality of all was the death of Ambrose Bradford, whose place henceforth ceased to be a headquarters of insurrection. The master of "The Scud," also, disgusted at the loss of the guns, which he had brought there at some trouble to himself, and disheartened at the general failure to accomplish anything practical, and seeing that more important work might be accomplished elsewhere, would have left the vicinity, had it not been for its advantages for smuggling operations, and the importunities of Fox that he should stay a short time longer. The latter

had himself decided to forsake the locality as soon as possible, and to go elsewhere. But before leaving he was resolved to carry out certain schemes which he had on his mind.

He had determined on two things: First, to sell Struthers to the Government, and next to depart in "The Scud" with as much loot as he could secure. To achieve this last, he decided on raiding some place, and the one which seemed to him the most easy to attack, and liable to provide the most plunder, was the Philpotts' house, which was close to the water, and not protected in any way. He had been informed that there was considerable plate and jewelry in the house. In this way he hoped to make a safe retreat with revenge and riches.

In order to carry out his first scheme, he indited a letter to Lieutenant Carey, who he, after much cogitation, concluded would be the safest man to deal with; for Carey's character was not unknown in the locality, and Mr. Fox was a gentleman, as has been seen, of an inquisitive nature. This epistle, which cost him some trouble, in spite of his claim to scholarship, he indited in the cabin of "The Scud," which was now his headquarters. It ran as follows:

Captain Karey:

Sir,—This is to say as one who is lyal, and knows whar he's hiden, can put in yure hands Henry Struthers, who is the worst rebel to King Garge. If also that rebel, R. Bradford, if expensis is payed, and no questions asked. If you

com alone to Bradfurd's boundary, at lake to nite
at sundown, will be thare.

Yours to command,

A lyal subjec.

This curious missive reached Carey by some mysterious means which Mr. Fox had of carrying out his projects, and was placed in his hands, as he was smoking on the lawn, some days after Etherington had left. He read and re-read it and pondered it over for some time. He was exceedingly cautious, and yet here seemed a good chance to make a reputation in the eyes of Monmouth, and of the lady of his desire. This kind of thing was more in Carey's line than open warfare, he was naturally made for intrigue; still he suspected it might be a trap, and he was scarcely as brave as he desired to be considered. He was well aware that his duty was to go straight to Monmouth, and show him the letter; but his natural inclination for the secretive, and his desire to shine as a sort of hero, and to accomplish what Etherington had failed to do, urged him on to what his naturally careful nature would have avoided. He was also finding the time heavy on his hands. After his meeting in the woods with Diana Philpotts, though he was as determined as ever to win her eventually, he found it difficult to see her often, and be on the same terms as before. Then Colonel Monmouth, since the departure of Etherington, whom for some reason he continued to praise, was quite insolent, and more difficult to get along with than ever, and sycophant and toady as Carey was, even he began to suffer under the

daily hints and innuendoes regarding his reason for lingering.

He smoked some tobacco over the matter in hand, and at last decided to be at the Bradford boundary at the hour mentioned; and just as the sun was setting, loaded pistol in hand, he approached the place indicated in the letter. It was rather a lonely spot, and he had an unpleasant memory of Robert Bradford and his gun, and a creepy sensation came over him as he stole along. But he had a strong suspicion that it was not Bradford he was about to meet, but a person of another class; and that person materialized, as the reader already expects, in the sly, scheming form, features, and cunning mind of Mr. Silas Fox, who, also well-armed, was awaiting his visitor in the shadows, where he smoked a pipe as he leaned against a tree.

"I reckoned as you'd come, Captain," said Silas, "you're no fool like some other Captains I know. You can do business, I reckon."

Carey examined the other curiously. He was, in spite of his mean character, somewhat of an exquisite, and the sight of Fox, in all his vulgarity, disgusted him. But he only said:

"You are Mr. Silas Fox?"

"Captain Fox, that is, I was," returned the other, "and in spite of appearances as lie, a lyal Tory."

"Oh!" said Carey. "I see."

"And to prove which, I wrote you that thar letter."

"Well, Captain Fox," asked Carey, "what are your plans for the handing over of Struthers?"

"What will you give?" was the cautious answer.

Now Carey had no money, and did not intend to give anything; but he was ready to promise any amount in the name of the Government.

"How much do you want?" he asked.

"One hundred pounds; it's worth that considerin' the risk."

"I am certain the Government will give that," assented Carey.

"The Gov'ment! Why I reckoned as p'raps you'd a give it."

"Oh, no, I don't want Mr. Struthers," said the young man. "I've no particular use for him," and he yawned languidly, as though it were an indifferent matter.

But Mr. Fox was not indifferent, he needed money badly, and craved it eagerly; but of late, he had also craved revenge. His treatment, as he regarded it, at the hands of the Bradfords and Struthers had not been of the sort to make him feel kindly towards them; and now that Bradford was dead, and Robert become a dangerous character, Mr. Fox's one chance of revenge in that quarter was directed to the impractical Struthers, and he was determined to sell him as dearly as possible.

"Wall," he said, after consideration, "if you'll give it me in writin' that the Gov'ment 'ill pay me four hundred dollars, and let me go scot free, I'll hand him over when you want him."

"That is satisfactory. Where will you have him?"

"We'll settle that, I reckon, when I see that writin'."

Carey drew out a gold pencil, and wrote on a leaf, which he tore from a note book.

"How will that do?" and he handed the paper to Mr. Fox.

"Read it over so I may hear it!" said Fox cautiously, handing it back.

"That on condition that Mr. Fox delivers up the body of Henry Struthers, the rebel agitator, for whose arrest there is a warrant issued, to the custody of Captain Carey, he will be granted a free pardon for any offences he may have committed against the peace of this realm, and also be granted the sum of four hundred dollars. He being a loyal subject.

(Signed),

H. Carey, Captain."

"That is all thar?" asked Silas suspiciously. "Let me read it, Cap," and he took it, and spelled it out. "Now have you warrant to speak for the Government?"

"Of course I have," returned Carey, lying with an easy conscience.

"And that thar paper means a free pardon?"

"It does when you have performed your part."

"Then it's done," said Silas, "and I may also get you young Bradford."

"It would be better," assented Carey.

"Right you are. To-morrow night at sundown," and Silas' eyes glistened eagerly. "And the place?" he continued.

"That cave up there," said Carey, pointing in its direction.

"That place! You know of that?" cried Silas, off his guard, with an oath.

"Don't be afraid, Mr. Fox," said Carey reassuringly, "I will keep my part of the contract."

"Ya'as, but he ain't thar now," and Fox tried to look remarkably cunning and defiant.

"But he will be there," said Carey significantly.

"Ya'as, but you won't let on that I'm in it."

"There will be no danger that he will suspect you," returned Carey, and they parted with an appearance of agreement, but with a strong mutual distrust.

The next day Carey asked Monmouth for a party of ten men from the militia, and told him that he had a hope of capturing Struthers. Monmouth only smiled cynically at this, and ordered the squad for him; but Carey, knowing what he did, and what the other did not know, also smiled and kept his own counsel.

It was just at dusk that Fox and Struthers were seated on a heap of bales in the cave whither they had gone, Fox being anxious, as he said, to show his companion where the guns had been piled, and to explain their disappearance. Struthers had been anxious to get to the States. Now that war was declared, and Bradford dead, he had no place wherein to lay his head; but he had been delayed by the advice of Silas Fox, who persuaded him that they should not leave without making a final effort to discover the guns.

"You is so darned clever, Henry," said that astute flatterer, "if you was to see the place, you might get a clue that none other could;" and so he inveigled him to the spot. Struthers was also loath to leave without

deciding his fate as regards Lydia, and the death of her father had made that for the time impossible.

Not so Mr. Fox, who had made one more attempt, and had been repelled with scorn, and was now intensely bitter, and ripe for any villainy, which would satisfy his general desire for revenge. So matters stood with regard to their fortunes, as these two associates, after making a final, and to Mr. Fox, a pretended search for the guns, gave the project up; and Struthers, who did not like the place, suggested that they should go on board the schooner.

“Wait a spell, Henry,” said Mr. Fox, “till I give a last look in here, there’s always some hidin’ corners in these here places.” Mr. Fox was not aware how near his lie came to the truth; but he was making any excuse for delay, and inwardly cursing Carey for not keeping to his appointment, as he was getting nervous.

Struthers sat down on a bale in forced resignation, though he would have felt happier to have gone, while Mr. Fox retreated to the rear of the cavern.

Just then there was heard a low whistle, and several men appeared at the cave entrance. Struthers stood up in alarm and surprise. He was no soldier, and was unarmed; and just then he perceived that they were militia, and knew that they were after him.

Captain Carey advanced into the cave. “Is your name Struthers?” he asked, in sharp tones.

“It is,” said Struthers with some dignity, feeling that the game was up.

“Then I arrest you in the name of the King.”

“And for what crime?”

“High treason.”

“High treason?” cried Struthers. “Where is your warrant?”

“You will see it soon enough. Seize him, men,” he commanded, and in a trice they had surrounded him, and he was taken.

Just then Mr. Fox came forward, and he pretended to start, and show surprise. Indeed, in his heart, he was not over comfortable at having to be so close to “King Garge’s” soldiers.

“What do you want here?” he managed to say to Carey, as though astounded, and speaking to a stranger.

“We want you, Silas Fox,” answered Carey, coldly and relentlessly.

“Me!” said that gentleman. “Me? Ye want me?” and his jaw dropped in real astonishment and fear.

“For high treason,” continued Carey, and in spite of Mr. Fox’s indignation and entreaty, he was seized, and his and Struthers’ hands were bound behind their backs.

Struthers accepted the situation with a certain resigned philosophy. He felt that he was a sort of martyr, and considered that, after all, it only meant a few months’ imprisonment, and then he would be able to make capital for future oratory out of it all. But not so did Mr. Fox. That gentleman tried to get near to Carey so as to speak to him alone. He felt that the latter was either over-doing his part, or else was a black-hearted villain to thus treat his sworn friend and ally in this most inhuman manner.

“What—what does this here mean?” he whispered hoarsely, as Carey passed him. But the other coldly ignored his advances, and said sharply to the soldiers:

“Now men, quick march! and bring your prisoners along,” and in this manner they left the cave.

Mr. Fox’s mind was in a sad turmoil. He had given something for nothing, and was taken in his own trap. So he ground his teeth, and swore under his breath; and began to think on his latter end, which took the form, in his growing terror, of a tree, a dangling rope, and, through a sort of red mist, a man dancing on nothing, against the sky. In his desperation, he sought for comfort in converse with his unhappy companion.

“Henry,” he moaned to that gentleman, “we’s in a darn bad box.”

“We are,” answered the other, “some scoundrel has betrayed us.”

But Mr. Fox said nothing to this, for he knew who that scoundrel was, and he merely groaned. He never realized what Carey had meant when he had promised that Struthers would never suspect his connivance. But the means of prevention was what rendered him indignant. So he cursed Carey, and racked his cunning wits as he had never done before in his life, for a means of escape from this very serious and alarming situation.

CHAPTER XXIX

MR. FOX TAKES HIS REVENGE

THE more Silas Fox ruminated over his serious position, the more desperate he grew, until at last he decided that the first favorable chance he got he would make an attempt to escape, and run for it. He knew the woods well, and he had no faith in Carey; besides he had, underneath all his schemings and envyings a deadly fear of Monmouth, which had grown considerably since his last experience of the latter's original methods of dealing with offenders. Therefore, when they had reached the deeper, denser woods, near the shore, he saw what he thought was his chance, and took it. Darting to one side with a sudden leap, which took his captors by surprise, he scuttled off into the close undergrowth, and by clever, sinuous turning and windings as he ran, managed to get, for the time, out of sight of his pursuers. But he found that running with his hands tied behind him was a very difficult feat to accomplish, and his being pinioned, not only impeded his progress, but also caused him to strike against trees and other objects, in a manner to cause him some pain and serious injury.

Carey, when he had recovered from the surprise caused by this sudden bolting of one of his captives, during which he had fired off his pistol in the direction which the fugitive had taken, ordered several of the

party off in pursuit. Then there ensued a sort of hunt, wherein the militia played the part of the hounds, and Mr. Fox that of the hare, and that gentleman soon acquired a deep sympathy with the hunted creature, as he dodged and fled as best he could in his trussed condition through the forest, trying to elude his pursuers. This, as it was almost dark, he soon, luckily for him, succeeded in doing, and coming to a gloomy spot, where a tree was upturned with its great roots in the air, he fell, or rather rolled under the trunk, and lay prone, close to the ground, panting with fear and exhaustion.

The searching party scoured the woods for some time, but without discovering his hiding-place, and finally giving up the pursuit, went off, their voices gradually dying out in the distance.

As he lay panting there in his hiding-place, Silas became possessed by what had now become an absorbing passion for revenge, directed against Carey as its chief object, and planned to discover how his desire might be accomplished. He was all bruises and scratches and sore in spirit with hate and spite, and resentment at what he considered to be Carey's treachery; so that, when he had rolled himself out of his hiding-place, after the hue and cry had passed by and died away in the distance, and he had managed to struggle to his feet, he was capable of anything, even of the fiendish project he now had in his heart. His first necessity was to free his hands, which were bound together by a strong cord; but pull as he would, the cord was too strong, and he could not bring his hands around so as to gnaw it with

his teeth. He then bethought him of a plan. He sought for and found a small tree or sapling, and proceeded to cut the cord by a sawing motion up and down against the trunk. This was necessarily slow, and gave him hard labor and some pain in its accomplishment; but he was desperate, and goaded by his fears and his desire of vengeance, he persisted, and after several attempts, succeeded in cutting his bonds asunder. Then panting with weariness, and half-dead with excitement, he stole into the woodland.

He was free to carry out any evil design. He knew that Carey desired Diana Philpotts, and he now meditated robbing, certainly; perchance something worse. Almost blinded by his insane passion, he made his way in the direction of the Philpotts place, which he approached from the back. He waited for fully two hours, until, as he supposed, all would be asleep, before attempting to carry out his nefarious project. He was still stiff and sore, and as he sat against the trunk of a tree, endeavoring to light his pipe, he found that in the scuffle, he had lost all of his tobacco, though he still possessed his tinder box, and he swore bitterly when he realized this one comfort was now denied him.

Meanwhile Captain Philpotts and his wife had been spending the evening at Castle Monmouth, and Diana, who was left alone with the servants, had retired early to her room upstairs. She did not undress, but sat by her window, lost in dreams. She had not forgotten the episode of that morning in the woods, and needless to say, her thoughts dwelt upon Robert Bradford. She realized that they could never be anything nearer to

each other than they were. She quite accepted her fate to be Carey's wife; but she could not forget the other young man. It was not according to nature that she should. Leaving the window, she started to braid her hair before an old pier glass, while she dreamed her romantic, if impossible dream.

But she was not the only dreamer of the impossible that night. As the darkness drew on, a shadowy figure came across the clearing, and stood in a secluded spot under a tree, looking up at her window. It was Robert Bradford. He had got into the habit of doing this of late. His vantage ground was a long way off, but near enough to permit him to see her light. Lover-like he had discovered her room, in some instinctive way, which lovers have, and he came there to be near her, and worship her mere vicinity, and thus strive to satisfy his foolish, aching heart. He knew that a wide gulf separated them, and realized the impossibility of his love; but there he was, held by a fascination which gripped him in its power, and which not even his father's death had affected. Robert Bradford was an unusual type of young man, the product of a mingling of heredity and the influence of environment. He had a fierce and narrow, but straightforward and constant nature. He would love forever, and hate as intensely and as enduringly. He might be slow to act, but he could never change. There was a certain childish element in his character, which marked the Celtic strain in his blood. His wild life in the forest had made him what his heredity predisposed him to be, a higher order of savage.

There are certain wild creatures which can be tamed; but there are others which can only live their own natural, out-of-door life, according to the primitive laws of being; and there are certain people who can never be made amenable to, or brought under the yoke of the veneer and compromise of our modern civilization, and of this class of being was Robert Bradford. He never for a moment associated the girl he loved with her father, or the cause he represented. The history of the western European Celts shows that the constant feuds between them and their slaying of one another was not incompatible with the wedding of their daughters by the slayers. In Robert's case, it was the girl he loved, and not her social surroundings. He would have liked to seize her and carry her off away from all those influences, so hateful to him; but he was civilized enough to realize that this was quite out of the question. His forest life had made him a creature apart, and alienated him from his family. For this reason his father's death had scarcely affected him, while his sister was quite broken-hearted. Whatever effect it might have had on him later, for the time it had merely dazed him.

This night he stood for a short time, gazing at her light, which twinkled dimly from behind its blind in the small, high-roofed window, when he was startled from his reverie into the character of the true woodman, by a strange circumstance which attracted his attention. It was the sight of a man's figure which stole furtively up to the front door of the house, and began piling something against it. At first Robert thought it

might be one of the household, though the action seemed unusual and suspicious. Then, as he watched, the figure stole as softly away, and as it did so, Robert perceived that there was something familiar in the aspect of the man. At that moment a small jet of smoke and flame leaped up from the pile.

In the young man's peculiar, excited condition, his first impulse was one of indignant amazement, and he unfortunately did the wrong thing; his rage at the man's fell act blinded him to all but one idea—that the culprit should not escape. So he ran in swift pursuit, and overtook, or intercepted the fugitive just as he had gained a small clump of trees, and as he did so, saw to his astonishment, that it was Silas Fox. The latter, in his insane desire for revenge, had made a blunder in setting the fire ere he had secured his plunder. No sooner had he succeeded, than he immediately took to flight in the hope of escaping, and when he was confronted by Robert his face grew livid with fear and desperation. But Robert flung himself upon the fugitive, and grappling with him, they both fell heavily to the ground, and there commenced and continued a fierce struggle, on the part of Bradford to master and capture the incendiary, and on that of Fox, to save his worthless existence. There they rolled and fought, now one then the other getting the upper hand, when Robert, who was the younger and stronger, glancing up, saw to his horror that the whole front of the house was in flames.

He now realized his terrible error in pursuing Fox, and giving his antagonist a quick shake with his grasp

on his throat, he flung him off, and staggering to his feet, ran towards the house. Here he found to his dismay, that the smoke covered the front windows, and that entrance was impossible by the door. Calling loudly for assistance, he tore off a fence stake, and smashing a window sash, crawled in. His aim was to find the stairs which led to Diana's chamber, but the room he was in was full of smoke and dark, and when he found the door and opened it, the smoke came rushing out. His cries had awakened the servants, but they only ran shrieking out of the house, quite out of their wits, so he had still to hunt for the stairs, which he finally found. Without pausing, he rushed up, and came at last to her room, which by this was full of smoke, while the flames had begun to leap in by the window.

Rushing in, half blind and exhausted by his struggle, Robert found the girl lying unconscious on the floor. With a last heroic effort, he seized her in his arms and hurried to the door, his lungs already nearly choked. Here the smoke was so thick as almost to stifle him with its acrid fumes; but fighting his way to the top of the stairs, he descended. He now found the whole front of the house in flames, and he had to retreat to the kitchen, where after some moments of suffering and fear, he at last found the door, which had been left open by some fleeing servant. He bore his unconscious burden into the yard at the rear of the burning building, where the terrified servants and some neighbors stood paralyzed by the destruction going on.

Laying her gently down, he chafed her hands, and

called for water, but she lay still and silent as the grim night about her, both in awful contrast to the agony of the young man's fears, and the roaring fire-fiend which shot its myriad, lurid tongues out into the gloom. The women present, with much clamor and lamentation, hurried about the prostrate girl, and tried all sorts of remedies to restore her to consciousness, while the fire crackled, roared and blazed like a vast torch. But it was little that Robert cared for this or his own personal sufferings. He still knelt by the inanimate girl, until at last she stirred and moaned, and opened her eyes, and then closed them again with a shudder.

By this time, the fire had been seen from Castle Monmouth, and those there had hurried to the scene. When they arrived the horror-stricken father and mother found their home a mass of flames, and their daughter barely conscious, with that white-faced man at her side. With them came Carey and Monmouth, the former of whom having got his prisoner safely secured, was in high spirits at the success of his project, when this terrible event intervened.

As they approached the spot where Diana lay, Robert rose with a wild, haggard face, and eyes bloodshot with smoke and flame.

"She is dying, she is dying, I fear," he said despairingly.

"Who are you?" cried Philpotts sternly.

But Robert only stared wildly at his questioner without speaking.

Then the girl opened her eyes, and spoke in a faint tone, "Father," she said, "he saved my life, he saved me."

"Yes," cried one of the servants. "Mr. Bradford went up through the smoke and flames, and carried Miss Diana down here, else she'd a been burnt alive!"

They all now stared wonderingly at the young man, all save Carey, who scowled his hatred, cursing his ill luck.

"May God bless you, rebel or not," cried the impulsive father, while the mother bent over her child, and he offered to shake the young man's hand; but Bradford drew back.

"No," he said, "it cannot be; I must go; I only want to know that she is safe."

"She is very weak," answered the mother. "Can you be moved, my darling?"

"Perhaps, mother," she said; "but I think I am dying, and could I see him for a moment? He risked his life for mine."

Robert approached her. "Miss Philpotts," he asked, "are you better?"

"I don't know," she replied, "but I thank—I thank you, and could you send your sister over to me? Tell her I would like to see her."

Just then, the house which had burned to a shell, fell in with a great crash.

"You must all come over to my place," said Monmouth, leaning over Diana. "Can you be moved, my dear?"

"I think so, if you please, Colonel," and she smiled wanly up into his face, surprising a tear on that cynical cheek.

"Quick! get a litter made," he cried to his men, who

had followed him; then he looked curiously over at Bradford, who fiercely returned the glance. It was a meeting of two invincible prides, neither of which would allow itself to be conquered; but the Colonel was the more civilized, and appreciated the fine form and carriage of the young man, and even allowed for the unrelenting hostility with which those dark eyes confronted him.

The litter was soon constructed and a light blanket procured, and they placed the girl upon it and bore her to Castle Monmouth. Before she started she said to Robert, "You will send your sister, won't you?"

"I will," he answered, and as they bore her off, he turned and left the place. His chief desire now was to hunt Fox down, as he would a wild beast, and he set forth to carry this into execution. But the wily captain had vanished as completely as though the earth had swallowed him up. How he had pulled himself together and managed to reach the shore, Bradford could never understand, but when the latter reached the place where "The Scud" had been lying, she was gone, and far in the distance, in the dim moonlight, he could just see a ghost of her sail bent to the fresh night breeze.

Robert now made up his mind. This incident had made him a man. He realized at length that his father was dead, and that he was the representative of his family and its principles. He felt, as he stood there under the night, as if he had awakened from a long lethargy, and must now find his real bearings. His first impression was that he had failed in his duty in the past, in allowing himself to become the tool of a

man like Fox. He decided next that he must straighten out his home affairs, and then go and offer his services to the invading army. He never stopped to weigh the real significance of what he was doing; it was, he felt, his duty to do so. It was as his dead father would have wished, and that was sufficient for him. He loved, but he realized that he loved in vain, and his proper duty now in life was to fight, and perchance die, for his own and his father's principles. So he went home with the determination to leave on the next trip that "The Scud" should make across the water.

The next morning Diana Philpotts, who was still very low, reclined on a couch on the verandah at Castle Monmouth, and beside her, on a small table, stood a vase filled with the choicest roses from the Colonel's sacred garden. The latter, who had just picked them and had brought them for her, was now walking in meditation on the lawn, when he was surprised to see a tall, slight girl coming up the path from the direction of the Philpotts' place. She was simply dressed, but there was in her carriage and presence an air of distinction, not of the world, but akin to it, which appealed to him as he gazed with some curiosity on her proud, dark beauty.

"Is Miss Philpotts here?" she asked simply, as she met his gaze with a frankness and ease that surprised him.

"Yes, she is," he returned in his most courtly manner.

"Then I would like to see her," she answered; "I am Lydia Bradford."

CHAPTER XXX

QUEENSTON HEIGHTS

WE must now pass over several months, and come to an event in which Etherington took part, namely the most famous military event in the history of Upper Canada, the Battle of Queenston Heights, in which that distinguished hero, General Brock, laid down his life and the first great victory in the struggle for the preservation of Canada to the British Crown was won.

For some months, Etherington had attended Brock in different parts of the Province. As soon as war was declared, the Commander laid his plans to make as brave and as effectual a defence as possible. The Province was large and but thinly populated, and there was a long line of border to defend, with but few troops to accomplish this.

The American scheme of campaign, which was a clever one, was to attack Canada at three points, Detroit, Niagara, and Lake Champlain; and this plan was eventually carried out.

On July the twelfth, the American General, Hull, crossed from Detroit and invaded Canada, inviting the Canadians to throw off the yoke of England. Many of the Western inhabitants, through fear or disloyalty, accepted his offer and sought his protection; but the

United Empire Loyalists remained true; and with his small force of regulars and militia early in August, Brock in turn attacked Detroit, which surrendered without firing a gun. He then returned to York with a large store of ammunition and supplies.

During all this time Etherington saw much of his leader, and daily his admiration for him grew. He made a firm friend, too, in Colonel Macdonnell, who also lost his life in the gallant action along with his great leader.

Macdonnell was of that great clan, Donnell, a clan of martial heredity, famous in British annals; and Etherington, though his heart was forever filled with sad memories of his unfortunate love, and with worry over the mystery of his father, found time to study much; and stimulated by the friendship of these intrepid men, became once more reconciled to his military career.

All through September they were busy in the work of the campaign, which now centred itself on the Niagara frontier, and culminated in the important battle which is about to be described.

The evening before that memorable day of the 13th of October, General Brock and his staff lay at Fort George, below Queenston. He had made all his arrangements, and had stationed his small force at different points along the river, where it would do the most effective service. The Province was fortunate in possessing such a determined soldier and true patriot, both as its Civil Governor and as the commander of the troops, at this serious crisis in its history. He was, without doubt, the Wolfe of Upper Canada, equal to

the hero of Quebec in chivalrous patriotism, in that dashing bravery which counts not the cost, and in his personal influence over his followers. His career, like that of his great brother-hero and prototype, was short and glorious, and his heroic death, like the other's, marks a crisis in the destinies of the continent and renders the famous Heights of Queenston, with those of Abraham, immortal in the military annals of modern days.

The early dawn of the 13th of October broke after a night of violent storm, which blew bleakly from the northeast over the high bluffs and down the river shore. The clumps of bright woodland, with their draperies of scarlet and gold, were now almost denuded of their gallant braveries; but those heights were soon to be stained with the crimson blood of heroes, and especially with that of one whose death was to render their beautiful slopes forever memorable in Canadian history.

On the Canadian side there had been little sleep among the small detachments of soldiers and militia, scattered all too thinly along the river bank, for the air was ominous of the invader, and across the river in the distance, could be heard the sounds of martial preparations, and the tattoo of drums, all foreboding immediate battle.

The American leader, Van Rensselaer, a bold and clever general, had for several days massed his troops on the southern shore, endeavoring to make a successful crossing. In this he had been repeatedly foiled, until his troops, which had not yet had the experience of tasting the British steel, clamored for an advance,

threatening to disband if immediate action were not taken.

The evening before, Colonel Christian, with several bodies of regulars, marched from Fort Niagara, and after being exposed to the fierce storm during the night, embarked his troops; and just ere the first stars began to pale in the east, the crossing began. The first boats, says the historian, carried over six hundred men, half of them regulars, under the cover of the fire from the American batteries; and most of them effected a landing. As at the storming of Quebec, the invaders were led up a path, which being thought impassable, was left unguarded, and so gained the heights, and came out above and behind where the single cannon guarding the shore was stationed.

General Brock, the hero of those Heights, awoke that morning early, and looked on the sunrise for the last time in this world. Alert, and perchance in a fateful mood of unconscious premonition, he arose and went forth from his sleeping-place and with a field-glass, scanned with anxious eye the American shore. His first suspicion had been that an attack was intended upon Fort George itself. He was silent and watchful for a time, and Macdonnell and Etherington, who accompanied him, noticed that he was unusually pre-occupied. His compressed lips and flashing eye prophesied the coming storm, which he and they were aware was soon to strike the Canadian shores.

"They are massing their strength on some point, it seems to be this one," he said, after a pause, to Etherington, and handing the glass to Macdonnell.

“Their object is to cross, and by capturing this place, cut off the east from the west.” Then he muttered as though to himself, “Had Provost but given me leave, I would have stormed yon fort days ago,” pointing to Niagara,—“and have carried the war into their own territory, and so have prevented this. “Great Heavens, gentlemen,” he added bitterly, “here am I with a mere handful of men, and but half of them tried soldiers, to defend a whole frontier. Was commander ever so hampered? But, by Heaven! they shall not gain a footing! They shall not! Please God, we will drive them back,” he said with a fine spirit of prophecy. “See,” he added, pointing across the river in the direction of Niagara, “there is already a movement. Would that I had some knowledge of where they intend to strike the first blow.”

“How many men have they, do you think?” enquired Etherington.

“About five thousand, and we but a quarter of that number.” He paced up and down near where an orderly held his horse, then he said:

“Captain Etherington, you mount and ride down toward Newark, and you, Macdonnell, toward the Fort, and see what you can discover.”

“And you, sir?” cried Macdonnell, as though loath to leave him.

“I,” he answered, “will await you here. This is a great game of chess, and it is their turn to play. I am awaiting my opponent’s next move.”

The two young officers were now mounted.

“Gentlemen,” he said, and he looked at them with

his deep flashing eyes, "I feel that to-day is to be the day of days for us or for them. We fight against fearful odds, but it is for our land. This day will decide whether this northern half of the continent shall remain with my Royal Master or pass to those over there," and he pointed to the farther shore. "England will to-day need the bravery and wit of all her loyal officers;" he stopped and looked at them, and Etherington again noticed, as on that first morning at York, how like the lower portion of his face was to that of Napoleon. And yet how lofty and austere was the brow, and the eye with its melting, dreamy sadness! He afterwards remembered the look as that perchance which is said to haunt the faces of lofty souls, fated to die for great purposes and inevitable ends.

But the young officer could find no words to reply. He seemed to be under a spell. He had, in the weeks of their close relationship in office and camp, grown warmly to admire and esteem this remarkable and heroic man, in whose dreamy aloofness the soldier and poet seemed blended, but who, as Etherington knew, feared nothing in God's world. Now, though the young man knew it not, they were parting for the last time, and he had not a word of farewell, as, with a salute, he and Macdonnell wheeled their horses about and rode off.

The two young men had become very intimate during the last few months. "Etherington," said the other, as they came to where their roads parted, "if I fall, you will inform my mother that I died as she would have desired;—and you?"

"If I go, it will be to meet mine, I hope. I am an

orphan," he answered gravely. "But these two letters" and he took two from his breast pocket—"you will see that they are forwarded."

"I will," answered Macdonnell as he glanced at the address. "Monmouth, Colonel Monmouth," he murmured. "Pardon me, Etherington, but do you know that you sometimes remind me of that mysterious man;" and he glanced at him curiously; and the way in which he said it gave the other cause for thought, when he remembered it afterwards. But now he only smiled, and those two, both in the dawn of youth, leaned from their mounts towards each other, and clasped hands silently, each wondering when they should meet again, whether it would be in half an hour or in eternity.

"For the king!" cried Etherington as he rode off.

"And our country!" added Macdonnell, and so they parted; and Etherington often thought in after years of that gallant young Highlander, and those two memorable partings on that fatal day.

It was out of a sombre reverie, that chill autumn morning of bleak nature, denuded over night of its gaudy leafage by wind and rain, that Brock was rudely awakened by the boom of cannon and the sharp crack of musketry, away up the river shore. At the moment his eye flashed, the doubt was over, the enemy had unmasked at last. He had now become all the soldier, as he called his men, and speedily mounted:

"Quick, to the fort! Tell General Sheaffe to follow, and send my aides!" This was his sharp, short order, as putting spurs to his horse, he galloped off up the

river shore in the direction from which the sound of battle smote on the morning air.

Swiftly he rode, as though on him alone depended, as without doubt it did, the whole issue of the contest. It is known to none save his God what were his thoughts, as he hastened up those river heights to his death. Did he merely plot and plan his next move; or did Fate reveal to him in that last hour, that he was about to enoble, as has none other, the history of Upper Canada? Whatever his inward thoughts, he was outwardly all action. As he passed Brown's Point, he merely called to those on picket to have the York volunteers follow him, and passed without pausing, guided by the boom of guns and crack of musketry, to what he now realized was the pivot point of attack.

Arriving at the field of action, he rode directly toward a single cannon on the hillside, where he perceived that a company of the Forty-Ninth regiment and some militia, which he had stationed there, were commanding the heights.

Riding up in front of them, and ignoring their evident surprise at seeing him unattended, he gave the command:

"Quick, men! To the shore! To your comrades' assistance!"

As he gave the order, and the men moved forward, there came a loud cheer from the hill top, and to the amazement of both Brock and his small troop, a large body of Americans charged from above, and, driving all before them, captured the cannon. Brock now realized that if something effective were not accom-

plished immediately, the battle and the Province were lost, and he, himself, out-generalled. He paused for a moment to collect all his faculties, and to rally his scattered men, who were scarce a handful. Then, animating them by his brave spirit, he rode along their front, with a grave, determined mien, then dismounting, cried in bold, confident tones:

“Follow me, men! That gun, or death!”

Then he charged up the slope, followed by his intrepid few, and amid their fierce cheers, recovered their position, reconquered the Height, and recaptured the gun; but this was Brock's last charge. As he reached the gun, a shot struck him in the breast, and he fell, mortally wounded; and ere his brave band, who were once more pressed back by superior numbers, could bear him beyond the reach of the enemies' fire, he had breathed his last. Thus fell Isaac Brock, Canada's second military hero, and like the gallant Wolfe, in the moment of victory.

Just as Brock fell, Colonel Macdonnell, who had ridden hard to overtake his leader, arrived with the York volunteers. Closely followed by Etherington, he charged the hill, repulsing the Americans. Etherington, who was behind Macdonnell, saw him fall as the Height was gained, and was just in time to catch him in his arms, ere he reached the ground, and with brain stunned by the immediate news of Brock's death, saw with added sorrow that his poor friend was rapidly sinking.

“My mother,—you won't forget,” gasped the dying man, as his eye glazed.

“I will not,” Etherington almost sobbed, as he tenderly supported his friend. Then the other feebly clutched at his breast, but in vain; and Etherington remembered what it was he sought. It was a gold cross which the other wore, the gift of his mother, for he was of the Roman faith. Quickly drawing it forth, he held the emblem of Christianity to the lips of his passing comrade. A smile of grateful recognition of his deed came over the face of Macdonnell, and when the smile passed, he was dead.

With a choking sob, Etherington rose to his feet. He hated to leave his dead friend there alone; but he knew what Macdonnell would have had him do. His heart was filled with anguish at the loss of those two brave men; but the enemy were still pressing forward in ever-growing numbers. He missed his own horse, which was either shot or lost, but he saw the General's near at hand, and mounting, he endeavored to rally the volunteers, but with little success; and with those whom he managed to gather together, he slowly fell back in good order, carrying Macdonnell's body with him. His heart was filled with sadness and despondency. Sheaffe had failed to arrive, and with Brock dead, and the Heights captured, he felt that already the day was lost, and with it the British cause. But downhearted as he was, he did his utmost to restore some order in the scattered troops, which were now forced to fall back on the village and wait for the arrival of Sheaffe. As they did so, there was little hope in the breasts of either officers or men; for though it was then but ten o'clock in the forenoon, the battle, to the two contending forces,

seemed virtually over. Indeed, some chroniclers of the day have said that if Van Rensselaer had not been so confident, but had pushed on and brought over more men, the glory of the day would have been lost to Canada. But destiny had ordered it otherwise, and little more need be told of how, later in the afternoon, Sheaffe arrived with the famed "green tigers," as they were called, and preceded by our good allies, the Indians of the Six Nations.

This is not a history, or we might relate at some length, in careful detail, how, fired to a noble revenge by the death of their now revered general, the charge of the Canadian and British ranks swept the American host before them, and changed what had seemed an easy victory into a grim defeat. What need is there to relate what all Canadians know? Time has happily long since healed the old scars of mutual hatred, and no one now dreams that the action of that day will ever need to be repeated. Kindlier feelings and larger, more humane sentiments rule in the breasts of both peoples; and no patriotic American, whose ancestor fought for freedom, as he regarded it, at Bunker Hill, will grudge the Canadian pride in the well-merited repulse of the invader on that 13th day of October, in the year of our Lord, eighteen hundred and twelve.

Etherington, who, with a young officer, little more than a lad, a Lieutenant Jarvis, led the rallied forces of mixed regulars and militia, noticed an Indian marshalling his dusky warriors on his right, and as he drew near, recognized him as the Indian of the wood, whom he had met on that morning on the shores of Lake Erie.

The other returned his glance, and then came forward:

“Remember, friend!” he said, and shaking Etherington’s hand, went silently back to his band of followers; but the young officer was afterwards to know him as the young chieftain, Brant, the son of a noted father whose warriors were destined to have no little part in the victory of that day.

After the terrible charge, and when the victory was safely in the hands of the Canadians, Etherington, who was again unhorsed, and with a sad heart and a sore wound, was returning in the van of his little corps, heard a wounded man groan, and turning aside, saw to his surprise, that it was Robert Bradford, who lay on the ground with his head pillowed on a dead comrade. He wore the American uniform, and as Etherington drew near, looked up and asked in a feeble voice for water. In a moment, the other was kneeling with his flask, which was placed at the lips of the wounded soldier. Bradford revived sufficiently to look up, and Etherington saw that he recognized him. He had a gunshot wound in his side, and a nasty scalp wound, evidently given by an Indian.

“Can I do anything for you?” Etherington asked.

“No, I am dying,” said the young man, “and I am glad that I am, now that we have been defeated.”

“Can I make you any easier, or get you a surgeon?”

“No, I am half dead already,” the other said resignedly.

“Can I carry a message to your sister?”

“My sister?”

"Yes. I love her—do you understand?" for Etherington saw that he was sinking fast.

"Yes, tell her," he gasped, "I die hating the British; tell her that."

"I will," answered Etherington.

"You will," replied the other with some surprise.

"Yes, but you are too brave a man to hold such bitter enmity."

"You don't understand; and yet there is a girl, a girl—," his mind seemed to wander, then came back. Etherington applied the flask, and he revived. Then he motioned to Etherington to open his coat, and the latter saw that it contained a sealed packet, the one he had carried to Monmouth, but part of which was now mutilated and bloody.

"Take it," said the dying man, "it is yours, and tell my sister—tell—Diana—tell Miss Philpotts—." Just then his jaw dropped, and his head fell back. He had passed from this world of prejudices and hatreds, we will hope, into that vast love, which passeth man's understanding. But the strain upon Etherington had been too great; all grew black about him; and he reeled and fell, and knew no more.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE LOST PACKET AGAIN

WHEN Etherington recovered consciousness, it was some hours later, and he awoke to find himself lying in a darkened hut, and over him, was bending, with some anxiety of expression, the Indian chieftain.

“You better now?” he asked. “You drink this;” and he gave Etherington a cool draught of some sort, which allayed his feverish thirst, and he again fell into a sleep. When he awoke once more it was daylight, and the Indian had gone; but near his bed, which was a rude one, there sat a man, who arose and approached as Etherington essayed to sit up,

As the man came near he saw that it was the little preacher, whom he had met in the tavern in the woods. He observed also that his face wore the same kindly, thoughtful look, which had impressed him on the former occasion.

“How do you feel, Captain?” he enquired.

Etherington felt slightly light-headed, and the wound in his arm was sore, while he ached all over; but otherwise he seemed all right.

“I am better, I think,” he said; “but where am I?”

“Brant brought you here, and at first we thought that you were done for; but we got you to bed, and could find no bones broken, or wounds, except that in your arm.”

"How has the fight gone since?" Etherington enquired.

"All the Americans on our side were captured, and are being taken as prisoners to York, where, by the by, you are to go as soon as you can be moved."

Then Etherington thought of Brock's death, and of Macdonnell's, and lastly of Robert Bradford's.

"Yes, but at what a cost has it all been accomplished!" he ejaculated with a sigh.

"Brock's death has saved Canada," said the preacher; "it has stirred the Province as nothing else could. But I must leave you now, I have much to do. There are many poor fellows on both sides, who need my ministrations. Then you are to have some other visitors. I am glad you are no worse than I find you;" and he turned to go.

"Wait," said Etherington, "there was a young man with me when I lost consciousness, he had just died. He was in American uniform, but was a Canadian; I would like to know concerning his burial."

"He is by now in the trenches," answered the other. "They have been at work for two days, and friend and foe have been treated alike."

"Two days!" ejaculated Etherington.

"Yes. You have been light-headed, and you must not talk too much now. May the Lord be with you!" and he gave him a bitter drink and went out.

Etherington lay there, trying to piece things together. Three days ago? That battle now was so long over, and Brock and Macdonnell already lying in the cold earth, and Robert Bradford also. What a terrible

thing war was! Then he began to think of himself, and to feel ill once more.

Just then the door darkened, and two officers came in. They were Jarvis, the young Lieutenant, and another.

"They tell me you are better, sir," Jarvis said respectfully, as he approached the bed. "This is Lieutenant Robinson, of the York Volunteers. General Sheaffe is anxious to know how you are, as we move on to York to-night, so soon as we have buried the dead, and arranged for the wounded."

"I am afraid I cannot move yet," answered Etherington, as he stirred feebly; "but I will follow as soon as possible."

"The General has sent you an orderly to look after you, and two horses will be left, and there is a local surgeon," said the young man. "We are proud of you," he added; "your name has been forwarded with Brock's and Macdonnell's in the despatches. But we must not wear you out;" and as Etherington attempted to thank them, they saluted and left the room.

For a moment, Etherington was conscious of a slight thrill at the suggestion of the possible honor, and the promotion that might follow; but it was only momentary. His mind reverted to the death of his friends, and the sad end of Robert Bradford; and then he thought of Lydia, and suddenly, out of the midst of all this melancholy perspective, there came a memory of that packet which Bradford had given him, with the corner torn out by the bullet, and the bloody edges. Was it lost again? he mused; then he seemed to be sinking away off, down, down into a vast deep.

It seemed hours after that he looked up into the face of the surgeon, who stood with the orderly beside his bed; but he felt better.

"That draught has done him good," the doctor said. "How do you feel, Major?" he asked, bending over him.

"Major!" ejaculated Etherington.

"Yes, that is what they say now," returned the surgeon, as he rebandaged the wounded arm. "Now take your nourishment, and rest all you can, and in a week you will be able to learn for yourself at York."

Etherington was nothing loath to do as he was ordered, and in three days, he was up and creeping about, with his arm still in a splint. It was then that he enquired about the package, and was told that Brant had found it clutched in his hand, as he lay unconscious, and was keeping it for him, until he was in a condition to receive it.

The day he left, the chief sent him the packet; but as Etherington gazed at it again, with the now dried stains of the young man's blood on its ragged corner, he had not the heart to open it. He did not feel strong enough to face what of dire import might be contained therein, so placing it in his breast, he mounted his horse, and accompanied by his orderly, took his way to York. It was not until he reached the inn, where he was to stay to eat and rest, that he had gained enough courage to open it, and satisfy his curiosity. He was still weak and nervous, and the long strain of doubt had affected him. In addition to this, the tragic manner of its

coming into his hands, stained as it was with the blood of the brother of the girl he loved, lent to the packet a sinister significance, which appalled and repelled him, and gave him a feeling that there was something to reveal, a secret into which, perchance, he had better not probe too deeply.

In this spirit, twice on the way, he had been on the verge of destroying the packet, or casting it into the deep, tortuous torrent, which his road had skirted. Now, however, his better sense predominated, and he saw the necessity of not delaying any longer an examination of its mysterious contents. So, ordering his meal in a private room, he waited until he had eaten something, and was somewhat rested, ere he took it out and laid it on the table.

Cutting the fastening, he found that there were three enclosures; first, the Governor's letter to Monmouth, which had been opened and read; this he put aside to forward to the latter. The second was another, marked private, and this he opened, to find inside another smaller packet, closely fastened and sealed with red wax, and addressed to himself, in his father's handwriting. This, with the other communication from Gore to Monmouth, was more damaged by the gunshot and the blood, than the outside wrapping; but Etherington opened the Governor's letter, which was very short, and merely stated that the enclosed was from his old friend, Colonel Etherington, and was to be delivered to his son, after his death, at as late a date as possible, providing that he should receive it before he left Canada, or went on any perilous expedition, and

requested that he, Colonel Monmouth, would kindly deliver it into his hands before he left the vicinity. He added that he was ignorant of the purport of this message from the dead father to the living son, but that he was sure that Colonel Monmouth would be a sympathetic friend to the young man, who seemed to be cut off from any relations, that he was aware of.

Turning from this communication Etherington picked up the other, and with trembling hand, broke the seal and opened the inner packet. It was, or seemed to be, a more lengthy statement, and coming from his dead father, it was with a certain awe that he started to peruse it, or what of it he could decipher, for nearly one-third of the paper was destroyed.

It was dated at his father's chambers in London, and what remained legible, was as follows :

My Dear Son,—When you read these words, I will be no more, and you will, I hope, be more inclined to forgive my long delay in discovering to you the mystery concerning myself and my—(here the paper was mutilated, and the words destroyed) “married your mother she knew of my—” “but not all!” “This has so affected my whole life since I—” “that you should not suffer as—” “decided that in the New World where—” “could with honor wear the name—or win it for—” “where a man's ancestry is not so—” If you are, however, determined to know—are, you can verify this by writing to Sir——”

This was all he could decipher, the rest of the letter was totally illegible. It seemed to the young man as he sat there staring at those blood-stained, torn fragments, that some strange fate had decided that he should be left in doubt as to this important matter, and that that influence was connected with Lydia Bradford. There was just enough of the communication left to show that his surmise was correct, that there was some mystery surrounding his father's origin, and that it was one, which, in his opinion, made it imperative that his son should cast in his lot with the future of the New World. But what that mystery was, though he might surmise and imagine, his loss of the packet, and the bullet which had ended Robert Bradford's life, had put it most likely forever beyond his power to solve.

Who, he wondered, was this "Sir Somebody," who could give him the details? He was baffled, and deeply disappointed at the mutilation of the document. He would now go all his life with an unsatisfied longing to know the truth. So he brooded, and brooded in moody silence, cursing his evil fate, which had, in a sense, cut him off from his kind. But after a while, he thought of the girl, who had so much to do with all this, and it suddenly came to him, with a sense of self-reproach, that here he was, thinking of his own miserable affairs, and all the time, her brother was dead, and no one, perchance, to break the news to her.

If he were alone in the world, cut off from his kind, how much more was she, with only her mother; and a feeling of shame overcame him that he had not thought of her before. Starting up, he put aside the fatal

packet, and called for writing material. Then after much trouble and misgiving as to the most delicate manner of breaking the sad news, he wrote Lydia Bradford an account of her brother's death, and of his having been with him in his last moments. He softened the harsher aspect of his death, and to his surprise, found himself speaking of the young man's bravery and intrepid character, until his final bitterness, as pronounced against the British, became, in Etherington's consciousness, a kind of virtue. He again thanked her, and said somewhat more by way of attempt at consolation; but he was silent concerning himself, his wound, or his feelings toward her.

This letter he sealed, and kept until he should get a chance to send it to its destination, when he arrived at York, and so felt easier in his mind that he had been able to perform, at least, this sad kindness for her and hers.

When he had completed the letter it was quite late, but calling his man, he again set off, and late that night, rode under the moonlight into the streets of York, and went to his old quarters.

CHAPTER XXXII

CAREY DISCOVERS A PORTION OF THE TRUTH

WHILE the war, though it reached and passed its crisis at Queenston Heights, went fitfully on, with more or less loss on both sides, life did not stand still for those who were left behind at Castle Monmouth and Bradford's Cove.

Colonel Monmouth marched with his militia; and accompanied by Carey, was in several engagements in the Western Peninsula. Then, when the worst of the trouble was over, for the time being, he returned home; and Carey, who desired to push his suit, and was not over-eager for active service, went with him. He claimed to be anxious for the protection of that special locality, and Monmouth, who saw through the young man's character and motives, acquiesced in a cynical silence. But there had been a great change in the settlement. Captain Philpotts, who as a militia officer had dropped his building operations to hasten to the border, was again hard at work preparing to erect a new house, and while Monmouth was absent, his wife and daughter had accepted the latter's hospitality, until their new house should be habitable.

Diana, though never really strong, had quite re-

covered her former health, and a true friendship had grown up between her and Lydia Bradford. Of this Carey disapproved, as detrimental to his own plans with regard to Diana. Both girls were interested in the war, though their sympathies were so widely different; but they mutually avoided the subject, and they managed to see each other as often as possible. Etherington and Robert were not mentioned, each keeping her own secret, as she thought, in her breast; and both silently grieved, though in different ways, when it was known that Robert had gone off, and joined the invading army. The one who knew of his intention suffered the feeling of a sister, and of one who had acquired a saner vision of the whole matter of late, and would have preferred that her brother should have held aloof, though she was satisfied that he had done what his instincts led him to do. The other, when she heard of his departure and his purpose—and she gleaned it from a quarter not favorable to his action—only went in spirit, and realized how much her heart was given to this man, whose act now only made the breach between them wider. She, however, clung to the sister, and grew to love her, and the other also developed a strong affection for the frank, sweet young girl, whose character gave the lie to all of her former prejudices. If Lydia read the girl's feeling for her brother, in any of her acts or confidences, she kept her own counsel, as she also held secretly in her own heart, her regard for the young officer, who was opposed to her brother in the deadly strife, which seemed to her to place a bar between those who otherwise might have been of one kin.

Colonel Monmouth found himself strangely attracted to this proud, dark girl, whose flower-like beauty was chastened by a cold reserve which he found it difficult to overcome. She, at first, was very distant in her manner toward him, when she came to visit Diana. Her father's recent death, and his strong prejudice against this remarkable man had affected her; but the more she saw of him and his home, the more she had to admit that her people had not done him justice; although she realized that there was something about him, which set him apart from others—a lofty pride, the superficial observer would have called it. But this girl, who had been close to nature, read by intuition, the presence of a great sorrow or tragedy, which clouded his life, and which he outwardly cloaked in an air of gallant courtliness or cold cynicism. She soon discovered two things—that he detested Carey, and that he had some inkling of her interest in Etherington. This last discovery made her shy of meeting him, as she would rather have died than have this man aware that she gave the young soldier a passing thought. She never mentioned his name; Monmouth had done so casually once, but the manner of the girl's reception of his words prevented their repetition.

One day, when she had come over, he had invited her into his rose garden, and was both surprised and pleased at her warm appreciation of its beauty, while she, on her part, got a better conception of his nature. There it was that each got an inkling of the other's secret, which brought about a mutual respect; and the beautiful young rebel, as he called her, and the cynical old

recluse, while they never would agree on politics, in secret grew to admire each other.

Thus time went on, until something happened, which broke up this social truce between loyalist and rebel. This was the arrival of two letters: The first was Etherington's to Lydia, announcing her brother's death; the other was one from the Naval authorities to Captain Philpotts.

Etherington's letter Lydia read and re-read, at first with dry eyes and terrible despair; then she thought of her mother, and of how it would affect her. They had had no word from Robert save a short note, announcing his intention of joining the American army. In view of his silence they had hoped that he had been unable to carry out his plan, and Lydia was still in her heart cherishing this hope, when this letter came as a death-blow. After a terrible half hour alone, she at last roused her courage and broke the news as gently as possible to her mother. It was two hours afterwards that the latter, scarcely able to grasp the terrible truth, and going, as was her wont, automaton-like about her household duties, hearing a rap at the door, went herself, and confronted Diana Philpotts, in all her delicate, girlish loveliness and happy youth.

"Miss Philpotts," she said in a heartbroken voice, "God help me, my son is dead,—my son is dead!"

The girl's face had at first a look of vague wonder, as she gazed up at her, then somewhat of the truth flashed upon her. "Dead?" she asked, "dead?"

"Yes," the mother sobbed, "he was killed in the big battle;" but as she said it, all the color fled from

the girl's blushing cheeks. There was a bitter cry, and Diana fell like one dead, at the elder woman's feet.

"Lydia," the mother cried; "child," as Lydia entered, "come quick! I fear we are not alone in our trouble."

Lydia and her mother between them bore the young girl into the spare room, and then she gradually revived, and seeing the other girl alone, crept into her arms, and sobbed as though her heart would break.

Word was sent to Castle Monmouth that Diana was too ill to come home, and all that night the two girls lay locked in each other's arms. She stayed there a whole week, and then returned to her home; but she was greatly changed. The happy young girl had vanished, and she had awakened to the fact that her heart was in a far away grave.

Meanwhile, Carey had returned, and had not been able to see her alone, although he was very assiduous. She seemed to be always over at Bradford's, and when he at last got private speech with her, he received no satisfaction. She seemed to have aged, and he read something in her eyes, which revealed to him her secret. But he was desperate. He had had trouble with Monmouth, and knew that he could not stay there much longer; and he resolved to know his fate finally, as soon as possible.

The other letter which affected the fortunes of the settlement announced the recall of Captain Philpotts to active service, and his promotion to the rank of an Admiral.

"It has come very unexpectedly," he said, as he

broke the news to Monmouth, "but his country never called Jack Philpotts in vain."

"This place will seem very lonely without you all," the Colonel said.

"Why not come, too?" cried the new Admiral.

"Never! I intend to die here." This was said with a tone of finality which brooked no answer.

A month later, when the wild autumn stormed over forest and shore, lonely and alien, Monmouth walked his grounds alone; for the Philpotts family, all save poor unfortunate Tom, who had joined the militia as a private, had departed; and Carey, who had once more tried his fate and been repulsed, this time finally, as even he realized, had also left to join his regiment.

But before he went, there was a scene between the two men. Carey was now more than desperate. He had gambling and other debts, and was feverishly anxious to discover how he stood, he had even the audacity to search for what he suspected to be his uncle's will. In his search, however, he came across other papers, never intended for his eye, correspondence which startled and confounded him, and showed him that he had been duped all along, and that he had been kept in ignorance of a remarkable mystery. But the day he left, he had been drinking more wine than was good for him, and he grew reckless and spiteful over his bottle.

"Who is that fellow Etherington, Uncle?" he asked sneeringly, as he faced the latter across the table.

"What do you mean, sir?" demanded Monmouth in tones that would have warned a soberer man.

“Why, only that I suspect he is a mere nobody, you know, just a fellow of no origin.”

“How do you know that, sir?” and the questioner’s face darkened and hardened ominously.

“Why,” returned Carey, “I have been enquiring in England, and—and—that is, they say that he is——.” Here he paused, for there was a look on the other’s face which cowed him. There was silence for a moment, while the elder man looked at the younger, then he asked sarcastically:

“Would you like to know who Captain Etherington really is?”

“Well, well, the truth is, sir, they say that no one knows,” answered Carey, with a silly attempt at a smile, which failed miserably.

“Well, I can tell you,” the answer came cold and quiet.

“You, uncle!”

“Yes, but I don’t think you will benefit much by the information. He is my heir!”

The glass which Carey was holding fell, and rolling to the ground was smashed, spilling the wine over the table. He was sober now.

“My God! uncle, are you mad?” he cried, as he started to his feet; “your heir?”

“Yes, my heir! The man who is to inherit all that I am possessed of. Now are you satisfied?”

The young man stood up. He was as pale as ashes, and a pitiable sight. “But, uncle, what of me? What of my grandmother; the family?”

“The family!” and there was a bitter sneer, that

destroyed the handsome lines for the moment on the other's face. "The family have lived long enough on me and my poor misfortune. Now, sir, you have had my last word."

"But, uncle!"

Monmouth rose to his feet, and the veins were swollen on his forehead. "Never dare to use that word to me again," he said sternly, "I am no uncle of yours."

"Not my uncle?"

"No, not even of your blood. Now leave me; go." And there was a look on his face, which told the other not to delay his departure. This then was the mystery. But as Carey rode away from that place, he had but one over-ruling desire, and that was to kill Etherington.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE DUEL

ETHERINGTON had arrived at York, worn and disheartened. He had received a terrible disappointment in the mutilated packet, which had reached his hands in so tragical a manner. He had not even admitted so much to himself, but the desire to know the truth concerning his father, had affected him more than was good for him; so that the disappointment, with the realization of the utter hopelessness of his love and the deaths of Brock and Macdonnell, had combined to make him a sad misanthrope. Though he performed the duties assigned him, yet he seemed to take little interest in life. Not even the gaieties of the old Capital could wean him from a melancholy habit he had fallen into.

Though he was still a young man, yet he was gradually coming to feel as though he had lived his life, and had done with the hopes and ambitions of human existence. As time went on, and he got no reply to his letter to Lydia Bradford, though he had never really expected one, the fact of her silence accentuated the reality of the impassable barrier which separated them.

Late in the autumn, he received news of the departure of the Philpotts family; and soon after, his mournful inaction was destined to receive a shock.

He had been invited to a mess dinner, and though he would rather have stayed away, Jarvis, with whom he had formed a certain friendship, rising largely out of their mutual reverence for Brock, had advised him that it would seem strange and cause talk were he to absent himself. "For the truth is, Captain Etherington," he added, "Captain Carey has just come to town, and is speaking in a strange way of you, and your absence from a dinner when he is present, might be misconstrued by those who do not know you."

Etherington's pride was roused at this with indignation, and wonder at the cause of Carey's intense bitterness, and he determined to be present, though an unpleasant feeling that the other meant mischief occupied his mind.

Etherington arrived in company with Jarvis and Robinson, and when the dinner was served, quite a number sat down. He was surprised to find that Carey, by some unfortunate accident, was his vis-a-vis.

The latter did not speak to him, and Etherington noticed that he looked careworn, and drank much, and seemed even more quarrelsome and insulting in his manner, than formerly. He saw also from the first, that, for some reason, Carey was determined to be nasty to himself, as he began to throw out innuendoes, which while addressed to others were, he knew, levelled at him. Etherington determined, if possible, to avoid any open encounter, on account of his feelings for Monmouth, whom he regarded as the young man's uncle; so he took no notice of Carey's occasional jibes and sneers, and addressed his conversation to some

others who were near him. However, Carey, who had come for the express purpose of picking a quarrel with Etherington, waxed more insolent as the evening progressed, until at last, carried away by his seeming failure to "draw" the other, he rose in his place, and, excited by his potations, proposed the toast of all traitors and rebels, and coupled with it, in an intention of insult, the name of Captain Etherington. He was about to resume his seat, when a glass in the former's hand, whizzed across the table, and struck him in the face, cutting his cheek, while the wine spilled all over his cravat.

In an instant there was an uproar, all present rising to their feet. Etherington stood where he was in silence, but feeling his whole body tingle with indignation, being carried quite beyond himself; while Carey, whose face was pale with passion, cried out that he would have his life, and attempted to draw his sword.

It was plain to all present, that Carey had acted from the first with an intent to insult, and then challenge the other; however, the company was broken up, and the men's friends kept them apart, and got them home to their quarters. Here Etherington sat by the fire with Jarvis and Robinson, awaiting the challenge, which he knew was sure to ensue, although the custom of duelling had greatly declined as a fashion.

In half an hour, there came a loud knock at the door, and Carey's friend entered. Captain Carey, he said, in insolent tones, would be pleased to meet Captain Etherington at the Don Valley, or where else he pre-

ferred, the next morning at daybreak, if he did not care to send an apology for his recent action.

Etherington's friend, on his part, refused the apology, and accepted the challenge, choosing the shore near the mouth of the Don and either swords or pistols—it was immaterial to their principal. Pistols were chosen; then Carey's second, a fierce bully of a fellow, departed, and Etherington had time to ponder on the gravity of his position, and make those preparations customary to those who are about to imperil their lives. Near dawn, by Jarvis' advice, he lay down to try and snatch a little rest, while the former, who stayed with him, did likewise.

It seemed that he had slept only a few moments, when he was awakened by his companion, to find the first faint glimmer of dawn stealing in at the pane, and was brought back to a realization of the deadly encounter, which was ahead of him. He did not fear death—he had seen too much of it of late; and life, as he viewed it, appeared in no roseate hue. He had no one who would grieve if he fell; but the thought of his going out in cold blood, to shoot, or be shot, in a vulgar, personal quarrel, repelled him. All the time he was thinking this, a hundred other jumbled fancies were running through his mind; meanwhile, he was up and making preparations.

The night before, he had made all arrangements with Jarvis, in case he fell. His letters were few; one to Monmouth, explaining all, and expressing his sorrow that such a thing should have happened. The longer one, to Lydia, told his love, and expressed the idea that

it was just as well, as he had long realized that she could never feel for him as he felt for her. The writing of this letter gave him intense agony, and it was with the feelings of one who signs his own death sentence, that he closed and sealed the letter, and placed it where Jarvis would find it if necessary.

There was little said between the two men, though each felt keenly the situation; and Jarvis could not but admire, and yet pity his companion, who he knew, from his own reticence and the hints others had let fall, was virtually alone in the world.

“Carey is a scoundrel, Etherington,” he said, as he examined his friend’s pistols, “he must have some great cause to dislike you. It is said in the mess, that he is like a crazy man, and is forever saying that he will finish you. I would be careful that he does not play some nasty trick, and if you can, hit him hard. He has no real friends save that brute, Johnson.”

“Were it not for the nature of his taunt, I would refuse to fight him,” answered Etherington; “but the insult was too gross. No British officer will silently submit to be called a traitor. I detest duelling; but I could not in this case withdraw with honor. As it is, it must go on; but I believe that he has some hidden sinister motive.”

“I think you are right,” said Jarvis, “and that you are compelled to fight; though they do say that he is a wonderful shot. But I will set you right with the authorities, whatever happens.”

“Thank you,” returned Etherington, grasping the other’s hand, and wondering at the man, who was little

more than a lad, having so much knowledge of life. "You have been a good friend to a lonely man, and if I cannot, I pray God may requite you."

They then got their things ready, and went out into the early dawn, which was gray and gloomy and chill over sky and earth. There was no one astir, and as they threaded the streets, the village seemed silent and deserted, as though it were an abode of the dead. Passing the gray, low, wooden houses with their small windows and tiny panes, which stood at intervals along the street, wrapt in quiet, they after a bit came out along the lake shore, where there was a fringe of marsh, and the river Don emptied its turbid waters into Lake Ontario. The first flush of dawn was rosy in the east, when they reached the appointed place—a desolate stretch of grass and sand on the shore near a clump of decayed trees, one of which resembled, in Etherington's mind, an old world gallows tree. There was a cold, lonesome wind stirring, and it rustled the grass, and woke those dead branches into an eerie song, like that of the witches in Macbeth. Neither young man cared to utter a word, for both were anxious to finish that for which they had come, and leave that place and its ill associations behind.

They had waited about five minutes, when two muffled up figures appeared in the distance, and Carey and Johnson approached. Carey, who was ghastly pale, and with his cheek black with a plaster, where Etherington had cut it, kept apart, and paced to and fro, evidently excited, while his second came forward, and made the necessary arrangements with Jarvis. His

manner showed that he had been drinking, and he was in a blustering mood. "Your man has an apology, I suppose, Jarvis?" he blurted out as he came forward, but ignoring Etherington, who stood apart, gazing at that desolate landscape, and wondering what would be the end.

"No, certainly not!" answered Jarvis shortly and coldly.

"Then," said the other brutally, "you had better place your man, for Carey is waiting to shoot him."

"Don't be too sure," answered Jarvis, "but let us get to work."

In a few moments, the principals were facing each other, pistol in hand; but Carey was so excited that he could not keep still. He had been drinking; and Etherington caught the look on his face as he fronted him there on that bleak sand, and it was more the countenance of a fiend than of a man.

"I don't want to unnerve you, Etherington," Jarvis whispered as he placed him, "but that man is a murderer. Were I in your place, I would not wait too long before I fired." As he spoke, Carey broke out in horrid oaths.

"Make haste, or I will shoot anyhow," he cursed. The truth is that he was after all, in reality, a coward; and in spite of his being a clever shot, the sight of Etherington standing there so cool, collected, and silent, unnerved him, and he was blustering to keep up his courage. Yet he was determined to kill the other man if he possibly could.

"Are you ready?" shouted Johnson. Each man, at

the word, stood straight, pistol in hand. There was a short grim silence. Etherington, did he live, would remember to his dying day, that bleak shore, that lonesome dawn, with its ruddy, cold fires, those moaning trees, and the living hate in the face of the man who fronted him. Then there came the words, "One, two;" and before the word "three" was uttered, there was the quick report of a pistol, and Etherington felt the world slipping away from him. Then he knew no more.

CHAPTER XXXIV

ETHERINGTON DETERMINES TO KNOW HIS FATE

WHATEVER else happened that grim morning, Etherington was told afterwards by Jarvis.

He had been horrified at the action of Carey, who had rushed forward vindictively toward the fallen man. But Jarvis drew his pistol. "Keep back or you are a dead man! You fired too soon, and if he is dead you are a murderer!" he cried sternly.

"Is he not dead? Is he not dead?" almost screamed Carey, as the surgeon, who had been delayed and came just in time to see Etherington fall, knelt beside his body.

"No, he is not, there is a chance for him," said the surgeon.

"Not dead? Not dead?" shouted Carey, with a face in which the gray insanity of an intense hate was shadowed. "You don't tell me he is not dead? Not dead! Just my cursed luck!" and with a horrible oath he shook his fist at the prostrate man.

"Dr. Henderson," said Jarvis, "I want you to witness what I say. See Captain Etherington's pistol has not been discharged. Captain Carey fired before the signal was given, and I proclaim him a scoundrel and a murderer."

But with a fiendish look on his face, and a curse at his ill-luck, Carey turned, and, followed by his brutal companion, left the field; and here he leaves our story. He returned to his regiment; but his reputation, and the account of his dastardly act followed him, and this, with his debts, forced him to retire from the army and go to the continent, where, long after, he died in obscurity.

Etherington lingered for days, on the verge of death, and for weeks after, was dangerously ill. When he came to himself, it was long days before he could realize what was happening about him. Then one afternoon—it was now winter—he woke from a sleep to see a form leaning over him.

“Do you know me?” a voice said, and Etherington, with the first effort toward interest in life, recognized Monmouth. From that time on, he gradually recovered; but it was well toward Spring before he left the house, and wrapped in robes, drove in a low sleigh through the quaint Capital. As he recovered, Monmouth, who had taken rooms at York for the winter, would come each day to his quarters, and take the young man for a drive; and when Etherington would protest, he would say:

“You have suffered enough from my connections. It is but right that I should try and repay you for the injury that scoundrel has done.”

This was the only reference to Carey that he ever made, though Etherington saw much of him, and, despite his peculiarities, admired him for those noble qualities which lay underneath. Monmouth, Ethering-

ton soon discovered, was one of the few most remarkable men in the Providence, and greatly sought after in the social world; but he entered it as little as possible, keeping his visits chiefly for Government House. He maintained at York, as at home, a sort of dual personality. He would call for Etherington, on some days, to take him for a drive, wearing a rough buffalo coat, with a wisp of hay tied about his waist, and a rude cap to match, and so apparelled, would go with a perfect indifference, past fashionable equipages. Then, the same evening, he would perchance appear at Government House, at a ball, accoutred in the most fastidious dress, and with all the air and distinguished grace of the Court of St. James.

In many of his rounds, he persuaded Etherington to accompany him, and introduced him to many fair belles, who were very complaisant to the elegant, if slightly melancholy young invalid; but no face which he saw appealed to Etherington as did that of Lydia Bradford, and Monmouth startled him one day by saying in his cynical manner:

“They are fine, are they not? But there is not one, is there, to compare with that proud young rebel in my country?”

Etherington said nothing, but he suspected that Monmouth had probed his secret.

One day, when Spring had come, and the ice was breaking up in the rivers, and the snow had wasted under the warming sun, Monmouth came to his rooms, and announced that he was going home. “I’m going back to God’s country,” he said, “away from all this,

where I can be alone with myself, and the vast spaces, away from all this folly and chatter, and strife and intrigue, and when you are weary of it you may come, too."

"And what should I do there?" asked the young man, though inwardly he knew his heart was ever there; then he said, "I have applied for leave, and when I get it, I may perchance come and see you in your vineyard."

"Do," said the older man simply; "you will always be welcome."

The next day, Monmouth and his factotum left York, and Etherington was left to his own devices and cogitations. But a new idea was gradually forming in his brain. He would retire from the army, and settle in Canada. He had had enough of the Old World, and the life that Monmouth led appealed strongly to his imagination. Why not be happy in his own way? So he determined to go, and make an attempt to see the girl once more, and know his fate; then if she would have nothing to do with him, the whole world was wide for a lonely outcast wanderer until the end. This was his plan. He had twenty thousand pounds and his commission, a mere bagatelle in aristocratic England; but, as he realized, quite a large fortune in the Province, where as a retired officer, he would be entitled to a fair grant of land.

He thought this all over, and as the Spring drew on, and youth and life called once more to him, from out of the spaces of air and earth and sun, this dream took firm possession of his heart and brain. But there was one great fear with him, always holding him back,

that she would never forgive, never forget, the past, and all her ideals and prejudices, and the tragic deaths of her father and brother.

Toward the end of May, he was one afternoon debating this over, for, it seemed to him, the hundredth time, when his man brought him a letter. It was from Monmouth.

“When are you coming?” it ran, “or have you deteriorated from your high ideal, and proposed to one of those official belles of Muddy York? Not that there are not some of them very attractive and captivating. I don’t believe it, if I know your better self. This war will soon be over, and I am anxious to restore peace to this remote region over which I rule. I have only one obdurate rebel who refuses to acknowledge my supreme authority, namely your fair captor. Could you not come and use your influence to heal the breach? If not, I give you fair warning that I, even at my age, will be driven to do something desperate in that quarter myself. You can ride, or get a passage from Newark (not on “The Scud”). Did you hear that my old friend, Philpotts, had won a victory, and is to be made a baronet? More’s the pity! as that poor sot, Tom, has got himself married to a common wench in this neighborhood. Such is the irony of fate. My roses are in bud already, and almost as fair as a certain young lady of Bradford’s Cove. I will hope to see you by this day two weeks at the latest, or you will have lost the confidence and good will of your friend and well-wisher,
George Monmouth”

This epistle Etherington read through with a beat-

ing heart. Something told him there must be hope, or Monmouth would not have written him so strongly upon the subject. He rang for his man.

"Tom," he asked, when the man entered, "how are the horses?"

"Never in better condition, sir."

"Well, get them and all else ready for to-morrow. We are going to pay a visit to Colonel Monmouth;" and as the servant withdrew, he read somewhat in his master's face, which he had not seen there for some time.

"Lord a' mercy," he said, "something's going to happen. He's woke up at last, he has."

But Etherington sat there, and gazed at that letter, and saw once again, in memory, the dark eyes and beautiful proud face of Lydia Bradford.

CHAPTER XXXV

ETHERINGTON CHOOSES

IT was once more late spring in the lake region, and earth and air were filled with the hope and joy of renewing life, when Etherington set out from York for Castle Monmouth. He and his man had taken the road by easy stages, lying over night at Newark, and coming on from there over the same road travelled by Etherington on that memorable June day the year before.

At the inn in the forest, he found his faithful, hard-worked woman acting as hostess, with the assistance of a slatternly girl; but the men, she told Etherington, had gone to the war, and had not yet returned. She gave her guest of the best of her rude and meagre hospitality, complaining of the change made by the troubles, and of her fear that the country would be ruined by the neglect of farms and all business by the men, who were engrossed by the continual struggle. She also received with profuse thanks, the generous fee which he offered in return for her services. Then, in a vague dream, he continued his journey, under woodlands and by great marshes, and along the edges of cliffs, where, ever and anon, he got a distant glimpse of shining water or hazy headland. So he travelled on,

and at last came, late at night, into the yard at Castle Monmouth.

There was a great baying of dogs, and a man appeared and took their tired horses, as they dismounted, and moved toward the door. Just then Monmouth came out, and gave the young man a cordial greeting. He was attired in his usual careless fashion, which sometimes bordered on eccentricity, but he appeared to be in his brightest mood, and chaffed the other about the evident strong attractions which had caused him to linger so long at the Capital.

But Etherington noticed that he looked older, and that under all this assumed gaiety there was a sad look, as of one who brooded much in solitude, and carried a secret burden of some sort. Now, however, he received his guest with a welcome which made him feel as though he had arrived at home.

"I have been expecting you," he said, as he led the way into the front of the house, and rang for water and other necessaries for the comfort of his guest, "so I delayed dinner. You can serve in ten minutes, James," he said to the man as the latter went out.

In a short time they were seated at the table, and Etherington, though worn by his journey, felt happier than he had been for some months. Monmouth seemed to have lost his usual cynicism, and with brilliant flashes of wit and humor, related reminiscences of his past life at the courts and in the camps of Europe; and by his general tone of friendship and kindly interest, woke in the younger man's mind a desire to make this remarkable man, who showed so unusual an

interest in his future, his confidant. So, in a pause of the conversation over their wine, he found himself unbosoming his secret regarding his father, and relating the whole of the facts, as he knew them, ending with the recovery of the package, and its mutilation in so tragic a manner. Monmouth heard him out, to the end, in evident interest; then, when he had finished, he looked at him steadily for a moment, as if trying to gauge the strength of his character, then asked in grave tones:

“Are you really determined to solve this secret?”

“Is it not a natural desire?” returned Etherington.

“If you are so determined,” said the other slowly, as though weighing each word, “it may surprise you to know that I am the only person on this continent who can gratify your curiosity.”

“You?” cried Etherington, in amazement.

“Yes,” continued Monmouth gravely, and still watching the other to see the effect of his words; “but it will be a knowledge for which you will pay dearly. It will, when gained, if indeed I know your character, stand between you and all the happiness and hope of this world, and wreck your life,” he added significantly, “as it has mine.”

“Listen to me,” he said, speaking with more serious feeling than Etherington had ever known him evince, “listen before it is too late,” and he leaned forward toward the young man: “I was once like you, young, happy, hopeful, and on the road to a great military career. I was the light-hearted gay friend of men who

since then have reached high places in the civil, military and political life of the Empire; like you, I trod suddenly on the edge of a mystery. Would to God I had let it pass, that I had allowed my fatal curiosity to die in its first yearning for what instinct should have warned me, was a fatal knowledge! But like you, I persisted; when suddenly, one terrible day, I discovered what I had longed to know, and from that day to this I have not known one hour's peace or true happiness. It has wrecked my life, destroyed all my former ambitions for what might have been great achievement, and embittered my nature.

“It was in the Low Countries that this fatal answer to my quest came; and when the awful significance and utter hopelessness of my position had lost its first effect, and I could at length collect my faculties, I lost no time in making my plans. I sold my commission, and fleeing from the life of the Old World, I buried myself out here in these vast wilds, in the vain hope of regaining that old simplicity, that one-time carelessness, which I had lost. But all has been in vain. With what I know, life to me is nothing, nor am I anything to life. I am like one cast away. I have tried everything to forget my position in the common cares and every-day vocations of my fellow-men. I have toiled like a blackamoor, I have performed the most menial offices, I have literally for days, yea, months, earned my bread by the sweat of my brow, I have been in turn, axeman, cook, and attendant to common laborers. I have done all this in order to forget, and feel as other men feel, but all in vain. Here I am, apart from the great human vortex,

from all that may lend a zest to the ambitions of natural men. Dynasties may rise and fall; kingdoms may pass from hand to hand, like wine decanters; battles may be lost or won, but I neither know nor care.

“Look on me as I now am, and then choose. Shall your fate be this of mine? Or shall it be that other, which you are even now dreaming? I have brought you here to save you from yourself, from that which I have become and endured. Deny yourself this one curiosity, and you gain love, life and happiness with a woman worthy to be a queen, your equal, your mate in every respect, your superior in the experience and heredity necessary to battle with the New World conditions on this continent. Deny yourself this, and you win a future, and perchance, honor and achievement. What if you remain in ignorance of your origin! Thousands on this continent know not, and care not who their grandsires and great grandsires were. It is true that to you this means immeasurably more; but this is the one sacrifice that Fate asks of you.

“If you refuse, you will lose what I believe to be more than life—your love for a good woman. I can say no more. I have told you what no other mortal could have drawn from me. Why I do this for you, I cannot say. It is a part of the mystery, which I had determined should die with me. If to-night you decide to risk all, and become as I am, you alone shall know all which it is my doom to experience; and believe me, there is a kind of misery in this world known to a few, but which is more acute than the common woes of mankind. I would save you, I repeat. The world knows me only

as a cynic. It suspects all sorts of things; but for the world and its opinion, I care not.

“Now what is your answer?” He stood up as he asked this, and confronted the young man with a fixed, questioning gaze.

But Etherington was silent. Never in his life had he been so astounded, and so at a loss what to do. His strong desire to know what this secret was which overshadowed him, overcame him for the instant, as it was natural it should. He also was not a coward, and he had no dread of entering the state of self-banishment described by the other; but he firmly believed all that Monmouth said, and between him and this shadow of his possible fate, stood the picture of Lydia Bradford. She whose personality had drawn him to this was the one woman in the world for him, and love conquered. He would give up all else, he would cut himself off from all that pertained to the Old World. He paused for a moment ere he answered; then he said:

“Tell me nothing; I have chosen; I am content.”

“You have chosen as I hoped you would,” said Monmouth, “and you have proved your right to know one thing—you are my nephew.”

“You, my uncle?”

“Yes, that is all I can say. But before we close this subject forever, let me command you, do not delay. Go to-morrow to that girl, she will save you; she will do more for you than I can ever do. She has the magic power of youth and love and hope of the New World to lead you out of the shadow and the mystery, the terrible fate which overhangs so many of those of a

certain strain of Old World heredity." Then he opened the door. "See," he cried, "there are the stars and the vast night. As they have given me peace, so will they help and sustain you!"

And with a strange feeling of release, of comfort, Etherington went out into the night to dream of Lydia Bradford, and to ponder on this strange danger, from which she and his desire to possess her, had saved him.

CHAPTER XXXVI

ETHERINGTON DECIDES HIS FATE

IT was a beautiful day, and early in the forenoon of that morning in the latter end of May, when Etherington went forth to know his fate from the lips of the girl he loved.

The tragic problem of the preceding night seemed to roll off from him, and to recede into a vague mist, and all earth teemed with life and youth, and the early promise of summer, as he went along the woodland path that ran across the Philpotts place in the direction of Bradford's Cove. Monmouth, or his uncle, as he must henceforth know him in secret, had excused himself after breakfast, and advised him to take a walk, and he had not delayed in taking advantage of the hint.

As he went along, he began already to plan out what he should do, how he should make the place his home, and make his influence felt here in the wilderness. All his old despondency had departed, and hope and expectancy had taken its place in his consciousness.

When he arrived at the Philpotts place, he saw that a rude hut now occupied the place where the house had once stood, and as he went past, a bold-faced, stout, young woman came to the door and shouted.

"Tom, Tom, you beast, come here!" but there was no answer; only from the angle of a rude rail fence, there issued a loud snore, where Etherington perceived that a

man lay. It was the possible future baronet, Sir Thomas Philpotts, who lay dead drunk, while the possible Lady Philpotts cursed him in inelegant terms, from the door of his primitive cabin. Such, thought Etherington, was the irony of aristocratic fate, in its struggle with the idiosyncracies of pioneer conditions, and he made a wide detour, so as to avoid this social tragedy in its adolescence.

But he had little thought for such matters. He soon came to the shore, and so went on under "leafy miracles of glorious May." Birds sang on the branches about him, and in him the lover sang an exquisite lyric of joy. After a while, having followed Monmouth's directions, he struck the path which ascended from the shore, and proceeding up it, ere he could realize the great happiness that fate had given into his hands, he came face to face, as Diana Philpotts had done, with the girl he was seeking. And there those two stood, he surprised and ardent, hopeful and doubting; and she, exquisitely beautiful, but filled with conflicting emotions. Each looked into the other's eyes; and each read there that old, eternal, yet ever new dream, which youth and love inherit by a sort of innate magic on a Spring morning.

She also had not been free from ponderings and misgivings, and maidenly sighs and grievings, all those months. Life had been very bountiful to her during that eventful year, and Lydia Bradford had learned much; and among those lessons, a great charity had grown up in her heart. But the final fillip given to her distrustful pride was administered by Diana Philpotts, ere she left for the Old World.

It was the day before she departed, that having by then got accustomed to speak of Robert's death with composure, she had startled Lydia by asking to see Etherington's letter once more before she went. Then she turned on her friend suddenly: "Why, I read something in this letter which you seemed to have missed."

"What's that?" questioned Lydia.

"That the writer loves you!" she returned with decision.

"What mean you?" and it was Lydia's turn to rival the blush-rose.

"Why, I read it in every word and line."

The other said never a word, and her friend returned the letter and took her departure; but her words sank into Lydia's soul as a great wonder, which had expanded into an expectancy, which now had its culmination.

They stood looking at each other, she first red, then pale. Then he seemed to read the signs for which he had dared hope, for he went forward and took her hands.

"Miss Bradford, Lydia," he said, "I have come for you. I could not keep away. Will you—will you be my wife?"

Her eyes continued to look into his as he came nearer, and she whispered, "Yes," as he took her in his arms, and kissed her lips.

It was some moments ere either could recover from their emotion, then she gently withdrew from his embrace.

"You cannot escape me now, my beautiful rebel," he said, as he again kissed her.

Come," she said, laughing demurely, "I am no rebel;" and she took him up and showed him the place where she had hidden the guns.

"And it was you who did that!" he exclaimed, looking at her in astonishment.

"Yes," she said. Then a remembrance of all she had suffered, and of her present great happiness overcame her, and the tears started in her eyes.

"You are taking a great responsibility," she said, "in marrying me."

"I am aware of it," he said. "We will here begin the great compromise, on which alone life in this young country can last. Do you now hate me, and my king, and my Colonel Monmouth?" he questioned, half-seriously, with his arm about her.

"I was wrong," she answered, almost in a whisper, as they left the cavern. "I did not understand; but," she added, "neither did you."

"No you were right," he said, "you spoke the truth, and to me half your beauty is in your truth."

And he took her hand, and together they went down that glad, morning path, in their youth and their love, emblem of the young nation that was to be; and there let us leave them.

THE END

