



THE  
YOUNG  
PURITANS  
OF  
OLD  
HADLEY



BY

MARY P. WELLS SMITH





CLC A1699.752



THE YOUNG PURITANS  
OF  
OLD HADLEY.







"Submit, thou canst ne'er guess what I have to show thee!"

Young Puritans Series.

---

THE  
YOUNG PURITANS  
OF  
OLD HADLEY.

BY

MARY P. WELLS SMITH,

AUTHOR OF "JOLLY GOOD TIMES; OR, CHILD LIFE ON A FARM,"  
"JOLLY GOOD TIMES AT HACKMATAK," "THE  
BROWNS," "THEIR CANOE TRIP," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY L. J. BRIDGMAN.

BOSTON:  
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY.

1914

*Copyright, 1897,*  
**BY ROBERTS BROTHERS.**

**Printers**  
**S. J. PARKHILL & Co., BOSTON, U.S.A.**



DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY

OF

My Father,

DR. NOAH S. WELLS,

*On this his birthday, in loving remembrance of my debt to his influence and training. Himself a descendant on both sides from the old Puritan stock, and of a strong historical and antiquarian bent, his true stories of the olden time (often told him in his boyhood by actors in the scenes described), not only were a constant delight in childhood, but were among the strongest influences that bent "the twig" as the tree's inclined.*

AUGUST 7, 1897.



## PREFACE.

THIS is the first attempt in the writer's knowledge to depict the life of Puritan children for young people. While a fascinating task, it has been one not without its difficulties. Two hundred years ago, the sayings and doings of children, instead of being watched, chronicled, and quoted as now, were little considered. That "children should be seen and not heard," was a repressive maxim rigidly enforced even in the childhood of many New Englanders still living. Reference to children is but scanty and incidental in the records of the old Puritan times.

But child nature is essentially the same in all ages and climes, save as modified somewhat by surrounding influences. The tale of the two bad boys who cried, "Go up, thou bald head," to Elisha, to be speedily and fitly devoured by "two

she-bears," was doubtless inserted in the Hebrew narrative of centuries ago because there were Hebrew boys then and there needing such an admonition. We feel the kinship of the Puritan boys both with those of Elisha's time and the boys of to-day, when we read in Sewall's diary such incidents as these:--

The boys of Boston, in 1662, "seeing Capt. Breeden in a strange garb, made an outcry from one end of the streets to the other, calling him a Devil. The people came out of their houses to see what was the matter." And one April first Sewall records, "I have heard a child of six years old say within these two or three days that one should tell a man his shoes were unbuckled (when they were indeed buckled) and then he would stoop down to buckle them; and then he was an April fool."

Not only child nature but human nature is practically the same in all ages. Despite their grimness, there was plenty of human nature in the Puritans. True, they were "heaven-bound." As Cotton Mather said, "Great numbers merely took New England on the way to heaven." The near, constant, felt presence of God, and it must be added, of Satan also, lent solemnity and gloom to

lives of necessary hardship and toil, lived with such intensity of moral and religious earnestness as the world has seldom elsewhere witnessed. "Duty was the object of life, and the Bible its rule," truly says Douglas Campbell.

Yet the Puritan had a very human relish for creature comforts (witness Sewall *passim*) when they could be enjoyed with a clear conscience. Nor was he devoid of the ordinary passions and feelings. Then, as now, life was softened and brightened by home love; the tender, self-sacrificing love of parents for children, the affection of children for parents and each other; by the all surrounding beauty of nature, in which the grateful heart saw God's special love and care for His children manifested; and by the joy that comes of energy, devotion to an aim, the consciousness of power successfully used for worthy ends.

"Not as the flying come,  
In silence and in fear; —  
They shook the depths of the desert gloom  
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

"Amidst the storm they sang,  
And the stars heard, and the sea;  
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang  
To the anthem of the free."

This story may be said to be true, in that it is closely based on historical facts. May it help make more vivid to the children of to-day the hardships endured by their forefathers and foremothers in the settlement of this country, as well as their devotion, high aims, and religious zeal!

MARY P. WELLS SMITH.

GREENFIELD, MASS.,  
August 7, 1897.

## CONTENTS.

---

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. TRAVELLING THROUGH THE WILDERNESS . . . . .	1
II. ALONG THE BAY PATH . . . . .	14
III. A NIGHT IN THE WOODS . . . . .	32
IV. THE JOURNEY'S END . . . . .	43
V. A MYSTERIOUS STRANGER . . . . .	59
VI. A PURITAN SABBATH . . . . .	72
VII. THE SCARLET GEWGAW . . . . .	89
VIII. ON MOUNT HOLYOKE . . . . .	103
IX. THE BEAR . . . . .	116
X. THE BOUND GIRL . . . . .	125
XI. THE BEWITCHED CHILD . . . . .	144
XII. GRANNY ALLISON TO THE RESCUE . . . . .	159
XIII. THE JAUNT TO SPRINGFIELD . . . . .	170
XIV. SHOPPING IN SPRINGFIELD . . . . .	182
XV. SUBMIT AND THE POPPET . . . . .	201
XVI. SUNDRY ROISTERERS . . . . .	222
XVII. GOING TO THURSDAY LECTURE . . . . .	239
XVIII. HUNTING FOR THE BAY MARE . . . . .	259
XIX. THE GREAT BURNING . . . . .	273
XX. UNWELCOME GUESTS . . . . .	290
XXI. WINTER IN EARNEST . . . . .	301
XXII. THE DAME SCHOOL . . . . .	312
XXIII. FOREBODINGS OF WAR . . . . .	330





# THE YOUNG PURITANS

OF

## OLD HADLEY.

---

### CHAPTER I.

#### TRAVELLING THROUGH THE WILDERNESS.

“**H**OW much farther must we journey to-day, father?” asked Prudence, from her seat on the pillion behind her father, as they plodded along the Bay Path through the woods, westward.

“Art weary, child?” asked her father, glancing back, not untenderly, at the small gray hood whose top he could barely see over his shoulder.

“Yea, father. It will gladden me when I can get down from the horse. The path is so rough it jolts me, and my side acheth.”

“Prudence is more of a baby than little Abigail. She doth not complain,” called back John, who rode before his father, driving two cows and some oxen.

“My son,” said John’s mother, “speak not unkindly to your sister. This hath been a toilsome

jaunt through the wilderness, e'en for older folk. Prudence's arms are but short, and 't is wearisome clasping her father and jolting over the rough path all day long. Pruda hath been a brave little maid ever since we left Old England."

Prudence's tired face brightened, and her heart felt warmed and comforted, as she heard her mother's words, and, looking back, caught her loving glance.

"In truth, little Abigail hath forgot her troubles," continued the mother, looking down on the four-year-old child she carried in her arms. "She hath fallen fast asleep from weariness."

"And Nathan noddeth, and would tumble off the horse, did not my arms make a stout fence about him," said the father.

Nathan, a sturdy boy of seven, on the horse before his father, rubbed his eyes at this, and said:

"I am not o'er sleepy, father, but I am sore hungry."

"My children," said the father, "we must bear without murmuring these lesser trials. God, of His great goodness, hath been pleased to bring us safely thus far on our way through manifold perils by sea, and in this vast wilderness, filled with cruel savages and wild beasts, He hath led and sustained us. To Him be the praise and the glory!"

"Amen," said the mother, with a reverent upward look.

But Prudence, at her father's words, looked fearfully into the woods each side the narrow path. The sun, low in the west, sent but a few lingering, broken rays sparkling in her eyes through the overhanging tree branches that brushed against her as she rode. Dark shadows began to gather in the depths of the silent, solemn forest.

Prudence said nothing, for she would not have John think she was afraid, John, who was fourteen, and thought he was a man because he carried a snaphance like his father. But her heart beat so fast and hard that it seemed as if her father must feel it even through his thick doublet, and she clutched him more tightly. Yonder huge boulder overhanging their path — how easy for the savages to hide behind it, and spring out upon them!

Hark! Did not her strained ears catch a rustling sound among the leaves? An instant more, and a fox, startled at the strange sound of hoofs in his woodland haunts, darted across the path and disappeared beneath the thick underbrush.

“Ha!” exclaimed John, raising the clumsy musket swung across his saddle and aiming it, but too late, “had not Sir Fox been so spry, I'd e'en have had his yellow skin for a cap.”

“Thou need'st to be spry thyself, John, and alert, too, now thou hast come to dwell in the wilderness,” said his father.

“Have no fears, father,” said John confidently ;  
“thou shalt see.”

It was only when they were about going on shipboard that John had become the proud owner of one of the new firelock guns, called snaphances, bought by his father in London. Few were the boys of his age in England that owned a snaphance, and that John knew right well. It was with a longing for adventure that he penetrated the wilderness. He almost hoped the Indians would attack them.

“I would slay them e'en as my Grandsire Ellis smote the king's brave troopers, hip and thigh, at Marston Moor, in the good times of Cromwell. My father should see that I am fit to bear a snaphance,” thought John to himself, as he replaced his gun with loving care.

Reuben Ellis, his wife and their four children, had left their home in England, unable longer to endure the hardships imposed on non-conformists since the Restoration. Twice had Goodman Ellis been dragged from the conventicle to a prison for worshipping God in the fashion that seemed to him the truth ; a fashion he proposed not to yield even at the cost of his life.

Like many another Puritan, his thoughts had begun to turn towards the new settlements in America, as the promised land into which God was leading his afflicted people. The outlook in

England for the "Fanatiques," as the Cavaliers scoffingly dubbed them, grew constantly darker.

Meantime, letters from friends who had ventured into the American wilderness strengthened the growing resolve in Goodman Ellis's heart to forsake his native land, and cast in his lot with his brethren across the wide Atlantic. Quietly converting as much of his possessions into money as he could, leaving the rest in care of faithful kinsfolk, bringing only a few necessities, he and his family had embarked on the good ship "Lyon," landing, after many weeks of weary sailing, at Boston.

Now they were journeying along the Bay Path to Hadley, where Ellis had decided to settle, influenced by urgent letters from his cousin Philip Smith, one of the "engagers," setting forth the fertility of the meadow land, and the many inducements to join the Hadley brethren in up-building a Christian settlement in the desirable valley of the Connecticut.

Although the country at this time — the summer of 1674, the year before King Philip's war — was at peace with the Indians, it had been felt prudent to abide in Boston until a little party of twenty persons was collected who wished to travel the Bay Path, and who would be company and protection for each other. At Quinsigamond Pond several had left their company: Daniel

Gookin, Thomas Prentice, and others, who hoped to begin a settlement in that beautiful spot, then unbroken wilderness.

John and Prudence were old enough to enter on this new life with all that fresh enjoyment of novelty peculiar to children. In the streets of Boston they had seen their first Indians; and strange enough had these wild denizens of the forest looked to their English eyes. Prudence could not shake off the impression of fear and aversion she felt at sight of them.

When near Quinsigamond Pond they had seen their first Indian village, and here her impressions had been more agreeable. For the natives here being praying Indians, disciples of John Eliot of Roxbury, had proved most friendly. Indeed, in the opinion of the children, one of the pleasantest parts of their journey had been this stop over night at Pakachoag Hill, where the fresh fish and game, which the Indians were glad to sell for some of the wampum beads with which their father had carefully provided himself in Boston, had been a delightful change from their coarse, dry fare.

Several of their travelling companions would leave them at the new settlement of Quabaug, but Nathaniel Warner of Hadley, who travelled post to and from Boston, the chief link between the isolated settlement and the outside world; Mr.

Peter Tilton, who had been down to the Bay on weighty business of his own and the plantation's; and four soldiers bound from the Bay for Hadley, would travel with them to their journey's end.

The narrow path, originally an Indian trail, hardly a foot wide (for the Indians always travelled in single file), had been widened here and there by felling trees or clearing away underbrush, so that horses could pass through, but so narrow was it still that two travellers could not ride abreast. The little procession filed along singly, two soldiers leading it, and two bringing up the rear.

As the twilight shadows began to deepen, above the plaintive cries of the whip-poor-will they began to hear the "boom, boom," of a frog chorus, and presently, through the trees, they saw dimly glimmering a sheet of water, and soon came out on the shores of a large pond.

"We must be nearing Quabaug," said Goodman Ellis. "An I mistake not, this must be the pond which we were told lay near that plantation."

"Yea, Goodman Ellis, thou art right," said one of the soldiers. "This is Quabaug Pond. I thought we should reach here before shutting in, but we have travelled but slowly. Let thy wife and little ones be of good cheer. We shall shortly be under the shelter of a friendly roof. Sergeant

John Ayres keepeth here a comfortable ordinary, where we may tarry and refresh ourselves."

As they stopped to let the horses and cattle drink from the pond, John exclaimed, —

"Father, I see a light through the trees!"

"Art sure, boy?" said his father. "I see nought."

"Yea. There, I see it again, high up, as if on a hill," said John.

"The boy is right," said Nathaniel Warner. "That is the light from Sergeant Ayres' ordinary, which is strongly built, and standeth on a height, for greater security in case of an Indian attack. Sometimes the thick waving branches hide it from our sight. But we shall soon reach the plantation now."

Soon all saw plainly the twinkling light which John's sharp eyes had been the first to discover.

The tired travellers were cheered and comforted by the glimmer of this light, proof that they were nearing a settlement of friends, the only settlement of whites in the wilderness they were travelling between the Bay and the Connecticut. With fresh courage they urged on their tired horses, and were soon climbing the hill where stood the little cluster of possibly a dozen small houses which made Qua-baug settlement. The sentinel, already pacing up and down the grassy street, was quick to catch the sound of horses' hoofs, and when, through the



gathering darkness, the first horseman was dimly seen ascending the path, presented his gun, calling :

“Stand! Who goes there?”

“Friends and brethren in the Lord, from the Bay and Old England,” answered the soldier.

The travellers were warmly welcomed by the isolated settlers, whose only glimpse of or news from the outside world was given by the occasional stopping of parties of travellers along the Bay Path. Friendly hands lifted down Nathan, stumbling with sleepiness, and Goodwife Ellis and Prudence, so stiff with long jolting over the rough path that they could hardly stand.

“Give me the babe, friend,” said a strongly built woman, who looked both kind and resolute. “Thou art sore weary, methinks.”

“Yea, thou art right. I am unused to journeying so long through the woods. We are but freshly come from Old England.”

“From Old England? Then thou art doubly welcome, for 't is long since we have had letters, and no doubt thou canst give us late tidings of our brethren there, who are sore beset by persecution,” said Goodwife Marks.

“Yea, lewdness and idolatry prevail there more and more,” said Goodwife Ellis, “and threatenings and slaughter are breathed out daily against God's people.”

Goodwife Marks escorted Goodwife Ellis and her

children into the ordinary, while Sergeant Ayres, Corporal Coy, and others of the men helped the travellers tether their animals near the inn, where they fell eagerly to cropping the wild grass growing thickly in the clearing.

Although it was June, the night air in the woods was so damp and cool as to make most cheerful the sight of a bright blaze in the great stone fireplace, extending almost across one side of the common room of the ordinary. On the huge crane over its brightly burning logs, Goodwife Marks, aided by other women of the settlement who had come in to help as well as to see the new-comers, had swung a great iron pot, and presently the savory odor of bean porridge and of fish fresh from the pond broiling on the coals, sharpened appetites that needed little whetting. When this food was placed on the table, with coarse rye and Indian bread, milk for the children, and home-brewed beer for the older folk, supper was ready.

But before the company seated themselves around the table, they stood reverently, while Mr. Tilton in a long prayer gave thanks to God who had guided them thus far safely on their way, craving His further mercies.

As Mistress Marks stepped briskly about, serving her guests, Nathaniel Warner said jokingly, —

“Hast had any encounters with the savages of late, good Mistress Marks?”

“An I hadst, I would do my duty, and that thou knowest full well, Nathaniel Warner,” replied Mistress Marks, with a snap of her black eyes.

She lifted the trap door, and went down cellar for more milk. While she was away, Nathaniel took occasion to tell the Ellises, —

“Being strangers in these parts, thou mayst not know how valiant our women folk can be in a strait. Goodwife Marks here was left alone in the garrison house one day, her husband and the other men having gone to the meadow to work. She saw Indians that she deemed unfriendly, lurking in the woods, designing, she thought, to fall upon the garrison house if they found it unguarded. Nothing daunted, she put on her husband’s wig, hat, and greatcoat, shouldered his musket, and marched up and down on top the fortification, crying ever and anon, like any sentinel, ‘All’s well! all’s well!’ The enemy retreated, not daring to attack the fort, thinking it well manned.”

“That was bravely done,” said Goodman Ellis.

“I doubt I could do such service,” said Goodwife Ellis, “unless the Lord strengthened the feeble knees.”

John looked with added respect at Goodwife Marks, as she emerged from the cellar with a pewter basin of milk, and then took from the table the wooden trencher so quickly emptied, to pile it high again with bread.

“Verily, the first time I ever heard of aught good coming from periwigs,” said Mr. Tilton.

“Art telling that tale again, Nathaniel Warner?” asked Goodwife Marks, with flushed cheek. “Methinks ’t were as well to let it rest. I did but my duty. ’Tis no matter for vain glory, or idle speech.”

“I some time since found it against my conscience to wear a wig, and have abandoned the practice, as contrary to nature, and doubtless displeasing to the Lord,” said Goodman Marks, addressing Mr. Tilton, whose good opinion he desired, knowing him to be one of the most worshipful assistants of Hadley plantation, a judge, a deacon, and a representative to the General Court.

“’T was well done,” said Mr. Tilton. “Our godly preachers at the Bay have delivered sundry weighty discourses of late against the pernicious vanity of periwigs.”

“Methinks ’t is but a poor time to discourse of periwigs,” said Goodwife Marks, who seemed little oppressed with awe of dignitaries. “The heavy eyes of these little ones show that they should be in bed, and I trow, Goodwife Ellis, thou wilt not be sorry to stretch thyself upon a couch again, e’en if it be not a bed of down.”

“Worshipful Mr. Tilton, wilt thou return thanks?” asked Sergeant Ayres.

Again all stood while Mr. Tilton returned

thanks at some length. This was no empty form. The helpless handful of people in the wilderness felt comforted after they had placed themselves under God's protection for the night, and craved His guidance and care for the future.

Goodwife Marks took Goodwife Ellis and the little girls up the rude, ladder-like stairs into the loft overhead, where were two beds for the women. Such extra bedding as the house afforded was spread on the floor in the room below for the men.

Nathan, sleepy as he was, looked longingly after his mother as she followed Goodwife Marks away. But he thought stoutly to himself, —

“I must not be a baby, like Abigail, now I have come to live in the wilderness. Father saith I must begin to be a man now. Perchance, by and by, I too can have a snaphance of my own, like John.”

He lay down on the floor beside his father and John. The soldiers, rolled in their blankets, were already snoring loudly. The bed of coals in the fireplace having been buried in ashes to keep fire till morning, the room was left in darkness. Without was the steady tramp, tramp of the watch, to and fro.

“’T is good to sleep under a roof again,” thought Nathan, as, comforting himself with visions of the gun he hoped to have some day, he snuggled closer to his father, and fell fast asleep.

## CHAPTER II.

### ALONG THE BAY PATH.

PRUDENCE was awakened in the morning, first by the bright morning sun, whose long rays streamed in at the curtainless windows full in her face, and secondly by her little sister, who was amusing herself by climbing over her, pulling her, and saying, —

“Wake up, Prudence. Wake up, and play with Abigail.”

“Hush, Abigail,” said Prudence, but smiling as she met the bright, roguish eyes of the little one, “thou wilt waken mother, who needeth rest so sorely. Be quiet, and sister will dress thee, and we will slip down stairs and out for a look at this strange place whither we came in the night.”

Quiet as the children tried to be, their mother wakened, for those whose minds are heavy with care sleep lightly.

“I will dress Abigail, mother,” said Prudence. “Thou need’st not hasten. ’T is yet early.”

“But we must start betimes, for it is yet two long days’ journey ere we reach Hadley,” said the mother, hastily rising.

"Dost think we shall truly reach Hadley to-morrow night?" asked Prudence.

"Yea, if it be God's will, and His mercies fail not, we shall see our new home to-morrow."

"I long greatly to see it," said Prudence.

It took but a short time to tie the strings of the children's few and simply made garments, and then Prudence helped Abigail down the steep stairs into the common room below.

The men were up and out long ago, a big fire blazed in the fireplace, and active preparations for breakfast were going on. Some venison frying over the coals smelt most inviting to the children, as fresh meat of any kind had been such a rarity, both on the long voyage and in their journey from Boston, and Abigail stopped, saying:

"I want my breakfast, Prudence."

"Little girls should not ask for breakfast till they are bid," said Goodwife Marks, briskly. "Go out doors now, and I will warn you with the conch shell when the breakfast hour has come."

The girls found their brothers out among the cattle and horses, John helping his father saddle the horses, and bind various packs and bundles on the animals' backs. Nathan had made friends with a big brown and white dog, who seemed as pleased with Nathan as Nathan with him.

"Come and see this goodly dog," said Nathan.

"It mindeth me of England to see a dog again,"

said Prudence. "'T is the first we have seen since we left Boston."

"That is a hound," said John. "He is gentle; see how he suffereth Abigail to pull his ears; yet he is brave, and a famous dog for hunting, young Goodman Warner saith."

"Dost wish for a dog?" asked young Eleazer Warner, who was helping Goodman Ellis. "I can give thee a hound, the mate to this, if thy father is willing."

All the children looked eagerly at their father, and his deliberation seemed long to them, before he said, —

"I judge a dog cannot fail to be useful in the wilderness. I accept thy gift, Eleazer, and thank thee for it."

"A good dog is almost equal to another man," said Eleazer.

John went off with Eleazer, and soon returned down the grassy lane between the houses, leading a young hound, who leaped and bounded around his new master as far as his strap allowed in most friendly fashion.

"What a goodly dog!" said Prudence. "It gladdens me to have a dog of our own. What shall we call him?"

"His name is Watch," said John. "Here, Watch, Watch!"

Watch frisked up to John, wagging his tail.



"Watch is part my dog," said Nathan.

"He belongeth to us all, doth he not, John?" asked Prudence.

"Yea," said John, "but I shall take him hunting with me, when I go out in the forest with my gun."

"It will be prudent to lead him by the strap until he becomes wonted to thee," said Eleazer. "But he liketh young folk, so he will shortly follow thee of his own accord. Small blame to him for liking such a fresh young English maid as Mistress Prudence," added he, pinching Prudence's round cheek, which bloomed forth from her close gray hood as freshly as an opening rose.

Prudence cast her eyes shyly down, her cheeks blooming a deeper red, while her father said severely, —

"Eleazer, thou speakest as the foolish ones. Vain words profit little."

Here, somewhat to Eleazer's relief, a loud blast on the conch shell gave the welcome call to breakfast.

At the table, many inquiries were made of Reuben Ellis about the brethren in England, and he in turn asked, —

"Is danger apprehended from the savages about you?"

"Those about us, of the Nipmuck tribe, profess friendliness," said Sergeant Ayres; "but we hear

rumors of trouble feared from King Philip by the Plymouth Colony. In truth, I trust none of them farther than I can see them. 'T is always prudent for our settlers to be watchful."

"The Mohawks sorely disturb the peace of our plantations on the Connecticut," said Mr. Tilton. "They full oft kill our cattle and swine in the woods. We have lately sent a complaint to their chief sachem at Albany, demanding reparation for these damages. They molest our friendly Indians, the Norwottucks and Pocumtucks, who ofttimes come into our plantations for protection from these enemy Indians, and become sorely burdensome to our good housewives."

"I can well believe that, good Mr. Tilton," said Goodwife Marks. "Gladly would I be free from the grievous trial of having these greasy savages lying about the fire in our kitchens."

"It would be an ill policy to offend them, nevertheless," said Sergeant Ayres, "so our good women must needs submit with patience to this trial, Goodwife Marks."

"We housewives have oft and sore need of patience here in the wilderness, and that thou wilt soon learn, Mistress Ellis," said Goodwife Marks.

"I came not into the wilderness as one on a pleasure jaunt," said Goodwife Ellis.

Breakfast over, Reuben Ellis paid Sergeant

Ayres for their entertainment with sundry strings of wampum beads, saying, —

“This seemeth but heathenish money, in place of good English shillings.”

“It serveth better our purpose here in the wilderness,” replied the sergeant, “for otherwise we must depend solely on bartering. English shillings grow not on the bushes hereabouts.”

Two processions now started away from the door of the ordinary. The travellers for Springfield took the path in that direction; while those for Hadley took the branch of the Bay Path leading through the present towns of Ware and Belchertown.

The Quabaug settlers stood, shading their eyes to watch the travellers out of sight, bidding them friendly good-byes, with many a “God speed ye.” In happy ignorance that another summer would see Quabaug deserted, its houses blackened, smoking ruins, Sergeant Ayres, Corporal Coy, and others slaughtered in its defence, the travellers journeyed on into the woods, much refreshed by the good night’s rest in its friendly shelter.

At this early morning hour, the forest was no longer sombre. Its cool shade was a pleasant shelter from the sun’s rays, which only glanced in here and there, flecking mossy rocks and tree trunks and the grassy path with waving, changing spots of brightness. Sweet odors of pines and

hemlocks and ferns, and all the moist fragrance of the woods, made breathing the pure air a delight. Overhead the birds sang joyously, untaught as yet to fear man.

The travellers felt the bright influence of the morning, and Goodwife Ellis, looking up into the branches of an overhanging maple where a robin red-breast was pouring out a flood of music, said :

“The fowls of the air are making merry in their hearts unto the Lord this morn.”

“What bird is that, mother ?” asked Prudence.

“I know not,” said her mother. “It resembleth our English thrush, methinks.”

“E’en the fowls of the air admonish us of our duty,” said Mr. Tilton. “Let us too uplift a song of praise to the Lord, as we journey on our way.”

He struck up the seventh psalm.

“Oh Lord my God, I put my trust  
and confidence in thee ;  
Save me from them that me pursue,  
and eke deliver me.

Lest like a Lyon he me tear  
and rend in pieces small ;  
Whilst there is none to succor me,  
and rid me out of thrall.”

All, even the soldiers and children, joined in the psalm, whose melody rang cheerfully through the aisles of the forest, and lightened the Puritans’

hearts with a comforting sense of God's nearness and protection.

John, who took turns with his father in alternately riding or walking to drive the cattle, was now walking, leading Watch. Nathan too had begged to be allowed to walk, to be nearer Watch, who seemed rather depressed in spite of Nathan's attentions, plodding on soberly enough at John's heels.

No rapid progress could be made by such a party as this, hampered by children and cattle; so her mother readily assented when Prudence asked, —

“May I get down and walk a piece with John?”

To walk was often found a welcome rest during a long day's jaunt on horseback.

“Suffer me to lead Watch now, John,” said Prudence.

“We are so far from Quabaug, I will e'en venture to take off his strap,” said John.

Watch showed his delight at regaining his freedom by circling wildly around and around the children, barking loudly, ending by jumping up so violently on Nathan as to knock him down.

This made little Abigail laugh, from her perch high up on the brown mare before her mother, and she begged, wriggling to get down, —

“Let me walk too.”

“No, little one, thy short legs would soon weary,”

said her mother. "Content thee to ride here with mother. At the nooning, thou too canst play with the dog."

Their path now ran between a swamp and a high hill, and here a lovely sight greeted the eyes of the travellers. Mountain laurel bushes in full bloom bordered the swamp and gleamed up the hillside among the tall trees, their shining green leaves and silvery blossoms a novel sight to English eyes. No wonder little Puritan Prudence was so delighted that she cried, —

"See, mother, see the brave show of blossoms! They look like little silver cups, hanging on the bushes. I will gather some for thee and Abigail," she cried, plunging into the bushes.

"Yea, the blossoms are most strange and beautiful," said her mother. "But have a care, child, how thou leavest the path. The wilderness aboundeth with huge serpents, we hear, some with rattles in their tails that have a mortal sting. And 'tis commonly reported that there are lions here too. Have a care."

"I will only gather those beside the path, mother," said Prudence, so absorbed in her flowers that she hardly heard her mother's warning.

"I have a root of the snake-weed in my pouch," said Nathaniel Warner. "If one bite on that as soon as stung, 'tis said to work an effectual cure. But 'tis well for the little maid to be prudent.

We know not what wild beasts may lurk under the bushes."

At this, Prudence withdrew rather suddenly into the path, her hands full of the flowers.

She had thrust a few blossoms into the front of her dull blue gown, and she said joyously, —

"These blossoms have no sweet odor, like the wild roses that grew so plentifully near Boston. But they make the woods look full gay, as if it were a May day."

Her father frowned.

"Talk not of pagan feasts, child," he said. "We have come into the wilderness to leave behind these unlawful days and seasons, displeasing unto the Lord. Nor shouldst thou bedeck thy person with blossoms. It betokeneth a tendency to vanity and light-mindedness that I look not to see in thee."

Prudence looked ashamed, and hastily pulled the flowers from her breast. But Mr. Tilton, regarding the little girl benevolently, said, —

"Goodman Ellis, we must e'en make allowance for the weakness of the female heart, which ever craveth gewgaws while in a state of nature. And Prudence is but young yet."

"True, and therefore would I begin now to train her up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Satan ever watcheth to ensnare our youth," said Goodman Ellis. "Come now and mount behind

me, Prudence. I would not have thee o'ertire thyself. And I see we approach a rivulet."

The path in advance was seen descending into the bed of a small river, whose swift current ran shallow now, in the summer heat. The horses and cattle splashed through the ford, but Watch swam out into the deeper places, making the water fly all about in a sparkling shower as he shook himself on the farther shore.

The sun, overhead now, shone down directly on the travellers, while the surrounding woods kept off whatever breeze might be stirring in the open. The air was close and sultry, and the heat grew oppressive.

"I warrant thou findest the summer heat more torrid here than at home, Goodman Ellis," said Mr. Tilton, as he saw Ellis remove his heavy, steeple-crowned hat to wipe his forehead, dripping with perspiration.

"Yea, in troth," said Goodman Ellis. "But the fires of persecution and the everlasting torments of hell are hotter far than New England's sun, and these fires we trust to escape by venturing hither."

"Thou speakest words of truth and soberness," said Mr. Tilton.

"It is the noon hour," said Nathaniel Warner, "and, if I err not, we draw near a fair spring, a favorable spot for our nooning."



But now every one's attention was attracted by Watch, who showed great excitement, sniffing the ground, running forward, then back to John, and seeming to try his best in dog language, to tell him something.

"The dog scenteth something; a wild beast perchance," said Nathaniel Warner, hastening to take his gun in hand, ready for instant use, as did the other men. Prudence, with fast beating heart, clutched her father more tightly, while Goodwife Ellis pressed little Abigail close in the mother arms that were so helpless, even with all her strong love, to shield her child.

They were drawing nigh the spring, which was on a hillside, in a thick cluster of bushes deep in the dense shade of the forest. Below was an open space, an old Indian clearing probably, near the spring. Watch ran towards the spring, barking violently.

"Stay the rest of you well back," said the soldiers. "We will advance and spy out the danger."

The soldiers, pikes in hand, advanced to the thicket. Suddenly out of its concealment stepped a huge old Indian, his tawny body but partly covered with rude garments of deerskin, a bow and arrow in his hand.

There was enough uncertainty about the friendliness of the Indians to make all startled at the unexpected appearance of one in this lonely

spot. One Indian often meant many more in ambush, and this handful of men, hampered with children and cattle, knew that they were poorly prepared to cope with any number of the savages.

Their fears were relieved when the Indian advanced towards them with a gesture of friendliness, crying, —

“Netop, Englishmen.”

“‘Netop’ signifieth ‘my friend’ in their savage tongue,” explained Mr. Tilton to Goodman Ellis, while Nathaniel Warner, who knew something of the Indian language, rode forward, saying, —

“Netop. Art thou not Wequogon, chief of the Agawams?”

“The Englishman speaks true words,” said the old sachem.

“What doth Wequogon so far from his wigwam?”

“Wequogon hunts for game in the woods of his fathers, and would journey to his son’s wigwam at Capawonk with the Englishmen.”

After some further parley with Wequogon, Warner returned to his party, halted at a little distance, saying, —

“This is Wequogon, sachem of the Agawams, whose chief abode is at our neighboring settlement of Springfield. I have oftentimes seen him on Hadley street, and he hath ever professed great

friendliness towards us of Hadley. 'T was of him and his squaw, Awonusk, that we bought the goodly meadow of Hoccanum, and his son, Sanchumachu, is the chief of our Hadley Indians. This tract through which our journey lieth to-day aboundeth in wild game, and hath long been the favorite hunting-ground of our river Indians. Wequogon wisheth to journey with us for greater safety, having seen some signs of his enemy Indians, the Maquas, in the woods."

"God forbid that we should encounter them!" said Goodwife Ellis, shuddering.

"Have no fears, goodwife," said Nathaniel Warner. "The Maquas go but in small bands, more for thieving than war, and they dare not attack us now, just as their chief at Albany hath given pledges of amity with us. But they might annoy us, and the presence of Wequogon may be of service. No white man hath the keen eye and sharp ear that the Indian hath. I doubt sometimes whether Satan doth not help them, for their keenness seemeth more than natural."

Having accepted Wequogon's company, the travellers now alighted. Their pewter vessels were first filled with the coolest, purest of water from the gushing spring on the hillside, for drinking, and then Goodwife Ellis and the girls washed their heated faces and cooled their hands in its clear depths. When the men had also refreshed

themselves, the horses and cattle were suffered to drink, and then turned loose to eat the coarse but sweet wild grass growing thickly in the open space and among the trees, where there was no undergrowth.

Seeing Goodman Ellis regarding his beasts rather anxiously, Mr. Tilton said,—

“Hunger will keep our cattle near us, where the wild grass is so plentiful. They will not stray far.”

Again the little Puritan band stood, hats on, heads reverently bowed, while Mr. Tilton craved a blessing on the poor meal, consisting of rye bread, smoked fish, and water from the spring.

Wequogon seemed to have had ill success in hunting; at least, he bore no game. He seated himself at a little distance from the others, making his dinner from some parched corn, ground to powder, which he carried in a pouch of deerskin hung at his belt, and which he moistened with water. He did not refuse some of the smoked fish which John, much to Prudence's astonishment, carried him.

“I marvel greatly at John,” she whispered to her mother, who hushed her, lest she offend Wequogon.

John, feeling all a boy's curiosity and interest in the Indian, tried to make some advances towards acquaintance.

"May I try this?" he asked, pointing to Wequogon's bow.

Wequogon shook his head, saying grimly, —

"The gun of the English boy hath a longer arm than Wequogon's bow."

"He hath observed my gun already," thought John, "and yet he hath not seemed to look towards it."

Here Goodman Ellis, dinner being over, proposed, —

"Let us raise a psalm of thanksgiving and praise unto the Lord, while we tarry by the way."

As the Puritan psalm began to ring out through the silent forest, Wequogon's face darkened, and he gave a grunt of disapproval, finally saying :

"The Maquas have long ears."

"Wequogon deemeth it wiser not to sing in the forest," said Nathaniel Warner. "Perchance it were prudent to heed his warning."

Prudence, sitting close to her mother, gazed fearfully on the dark Indian. But presently her attention was happily diverted by John, who had strolled away into the wood, and now called :

"Prudence! Nathan! hasten here and see what I have found!"

The children found John on his knees in the midst of a large bed of wild strawberries full of ripe fruit.

"Only taste and see how luscious they are," cried John.

"I ne'er tasted aught so relishing," said Prudence, while Nathan was eating too fast to say anything.

The young men soldiers came to help Goodwife Ellis and the children fill pewter porringers with the berries, which tasted most refreshing after their dry, salt repast. Mr. Tilton and the other men still sat eating, discoursing gravely on matters of church and state, in Old and New England.

Suddenly Wequogon, sitting alone near the spring, was seen to erect his head, listening intently; then, seizing his bow and arrow, he slipped noiselessly away into the wood.

"What bodeth this?" asked Matthew Clark, one of the soldiers.

"Treachery, an I mistake not," said one of his comrades. "There are Indians about. See the horses."

The horses were sniffing the air, with ears pricked up, and every sign of alarm.

"Watch hath gone with him!" cried John, dismayed lest he had lost his precious dog.

The delights of berry gathering came to a sudden end. Goodwife Ellis and the children were placed behind the men, who stood, matchlocks and pikes in hand, on the alert, watching

the point in the woods where Wequogon had vanished.

John, grasping his gun, with fast beating heart, thought to himself, --

“Now is the time to let my father see whether I am fit to bear a snaphance or not.”

## CHAPTER III.

### A NIGHT IN THE WOODS.

AS all stood, every nerve tense with excitement, they were startled by the report of a gun in the distance, in the direction where Wequogon had disappeared.

“What meaneth this?” asked Mr. Tilton. “Who hath a gun in the wilderness?”

Here Watch came running out of the woods, barking, and showing much excitement. A few moments more, and Wequogon strode out from among the trees.

“The Maqua big thief,” he said. “Wequogon’s foot is swift; — the Maqua’s gun is swifter. The Maquas eat the Englishman’s cow.”

This bad news was found to be too true. When the cattle and horses were hastily surrounded and driven into the open space, one of the two cows that Goodman Ellis had, with no little trouble and expense, brought from England, was found to be missing. She had unluckily happened to stray farther away from the camp than the other animals, near the spot where a party of the sly



Maquas were lying in ambush, and they had killed her and made off with their prey in safety.

"This is a sore frown of God's providence upon thee, Goodman Ellis," said Mr. Tilton.

"I know not whether some unrepented sin hath kindled God's wrath against me," said Goodman Ellis, "or whether Satan is allowed to work his will upon me as a meet trial of my trust and patience. It becometh me not to murmur against this heavy laying on of the Lord's hand. But how happeneth it that I heard a gun? I thought it was forbidden to sell firearms to the Indians."

"True," said Mr. Tilton, "our laws are most strict against so doing, for our safety dependeth on it. But of late there have been rumors that some of the French in Canada, arch-enemies of the English, have been giving the Indians guns in traffic, and this confirmeth our fears."

The party now mounted and resumed their journey, the Ellises sobered by their loss. Cattle were as yet scarce in the wilderness, and to lose one of their two cows seriously affected their future comfort. They felt, too, a more vivid sense of the savage foes perhaps even then haunting their path, seeking not only their property but possibly their lives.

Prudence no longer wished to walk, picking flowers and berries and enjoying the beauty and freshness of the woods, but clung closely to her

father, often fancying that she caught a glimpse of a dark face vanishing behind a tree trunk in the depth of the forest, or seeing an Indian's waving feather in some distant fern waving harmlessly above a mossy log. She watched Wequogon fearfully.

He strode on noiselessly in his moccasins, ahead of the soldiers, who now rode more alert, less at careless ease than in the morning. The road was hilly, the path rough and stony, and there were few incidents to vary the slow, weary plodding on, up hill and down, through the woods.

Once Wequogon started from the path, and shot an arrow off into the forest, running lightly after it, but soon returning, empty handed.

John caught a fleeting glimpse through the trees of a flock of wild turkeys, led by an immense gobbler, vanishing as if by magic almost before he saw them.

"Ah, if I could but have shot one of those fowls!" exclaimed he, raising his gun instinctively, although too late.

"The wild turkey maketh a delicate feast," said Nathaniel Warner. "Verily one to roast over the fire for our supper to-night would not have come amiss."

"Turkey much cunning," said Wequogon, calmly, seeming unruffled by his disappointment. "White men's feet make noise. Turkey's ears long ears, like Indian's."

“Perchance we shall have better fortune later on,” said Nathaniel, while John resolved to strain eye and ear in imitation of Wequogon’s marvelously keen senses.

The sun, which had been beating down on them with intolerable heat, now disappeared behind white clouds. The slight cooling of the heated air that followed was a relief; but through the gaps in the branches overhead, they saw dark, angry clouds rapidly rolling up over the blue, and mutterings of thunder were heard, growing nearer and louder.

It was dark and gloomy in the woods, and when there came a vivid flash of lightning, Goodman Ellis felt Prudence start violently.

“Father,” she said, “I am sore afraid. The lightning may strike us here among the tall trees.”

“Fear not, my child,” said her father. “’Tis plain that Satan seeketh in many ways to discourage and hinder our journey into the wilderness. But the arm of the Lord is not shortened that it cannot save, nor His ear deaf that He cannot hear. If we cry unto Him, He will deliver us from the darts of the adversary, and the devil shall not prevail over His people.”

Little Abigail, tired, and hearing something of her father’s talk, began to cry, saying something about “the Black Man.”

“What is it that the child saith?” asked her father. “Doth she say that she seeth the Evil One?”

“Nay, nay,” said the mother, “she is but afeared at thy words. Mother will take thee under her cloak, little one, and keep thee safe from harm. Put on thy cloak, Prudence.”

For now the rain came down heavily, and there was no protection from it but to put on the long gray woollen cloaks strapped to their luggage. The little procession was a sorry spectacle, plodding wearily along through the wet woods, drenched in the rain, which now drove in a white sheet into their faces, almost blinding them. Finally Mr. Tilton said, —

“Nathaniel, it seemeth to me ’t were wiser to halt for a season under the shelter of yonder thick pine-trees until the fierceness of the storm hath somewhat abated, lest we stray from the path.”

All welcomed this suggestion. The pines afforded considerable shelter from the driving storm. From the heart of the pine branches overhead, a little bird singing rapturously in the midst of the shower, as if it said, “All is well, trust God,” cheered Prudence, she hardly knew why.

“Yon little fowl teacheth thee a lesson, my daughter,” said her father. “He fears not.”

“I am no longer fearful, father,” said Prudence.

“Nor am I,” said Nathan, peeping out from

under his mother's cloak, which was thrown over him as he rode on the brown mare's back, on the pillion behind. "This is my tent. I am one of the king's troopers."

"A brave trooper thou, to hide beneath a woman's skirts!" said John, who was considerably raised in his own esteem since he had stood with his gun, unflinching, awaiting an Indian onslaught.

"Wait till I grow up. I will show thee what I can do when I am a man," said Nathan.

Tired Abigail, safe and warm under the cloak in her mother's arms, had gone fast asleep.

Suddenly a loud drumming sound, unfamiliar to English ears, rose from the thicket behind them, where the ground sloped down to a small stream.

"What is that?" asked John.

"'T is the note of a wild bird, like the English partridge, that aboundeth in these woods, an I mistake not," replied Nathaniel Warner.

Watch had vanished at the first note, and Wequogon had also disappeared. In another instant, a loud whirring sound was heard, and Watch bounded out of the bushes to the foot of a pine-tree, into whose branches a large bird had flown. The next moment it fell to the ground with an arrow in its breast, and Wequogon appeared, bearing its mate, which he had also slain. The birds were ruffed grouse, which the English called partridges.

"That was well done, Wequogon," said Nathaniel. "Those partridges are as large and fat as hens. They have feasted on wild berries until they were too gross to escape easily. They will make a savory morsel for our supper to-night."

"Bird's meat taste sweet," said the Indian, as unmoved by his success as he had been by his failure.

John patted Watch and told him he was "a good dog." Watch knew he was, without being told. He carried his tail proudly aloft over his back, wagging it vigorously, and sniffed eagerly about the bushes, evidently hoping to flush another covey of partridges then and there.

This incident, trifling though it was, served to divert the travellers' minds from their discomfort. And when at last the storm had passed by, and the sun shone out brilliantly, glistening radiantly in the thousands of hanging raindrops that trembled and flashed on every bough, they resumed their journey in better cheer, breathing in with refreshment the reviving air, pure and fresh after the shower.

As they came out into an open meadow a good omen gladdened their eyes. Across the eastern sky swung the vivid arch of a rainbow.

"The Lord hath set his bow in the clouds, a sign that he will remember his covenant and not again destroy his chosen people," said Mr. Tilton, pointing solemnly up.

“I count it a good prognostic for our journey to-morrow,” said Goodman Ellis. “The sailors on shipboard had a heathenish rhyme, which ran,

“‘Rainbow at night,  
Sailor’s delight;  
Rainbow in morning,  
Sailors take warning.’

I set not much store by such talk. Yet sailor men are oft full wise in matters pertaining to the weather.”

“Folk in England were wont to say that if you journey to the spot where the rainbow toucheth the ground, you will find a pot of gold,” said John.

“Tush, boy,” said his father, “that is but an old wives’ fable. Gold is not picked up so easily. All thou gettest out of the ground must come by thy own toil and sweat, an I mistake not.”

“Worshipful Mr. Tilton, how soon dost think we shall reach our camping-place?” asked Goodwife Ellis. “’Tis strange, but I feel more weary after this day’s jaunt than from any of the days before. I would fain alight and rest.”

“Had not the storm delayed us we should have reached Cold Spring before shutting in,” said Mr. Tilton. “There is a most copious and refreshing spring there, and as it lieth half way between Hadley and Quabaug, ’tis a spot much frequented by travellers to and from the Bay.

But be of good cheer. The journey's end draw-eth nigh."

The long summer twilight was glooming into dusk when the travellers at last reached Cold Spring. The animals were carefully tethered near the camp, where they could be guarded. By the aid of a flint and steel from a tinder box, after much difficulty, a bright fire was finally kindled from dead pine branches, by which their damp garments, already partly dried from the sun, were further dried. The cow's milk, and the partridges roasted on forked sticks over the fire, gave some variety to the dry supper, which was yet eaten with a keen relish given by riding all day in the fresh air of the woods.

The men cut pine branches and spread on the ground around the fire, which was built in a sheltered place where the earth, being sandy and sloping, had already become comparatively dry. Blankets and cloaks were spread on the branches, and then the travellers, after commending themselves to God's unsleeping care, lay down, each man with his gun where he could put his hand on it at a moment's warning. The soldiers took turns in mounting guard. The fire was to be kept burning brightly all night as a protection from wild beasts.

In spite of their hard beds, the tired travellers were all soon fast asleep, save John. Camping



was not yet an old story to John, and perhaps the novelty of his situation kept him awake. Then there were many troublesome little insects of some kind strange to him that buzzed thickly about him, stinging his face and hands, producing a most tormenting itching.

Whatever the cause, John could not sleep, but rolled uneasily about on his rude bed, now looking up through the overhanging branches at the stars twinkling mysteriously far aloft, now watching the blaze of the fire rise and fall as it was blown about in fantastic forms by the night breeze, making it send long, black shadows from the nearer tree trunks shifting weirdly over the depths of the woods beyond, so that John could easily fancy that he saw dark forms moving there.

The sentinel, gun at his shoulder, paced steadily up and down like an automaton on the opposite side of the fire. The hoot of owls came with dreary reiteration from the forest near by, but more weird and depressing was the incessant howling of wolves, farther away. John's wakeful ears even heard the grinding sound of the cattle's teeth as they cropped the thick wild grass.

"If the cattle would keep still, and the owls and wolves stop their noise, and these buzzing torments let me alone, I believe I could go to sleep," thought John, twisting about to find a softer place, and get away from a big pine

branch that pressed into his ribs till they ached.

Suddenly he heard something else, something that made his heart almost stop, then beat so fast he could hardly breathe; a rustling of something breaking through the bushes in the wood behind him!



"The head of a large white deer peered through the drooping branches of a white birch."



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE JOURNEY'S END.

JOHN sprang up, seizing his gun. At the same moment the head of a large deer peered through the drooping branches of a white birch, its ears alert, its great bright eyes fixed on the fire, whose light had attracted it, and seemed to daze it.

John's faculties were already being quickened by life in the wilderness. Like a flash he raised his gun. Its loud report echoed through the forest, followed by another ringing shot from the sentry, who, farther away than John, had seen the deer an instant later.

The deer gave a great bound and disappeared, followed by Watch, loudly baying. The sleepers all sprang to their feet, the men guns in grasp, while Wequogon's hand sought his tomahawk.

"What is 't? Are we attacked?" asked one and another.

Prudence, waking from peaceful dreams of home and playmates in Old England, stared bewildered at the strange scene, the armed men, the dark woods lit up by the fitful firelight, not knowing where she was. Then she cried,—

“The savages! The savages! They are coming!” and clutching her mother, hid her face in her cloak.

Her mother drew the younger children closer to her, breathing a cry to God for protection and deliverance.

John, meantime, had bounded into the bushes almost as swiftly as the deer, followed closely by Matthew Clark, the sentry. Wounded by John's shot, the deer had not run far before Watch overtook it and pulled it down. Another shot from John's gun ended the poor creature's agony.

“Well done, boy!” cried Clark. “Thou hast brought down as noble a deer as Robin Hood and his Merry Men e'er slew in Sherwood Forest. I will help thee bear it back to camp.”

Great was the joy and relief of the campers when they saw John and Clark come out of the wood, bearing the deer between them, proudly escorted by Watch, who apparently believed that he had done it all himself.

“For a mere boy, John, thou hast shown rare prowess,” said Nathaniel Warner.

“Thou mayst yet become like Nimrod, John, a mighty hunter unto the Lord,” said Mr. Tilton. “Thy venison, boy, will make us a relishing breakfast, and be cheering to your good friends in Hadley.”

“Fill not the boy's head with vain glory,” said

Goodman Ellis, himself perceptibly proud of John. "It is God who hath mercifully preserved us and turned our mourning into gladness. Let us return thanks unto Him for His great mercies unto usward."

All stood while the good man poured out his soul in a fervent prayer. Goodwife Ellis, still weak from terror, lifted up her heart in deep thankfulness that they had been spared the horrors which she had fancied about to befall them. Then all were glad to lie down again and sleep.

John did not go back to his couch until he had helped the men and Wequogon skin and cut up the deer, hanging the haunches of venison high up in the trees, where it would keep cool and safe until morning.

"This skin will make thee a stout pair of breeches, John," said Nathaniel Warner. "I know not what we should do here in the wilderness but for deerskin."

"Can I have the horns too?" asked John, picking up the fine branching antlers.

"T is hardly worth thy while cumbering thyself to bear those away," said Nathaniel. "Deer are plentiful. Thou canst readily get all the antlers thou mayst fancy in the settlement."

"I can easily carry them," said John, who had no idea of losing this trophy of his first deer. If

only he could show those antlers to some of the boys at home in England!

Wequogon was carefully drawing out and saving all the sinews of the deer.

“What doth Wequogon?” asked John.

“He will dry the sinews,” said Nathaniel, “and use them for his bow strings, or mayhap for snowshoes next winter. Thou knowest the woods are the Indians’ shop, where they chiefly find their wares.”

After all his excitement and the loss of sleep, John did not waken early next morning. Although the rising sun, striking in low under the branches, shone full in his face, announcing the finest of June days, John slept heavily on until he was wakened by Nathan, who, having rested well, was up with the sun, bright and happy, ready for the day’s adventures.

“Wake up, sleepy head!” cried Nathan, bestriding his brother’s prostrate body. “Wake up, or I will ride thee for my nag. Get up!” And Nathan jogged up and down, plying a switch he had pulled on John’s sides.

John half opened his sleepy eyes. Then, suddenly, he turned over, sending Nathan tumbling heels over head, luckily into a soft bed of moss and pine needles.

“This is a frisky nag, I promise thee,” said John, laughing, as Watch, seeing the fun, began to nose over Nathan, trying to play with him.



"Thou wouldst not lie here snoring, John, an thou knew'st what I know," said Nathan, as he picked himself up. "There is famous news. Venison for breakfast! Dost not smell it? Hath it not a goodly odor? Oh, I am so hungry for it!"

"Verily, it doth smell savory," said John. "But who shot that deer while thou wast snoozing like a trooper?"

"Wequogon?"

"Nay. I shot it myself, with my trusty snap-hance."

"Didst thou truly, John?" asked Nathan, as much impressed as John could desire. "I wish I were as big as thou. I mean to shoot deer, and bears and lions too, when I am a man."

"Come and see the deer's antlers. Was he not a huge fellow?" said John.

The venison, roasted on forked sticks over the fire, with berries gathered by the children while it was cooking, made a breakfast whose deliciousness can hardly be appreciated save by those who have lived chiefly on smoked fish and dry bread for a week.

The travellers now set their faces hopefully to the westward, cheered by the thought that night would see the end of their journey. The air was clear and bright after the storm, the woods full of fragrance, and bird songs rippled joyfully from every tree.

“What is that wondrous sweet odor that greeteth my nostrils?” asked Goodwife Ellis, sniffing and looking about. “Doubtless some herb strange to me.”

“’Tis the wild grape whose odor thou perceivest,” said Mr. Tilton. “Its blossom giveth forth a most grateful smell. Seest thou not the vines festooning from tree to tree, through the forest?”

The Ellises were much struck with this fresh proof of the richness of the new land into which they had come, and Goodman Ellis said, —

“Verily God hath mercifully directed His people into a land teeming with fatness.”

“Wait until thou seest Hadley, Goodman Ellis,” said Nathaniel Warner.

“Hadley hath a pleasant English sound in mine ears,” said Goodwife Ellis.

“I trust, Experience, thou art not already longing for the flesh-pots of Egypt,” said her husband, who sometimes suspected that his wife’s heart failed her for homesickness.

“Nay, not so,” replied the goodwife. “I am not one like Lot’s wife, to look back towards Sodom. But Hadley hath a home-like sound that maketh it seem less strange. When I was a child, I journeyed once with my father to visit a kinsman in Hadleigh in Essex, and I remember the place well. Its wide meadow lieth low on the

broad Thames, not far from the sea, and it was a spot of green pastures and still waters."

"Verily, 't is much like our Hadley, and hence doubtless had it its name," said Mr. Tilton.

"I long to see Hadley," said Prudence. "Is it somewhat like London? Shall we see the grand ladies riding about the streets in their sedan chairs, and the coaches with six horses, and footmen, and outriders, such as we saw in London?"

"I love best to see the trainbands," said Nathan.

"Thou wilt see no glittering shows in Hadley," said Mr. Tilton. "We are but a handful of God's chosen people seeking to serve Him in the wilderness. But He hath set us in a large place, and it is not unlikely, if God prosper us, that the little one may become as a thousand, and Hadley become a great city like London, only more godly, we trust."

Somewhat after noon, as they jogged on, they came in sight of several young horses grazing in an open spot among the large trees. The colts, startled at their approach, lifted their heads, sniffed the air, and, catching but a glimpse of the travellers, galloped swiftly away into the woods, kicking up their heels and tossing their manes, as wild and free as deer.

"Do wild horses abound in the forest?" asked Goodman Ellis, prepared to believe anything of this wonderful land.

“Nay,” replied Mr. Tilton. “The colts belong to our Hadley planters. We are now in the easternmost precincts of Hadley, though we still have some distance to journey before we reach the plantation. These outlying woods, which have been burned over every autumn by the Indians to destroy the underbrush and make good hunting grounds, are our best pastures. Our hunters now follow the Indian custom. Thou hast doubtless noticed that the bark on many of the trees is scorched.”

“Doth not this injure the trees?”

“But little. An it did, 'twere no matter. 'T would save our felling them. All our horned cattle, horses not needed for use, and swine, pasture in the woods. They have a great range, and the pasture is free to all. The poor man's beast and the rich man's flocks share alike.”

“A blessing that pertaineth only to this goodly land,” said Goodman Ellis. “But do not the creatures become wild? And do not you lose many by wild beasts and Indians?”

“They are wild enough, and our young men and boys have hard work and some sport withal gathering them in ere winter cometh. They are all branded with the town mark. The Maquas, as thou knowest to thy sorrow, sometimes steal our cattle, but we oblige them to make restitution. Wolves are our greatest pest. They kill many

swine, sheep, and calves. And a bear now and then catcheth a cow or ox. But we must needs use these woods for a pasture for want of a better."

"The settlement payeth a bounty for the destruction of these pernicious beasts," said Nathaniel Warner. "An thou provest as sure a marksman as thou didst last night, John, thou canst earn some good shillings that way. The townsmen pay twenty shillings for a wolf, and five shillings for a whelp, an thou bearest the heads to the constable."

John was well pleased at the possibilities opening up in his new home. It would be great sport to help hunt up and drive in the cattle next fall.

"An I mistake not, my good snaphance will bring me in many a shilling," he thought, mentally calculating how many wolves' heads he should probably carry to the constable a month.

He soon learned a new way of making money. Wequogon left the path, and going into the forest to what seemed a pile of brush, he bent over, pushing aside the brush, revealing a deep pit, in which some wild animal was heard snapping and snarling so furiously as greatly to frighten Prudence and Abigail. Even Nathan was well satisfied to be high up on his father's horse, the creature seemed so ferocious, though it was plain he could not get out.

Wequogon speedily killed the wolf with the long stone knife he bore in his belt. Then cutting off its head, he strode on, carrying it by its ears. Great hawks, hovering overhead, hardly waited for the travellers to disappear, before they settled down on the bloody carcase.

"It seemeth Wequogon hath a wolf pit here," said Mr. Tilton.

"Our hunters catch many wolves in pits," said Nathaniel.

"Will the Hadley townsmen pay Wequogon twenty shillings for that head?" asked John.

"Yea. We care not who killeth the wolves, so that the vermin be rooted out," said Warner. "When thou canst not bring in the head, the townsmen pay the bounty for the ears only, provided they be fresh, that they may be sure the wolves were killed within our precincts."

John felt more and more sure that he should enjoy life in the wilderness, but to Prudence, what with Indians and wild beasts, the new life seemed less attractive.

They began to come more frequently on groups of cattle, horses, and swine scattered about, feeding in the woods.

"Praise be to God, we draw nigh the settlement at last," said Mr. Tilton.

"And we shall reach it before shutting in," said Nathaniel, "and so not be forced to break

the laws of our colony by travelling on the Lord's holy day."

"When we reach the height of this eminence, ye will catch your first glimpse of Hadley," said Mr. Tilton.

The tired travellers pressed on with new courage. On the top of the hill they drew rein, and gazed with delight on the scene before them, shading their eyes from the afternoon sun, low in the west.

Below them stretched a wide expanse of the Connecticut Valley. Through fertile, green meadows wound at its own free will such a great river as the English people had never seen or imagined. Each side the valley the meadows swept up into hills covered with primeval forest, unbroken as yet by the axe or human habitation. To the south rose grandly a rugged mountain range wooded to the summit, and behind this range the river disappeared. Smoke curled up from that part of the meadow which was enclosed by a great bend in the river.

"What a noble, great river!" exclaimed Goodman Ellis.

"The savages call it the Quonetecutte, which meaneth 'the long river' in their heathenish tongue," said Mr. Tilton, "and we have adopted the name. Yonder smoke thou seest riseth from our plantation of Hadley."

"Methinks I see smoke also beyond the river, in two places," said John.

"That to the northward riseth from the houses of our settlers on the west side the river, and that on the plain to the west cometh from our neighboring settlement of Northampton," said Mr. Tilton.

Beautiful indeed looked the smiling valley to the eyes of the new-comers. Even Prudence took fresh heart, and began to feel that life in the wilderness might have some attractions, especially as Nathaniel Warner said to her, —

"The young maids of thy age, Prudence, long greatly for thy coming. There are a round dozen of them; thy cousin Hannah Smith, and Mary Wells and Mehitable Porter, and my sister Priscilla, and others, — merry maids all."

So there really were playmates even in the wilderness!

Prudence's spirits were further raised by John, who, looking on the grand sweep of the Connecticut with delight, said, —

"I will oft take thee rowing on that broad river, Prudence. Nathaniel saith the youths here fashion themselves goodly canoes from logs. And I will teach thee to swim in it, Nathan."

"I want to help paddle the canoe," said Nathan.

Goodwife Ellis, her heart full of thankfulness, exclaimed, —



“Verily, the lines have fallen unto us in pleasant places!”

“Yea, praise be to God, we have a goodly heritage,” said her husband.

“Thou hast well said, Goodman Ellis,” said Mr. Tilton. “This meadow land teemeth with richness. An God mercifully spare us from destruction by the savages, we look for a prosperous outcome to our venture here, begun for conscience’ sake.”

In the best of spirits the travellers now pressed on. Passing Spruce Hill they forded Fort River, — so called, Nathaniel told John, from an old Indian fort crowning the bluff near by, — and before the sun had sunk behind the undulating western hills, they reached a long extent of rail fence, running along the top of a high bank of earth which had been thrown out from the broad ditch that protected the outer side of the fence.

Matthew Clark dismounted, and opened the gate which barred their way.

“This ditch mindeth me of the moats around our castles in Old England, like that at Warwick,” said Goodman Ellis. “Is it for defence against the savage foe?”

“Nay,” said Nathaniel, “’t is built to fend the crops on our meadows from our own creatures that run in the woods. Late in the fall, when the

crops are all garnered, the cattle are turned in here to graze."

"John," said Mr. Tilton, "I must warn thee to be ever mindful to close the meadow gates. Shouldst thou leave one open, as some of our careless youth have done, thou wilt e'en be fined two shillings and sixpence."

"I will have a care, worshipful Mr. Tilton," said John, resolved not to lose in this way any of the precious wolf shillings which he already felt jingling in his pocket.

The edge of the sun was beginning to disappear behind the mountains when the little cavalcade rode into Hadley's wide street, thus barely escaping the violation of the Sabbath, which began to be observed in full rigor with the setting of Saturday's sun.

"Thanks to God's mercy, here we are safely at home," said Mr. Tilton. "Welcome to Hadley, friends!"

The Ellises gazed with greatest interest at the strange surroundings where the rest of their lives must be passed, realizing that many new experiences no doubt awaited them here.

They looked up and down the street, a mile long, and twenty rods wide, so broad indeed that the small, unpainted houses scattered along each side looked like two separate villages. A path was worn in the grass before each row of houses, and

between the paths stretched an expanse of grassland, broken with ridges and hollows, in some of which large ponds of water reflected the brightness of the western sky. There were few trees, the settlers having cut down most of those left standing by the Indians on this, their old cornfield of Norwottuck.

On one of the highest ridges in the middle of the street towards the north end, stood a new building, whose square roof, rising to a point in the centre and bearing a small turret, told the Ellises that this was the meeting house.

"Verily it gladdeneth my eyes to behold so goodly a house of God already erected here in the wilderness," said Goodman Ellis. "It hath a sightly situation."

"It was placed to the north the better to accommodate our people who dwell on the west side of the river," said Mr. Tilton. "But here is the house of our godly minister, Mr. Russell, and here I must say good even, friends, as I bring him weighty letters from England."

The arrival of a party of travellers from the Bay in Hadley street produced as much excitement as the stately Puritans felt it dignified to manifest. Especially was the return of the post, Nathaniel Warner, their only link with the outside world, full of interest.

Women stood in their open doors, shading their

eyes from the long slanting rays of the setting sun, looking with interest at the new-comers, who were well known to be a godly family fresh from Old England, the land which, in spite of the persecutions which had driven them forth, was still "home" to so many. Grave men in steeple crowned hats and broad white collars bent their footsteps across the green to accost Nathaniel, and learn if perchance he had brought them letters from the Bay or England, or various articles ordered by them from thence.

"I too must leave ye here," said Nathaniel. "It behooveth me to hasten to my father's house, and distribute what packages I may ere it be too late. Matthew Clark, who is quartered at the house of thy kinsman, Lieutenant Samuel Smith, will escort thee thither."

The other soldiers scattered to the houses where they were quartered. Matthew Clark conducted the Ellises up the street past the meeting house, to the house of Lieutenant Smith, one of the largest in the settlement.

Wequogon bent his way to the north end of the street, where, from under some bushes on the river's brink, he drew a birchbark canoe. Stepping in, he shot swiftly away across the broad river, his paddles breaking the picture of the sunset sky imaged in its clear waters into a thousand glimmering, dancing fragments of brightness.

## CHAPTER V.

### A MYSTERIOUS STRANGER.

LIEUTENANT SMITH'S wife, Elizabeth, was aunt to Goodman Ellis. Almost with tears of joy did the good old lady and her venerable husband welcome these kinsfolk, who, for conscience' sake, had crossed the wide ocean to cast in their lot with the people of Hadley.

"It gladdeneth and comforteth my heart to be permitted to look upon the face of my sister's son, Reuben," she said. "And thy wife, and these little ones, growing up like olive branches around thy table, are most welcome. I knew not when thou wouldst arrive. But Mercy hath a huge pot of bean porridge boiling over the fire, and shortly thou shalt have supper, and then to bed, for ye must be sore weary after your toilsome journey."

"Yea," said Goodwife Ellis. "And to-morrow we must be up early, for 't is the Lord's day, and gladly will we go up to His house to return thanks for His unmerited mercies in bringing us in safety to our journey's end."

“I have attended to thy commission, Reuben,” said Lieutenant Smith. “The son of John Hawks hath removed to Pocumtuck,—a new settlement just beginning to be upbuilt in the wilderness some dozen miles or more to the northward. Thus I was enabled to purchase thee a home near our own, across the street. Our authorities readily consented to thy admission among us.”

“But ye will abide with us over the Sabbath,” said his wife.

“Hast thou room for so many, good aunt?” asked Goodwife Ellis.

“We are two old folk, living alone, save for our handmaiden, Mercy Jackson, and the soldier. Our children are all married and settled about us, save Samuel, who hath gone to the Virginia plantation. Philip liveth next door, and Chileab across the street. The Lord hath bountifully blessed them with children. And they are all eager to see their new cousins from England,” said the old lady, smiling kindly at Prudence.

Hardly was supper over, when the outer door opened, and Lieutenant Smith exclaimed,—

“Here comes Philip’s oldest son now. Good even, Samuel. Pray, how happeneth it that thou comest out after shutting in on the eve of the Sabbath?”

“Good even, grandam, and grandsire,” said Samuel, a sturdy boy of about John’s age, with

cropped hair, wearing a broad collar, a woollen doublet, and knee breeches. He looked eagerly at his English cousins, who returned his gaze in like fashion.

“Father heard of the arrival of our English cousins, and hath permitted me to come and ask Cousin John to rest at our house over the Sabbath. Mother saith thou mayst be overcrowded with so many. And Cousin Hannah desireth Prudence to sleep with her. Uncle Chileab said I was to bring Prudence to his house.”

John was entirely ready to go with his new cousin, but Prudence shrank shyly from meeting all these strange relations, and hung back, murmuring,

“I would gladly stay with thee to-night, mother.”

“Go with thy cousin, child,” said her mother. “Thou canst return here to-morrow, if thou wishest, and Monday we will move into our new home.”

“Chileab’s Hannah is a good girl, e’en though somewhat light-minded at times, after the fashion of young maids. She is nigh thy age, Prudence, and a desirable companion for thee,” said Aunt Elizabeth.

“Take thy night rail with thee, Pruda,” said her mother.

Samuel and John escorted Prudence across the wide street to her Uncle Chileab’s. The children chatted as they went, getting acquainted fast, as is the wont of young folks. So absorbed were

they, that they did not notice a man of grave and reverend presence, until he stopped them, saying severely to Sam, —

“ I like not this idle gadding and gossiping on young folk on the king’s highway on the eve of the Sabbath. What meaneth this light conduct, Samuel Smith ; above all, in the grandson of that ancient, godly man, Lieutenant Smith, ever a bright and shining candle unto the Lord ? ”

The speaker was Richard Goodman, who, as one of the deacons, had special oversight of the morals of the community.

Sam hastened, with all the respect due a man of such importance, to explain the cause of his unusual violation of the Puritan ordinance.

“ As thy kinsman’s late arrival seemeth to furnish some excuse for thee, thy offence will be winked at this time,” said Deacon Goodman. “ But go thy way speedily and quietly, with no vain conversation or idle laughter unbecoming the day.”

Thus admonished, the children hastened silently on. Once more were they stopped, this time by John Barnard, the watchman that night for the north end of the street, whom they met as he paced to and fro, gun at his shoulder, and to whom also Samuel was forced to explain his presence on the street after sundown.

As they hurried on, Prudence, looking up at the western sky, where a faint hint of the dying



daylight still lingered, saw the tiny sickle of the new moon hanging low over the hills.

"See, John," she whispered, pulling his arm, "yonder is the new moon, the same moon we used to see at home."

"Of course, silly one," replied John, in a subdued tone. "Why not?"

"It seemeth friendly and natural to see it in this strange land," said Prudence. "And, John," she whispered softly, lest her strange cousin hear, "I saw it over my right shoulder, too."

"Thou 'd best not let father hear thee say that," said John.

Nevertheless, Prudence felt comforted by the old, old English superstition, handed down perhaps from old pagan times through long generations of forefathers, and was enabled to encounter the flock of cousins at Uncle Chileab's with better courage for this good omen.

Here she met Uncle Chileab and Aunt Hannah, their daughter Hannah, their sons, Luke, Ebenezer, and Pelatiah, and finally baby Hester. Hannah was a bright-looking girl somewhat older than Prudence, whose sparkling brown eyes regarded her shy, blue-eyed English cousin with so friendly a glance that Prudence felt drawn to her at once.

"We will have our Scripture reading presently," said Aunt Hannah, after her kindly greeting, "and then 't is best, Hannah, that thou take thy

cousin to bed. She must be sore weary after her tiresome journey. Do not keep her awake with thy foolish chatter. Remember 't is the eve of the Sabbath."

"I will not forget, mother," said Hannah.

"I wish John could rest here too," said Luke.

But Sam bore away the coveted big boy cousin, and Luke had to be content with his new girl cousin. After Scripture reading and singing a psalm, during which tired Prudence nodded with irrepressible sleepiness, though she tried hard to sit up straight on her block and keep her eyes open, Hannah lit a splinter of candle wood, and led her cousin up stairs, into a homely little bedroom under the sloping roof, where she stuck the splinter into a chink in the wall. The girls hurried to undress before it burned out.

"Thou art too sleepy to talk to-night, I see plainly," said Hannah. "Moreover, I promised my mother not to talk. But in the morning I shall have much to hear and tell thee too. I am glad thou hast come."

The straw tick was as a bed of down to Prudence after sleeping on pine brush in the forest, and she felt delightfully safe and protected to be under a roof again, and in a village. She slept so hard and fast that it was morning almost at once, it seemed.

The sun was reddening the eastern sky, when

she woke, Hannah, already up and dressed, was standing looking at her.

"Verily, I believe I waked thee merely with looking at thee, and longing to have thee open thine eyes, Prudence," said her cousin, "for I have tip-toed about in my slip shoes as still as a mouse. Art rested?"

"Yea, cousin Hannah," said Prudence. "I rested sweeter in thy good bed than since we left the Bay."

"That blue stuff maketh thee a gown vastly becoming to thy color," said Hannah, as Prudence put on her gown of sober, dark blue. "I would my mother would suffer me to wear somewhat besides these sad-colored stuffs. I like them not."

"Dost thou too love bright colors?" asked Prudence, speaking low, as of something wrong.

"Verily I do, Prudence. Sometimes I really crave them, as I do food when I am hungry."

"I see not why 't is so wicked to desire them," said Prudence, "though I know 't is, for the older folk all say so. But God hath given the blossoms and little fowls brave colors that gladden the eye."

"I am warned oft enough by my mother and grandam that it is my sinful heart that maketh me cherish such vain desires," said Hannah. "Doubtless 't is so, for I cannot help it. To-morrow, on a week day, I will show thee something

most pleasing. But now we must hasten down to the wash bench."

Hannah took Prudence out the back door, where near the well stood a bench holding a pewter basin, and a wooden piggin filled with home-made soft soap. Here they made their morning toilets, wiping on a roller towel of coarse dowlas behind the kitchen door.

The boys had been wide awake and up a long time, waiting to see their new cousin, and the younger two, Ebenezer and Pelatiah, were both determined to lead her to the breakfast table.

"Go away, Pelatiah. Thou art too little to care for our cousin," said Ebenezer, the older.

"She is as much my cousin as thine, Ebenezer Smith," said Pelatiah, seizing Prudence's other hand. "I can lead her as well as thou."

"Hush, boys," said their father. "Let me hear no unseemly contentions on the Sabbath morn. Come quietly and decently to prayers before meat."

The boys, noticing that their father was absorbed in making his Scripture selections, quietly persisted in their own way, without making much demonstration, each holding tightly the hand he had grasped until they had reached the table. Hannah looked across at Prudence with so merry a twinkle of the eye that Prudence would have smiled had she dared.

All stood, while the father made a longer prayer than usual because it was the Sabbath. Then they were allowed to eat.

The children each had a pewter porringer filled with hot porridge. In the centre of the table was a large wooden trencher full of fried fish, to which whoso wished helped himself with his fingers, eating with it a piece of rye and Indian bread, without butter.

Luke longed to tell Prudence that he and Sam caught these fish in the river yesterday. But talking by children at meals was not allowed, so they ate in silence. But when they stood for return thanks after breakfast, Pelatiah, who had merry brown eyes like Hannah's, emboldened by his father's closed eyes, threw a crust of bread across at Prudence, and laughed.

At this daring act, the children looked at him an instant in horror at such an enormity, and then dropped their heads. When Goodman Smith rather hastily concluded his prayer, Pelatiah had disappeared under the table on all fours.

"Come forth, my son," said his father, not so much in anger as in sorrow. "Thy carriage mindest me of that of Adam when he hid himself in the garden from the just wrath of God, after he had tasted the forbidden fruit. Come forth, I say."

Pelatiah came forth, and was quietly led into

an adjoining room. The sound of loud wailing that soon arose there showed that his father was being faithful to him.

The breakfast dishes having been set aside, to be washed after sundown, Goodwife Smith gathered the children about her, and instructed them in the catechism. Having passed an hour in this way, she said, —

“Go now and make ready for the assembling of ourselves together. I judge ’t is nearly time for meeting, by the shadow of the noon mark on the window sill.”

Meeting began at nine o’clock in the morning. Hannah and Prudence went up stairs to make ready, chiefly by tying on the close linen caps which in summer took the place of their hoods. Hannah, cautiously closing her bedroom door, whispered, —

“An I mistake not, Prudence, we shall see a brave show at meeting to-day.”

“A brave show, — at meeting!” exclaimed Prudence.

“Yea, even as I tell thee. Young Mistress Hepzibah Wells hath come here of late from Windsor in the Connecticut colony, as the bride of young Thomas Wells, and her gay apparel hath caused no little scandal. She hath been visited and admonished during the past week by the deacons, but ’t is said she hardeneth her heart

against all warnings. But oh, Prudence," said Hannah, in a guilty whisper, "her damask silk was stiff enough to stand alone, and the colors on it were most fair to see! Over a pale blue ground were sprinkled pink roses. Nought like it hath e'er been seen in Hadley meeting house. And her silk hood had a pink lining! I did love to look upon her, and I noticed many of our young men and maidens cast their eyes her way."

"I wish I too might see her bravery," said Prudence, "although I doubt not it may be sinful in me. She must look like the grand court ladies in London."

"Do tell me about them, Prudence, I beg," said Hannah; "what they wore, and how 't was cut and trimmed. Do they truly wear patches on their faces?"

The sound of a bell ringing made both girls start.

"'Tis the sign for meeting. We must hasten down," said Hannah.

The family walked forth in a grave procession. Across the green centre of the street came all the inhabitants of the settlement towards the meeting house in similar staid processions, the father and mother leading, the father, if he happened to be one of the guard for the day, bearing his gun. The infants were borne in arms, the younger children led, while the older children, and the

servants, if there happened to be such, walked soberly, two and two, behind.

There was no idle talk, no smiles. Grave nods of recognition were exchanged as friends and neighbors met along the way.

It had been thought best that John Ellis should return to Lieutenant Smith's for the Sabbath, lest he and his cousin Philip's sons, of whom there was a houseful, might be tempted to light conversation unbecoming the day. As the family were leaving the house, Lieutenant Smith said, —

“The infirmities of age are upon me. I have forgotten my staff. John, wilt thou return for it? We shall walk so slowly that thy young legs will readily overtake us without unseemly haste. 'Tis a stout oaken staff, and thou wilt find it behind the kitchen door, an I mistake not.”

John turned back to get the staff. The front door was unfastened, it not being the custom to fasten the outer door of houses. Evil doers were not tolerated in the community, but were either hauled up before the magistrate and clapped in Springfield jail, or warned out of town. Every person able, as the saying was, “to go from the bed to the chair” was expected to attend meeting.

John entered the quiet, deserted house. Not finding the staff where the forgetful old man had said, he thought, —





"John stopped in dismay. The stranger seemed as startled as John."



“Perchance he left it upstairs in his chamber. I will look there.”

At the top of the dark, narrow stairway, John was greatly startled by suddenly encountering a strange man, an old man of venerable and dignified aspect, whom he had never seen before. Who could this be in the deserted house?

John stopped in dismay. The stranger seemed as startled as John.

“Boy, whoever thou art, I solemnly charge thee, speak to none of having seen me,” he said impressively, and then disappeared into a back room, closing the door.

John found the staff, and hurried downstairs, with frequent glances back over his shoulder at the door where the man had disappeared. He could not think the mysterious stranger a rogue of any sort, for his venerable, reverend appearance forbade that idea.

Could it be the devil? John well knew that it was Satan’s habit to assume many disguises, even the most venerated, for his wicked ends. Yet why should the devil haunt the house of the godly Lieutenant Smith above all others?

## CHAPTER VI.

### A PURITAN SABBATH.

THE June sunshine streamed down with quiet brightness, a few fleecy clouds, floating over, sent shadows drifting gently across the grassy street, the bell was tolling, and a Sabbath peace seemed to fill the air, a strange contrast to the whirl of dark thoughts in John's mind as he hastened on, past the stocks and whipping post, to the meeting house door.

There he found most of the congregation assembled, waiting for their revered minister, Mr. John Russell, whom John now saw, clad in a long Genevan cloak and a black velvet cap, walking slowly and with dignity up the street, his wife upon his arm, his aged parents following, and his sons bringing up the rear, exchanging grave salutations with his people, who waited respectfully until the minister and family had entered the building, and then soberly followed.

His cousin Sam had met John, and now whispered, —

“Thou art to sit with me and the other boys on the pulpit steps. We all sit there.”

As they were about going in, to John's surprise he saw two young men sitting on the fence that ran along the river bank at the north end of the street, beyond the meeting house. They wore a defiant look, which seemed to say, "We care not who sees us," and were talking and laughing together.

"Who are those, who dare to stay away from meeting?" asked John, in surprise.

"'T is Joseph Selden and Edward Grannis, two bold young sprouts," replied Sam, in a whisper. "They will be hauled up before the magistrate to-morrow, thou wilt see, an they refuse to take their assigned seats in the meeting house."

John saw Mr. Tilton regard the daring rebels with a dark frown, and heard the words "sons of Belial," as he despatched Obadiah Dickinson to order them into the house of God.

But it would not answer for Sam and John to loiter on the steps to see the outcome of the affair. They hastened in, lest they too fall under condemnation.

Entering the men's door, they took their seats with the flock of boys crowding the pulpit stairs. The pulpit was a small, box-like structure, placed high, with a long flight of steps ascending to its heights on either side, so that here and on the steps of the deacons' seat, below the pulpit, there

was room for the boys who so abounded in the old Puritan families. But they had to sit close, and the uncomfortable seats were some excuse for the wriggling restlessness apt to set in before the end of the long service.

There was good reason for the town vote, in 1672, "that there shall be some sticks set up in the meeting house in several places, with some fit persons placed to them, and to use them as occasion shall require, to keep the youth in order."

Sam nudged John and looked significantly towards two of these same sticks standing in the corner near them. John noticed that Obadiah Dickinson, who had been despatched for the "sons of Belial" perched on the fence, returned without them, and took his place by the sticks. He was a tall, strong young man of severe aspect, who looked quite capable of using the sticks without flinching if he saw good cause.

John looked about with great interest on the people below, his new neighbors and townfolk. The congregation were seated on hard wooden benches, backless and cushionless. The venerated Madam Dorothy Russell, the minister's mother, in the fore seat on the women's side, was privileged to bring a cushion to sit upon, as were a few others whose age or infirmity made this luxury pardonable.

The rows of benches were divided by an aisle in

the middle. The men and boys occupied the benches on the minister's right, the women and girls those on his left. Each side had its own door.

Before the pulpit, on a seat raised two steps, facing the congregation, sat Deacon Peter Tilton and Deacon Richard Goodman, looking impressively down upon the people. Like Mr. Russell, they wore black velvet caps, as did others of the old men.

John saw Prudence and Hannah sitting demurely on the bench beside their mothers. Abigail and Nathan sat on a little bench or long cricket in front of their mother. On the other end of the same bench sat Pelatiah, looking wistfully now and then at his attractive new cousins, longing to make advances towards an acquaintance. But his recent chastisement was still too fresh not to linger even in his short memory, and repress his activity for a while.

Although Hannah and Prudence seemed to be sitting sedately as young Puritan maidens should, it is to be feared their minds wandered to worldly thoughts. Hardly were they well seated, when a cautious pressure of Hannah's elbow directed Prudence's attention to a young woman passing up the aisle whom she knew at once must be Mistress Hepzibah Wells.

Mistress Hepzibah was not over nineteen, a

pretty young woman, pleasing to look upon in her wedding finery of silk and lace, and silken hood lined with pink, her gay attire the more noticeable for the plain, sad-colored dresses around her. Her cheeks were flushed, and her air slightly defiant, as if she were fully conscious that many sternly disapproving eyes were fastened on her.

Prudence saw two or three other young women whose attire was gayer than Puritan custom sanctioned. One Mistress Westcarr even had short sleeves to her flowered lutestring gown, reaching only half down the arm. Long, open-work gloves met the sleeves, and the arm where they ended was still further shielded by lace, fine bone lace, worth at least three or four shillings a yard, as most of the women in the meeting house took notice. And Mistress Grannis not only wore a silk gown and petticoat trimmed with fringe, but also an immoderate great ruff.

The young women were not alone in their transgression. Several of the young men wore their hair long and curling, waving in luxurious defiance of the Puritan laws against long hair, and were also guilty of wide breeches. One young fellow, Jonathan Wells, added to these enormities a touch of gold lace that lent him a dashing look not lost on young Mistress Hepzibah Colton of Springfield, who was visiting his sister Sarah. In short, it



was plain that human nature was cropping out, at least in the younger of the Hadley Puritans.

The fine feathers of these fine birds distracted the attention of Hannah and Prudence not a little during the service, but were a wonderful help in carrying them through the long sermon.

As Mr. Russell was opening the service, to John's dismay he saw his dog Watch come up the outer steps, and, standing in the open door, look about, wagging his tail affably, evidently seeking his master. Poor Watch felt lonely in this strange place, with his friends scattered about, he knew not where, and he had determined in his wise dog mind to go out and seek them. Naturally he had followed the whole settlement to the meeting house.

Sam, who also saw the dog, nudged John, adding to his nervousness. He only hoped Watch would not spy him, in his exalted seat on the pulpit steps. Evidently Watch did not, for presently he slunk under the rear bench, and composed himself for a good snooze, satisfied with the sense of human companionship, and John breathed easier.

Deacon Goodman now set the tune, "York," and began to line out the sixteenth psalm. The congregation stood, and sang line after line with fervor as the deacon read them out. But, there being no instrument to guide their voices, and it being a religious duty for all to sing, — the deaf, the old, the children, those with no voice and no

ear, — there was more noise and fervor than melody, and by and by it fell out, that part of the congregation were still singing “York,” while part had swung off into “St. Dowds.”

Little did Goodman Ellis and his wife note the lack of harmony. Filled with joy at being privileged to worship once more in a company of the faithful, and with sincere gratitude for the safe ending of their journey, gladly did they uplift their hearts to God in love and praise.

But there was one listener in whose ears the discord was unbearable. Hardly had the congregation let itself out on the second verse of the psalm, —

“They shall heape sorrows on their heads,  
 which runne as they were mad;  
 To offer to the Idoll Gods,  
 Alas, it is too bad.  
 As for the bloody sacrifice,  
 and offerings of that sort;  
 I will not touch nor yet thereof  
 my lips shall make report” —

when a painful, prolonged howl broke in from Watch, who, waking from his nap, had sat up with uplifted, distressed ears, and finally, unable longer to suppress his feelings, had thrown back his head and given loud vent to his protest.

John blushed violently, as if every one must know that the hound was his. Then he saw a man, armed with a long whip, step swiftly in the

direction of Watch, and knew him to be the dog-whipper, appointed by the town to prevent such interruptions of the service. A loud yelp told that he had done his duty. Poor Watch scurried out the door. John found him, when service was over, patiently lying in the shade of the stocks, waiting for him.

The interruption attracted little notice except from some of the younger children, who welcomed any diversion, and who were gently rapped on the head by their vigilant mothers, to remind them that it was not seemly to look about in meeting.

The congregation again stood, while Mr. Russell prayed for an hour. No one felt this a hardship. Short prayers were despised by the Puritans as savoring of Episcopacy. Indeed, Mr. Russell was especially esteemed for his gift of continuance. Midway in the prayer, a few aged and infirm persons, who had received special concessions for their feebleness from the deacons, sat down. The rest stood till the end, though not without some uneasy scuffling of children's feet on the sanded floor.

Then came the sermon. The sands of the brass-bound hour-glass standing on the desk beside Mr. Russell measured an hour and a half ere it was finished, and those tired of standing during the prayer certainly had a chance to rest.

As the sermon went on and on, with thoughts and language impossible for young minds to com-

prehend, John's mind reverted to the mysterious stranger he had encountered in Lieutenant Smith's house. A new and comforting thought occurred to him. Possibly it was not the devil. It might be some guest who had arrived late Saturday night, after John had gone to his cousin's. Yet, if so, why was he not at meeting?

As John puzzled his brain with these conjectures, he unconsciously leaned back against the knees of the boy who sat on the step behind him.

John had been conscious that this boy was a restless spirit, as his constant wriggling about had been most uncomfortable. Now he dug his toes maliciously into John, and kept on repeating the offence, though John, apparently accidentally, dug his elbow back forcibly into his enemy's legs, as a gentle hint to let him alone.

"An it were not in meeting, he should see what he would get," thought John, coloring with anger, as a sharper dig than ever from his neighbor's hob-nailed shoes nearly pushed him off the narrow seat.

The boy now dropped a wet wad of paper down John's back, at which another boy laughed, audibly, too.

John's heart stood still as Obadiah Dickinson gave the boy who had laughed a sound rap with one of the long sticks, a rap that made him feel less mirthful, and, grasping the chief offender by

the doublet collar, hauled him down with a clatter, and marching with him over to the women's side, sat him down with emphasis beside Goody Webster. The shame-faced culprit looked as if he would rather be under the bench than on it.

The parents of the boys, who were present, made no attempt to interfere with this discipline of their sons; indeed, they would undoubtedly follow it with further chastisement at home, as the sons knew to their sorrow.

The incident made no break in the sermon, which went steadily on to "fourteenthly" before "finally" was at last reached. Now and then the sturdy cry of some infant arose. If the mother could not hush it, she took it out doors, returning when it was quieted.

The June sun glared in at the curtainless, shutterless windows, which were closed fast. The new pine boards of ceiling, walls, floor, and benches gave forth a strong odor in the heat, which, combined with the drowsy buzzing of the flies, sent Nathan and Abigail off fast asleep early in the sermon, their heads resting peacefully against their mother's knee.

Pelatah, observing his own mother's absorption in the sermon, by degrees ventured to slide cautiously along the bench towards the other end. When within reach of Nathan, he slyly gave his hand a smart pinch.

Nathan, not knowing where he was, jumped, and cried out, —

“Something stingeth me, mother !”

Pushing against sleeping Abigail as he jumped, he crowded her off the end of the bench, sliding after her himself. The bench tipped up, sending Pelatiah off too, coming down with a thump that resounded through the quiet meeting house.

Goodwife Ellis stilled as soon as possible the crying Abigail, so rudely wakened from her happy dreams, while Goodwife Smith, with a red face, gave Pelatiah a most unsanctified shake, and re-seated him forcibly on the righted bench. Nathan looked askance at his lively new cousin, not at all certain that he liked him.

After the sermon, Mr. Russell announced that “by divine permission, this congregation will attend Thursday lecture at Northampton this week.” He then added, —

“Waitstill Jennings desireth to make public confession of his sin before the people of God.”

A solemn hush fell over the assembly. A young man, with downcast eyes, shame-faced, yet with an expression of sincere contrition, came down the aisle to the deacons’ seat, faced the congregation, and said, —

“I do confess that, being left of God in my sins, and being prevailed with by Satan, I have at sundry times and seasons reviled our worship-

ful magistrates, and, being admonished and corrected, did harden myself and make use of profane speech. I acknowledge my offence, and ask the prayers of God's people that the Lord in His mercy will pardon my transgressions, and aid me to mend my ways."

This confession, prompted by a sincere desire on Jennings' part to regain favor with God, and retrieve his good name and standing in the community, was heard in the solemn silence of those who feel that a human soul is laid bare before them.

Another psalm was sung. Then the congregation dispersed for a short half hour's nooning, eating a dry luncheon of bread and cheese, simply enough to sustain the flagging body through the afternoon's service. Some of the people who had come from the south end of the street, brought their luncheon with them, and ate it at the houses of the brethren who dwelt nearer the church.

Deacon Goodman and wife, and some of the Dickinsons, tarried during the nooning at Lieutenant Smith's, where the time was spent in singing psalms and discussing the sermon. But among these strange faces, John failed to find that of the mysterious stranger, whose venerable countenance had impressed him too deeply to be easily forgotten.

During the nooning, Lieutenant Smith took occasion to say to Deacon Goodman, —

“ I doubt, Brother Goodman, whether it be not expedient to appoint a day of fasting and humiliation soon, to perchance avert the wrath of God against this settlement. His hand seemeth much against us of late in the sad face of things in regard to the rising generation. Didst see the flaunting dress of Mistress Wells and the others, and the wanton locks of sundry of our youth ? ”

“ This generation are hardening their necks against the truth, ” said Deacon Goodman. “ We must carry things against these practices with a high hand. And Joseph Selden and Edward Grannis were not in their assigned seats in the meeting house, but, Mr. Tilton telleth me, strutting proudly about, sitting on fences, smiling, and otherwise breaking the Sabbath. ”

“ This neglect of God’s word and ordinances, and all these sinful practices must be put down, ” said Lieutenant Smith. “ ’T is plainly to be seen that the devil goeth about like a roaring lion seeking to disturb the New English church, and we must e’en fight him to the death. ”

The afternoon service began at two o’clock, and lasted until the sun was low in the west. At its close, John returned with his parents to Lieutenant Smith’s, where his aunt, aided by her handmaiden, Mercy Jackson (an English girl who was serving the Smiths to pay for her passage over), prepared a warm supper.



First there was a smoking hot boiled Indian pudding. His aunt helped John to a thick slice, saying, —

“Growing boys are hearty eaters, and I doubt not thou art hungry, John, after thy Sabbath fast.”

John admitted that he was. The pudding was followed by baked pork and beans from the brick oven, where they had been put to cook Saturday night. John was able to eat more than one helping, in spite of the pudding, and notwithstanding the fact that his mind was still troubled about the mysterious stranger, who appeared not, and of whom no mention was made.

The supper dishes were left to be washed after sundown, and the rest of the daylight was devoted to reading the Scriptures in turn, varied by psalm singing.

As darkness began to fall, Lieutenant Smith said, —

“Thou canst rest under our roof to-night, John. There will be ample room for thee to remain here. Had we looked for thy arrival last night, it could have been so arranged.”

“I had just as soon go to cousin Samuel’s,” John ventured to suggest.

“’Tis not necessary to-night,” said Lieutenant Smith, decidedly, and John dared make no further objections.

When his Aunt Elizabeth escorted him upstairs

to bed, she opened the door of the small back chamber, into which John had seen the stranger disappear, saying kindly, —

“This will be thy chamber, John. Good night. I trust thou wilt rest sweetly.”

“Good even, aunt,” said John, rather faintly.

He was glad that Watch had followed him upstairs.

“Here, Watch, good Watch,” he said, patting the blue woollen coverlid as an invitation to Watch to jump up on the bed and sleep.

This was an indulgence usually highly prized by Watch, and one not often offered him. Yet to-night he refused to go to bed, but ran sniffing about the room in a restless, excited way, whining and scratching at the door.

“He seeth somewhat that I cannot,” thought John, his heart beating fast.

It seemed to him that his torch of candlewood burned with a bluish light and a strange sputtering. And did he detect a faint odor of brimstone, or was it only his fancy?

John decided, in spite of the stranger’s warning not to betray him, that he should rest better to at least counsel with his father. He rapped on his father’s chamber door.

Goodman Ellis stuck his head out, already encased in its pointed nightcap.

“What is ’t, boy? Art ill?”

“No, father, but I would speak with thee somewhat.”

Goodman Ellis at once came into John's bedroom, thinking to himself,—

“John hath shown some signs of dejection this even. Perchance some of the shafts from Mr. Russell's discourse to-day are rankling in his heart, and he is awakened to a saving sense of his sins. 'T was verily a most weighty discourse, sound physic for sinners.”

But when John unfolded his story of the mysterious stranger, Goodman Ellis's countenance changed strangely.

“My son,” he said, with more emotion than John had ever seen him manifest, “breathe not a whisper of him whom thou hast unluckily chanced to see, to any mortal. More is at stake than thou canst understand. 'T is a most dangerous secret, involving precious lives. Can I trust to thine honor that thou wilt hold it sacred?”

“Yea, father, thou mayst,” said John, earnestly, much impressed. “But, father, I am not fearsome, but — art sure that Satan hath no hand in the matter?”

“Nay, nay, my son. Thou mayst rest easy on that score. Satan hath no part or lot with such as he, save as it delighteth him to harry and persecute the Lord's holy ones. Rest at peace in thy bed, and try to forget what thou hast seen.”

John went to bed, more puzzled than ever over this mystery, but easier in his mind for his father's assurances. Yet he was not sorry when Watch, having completed his investigations to his own satisfaction, at last jumped on the bed, and, curling himself up on the blue coverlid at John's feet, went fast asleep.

John well knew that dogs and horses were gifted with a sort of second sight, and that they could see many things hid from human eyes. So, comforted by Watch's serene repose, he himself soon fell asleep.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE SCARLET GEWGAW.

WHEN Prudence and Hannah went to bed Sunday night, Hannah summed up their whispered discussion of the finery seen at meeting by saying, —

“’T was a most pleasing treat to see. But me-thinks Mistress Westcarr was somewhat over bravely clad, for her means, and for meeting. To-morrow morning, Prudence, be sure to mind me to show thee the thing I told thee of.”

“I’ll not forget,” said Prudence.

“My mother hath promised that, after I have spun my morning stint to-morrow, I may go over to thy house, and help thee get settled. And she saith, if thy mother consents, I may take thee to make acquaintance with some of my mates: Priscilla Warner and Mehitabel Porter and Mary Wells. Mary Wells is the young sister of Thomas, the husband of Mistress Hepzibah, and is my great friend. ’T was thus Mistress Hepzibah chanced to give me what thou shalt see to-morrow morn.”

Prudence’s curiosity was roused, and she said:

“Why cannot I see it to-night, Hannah?”

But here the candlewood splint settled the matter by going out, leaving the room in utter darkness. There was nothing to be done but to go to sleep and so shorten the time of waiting.

The girls were up early next morning. As soon as they were dressed, Hannah, having carefully closed her door, opened the large chest standing in one corner of her room where her clothing was kept, and digging down under a pile of stout knitted stockings filling the till, she brought forth a small bundle carefully wrapped up in a bit of linen, and pinned with a large brassy pin.

“Why, hast thou a pin of thy very own!” exclaimed Prudence.

“Yea, I have, as thou seest. My mother hath but two. Mistress Wells hath a noble heart. She gave me the pin when she gave me this,” said Hannah, as, unrolling the linen, she held up to Prudence’s admiring gaze a knot of scarlet ribbon.

“What a brave color! It dazzles my eyes!” exclaimed Prudence. “’Tis far brighter than a rose. Didst ever put it on, Hannah?” she asked with bated breath, as one who speaks of a forbidden temptation.

“I oft take it out to feast mine eyes on its brave color,” said Hannah, “and sometimes I fasten it on at night, when I come up to bed, for a moment. I will show thee how it looketh on me.”

Hannah pinned the scarlet bow under her chin, and turned complacently towards Prudence.

“I would I had a mirror to see myself with it,” she said.

“Oh, Hannah, truly 't is a pity thou canst not see thyself!” exclaimed Prudence. “That brave knot lighteth up thy sad-colored gown, and maketh thy cheeks more red, and thine eyes bright. Thou lookest as fine as a London gentlewoman. 'T is most pleasing. I would that I, too, had a knot of that goodly color.”

“I will let thee put this on for a moment,” said Hannah. “Then I, too, can see how it looks.”

As Hannah was pinning the scarlet bow beneath Prudence's soft round chin, suddenly the door opened, and her mother, a stirring woman, thrust her head in, saying briskly, —

“Come, come, girls, you are belated. 'T is Monday morn, and we must —”

Here her eye fell on the scarlet bow, and she stopped, thunder-struck, gazing sternly at the two culprits, who stood hanging their heads in guilty silence.

“Where didst get yon vain gewgaw, Hannah Smith?” she demanded.

“Mistress Hepzibah Wells gave it to me,” faltered Hannah.

“Mistress Wells is a vain, giddy hussy,” said Goodwife Smith. “I look for a heavy judg-

ment from the Lord upon her, an she mend not her idle walk and conversation. Give me the gewgaw."

Marching downstairs, followed by the downcast girls, Goodwife Smith cast the pretty knot of ribbon into the kitchen fire.

"It shall be a burnt offering," she said.

The flames seized greedily upon its brightness, and in a moment it was shrivelled, blackened, gone.

Hannah was unable to repress her tears.

"I would thy tears were for thy stony heart, and not, as I fear, for thy sinful gewgaw," said her mother. "The pin is of value, and I will not destroy that. Thou canst return it to Mistress Hepzibah with thy mother's thanks for the fine example she setteth her daughter."

Here Chileab Smith said, —

"Doubtless young Mistress Wells meaneth no harm. She is but young and light-minded, and thinketh not how her vain example tendeth to corrupt our youth. But —"

"Thou excuseth her because she is fair to look upon," burst in his wife.

"Good wife, thou interruptest me," said Chileab, continuing gravely: "My daughter, the psalmist saith that favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but the woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Such an one do I pray to see thee become,



but I fear that thou setteth thy heart too strongly on the things that perish. After breakfast, I will have a season of special prayer with thee, that thine eyes may be opened to the truth."

For the morning selection of Scriptures, Hannah had to read, as her portion, the last part of the third chapter of Isaiah, beginning at the eighteenth verse.

The girlish voice sounded rather pitiful as it read in tearful accents the long list of the sinful finery of the daughters of Zion, — their "chains and bracelets and mufflers," their "bonnets and ornaments of the legs and tablets and earrings," their "nose jewels and wimples and crissing pins."

Prudence felt herself under a cloud, as an accomplice in Hannah's sin, and was unable to make much response to the cheerful advances of Luke and Ebenezer, who seemed in remarkably good spirits, possibly rather pleased than otherwise that Hannah was having her turn in being "dealt with."

"Come with me, my daughter, to thy chamber," said Chileab, after return thanks.

As Hannah and her father withdrew, Luke whispered to Prudence, —

"An it had been one of us boys that had transgressed, father would have trounced us soundly with the rod. I see not why girls should not be

whipped as well as boys. Because they whimper and make so sore outcry, I dare say."

"What art whispering to thy cousin, Luke?" asked his mother, rising from the hearthstone, where she had been placing the covered bake-kettle containing dough to raise for bread.

"Let us have no more folly," she continued. "Thou mayst go now and take thy cousin down to her new home. Go first to thy grandsire's, though I doubt not her mother is already gone to work. Hannah will stay in the house to-day, and spin an extra stint. She hath been too idle of late. Satan loveth an idle dawdler, for then he seeth fruitful soil for his seed."

"May we go with Luke and Prudence?" asked Ebenezer and Pelatiah.

"I see no harm in 't," said their mother, after a moment's pause for consideration. "But come directly home again and to thy work. Goodwife Ellis will have too much to do this morning to want idlers around under foot, I wot."

Prudence was glad to escape out doors, and drew a long, free breath as she stepped into the June sunshine, that poured down a golden flood of blessing on saint and sinner alike.

The children went first to Lieutenant Smith's, where they learned that the Ellises had already gone to their own home. They crossed the green again, where were pasturing a few horses and oxen.

Ebenezer picked up a bit of broken tree branch, and began to whip and drive an ox peaceably grazing near him.

"Haw, buck, gee!" he cried, starting the ox into a clumsy run.

"Have a care, 'Nezer," said his older brother. "That is William Webster's ox. An Goody Webster chanceth to see thee chasing it, thou mayst have an evil charm cast on thee."

"I was only playing I was the cow-keeper," said 'Nezer, hastily dropping the whip.

"Ho, a proper cow-keeper thou! The cow-keeper was up and off to the cow commons with his herd long ago," said Luke. "Father drove our cows out for him before breakfast, and I heard his horn sound while we were eating. Thou couldst not be such a sleepy head mornings, an thou wert the cow-keeper."

"I am glad our poor Brindle will be safe guarded from the Mohawks," said Prudence, telling her cousins the sad fate of her father's other cow.

"Thou needst have no fear now," said Luke, "for the cow-keeper beareth a gun, and keepeth a sharp outlook for prowling enemy Indians or wild beasts. And he taketh good care to drive the herd home ere the gates are shut."

"There are some Indians now!" exclaimed Prudence.

A wrinkled old squaw, her back bent under a load of skins, was following meekly down the street an Indian brave, who bore quarters of venison.

"That is Mattawan and his old squaw, Mashalisk, going doubtless to Dr. Westcarr's to truck their skins and venison for his wares," said Luke.

"More likely for his firewater," said Ebenezer.

"Dr. Westcarr hath been bound over of late for trial by our Commissioners, so he will be wary of selling liquors to Indians for a season, methinks," said Luke.

"I like not to see Indians," said Prudence. "The sight of them maketh me shudder as if I had stepped on a serpent."

"Thou wilt soon become wonted to them," said Luke. "They are to and fro every day among us, and we think nought about them."

The horses and cattle pasturing on the green were, save the Indians and children, the only living things stirring up and down the long, sunny street. The men and boys were off at work on the meadows, the women and girls busy indoors. But one more person did the children encounter.

As they neared Dr. Westcarr's house, out came an old dame, wrinkled and bent, with snowy hair, leaning on a staff.

"Good morrow, lads," she said in a cheery tone,

that accorded well with the kindly face, bright despite its wrinkles. "Is this thy young English cousin with thee?"

"Yea, good Granny Allison," said Luke, respectfully.

"It cheereth my heart to see the fresh roses of Old England on thy cheeks, child," said Granny Allison. "Tell thy good mother I shall come to see her shortly. And come thou, child, to see me, and tell me how it fareth now in Old England. I would I could see home once more, ere I die. But I must hasten on, and not be idly chattering here."

"Who is ill, Granny?" asked Luke.

"Dr. Westcarr is grievously valetudinarious. He hath sore misgivings that God is wroth with him for his dealings with the Indians, and hath sent this sickness on him in anger, and that he will not recover. I must home and concoct a healing potion that hath marvellous virtue in such ailments."

The good granny hobbled off down the street, while Luke explained to Prudence, —

"Granny Allison will tell thee merry tales of doings in old England, an thou visitest her. My mother and others deem her guilty of vain conversation, and doubt if she be, at heart, a true non-conformist. But she hath wondrous skill as a healer, and she is so kindly too, that even the magistrates care not to meddle with her."

“Granny Allison made Shadrach Clarke eat the meat of a rattlesnake once, when he was weakly and could not go to school,” said Ebenezer. “And she keepeth snake balls, for I saw them once.”

“Ugh!” said Prudence, “I would gladly rather be ill than take such horrible medicines.”

“Granny saith that rattlesnake’s meat hath wondrous virtue,” said Luke. “I know that Shadrach was restored able to go to school the next day after tasting it. But here is thy house. Good-by. We will come to see thee and thy brothers soon, mayhap to-night.”

Prudence looked with great interest on her future home. She saw a small house, unpainted of course, covered with thick clove-boards, its roof, steep in front, sloping down in the rear to cover a lean-to. The front door opened directly into the living room. The windows had solid wooden shutters, with bolts to fasten them at night.

Nathan and Abigail were sitting on the door-stone, waiting to be the first to show Prudence the new home. Peletiah loitered behind.

“I would fain stay awhile, Luke,” he said, “and play with my cousin Nathan.”

“Come on, thou laggard,” said Luke, pulling him by the hand. “Thou knowest full well that thou wilt get a sound basting an thou stayest without permission.”

So Peletiah had reluctantly to leave, while Nathan and Abigail, seizing Prudence's hands, pulled her into the house.

Out of the living room was a bedroom, and back of it, in the lean-to, a small summer kitchen. Rude, steep stairs led to two chambers above.

Near the huge fireplace stood a high-backed wooden settle.

"See what nice seats Abigail and I have," said Nathan, showing some solid blocks of wood. "And there are blocks for thee and John too. But this is the best seat of all," said Nathan, sitting down on a seat inside the great fireplace. "This will be nice and warm in winter. And I can see the sky," he added, peeping up the black depths of the chimney.

The living room was a square, low room, seeming still lower from the two heavy beams that ran across the ceiling. In these beams were fastened clumsy iron hooks. The ceiling and walls of the room were of matched boards, unpainted.

It was not a bright, luxurious interior that met Prudence's eyes. But it looked pleasant to her, for it had the charm of novelty, and, above all, it was home. Here the Ellises could settle down, and worship God after their own fashion, in peace and freedom.

“Is not this a goodly house? Art not glad we came to live in Hadley?” asked Nathan.

“I like the house well,” responded Prudence, heartily. “And I trow we shall have some merry times here with all our cousins. Hannah hath told me much of their doings.”

“I care not over much for my cousin Pelatiah,” said Nathan.

“I dare say you two will be great friends, once you are acquainted,” said Prudence.

Goodwife Ellis had been busy, meantime, settling their few belongings. Lieutenant Smith had purchased for her husband a few necessary articles of heavy furniture, and wooden trenchers and piggins, all rudely constructed by the Hadley carpenter; and she had brought from Old England her store of pewter, clothing, tow and holland sheets, etc.

Prudence found her mother full of trouble. She was trying to kindle a fire in the kitchen fireplace. Volumes of smoke poured down into the room, and out the open door and window.

“I know not what aileth this chimney,” she said, wiping her smarting eyes. “It will not draw. I verily believe it is bewitched.”

“Perchance it is, mother,” said Prudence, “for, as we came along, ’Nezer chased an ox, and Luke warned him to stop, lest the wife of its owner cast an evil spell on him. Luke saith that Goody



Webster is by common report a witch, and that she works much harm on those who offend her. And she liveth not far below us."

"Doubtless that is the trouble," said her mother. "We must use great care how we deal with her. Yet I see not why she should bear ill will against strangers like us."

"Luke saith that the witch hath a venomous spite against father's cousin, Philip Smith, because he hath threatened to have her presented at court for her wicked practices, and so she hateth all of his connections on his account," said Prudence.

Goodwife Ellis now peered up the chimney, and fancying that she perceived some obstructions through the dense smoke, sent Nathan for a long pole. With this, she was not long in dislodging a mass of swallows' nests that had accumulated in the disused chimney.

The evil spell was now broken, the fire broke out into a bright blaze, and Goodwife Ellis took fresh heart.

"While I unpack the pewter and arrange it on the dresser," she said, "do thou and Nathan, Prudence, take this bag and go up the street to the river bank, and fill it with the finest, whitest sand thou canst find, to sand the floors. Take Abigail with thee, as it will keep her out of my way, and if ye hap to see any scouring rushes, bring home a goodly handful."

The children went willingly on this agreeable errand, and prolonged it as long as they decently could.

It was fascinating to loiter on the shore of the bright river, which swept by so peacefully yet strongly, shining in the sun, lapping gently against the stones, reflecting the blue sky, the birds flying low over its waters, the bushes and trees along its banks.

Nathan and Prudence had a fine game of ducks and drakes. Nathan improved so that he could make the flat stones skip out of the water almost as many times as his older sister.

This game might have gone on much longer, had not the children happened to see two Indians in a canoe, paddling swiftly down stream towards them.

“Methinks ’t is time to go home,” said Nathan, seizing the bag of sand.

But Prudence was already scrambling up the bank, pulling Abigail after her as fast as she could.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### ON MOUNT HOLYOKE.

GOODMAN ELLIS and John, escorted by Samuel Smith, had gone this Monday morning to view the section of meadow land in Hockanum which had been a part of the Ellises' purchase from the Hawks family.

Goodman Ellis bestrode his strong white mare, while John and Sam rode the brown one, and Watch trotted merrily along behind, before, all about, glad indeed that an expedition of some sort was evidently on foot.

"'T is best to take your guns," Sam had advised. "True, there is no fear of Indians, but we may chance on some game."

Sam, who owned no gun of his own, though free to use his elder brother's, felt almost envious of John as he handled and admired the snaphance.

It was pleasant to ride that glorious June morning along the river side down the Springfield road through Fort Meadow, in some places covered with thriving crops, in others waving with tall, rank, wild grass, their view to the south bounded by the

two great mountains rising grandly up against the blue sky.

Goodman Ellis's heart glowed within him with a vivid sense of God's loving-kindness to him and his, as he gazed about on the beautiful scene, and he hummed a psalm tune as he jogged along.

When they trotted across the strong bridge of logs over Fort River, John said, —

“Verily, this seemeth like Old England. This is the first bridge I have seen in this land.”

“’T is almost the only one, I trow,” said Sam. “but the town is minded to build a cart bridge next spring, on the Bay Path, south of Spruce Hill. ’T is a great conveniency in crossing streams, especially in time of high water.”

John was careful to dismount and close the Fort Meadow gate after them, and this reminded him to ask Sam, —

“Sam, I would gladly earn the bounty offered by the town for slaying wolves. Think’st thou I can kill any?”

“Thou canst easily,” said Sam. “I will help thee make a wolf pit. A good place is on the Pine Plain, for they lurk about there in great numbers, striving to catch and devour our calves and swine. We lose many by the pests. Perchance we can go up on the mountain to-day and find a good spot for a pit. We may e’en chance on a wolf there.”

Arrived at Hockanum Meadow, Goodman Ellis viewed with much satisfaction his section of four acres, divided from his neighbors' land only by mere stones, the floods which covered the meadows every spring making it impossible to maintain fences.

Lieutenant Smith and his sons, knowing how vitally important abundant crops were to the settlers in this new land, where each must depend solely on what his own hands could bring forth from the soil by hard toil, had kindly planted their kinsman's land with the crops they knew to be most necessary: corn, peas, rye, wheat, and flax. In the rich new soil these crops had already made a rank growth that amazed the English eyes of Goodman Ellis.

"Verily the fertility of this land is greatly to be marvelled at," he exclaimed. "The corn is high enough already for the first hoeing. John, thou and I must bring down our hoes to-morrow, and at it in earnest."

"Of late 't is the custom to plough between the rows," said Sam. "'Tis found to save much labor in hoeing. I wot father will gladly lend thee his plough."

"What are these plants and vines growing amongst the maize?" asked Goodman Ellis.

"Father and Uncle Chileab deemed it wise to adopt the Indian custom for thy land, as they

have for their own," said Sam. "The Indians, on their plantations on Indian Bottom, are wont to plant beans with the corn, and pumpkins between the hills. Thus they get three crops instead of one from the same land."

"Verily, a most wise course," said Goodman Ellis.

Now whether the air and sunshine of this bright June morning had gone to Goodman Ellis's head, or what was the matter can never be known; but certain it is that, after he had thoroughly looked over his growing crops, he astonished the boys by saying, —

"Samuel, I am not one given to idling, but, being new in this land, and the morning being broken, I count it no sin to spy out the country round about. Methinks if we could ascend this great mountain a piece, there would be a goodly prospect."

"Oh, let us go up the mountain by all means," said John, delighted at this novel inclination to relax in pleasure-seeking, the first time that his father had ever shown such a tendency in John's recollection.

"T is quite safe to go, for there are no Maquas about now," said Sam, also eager for the expedition. "I can guide thee, for I went up in the spring before planting, with young Thomas Wells, who is a famous hunter."

“Didst get any game?” asked John.

“Great store of it,” said Sam, “and the venison and turkeys we brought back were truly a blessing, for the long winter had sorely wasted our stock of provisions. In truth, we get most of our meat from the woods and streams, save what our swine furnish.”

Sam led the way towards the crack of the mountain.

“Canst not go directly up from the meadow?” asked Goodman Ellis.

“Nay, ’t is too steep,” said Sam. “’T is easier to go roundabout to the valley of the crack, where the ascent is easier. We can ride a piece till the slope groweth steeper.”

Leaving the meadow behind them, they soon struck into the oak and chestnut woods covering the lower slope of the mountain. Here there was little undergrowth to hinder their riding between the trees.

Goodman Ellis looked about in wonder and admiration at the primeval forest, where the sound of an axe had as yet never been heard, at the great trees ripening to decay, at the wealth of vines swinging from tree to tree in wild luxuriance, full now of odorous blossoms.

“Verily,” he said, “this canopy of verdure is a goodly spectacle. Yon huge oak mindeth me of that which Scripture telleth us of, whereon Ab-

salom was caught up by the hair of his head, between the heavens and earth. Doubtless he wore unseemly long locks to his destruction, like our gallants."

John and Sam were not thinking much about Absalom. They were keeping a keen lookout for game, and so was Watch, sniffing eagerly about as he made wide excursions on all sides into the woods. The forest was full of life, and Watch found ample scope for his activity. Now he chased a rabbit that vanished into its hole before he could seize it; now he started a partridge that fluttered up into a tree out of his reach; now a gray squirrel eluded him.

The boys laughed to see so much fierceness wasted, but Watch lost not a whit of his ambition, starting on a fresh hunt after each disappointment with cheerful energy.

Many a bright flash of color lit up the forest, as robin or bluebird darted from branch to branch, or sat swaying lightly on some pendent bough tip, singing love songs near its nest.

John was looking up at the birds, with no heart to shoot such merry warblers, when he saw something new to him.

"Sam," he said, "didst see that little creature leap, it seemed to me full twenty feet, from yonder giant oak into the top of that tall chestnut? I can hardly believe my eyes, yet verily I saw him do it."



“There is a species of squirrel in these woods, that by a certain skill flieth from one tree to another. Doubtless, 't was one of those thou saw'st.”

“Verily this is a land of marvels,” said Goodman Ellis.

“We must needs tie the horses here, and mount the rest of the way on foot,” said Sam. “'T is most steep above here.”

“Methinks 't were wise to leave Watch to guard our beasts,” said Goodman Ellis. “Watch! Here, sir, lie thee down here.”

Watch was evidently sorry to give up his happy prowlings about the woods. Yet he appreciated the honor of his charge, and lay down by the sapling to which the horses were tied, looking proudly about, as if thinking, —

“Let any one touch these horses at his peril. *I* am here.”

The ascent now grew steeper, broken by rocks, and strewn with mossy logs, trunks of great pines that, wasted by natural decay, had fallen in the fierce gales of some bygone winter, long ere the foot of a white man had trod Mount Holyoke.

Pines and birch trees began to take the place of the chestnuts growing lower down. Mountain laurel bushes in profusion lighted up the forest aisles with their shining leaves and their pink and white flowers, and John was thinking, —

"I will gather some of those posies for Pruda when I come back," when Sam cried, —

"Quick, John! Your gun!"

Far up beyond them, where a spring gushed out of the mountain side, John saw a beautiful deer drinking from the spring, a fawn by her side.

John and his father both fired. The shots smote harshly on the quiet morning air, and echoed along the mountain. In far away Hadley street people listened, and wondered if Indians were about; then thought, —

"These be times of peace. 'Tis but some hunter at his sport."

The deer gave a great leap, and, followed by her fawn, bounded swiftly away into the forest. Goodman Ellis was vexed.

"Verily, this gun must be bewitched," he said "I aimed most surely, and I see not otherwise how I could have missed the creature."

"'T was likewise with me," said John.

"It taketh some practice to shoot wild game," said Sam. "Thomas Wells and others of our skilled hunters are sure shots. They hit birds on the wing, and deer on the run. That deer was at long range for any gun."

Better luck awaited them farther on, when they came upon a flock of wild turkeys feeding on wintergreen berries and tender new leaves in an opening in the woods. Almost as soon as seen,

the turkeys vanished, but not before two quick shots had laid low a large gobbler and a hen.

John, overjoyed, ran to pick up the game, while his father, well satisfied, said, —

“God hath shown His loving-kindness to us in this stroke of good fortune. Thy mother will welcome this addition to our larder, now when we are but poorly stocked with provisions.”

“What shall we do with them?” asked John. “This huge fellow weigheth twenty pounds, an he weigheth an ounce.”

“Hang them up on a bough till we return,” said Sam.

“We have no twine with us,” said John.

“No lack of that in the forest,” said Sam. “Here, close by, is a shrub called moosewood, whose bark the Indians oft use for strings.”

Sam peeled long strips of the tough, fibrous bark from the moosewood stem, with which the turkeys were tied foot and foot, and left dangling high up on a pine bough, near the spring.

The ascent now became a rough scramble up what seemed to them an almost perpendicular rocky wall. Placing their feet cautiously, now on a narrow projecting shelf, now in a cleft or crack among the rocks, they pulled themselves up by the stunted cedars and hemlocks that hung out from the rocks, their roots firmly fastened deep in the crannies.

Sam, who led, came out at last on top a bare rock, exclaiming, —

“Here we are at last!”

John scrambled up next, and last of all came Goodman Ellis, puffing and panting, and realizing that he was not so young as the boys.

They stood at first lost in wonder at the vast picture spread out below them, one of the most beautiful on which the sun shines. It was not strange that John exclaimed, —

“I knew not that the whole world was so great!”

Their view swept over hundreds of miles, from the ranges of mountains and hills in the far north, with summits rising here and there above the rest, to be called later “Greylock,” “Monadnock,” “the Green Mountains,” down the valley of the Connecticut, almost to its mouth in the adjoining colony. For many miles they traced the course of the noble stream, from among the distant hills in the north, winding along until it made the great curve which held Hadley lovingly nestled in the hollow of its embracing arm, and then swept majestically on between its two great mountain guards, Tom and Holyoke, on its way over the Connecticut border.

As far as the eye could reach, in every direction, was only forest, unbroken save by some fertile meadows along the river, the Indians’ planting ground from days of old.

They looked with deep interest at the little cluster of houses on the peninsula below made by the river's curve, which was their home, and were glad to see that other small group of houses across the river, finely situated on a plateau rising above the meadows, which Sam told them was the neighboring plantation of Northampton. Behind them the mountain range on which they stood stretched far away in rough and rugged grandeur, covered with woods, save where bare rocks jutted boldly out.

Goodman Ellis lacked words to express his delight in a scene of such grandeur and extent as he had never before looked upon. Finally he burst out, —

“Verily, a most amazing and pleasing sight! A goodly heritage hath the Lord given into the hands of His chosen ones! This mindeth me how Moses gat up from the plains of Moab into Mount Nebo, to view the promised land. The everlasting hills, the mountains of Zion,” he murmured to himself, striving by familiar Scripture phrase to express the feeling of exaltation that filled his soul, high here on the mountain top.

“Where lieth Springfield, Sam?” asked John.

“To the southward, below the mountains, and the great falls in the river. Thou canst see smoke there, the day is so clear. To the north, near where the river first appeareth among the

hills, lieth the new settlement of Pocumtuck, or Deerfield, as they think to call it. 'Tis but lately begun. Beyond Deerfield, save a small settlement begun of late at Squakeag, is nought but unbroken wilderness to Canada."

"By God's help His people have run through a troop, and leaped over a wall," said Goodman Ellis. "He hath brought them forth into a large place. His voice shaketh the wilderness, and breaketh the cedars of Lebanon. Blessed be the name of the Lord, who hath wrought great things by His mighty arm."

As they stood, elated by standing above the world, as it were, looking afar over earth and sky, a great bird flapped slowly over.

"Yon goes an eagle," said Sam.

John would fain have tried a shot at the eagle, but it had lighted on a dead pine projecting from a rocky summit beyond the range of his gun.

Now Goodman Ellis aroused himself from his absorption, saying, —

"The height of the sun proclaimeth that noon draweth nigh, and we must e'en descend from this mount of the Lord. I bless His holy name that mine eyes have been permitted to behold this goodly vision. 'Tis time profitably spent."

The downward climb, though rougher work, was also much speedier, and they were not long in coming to the spring, where they found their tur-

keys safe, though a great buzzard was circling above the woods, suspiciously near. John took one turkey, Sam the other, and they pressed on down the mountain.

“Watch will be sore weary waiting for us,” said John. “But ’t was well we left him behind. He could not have climbed those great rocks.”

“Hark!” said Goodman Ellis, suddenly stopping. “Methinks I hear him barking loudly.”

Listening, they plainly heard loud barking and yelps from Watch’s direction, indicating immense excitement.

“I marvel much what is the matter,” said John. “His bark hath a note of alarm.”

They ran as fast as the nature of the ground permitted among the trees, to the spot where Watch and the horses had been left. As they drew nearer, Watch’s yelps took on a shrill tone of distress.

“Some wild beast devoureth him!” cried John, speeding breathlessly on, ahead of his older and stouter father.

Watch had good reason for his yelps, as John to his horror found, when he saw his faithful dog clutched close in the embrace of a young black bear.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE BEAR.

THE bear, prowling about the forest, perhaps frightened to a lower range from the heights above by the gun shots, had come out upon Watch and the horses. The spirited white mare had broken her tie rein and fled. The other horse was snorting, rearing, pulling, in frantic efforts to escape.

Watch, undismayed by the sight of this strange beast, had bravely attacked him, but had been overpowered in the unequal struggle, and now the bear, standing on its hind legs, clutched him in a death grip, striving to crush out his life.

John hurriedly fired a shot which penetrated the bear's thick hide, causing him to drop Watch and rush fiercely at his new foe.

Goodman Ellis poured a round of bullets from his gun ere the beast relaxed its grasp of John and fell. Sam rushed up with his large knife and gave the bear the finishing stroke, though not without having one hand badly torn by the claws of the wounded animal.



“Ha,” said Sam, “but for my stout buckskin breeches, my legs would have fared worse than my hand.”

“Again hath the Lord preserved us,” said Goodman Ellis, as he stood leaning on his gun, looking with something very like natural human pride on his first bear. “Is the good Watch much hurt?”

“He bleedeth so that I cannot tell yet whether any of his bones be broken or no,” said John, who was tenderly trying to soothe his beloved dog friend. “Good Watch, poor Watch,” he said, trying to make him understand how much he admired his pluck and faithfulness.

“Watch is a valiant hound,” said Sam. “’T would be a pity to lose him.”

“But thine hand bleedeth sorely. Thou art badly hurt,” said John.

“’T is not much,” said Sam, trying to make light of his injury. “But ’t is an inconveniency here in the wood, so far from home.”

The situation was indeed rather awkward. A dead bear, a wounded boy and dog, on the mountain side, to be gotten home with only one horse. What was to be done?

Goodman Ellis felt extremely anxious about his white mare, an animal brought by him from England, whose value here in the wilderness could hardly be estimated.

“I judge it wise to leave the bear here, and

press on in pursuit of the mare," he said. "T would be a sorry stroke of God's providence should we lose her."

"Go thou in search of her, cousin Reuben," said Sam. "The bear's carcass is too useful to be wasted. Bear's steak maketh a noble feast, and the skin is most useful. John and I will contrive some way to take it home."

Goodman Ellis, willing to accept advice according so well with his own inclinations, threw the turkeys over his shoulder, and hurried down the mountain, looking hard as he strode on, wherever the ground was soft, for hoof tracks to guide him.

John was as determined as Sam to get the bear home somehow.

"Prudence will be sore frightened to look upon it, I doubt not," he said, "but my mother will see now how wise it was for my father to buy me a snaphance of my own."

He contrived to swathe Sam's hand in large oak leaves, bound on with strips of moosewood bark, and made a sling for his arm from a wide strip of the bark.

"Do thou, Sam," he said, "mount the horse, and I will e'en try to load on the bear's carcass."

Now came a struggle. The frightened horse wheeled and curveted about this way and that a long time before the boys' united efforts succeeded in soothing her enough to allow the carcass to be flung across her back.

“Now canst bear poor Watch in front of thee?” asked John.

“Yea, an thou ledest the horse,” said Sam.

“That I must needs do, or she will throw thee ere thou knowest where thou art,” said John.

Long after the noon hour, when Goodwife Ellis had become thoroughly anxious about the missing ones, Nathan and Abigail were playing goal before their door with their cousins Ebenezer and Pelatiah, who proved most merry playmates, when Ebenezer, chancing to look up, saw this strange sight: John coming up the street leading the horse, on which sat Sam, pale and weak, bearing before him Watch, all bloody and distressed, and behind a black bear's carcass thrown across the horse.

“Look! look!” cried Ebenezer. “Our brothers have had a fight with a bear!”

At the word “bear” Abigail fled into the house, crying,—

“A bear! a bear!”

Out ran Goodwife Ellis, prepared for the worst, and out peeped Prudence through a cautious crack in the door.

Great was the excitement at the boys' story, and deep the sympathy and admiration of all the children for good Watch. Prudence hastened to make a soft bed in the chimney corner for him, while the younger brothers looked with great

respect on Sam and John as hunters of renown, and told each other what they would do if they chanced to meet a bear.

Sam went home, where his mother, fearing that his wound needed greater skill than she was mistress of, sent one of the younger boys after Granny Allison, saying, —

“Tell Granny the nature of Sam’s hurt, and ask her to bring such simples as she deemeth needful, for I have but a small stock of physical herbs.”

Granny Allison came hobbling over as soon as summoned. Examining the wound, she said, —

“Odsplut! But that bear did give thee a sound clawing!”

Goodwife Smith frowned at this exclamation.

“Use not profane terms here, Granny,” she said, “lest the Lord fail to prosper thy healing arts.”

Granny Allison shed this advice with the cheerfulness which seemed so natural to her that even the Puritan views — which, indeed, she was suspected to hold somewhat loosely — could not dampen it, and prescribed a poultice made of elder leaves and milk for the wounded hand, and a plantain tea to be taken internally, “to cool the humors of the blood.”

Her surgery done, Granny said, —

“I trow I’ll e’en trudge down to Goodman

Ellis's and take a look at Sir Bear. I have seen no bear since I was wont to see the bear-baitings in Merry England."

Goodwife Smith frowned again at this light allusion to a sport forbidden among the Puritans; but not wishing to offend Granny Allison, lest she lose her healing skill in some emergency, she kept a stern silence.

Late in the afternoon, Goodman Ellis returned home, tired and hungry, from his vain search for the white mare, much dejected at this new misfortune.

"Perchance," he said, "'t was a sinful waste of time to go idling upon the mountain, calling down God's anger upon me. Yet I thought it no harm to learn somewhat of this new land wherein we have pitched our tent."

"Thou hast something of the boy still left in thee, Reuben Ellis," said his wife. "'T was a true boyish freak in thee, methinks, to climb yon great mountain causelessly."

"'T was the goodliest sight mine eyes e'er rested on," said the good man, the vision of beauty he had seen rising again before his mental eye. "I wouldst thou too could gaze upon it, Experience, but no woman can e'er ascend that wondrous steep mountain. Yet it much feareth me, as thou sayest, that the natural man o'ercame the man of grace in me, that I was tempted to

idleness and pleasure-seeking by Satan, and that the Lord hath sent this disaster upon me in token of His sore wrath."

As the sun was setting, Prudence, who was sitting on the door-stone, looking down the quiet street, feeling somewhat lonely and homesick, wishing she could see again Rose Hathaway, her dear playmate in far-away England, suddenly cried out, —

"Father, there is an Indian coming up the street. An I mistake not, he leadeth our white mare, Bess. Yea, 't is verily she!"

The Indian proved to be none other than Wequogon, who, finding the mare in the woods, seeing by her saddle that she had run away, and recognizing her as the property of Goodman Ellis, had brought her back to her owner.

As he drew near he said, —

"Netop, Englishman. Wequogon found the Englishman's squaw horse many arrow shots away, on the great mountain," pointing towards the south, where Mount Holyoke, pink in the hues of the setting sun, rose up in all her evening glory. "Wequogon Englishman's friend. Bring squaw horse back."

"Good Wequogon," said Goodman Ellis, "I will not forget this kindness at thy hands. Verily, as the Scripture saith, they that dwell in the wilderness shall bow down before the Lord,

and the heathen shall praise Him ! Come in and sup, friend."

Willingly did Goodman Ellis place in Wequogon's hand a goodly string of wampum beads, and cheerfully did his wife prepare a big supper from her larder, now so bountifully replenished with good store of bear and turkey meat, and greedily did Wequogon devour everything set before him, to the last savory scrap.

Nathan and Abigail stood at a safe distance, watching his greedy eating with a sort of horrified fascination, while Watch, from his cozy bed in the corner of the fireplace, gave low growls now and then, in spite of Prudence's patting and hushing, showing too plainly what he thought of the visitor.

White Bess was a trifle lame, but not otherwise the worse apparently for her wild run in the forest.

At prayers, that night, Goodman Ellis's heart overflowed with gratitude to God for His undeserved mercies. Still mindful of the beautiful sight he had that day seen, he selected for his Scripture reading the chapter in Mark which recounts the transfiguration of Jesus on "an high mountain;" and then he said,—

"Let us sing to the praise of God the nineteenth psalm."

The voices of parents and children, even little

Abigail's, blended sweetly as they rose in the quaint words of Sternhold's version.

“The heavens and the firmament  
do wondrously declare  
The glory of God omnipotent,  
his works and what they are.

In them the Lord made royally  
a settle for the sun,  
Where lyke a Gyant joyfully  
he myght his journey run.

And all the sky from end to end  
he compast round about;  
No man can hide him from the heat  
but he will find him out.”



## CHAPTER X.

### THE BOUND GIRL.

ONE pleasant afternoon, soon after dinner, Hannah came down to Prudence's, carrying an Indian basket woven of oak splints, rudely stained red and blue with dyes from forest plants. Her face was full of joy and animation.

"Cousin Experience," she said breathlessly, "wilt thou suffer Prudence to go with me and some of my mates to the Pine Plain this afternoon for blackberries?"

"Are the berries ripe yet?" asked Goodwife Ellis, while Prudence waited her mother's decision with an anxiety that flushed her fair face with changing color.

"Mary Wells came up last night to tell me that her brother Jonathan saith the berries are ripe, and most plentiful too, over on the Plain. My mother hath given me the whole afternoon, for she desireth berries to dry for use next winter. Wilt suffer Prudence to go too?"

"If thy mother alloweth thee to go, Hannah, doubtless the place must be safe. Thou mayst

go, Prudence. Thou hast worked diligently to-day."

Prudence's face shone at this praise, and the happy prospect of a whole afternoon's outing with the other girls.

"Take with thee the large basket that I purchased from Awonusk. An thou wastest no time in idle play, but bringest me home good store of berries, thou shalt have some with thy bread and milk for supper to-night."

"Thou shalt see that I will bring thee a plentiful store of berries, mother," said Prudence, joyfully, as she tied on her linen cap.

The girls hastened across the street to Mary Wells's, where they found impatiently waiting their coming, not only Mary herself, but her next door neighbor and crony, Mehitable Porter, and also Priscilla Warner, Nathaniel's sister, and Submit Carter.

"Thou art as slow as slow, Hannah," said Mary, a quick-tempered but warm-hearted girl.

"I had to wait for Prudence," said Hannah. "But now let us hasten on and get to filling our baskets."

As the girls went down the street, Priscilla, who walked with Prudence a little behind the rest, said to her in a low tone, —

"'T is passing strange that the Widow Burnham hath suffered her bound girl to go with us.

She must have wanted blackberries sorely. 'Tis said that Submit hath to toil early and late, like a negro slave."

"I pity her," whispered Prudence, "yet, I know not how it is, I like her not. She seemeth strange, unlike other girls. I wish she had not come."

"My mother saith we must treat her kindly, because she is a bound girl," said Priscilla. "But I feel towards her exactly as thou. Thou knowest it is commonly reported that she ran away down in Connecticut and wished to dwell in the forest among the Indians!"

Submit Carter's father was a Boston sailor; a man regarded by his Puritan acquaintance as of loose life and doubtful character. On returning from one of his foreign voyages, he had brought this little girl, Francesca, as he called her, his child, he said, by a foreign wife, who was dead.

He failed to return from his next voyage. It was supposed that he had been captured by pirates, but his fate was not known. The Boston townsmen had bound out the friendless orphan, Francesca, until she was of age, to the Widow Burnham, who had removed not long after to the Connecticut Colony, and thence up the river to Hadley.

The Widow Burnham was one of the most rigorous of the Puritan matrons. Rumor reported her to be a hard task-mistress. She had at once

changed the child's name to Submit, against Francesca's passionate remonstrances and pleadings.

"I like not that hateful name," she had cried with a tempest of tears. "I will be called by my mother's name that my dear daddy gave me. He was wont to call me his darling little Francesca, his heart's delight. I am Francesca, not Submit!"

"Hoity toity, my fine mistress," said Widow Burnham, "a becoming way this for a bound girl to talk, forsooth! Submit is a proper name, befitting thy condition. Francesca, or whate'er thou call'st it, is a pagan name, unbecoming a Christian. Let me hear no more of it, an thou wouldst not have a sharp taste of yon bundle of rods."

Francesca's last name soon changed into plain "Carter" in colonial phrase. And so Francesca Cartier became outwardly Submit Carter, but in her heart she clung to her old name, and was always Francesca.

More than once had she made intimate acquaintance with the widow's bundle of rods. Once she had run away, wildly resolved to go, she cared not whither, anywhere for freedom. But there was nowhere to flee to but the woods, and the friendly Indians who had found her, brought her back next day, and since then she had been kept more closely than ever.

Francesca was a slight child, with abundant

black hair, a clear, dark, colorless skin, and great black eyes, with an eager, discontented, yearning expression. Among the strong, rosy children of English descent, she looked like something exotic, foreign. It was felt that there must be some strain of pagan blood in her.

Mr. Russell and the deacons often exhorted Widow Burnham to use peculiar diligence to raise this heathen child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, lest Satan snatch her soul to perdition.

“May it please your worships,” quoth the widow, “I wrestle faithfully for her salvation, in season and out. Nor do I spare the rod. But ’t is passing hard to train a sprout of evil up into a fruitful olive-tree in the Lord’s vineyard. She chooseth to eat the bread of idleness.”

To do the widow justice, she was actuated not only by a thrifty purpose to get all the work possible out of this alien bound girl, whom she must feed and clothe, but also by a sincere desire to save Submit’s soul, and train her up into a Christian womanhood.

Submit had hardly been able to credit her ears that summer morning, when told by her mistress:

“Goodwife Wells saith that her Mary and a party of her young mates go to the Pine Plain this afternoon for berries. An thou wouldst not be so slothful, I am half a mind to suffer thee to go with them.”

The color flushed Submit's dark cheek, and her eyes flashed. She said nothing, but the spinning wheel whirled with so merry a hum that morning in the widow's kitchen that even the widow was moved to rare praise when Submit, her spinning done long before the noon-mark proclaimed mid day, took the broom made of birch twigs and fell to sweeping and sanding the floor without being told.

"Thou couldst be a most desirable handmaiden an thou wouldst," said Widow Burnham. "Thou art deft and handy by nature, wert thou not so stubborn and stiff-necked. I could not have spun those rolls quicker or smoother myself. Thou mayst go this afternoon, an thou wilt work as briskly at berry gathering as thou hast this morning."

Submit's face softened at these words, almost kind, but when Widow Burnham felt it wise to add, —

"An thou bringest not home a goodly store of berries, I will baste thee soundly for idling," her face darkened into its usual sullen expression.

The party of girls went down the Middle Highway to the woods, then through the gate, up the bank, and were on the Pine Plain. The pine woods formerly covering the Plain had been mostly cut. All around the stumps, fallen logs, and piles of brush grew a wild profusion of blackberry bushes,

hanging low now with heavy clusters of fruit, in all stages from green berries to those of luscious ripeness and sweetness.

At first Submit said little to the other girls, her sensitive nature keenly sensible of their mental attitude towards her. She seldom mingled with them. They attended Dame Twitchell's school in winter, but Submit was kept at home to work.

None dreamed the joy with which Submit shut the highway gate behind her. The chains seemed to drop from off her soul. For one afternoon at least she was free, free as the birds that flew above her, free as the clouds floating over, as the summer breeze that tossed the pine tops and blew about her like some unseen playmate, as Submit often felt, urging her to come away and live forever joyfully with it under the open sky.

At first her slim fingers flew nimbly, and her basket filled faster than the others. But all the time a feeling of wildness, like that of a caged bird suddenly let loose, surged in her heart, and she felt tempted to some wild prank.

"I am glad," said Hannah, "that no enemy Indians have been seen of late, for then we should not have been suffered to come out on the Plain to-day."

"I would not care if we did meet the Indians," said Submit. "I would I were an Indian. Their

life is far happier than ours, I trow. I would gladly go and roam the hills and forest with them."

"Thou wouldst be more glad to come back, I'll wager, once thou hadst slept in their filthy wigwams," said Priscilla.

"I would sleep in the forest, under the trees and the stars," said Submit.

"The wolves and the wild cats would devour thee," said Prudence, remembering what she had seen and heard while journeying through the forest.

"Little would I care for them," said Submit, with a wild look in her black eyes. "I know a spell that can close their mouths."

"Oh, ho! Thou lovest to talk, Submit Carter," said Hannah, mocking this assumption.

A little later, Mary Wells exclaimed, —

"Do but look at Submit's basket, girls! She hath twice as many berries already as the rest of us! Verily, I believe the witches are helping thee," added Mary, jokingly.

"Perchance," said Submit, with another wild glance from her bright, dark eyes, "I know them well, and their master too."

"Submit Carter! Thou shouldst not talk that way, even in jest," said Mehitable Porter. "'T is sinful."

"I care not," said Submit. "I speak but the



truth, and thou wilt know it some day. And so will Widow Burnham, to her sorrow."

The girls exchanged glances, but dropped the subject, thinking the talk all part of Submit's strangeness, and that she was only trying to frighten them.

Straying farther on, they came to a little pool in a mossy hollow, on whose bank grew a mass of cardinal flowers in radiant bloom, the tall crimson spikes, leaning over the water, reflected against the background of blue sky lying in the pool's dark depths.

It was a sight full of beauty. The girls cried out in delight at the strange, bright flowers, and forgot all about berry picking as they ran to gather them. Hannah, whose longing for brilliant colors made her especially delight in the crimson blossoms, could not resist twining a few into a wreath.

Taking off her cap, she put the wreath on her head, and peered over into the pool, whose clear, dark mirror showed distinctly the girlish face, fair to see with its crimson crown.

"Oh," said Hannah, with a sigh, "how I wish it were not sinful to wear bright hues!"

"Thou art fair to look upon, Hannah, with that bright wreath," said Mehitable, a demure, quiet child, "but I doubt truly whether it be not sinful to adorn thyself in that manner."

"I care not whether it be sinful or no," said Submit. "Give me the wreath, Hannah, and I will show thee somewhat thine eyes never looked upon."

She cast her prim cap on the ground, loosened her long dark hair, and placed the wreath on her head, where it seemed to transform her into something as bright as itself. Her eyes shone, a rich color rose to her cheeks, and new life seemed to fill her lithe, slight form. She said to Hannah:

"Repeat these words, 'How now, Ophelia?'"

"What meaneth such gibberish?" asked Hannah, her curiosity excited to see what the strange girl would do next. "'How now, Ophelia?'"

To the girls' amazement, Submit began to sing a wild, weird song to a plaintive air, clasping and waving her hands in a distracted fashion.

"How should I your true love know  
From another one?  
By his cockle hat and staff,  
And his sandal shoon.  
He is dead and gone, lady,  
He is dead and gone;  
At his head a grass-green turf,  
At his heels a stone."

"'Tis a most strange, mournful song," said Mary Wells. "Where didst learn it?"

"My dear daddy taught it to me," said Submit. "'Tis a play-actor's song that my father heard at

a play in London, writ by one of good Queen Bess's play-actors. I used to sing it on shipboard to the sailor men."

"A play-actor's song!" exclaimed the girls, horrified that they had listened to anything so wicked.

"Ay. And I can dance, too," said Submit.

Humming a wild air, to whose strain her body swayed lithely, the little flower-crowned figure circled round and round on the green sward in a graceful dance.

The girls could hardly believe that this was the Widow Burnham's sullen bound girl. Life, joy, shone in her eyes, and bloomed in her cheeks, as she danced, swaying this way and that to her song, twining and waving her slender arms above her head in time with the motions of her nimble feet.

The girls had never seen anything like it, and gazed upon her with a sort of fascinated horror. It did not look wicked, but they knew it must be, for was it not dancing? They well knew they ought not even to look upon this forbidden thing, yet — 't was so novel! Their curiosity was excited to see for once what this dancing, so much condemned, was like.

"I would 'twere not sinful to dance," said Hannah Smith at last. "It looketh so pleasing."

"But 't is sinful, and sinful in us to countenance it," said Mehitable, stoutly. "Submit

Carter, an thou stop not, we will go away and leave thee!"

Submit rested lightly on one foot, like a bird lighting on a branch, and looked at the girls, a triumphant light blazing in her eyes. At last the girls had seen her real self. They knew Francesca, the Francesca who dreamed beautiful impossible dreams, as she drudged in dreary silence at the Widow Burnham's hateful tasks.

"'Tis not sinful to dance," she said hotly. "Something in here —" laying her hand on her breast — "tells me so."

"Satan, 't is likely, or some of his imps," said Mary Wells. "But, girls, look at the sun! 'T is sinking low, and yet our baskets are not filled."

The girls went back to picking berries, but their minds were full of Submit's strange performances. Submit saw that they were impressed, and felt with secret delight the power which she, the oppressed bound girl, could exert over these girls more favored by fortune.

"Doubtless thou hast seen many strange and wondrous things in thy wanderings, Submit?" said Priscilla Warner.

"Verily I have," answered Submit. "I have seen Satan himself."

The girls looked upon Submit with mingled horror and curiosity, and Hannah said,—

"Tell us about it, an it be true."

“First I saw him in the form of a huge black bear,” said Submit. “’T was when I journeyed up from Hartford with Widow Burnham. ’T was a darksome night, but I saw him plainly by the light that his eyes gave out. His eyes shone like coals of fire as he ran beside me in the path. My flesh crept all over. Then he leaped up behind Widow Burnham and sat on her saddle-cloth.”

“Submit Carter!” exclaimed Mary Wells, “have a care what thou sayest. An thou liest, the devil, who is the father of lies, will be after thee sure enough. How knewest thou that it was not a true bear?”

“Because he spoke to me, and asked me to sign his covenant with my blood,” said Submit, solemnly. “He promised me, an I would, he would take me away from the widow, and give me a red silk gown and many other fine things, and I should live merrily all my life.”

“Thou didst not do it!” exclaimed Hannah.

“Not then, but I may another time. He oft urgeth me to it. I saw him last night in the form of a little black dog, with red eyes in his back, sitting just outside Widow Burnham’s back door, when I went out to feed the swine. He spoke to me and said, —

“‘Art ready to sign, Francesca?’

“‘Not yet, good Mr. Devil,’ quoth I. But next time —”

"Thou shouldst never have any commerce with the Evil One, or e'en think of such a wickedness," broke in Mehitable.

"Hast told the minister, Mr. Russell, of this tempting of Satan?" asked Hannah.

"Nay, but perchance I will some day," said Submit, well pleased as she saw the girls look at her askance, with ill-concealed fear, and yet with a certain respect, as for one who has had unusual and remarkable experiences.

"'Twere safest for thee to confess speedily to Mr. Russell and the deacons," said Hannah.

The sun was now so low that Submit knew supper time must be approaching, and that she should certainly receive the promised whipping from the widow if she were late, while yet her basket, owing to the pleasing diversions of the afternoon, was not filled.

Bidding the other girls a hasty "good even," she started down the Middle Highway on a run, thinking all the way what excuse she could make to her mistress, how escape the promised whipping. When she came out on Hadley street, she moderated her gait to a rapid walk, for the Puritans liked not "immoderate walking" even, much less "unseemly running."

The other girls lingered as long as they dared, hurrying to pick as many berries as possible, for their baskets were not so well filled

even as Submit's. Finally they too started for home.

The evening shadows fell long from the west, a dewy coolness filled the sweet air, the birds warbled their good-night songs from every tree; all spoke of love and peace. But to the girls' excited fancy, there was something weird and uncanny in the sweet summer twilight. They kept close together and hurried on, looking fearfully over their shoulders now and then to see if perchance a black bear with fiery eyes or a dog with eyes in his back were not pursuing them.

Ere they reached the gate into the Middle Highway, their fears were intensified by a snarling, whining howl, which came from a clump of bushes on their right, accompanied by a sound of scrambling and scratching.

Prudence began to run, followed closely by the panic-stricken girls, until suddenly Mary Wells bethought herself to say,—

“Prudence, run not so swiftly. I mind me now that Jonathan told me yesterday that he had helped thy brother John to dig a wolf-pit on Pine Plain. Doubtless, John hath already captured a wolf in it.”

“John will be greatly rejoiced an that be so,” said Prudence, “for he wanteth sorely to buy lead to run shot and bullets for his snaphance. But let us still hasten, for we know not that it is

a wolf. Or, if it be, the creature might get out."

"It may be Satan in form of a wolf," suggested Mehitable.

Animated by these fancies, the girls sped on, almost falling over each other in the determination of each not to be the last one in the little group.

"I trow I am glad to be safe among Christian houses again," panted Priscilla, when, out of breath with their race, the girls entered Hadley street.

"I will walk home to thy door with thee, Prudence," said Hannah, seeing that her young cousin was even more frightened than the older girls.

"Wilt thou, Hannah?" said Prudence. "Thou art so kind. I wish Submit had not told us those tales. Yet 't was most interesting. I long to hear more."

"How pretty she looked when she danced!" said Hannah. "I would ill like my Grandsire Smith or my father and mother to know that I had countenanced dancing. But truly 't was a most pleasing treat. Submit Carter hath sailed the ocean with her father, and visited foreign lands, and I doubt not she can tell many a strange tale."

"Oh, Hannah!" cried Prudence, clutching her cousin's gown, "yon is Goody Webster! And



her black cat is beside her! See how its eyes glare! Oh, Hannah, I'm sore frightened!"

"'Sh, Prudence, be not so fearsome," said Hannah, although her own heart beat faster. "We will speak her civilly, and pass quickly by, and she will not harm us."

At the entrance to the Middle Highway to the Meadow, near her own house, which was next the town pound, stood Goody Webster, an ill-favored, scowling woman, whose furies of ill temper had often found vent in dark threats of dire punishment to be dealt out by some unknown power on those who had angered her. Perhaps she rather enjoyed the awe with which her reputed witchcraft inspired her neighbors who were better off in this world's goods than she.

Her pet cat, a huge black fellow without a white spot on him, in whose great greenish-yellow eyes the girls' excited fancy saw a baleful fire, rubbed about her feet, in truth begging for his supper.

"Good even, Goody Webster," said Hannah, with timid civility, while Prudence, careful to keep on the farther side of her cousin, clutched her gown tightly, trying to hasten her pace by pulling her along.

"Fiddle-dee-dee, with your mealy-mouthed 'Good even, Goody Webster,' Hannah Smith," mocked Goody Webster, who seemed in a furious

rage. "The name of Smith shall be a stink and a hissing in this settlement ere many days. One that hath power will shortly visit that purse-proud hypocrite, thine uncle Philip Smith, and all his tribe with such direful woes as the world hath never witnessed!"

Amazed at this unexpected assault, the girls stood spellbound, and Goody raved on.

"The proud oppressor shall wither away. HE," and Goody waved her hand wildly aloft, looking up as if she saw something invisible to the girls' eyes in the dusk, while her cat started and looked eagerly too, — "HE will avenge the cup of wrongs which the rich man hath pressed to the lips of the poor and down-trodden. Blackest curses light on Philip Smith, on him and his forever!"

The shocked girls waited to hear no more, but rushed on, like autumn leaves driven before a biting wind. They forgot to be anxious about their reception at home with their partly filled baskets. If only they could get safely under the home roof again, let mothers scold as they would.

"I much fear," whispered Hannah, as they hurried on, "that we sinned grievously this afternoon, in countenancing dancing and play acting, I above all, because I began it by putting on the wreath; and that some fearful judgment will be visited upon us."

“Shalt tell thy mother?” asked Prudence.

“I like not to o’ermuch,” said Hannah, “yet, perchance, should I confess to my father and to Mr. Russell, my sin might be pardoned.”

Prudence glanced up fearfully now and then as she panted on, half expecting to see Goody Webster and her black cat sailing along overhead on her broomstick, although she well knew that these broomstick excursions rarely occurred save in the darkness of midnight.

With great relief did she dash into her own door, while Hannah hastened on home alone. Supper was on the table, but Prudence saw at once that her father and mother were not eating, so absorbed were they in some exciting tale that John was recounting. Nor did they seem even to notice her lateness. Her mother only said hurriedly, —

“Come at once to thy supper, Prudence. And list the strange tale thy brother telleth. There be dark doings here in our midst.”

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE BEWITCHED CHILD.

JOHN had been to the Great Meadow that day, helping Sam and Sam's young man uncle, John Smith, the youngest son of the Lieutenant, mow Philip Smith's grass. In return, when Goodman Ellis's grass was cut, the cousins would help him. It was a common custom to exchange day's work in this manner, and one highly approved by the boys, who found not only that "many hands make light work," but also that the pleasure of other boys' companionship was a wonderful ease to labor.

John, in a high-pitched, excited voice, went on with the tale interrupted by the entrance of Prudence.

"We had cousin Philip's cart and his pair of young oxen that he hath lately broken to the yoke, to bring the hay home this even, and we were all riding on the cart. As we neared the Middle Highway to the Meadow, Sam saith, —

" ' I wonder if we shall catch a glimpse of the witch as we go by. I hope not, for she loveth not my father o'er well. '

“ ‘Speak not of her. I doubt not she may know it, e’en so far away,’ said my cousin John. ‘Her ill will bodes us no good, I greatly fear. Waitstill Jennings told me that, two nights since, as his mother was getting supper over the fire, a great black hen flew down the chimney almost in her face. There was a pot of boiling water on the crane, and Goodwife Jennings was just going to stir in meal for her hasty pudding, when this black hen fell into the pot. But she had power to fly out again, with a mighty cackling and squalling, and vanished out the door. One wing hung down as though badly scalded. Though Goodwife Jennings ran after her speedily, she found naught of the black hen. This roused her suspicions, and the next morn she called on Goody Webster and found her with her hand bandaged up. She said she had scalded it. Waitstill saith his mother thinketh an some of our good wives should search her person for witch-marks, they would find enough to hang her.’

“ While cousin John was talking thus, we had come in front of Goody Webster’s house, when our oxen began to act most strangely. They seemed to see somewhat frightsome in the road, though we saw naught, and ran back and would not pass the house, though Sam plied the goad briskly. Goody Webster, with her black cat at her heels, stood in her door, laughing and jeering at us. Then cousin John cried out, —

“ ‘We must disturb the witch, would we get past her den.’

“ We all took our whips and went up to her, and John said, —

“ ‘Take off thine accursed spell from those oxen, Witch, or we will ply our whips on thy back.’

“ An a look could kill one, then had cousin John dropped dead, so furiously did Goody Webster glare upon him, as she cried out, —

“ ‘Fool! See, thy cattle run away from thee, while thou tarriest to trample on the poor. But the worm will turn — ’

“ John stayed to hear no more, for the cattle were indeed running down the highway toward the meadow as if some devil were behind them, as was doubtless the case, and it was with difficulty that we o’ertook them.

“ When night came, we started for home with a great cartload of hay. Sam said, —

“ ‘I would we had not to pass Goody Webster’s again.’

“ ‘Our good-ox whips will break her spells, e’en as they did this morn,’ said cousin John.

“ When we reached Goody’s door, she stood in it, looking evil and dangerous, though she said naught to us, or we to her. But what thinkest thou? Although the ground is not very uneven there in the highway, suddenly our load of hay began to tip in a strange fashion, more and more,

till we saw plainly that it was going over. Cousin John waited for no words. He leaped down, and running up to the door, seized Goody Webster, and was about to lay his whip o'er her shoulders. And — wouldst believe it? — the cart straightway righted itself! Sam declareth that the witch turned the load clear over, and that it turned itself back again. I noted it not, for I was watching the witch. Ne'er saw I such evil looks.

“When cousin John released his hold on her, she straightened herself, till she seemed unnaturally tall, and screeched shrilly, —

“‘An enemy shall bind thee, John Smith, and take thee where thou wouldst not. Already I see thy gory head low in the dust.’

“Cousin John looked sober, and said naught as we came home. Dost think the witch can harm him with her evil charms, father?”

“I know not, but 't is greatly to be feared,” said Goodman Ellis. “'T is a pity that John hath gotten her ill will.”

Here Prudence told her experience with Goody Webster, which was heard with mingled interest and concern.

“'T is a meet punishment for thy tarrying so late,” said her mother, now recollecting that she had omitted to do her duty in rebuking Prudence. “Thou 'd best ne'er go near Goody Webster's

house again. Hadst thou come before when thou ought, this would not have happened."

"An she continue these evil practices among us," said Goodman Ellis, "our magistrates must bind her over to appear at court and answer for them. I much fear that witchcraft is gaining ground in our settlements. Mr. Tilton told me last Lecture Day, that Goodwife Mary Bartlett, who died only last month in Northampton, is thought to have come to her end by witchcraft, through the malicious practices of one Mary Parsons. Although her husband is one of the foremost men in Northampton, nevertheless Mistress Parsons is to be dealt with by the county court at Springfield next month. This wickedness cannot be winked at, e'en though it appear in high places."

"'Tis said to be a good help to detect witches to bind them fast and throw them in deep water," said Goodwife Ellis. "Widow Burnham saith this was tried with some suspected women in Hartford, and the witches swam like so many corks. I doubt not, an Goody Webster were thrown into the river, 't would be found that naught could sink her."

"Widow Anne Hibbens was hung at Boston for witchcraft no more perverse than Goody Webster's practices," said Goodman Ellis. "An she mend not her ways, and cease to persecute the



Lord's elect, she too hath a fair chance to stretch the halter, methinks."

Absorbed in this engrossing topic, it was late ere Prudence thought to tell John, —

"John! What thinkest thou? Thou hast a wolf at last in thy pit over on the Pine Plain. We plainly heard it snarling and growling as we came by."

John looked pleased. Then a look of doubt replaced the smile of delight, and he said, —

"I will not go after it till morn."

"'T is wise, my son, to delay till the morn," said his mother, "e'en though perchance thou lose the bounty. Satan loveth to disguise himself in many forms, and peradventure this may not be a wolf. Evil practices so abound among us, 't is best to be wary."

After family devotions were over, Prudence was told to go to bed, but hung back, reluctant to go up to her room alone, though the long lingering summer evening still gave a dim twilight, making other light unnecessary.

"Have no fears, child," said her mother. "Knowest thou not that thy father nailed a horse-shoe over our door as soon as he heard of Goody Webster's ill repute? And our chimney hath not failed to draw since. Thou canst repeat a text of Scripture aloud. God's Holy Writ is ever potent to exorcise the Evil One. And I will e'en go up

with thee to-night, thou timid one," added the mother, kindly, seeing Prudence's eyes, big with nervous terror, glancing askance at the dark corners of the room, and out the open door, where an owl in a tree near by hooted dolefully.

Comforted by a sense of the blessed, protecting mother-love, Prudence went to bed, and was soon fast asleep, with the sheet held tightly over her head.

The next morning, John, having secured Sam's company, went early to his wolf pit. Daylight had banished many of the creeping fears of the previous night, and when, to his joy, he found the wolf still in the pit, he was not afraid to put a speedy end to its torment.

As he and Sam were coming back, on their way to the constable's with the wolf's head, a bloody trophy, dangling by the ears, Sam said, —

"John, an the constable pay thee the twenty shillings' bounty to-day perchance thy father will suffer thee to go with me to Springfield on Saturday to get thy lead at Mr. John Pynchon's warehouse. I go down thither then on an errand for my grandsire, who hath much dealing with Mr. Pynchon, and I would fain have thy company."

"I will gladly go with thee, an my father can spare me and the horse," said John.

The boys were now nearing Widow Burnham's house, where there seemed signs of some unusual

excitement. A group of neighbors stood before the house, and Mr. Russell, Deacon Goodman, and Deacon Tilton were just entering the door, the people standing reverently back to make way for these dignitaries.

"I wonder what is the matter at Widow Burnham's," said Sam. "Mayhap she hath some sudden seizure of illness, and the worshipful Mr. Russell and the deacons go to pray with her."

"Let us tarry and learn what it may be," said John. "Hark, hearest those wild screeches from within?"

The boys soon learned that strange things were indeed happening at the widow's.

When Submit came home so late, and yet with her basket not filled, the vials of the widow's wrath had been freely poured out on her defenceless head.

"Idle hussy!" she exclaimed, "thou shouldst have been here a half an hour ago. 'T is as I expected. Thou hast idled away the whole afternoon. Thou shalt have such a basting as thou wilt not soon forget, I promise thee. I'll see if I cannot quicken thy sluggishness. But first go down cellar and bring up the milk."

Submit, with a dark, defiant look, went down the trap-door into the cellar, whence presently came such an ear-piercing scream that the widow hastened down herself, muttering as she went, —

“I verily believe that minx will worry me into my grave!”

She was startled to find Submit standing rigidly, as if transfixed, her great black eyes gazing fixedly at a dark corner of the cellar as if she saw something invisible to the widow's eyes. Then she cried wildly, —

“What cheer, old man? What cheer?” Then, seeming to listen, she cried, “Oh, no, I cannot. No! No! Oh, my head!” clapping her hands on her head. “Oh, my breast! They strangle me,” and she gasped for breath, her hands struggling as if with something at her throat.

The Widow Burnham was deeply alarmed. She well knew Submit's symptoms to be those of a bewitched person. Seizing her by the arm, she dragged her upstairs, and demanded an explanation.

Submit began laughing so immoderately that she fell down and rolled at the widow's feet. Then she shrieked and tore her dishevelled hair; then she lay rigid, declaring that something sat on her breast and strangled her.

“I command thee, child,” said the widow, solemnly, “confess who hath bewitched thee.”

“Oh, I cannot. They will not suffer me. How they pinch me! Oh, the pins! the pins!” cried the sufferer, rolling about in agony.

Examining Submit's limbs, the widow found red

spots, as if they had been pinched. She put Submit to bed, and read the Bible to her, when the spell seemed broken. Submit, exhausted by her performances, fell fast asleep, and slept sweetly until morning, in spite of sundry ominous appearances which the excited fancy of the widow detected during the night, such as a lump "as large as a cat" which, in the dim twilight, she saw in Submit's bed, which disappeared when she went to put her hand on it, appearing again in another place.

Once, too, the widow was wakened from the sound sleep into which she at last fell, by what seemed to be a mysterious shaking of the house. Rising and looking out the window, all seemed quiet as usual, but she saw a bright light in the sky, shaped somewhat like a sword, directly over the house of Thomas Coleman.

In the morning, when it was time to rise and go to work, Submit's bewitchment came on worse than ever. She leaped and cried out, plunging violently about, finally trying to leap into the fire, it being all that the widow, aided by Goodwives Dickinson and Warner, who, hearing the uproar, had come in, could do to hold her back.

When this paroxysm had passed off, Submit, lying limp on the settle, confessed, in reply to the urgent entreaties of the women, —

"The devil hath long tried to persuade me to sign a covenant with him. He oft cometh down

the chimney in shape like a dog, with a witch's head, and sitteth on my breast. Oh, he cometh! he cometh!" And Submit went off into her spasms again.

"Seest thou not the print of a dog's paw in the clay of the chimney?" whispered Goodwife Dickin-son, with bated breath.

The other women looked with awe on a dent in the chimney's clay daubing which might be the mark of a dog's paw, — a strange, unnatural paw, unlike an earthly dog's.

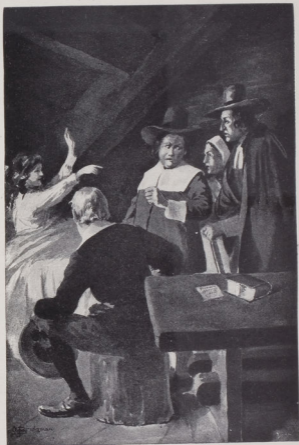
"I never noticed it there before," solemnly testified the widow.

"Confess, girl," said the widow, when Submit again grew calm, declaring that the devil had "flown up the chimney," "confess that thou hast signed the covenant with Satan."

"Yea, yea, I have so," cried Submit. "I signed it night before last with my blood. Thou wilt find the knife with which he drew my blood stuck in the side of the house by the back door."

Sure enough, here was found one of the widow's knives stuck fast. What more convincing proof was needed?

When asked to show the place where the devil had cut her, Submit displayed what looked much like a long scratch from a blackberry bush on her wrist. But it was enough. It takes but little to confirm the faith of those already convinced.



“ ‘ What meaneth thy apish gestures, child?’ asked Mr. Tilton.”





The news of the bewitchment had spread meantime, and other neighbors had come in. All united in advising the widow to lose no time in sending for Mr. Russell and the deacons.

No one present could doubt that Submit was bewitched who witnessed her demeanor when these revered men entered the Widow Burnham's bedroom, where she had been put to bed. Although she had been lying motionless, speechless, her eyes closed, seemingly in a trance of some sort, she at once sat upright, and began to point wildly at them, waving her hands about strangely.

"What meaneth thy apish gestures, child?" asked Mr. Tilton.

"See the yellow bird," cried Submit, "the yellow bird on the minister's hat! Oh, this room is full of devils! One percheth on Deacon Goodman's back!"

Deacon Goodman looked uneasily over his shoulder, while Submit began to laugh immoderately, and then to cry wildly.

"Her distemper is no doubt diabolical," said Mr. Russell, gravely. "Submit, I conjure thee, confess who hath bewitched thee."

After some further urging, Submit confessed:

"'Tis Goodwife Dickinson that hath bewitched me."

Goodwife Dickinson, sitting by the bedside

while Submit had lain in rigid unconsciousness, had said to Widow Burnham, —

“I always feared, good neighbor, that thou wouldst have trouble with this pagan child. Her father was a sorry son of Belial, 't is commonly reported, and her mother was a heathenish woman of some sort, a Papist, perchance. 'T is not strange Satan seeketh to claim his own.”

“Goodwife Dickinson!” exclaimed Mr. Russell. “Surely thou art mistaken. Goodwife Dickinson is one of our ancient, godly gentlewomen, who hath ever walked soberly and virtuously among us, a bright and shining candle of the Lord.”

“Nay, nay, 't is verily she,” insisted Submit. “She walketh soberly in the daytime, but by night she goeth gayly to the forest on her broomstick with Goody Webster and her cat. They asked me to go with them, promising that I should dance merrily with them and the devil around a great May pole, with bright May garlands on our heads. 'T was she who killed Thomas Wells's cow by her charms.”

Goodwife Dickinson's face blanched, and she gasped in her horror, unable to say anything. How could she defend herself from these charges, impalpable as air, yet heavier than lead to weigh down the highest reputations?

Even her best friends gazed upon her dubiously, with sudden suspicion. Had not Thomas Wells's

red and white cow lately died suddenly, with a lump in its throat?

“I doubt that this accusation be not false. Yet, prithee, Goodwife Dickinson, lay thine hand upon the afflicted child.”

As soon as Goodwife Dickinson's hand was laid upon her, Submit writhed in agony, crying, —

“Take her away! Take her away! She stranglenth me! I cannot breathe!”

When Goodwife Dickinson, dazed and confounded, had left the room, Submit grew easier.

“’Tis plain that the child is possessed,” said Mr. Russell. “’Tis a grave business. I must confer with the worshipful Mr. Cotton Mather by the next post on this matter. He hath much wisdom in such sad cases. But I know that this kind goeth not out save by fasting and prayer. Let us invoke Divine help for this afflicted one.”

All stood around the bed, while Mr. Russell offered up a fervent prayer, beseeching the throne of grace with strong cryings and wrestlings of spirit, that the Lord, the protector of the widow and the fatherless, would be pleased of His gracious love and longsuffering to haste to the deliverance of this fatherless and motherless child, and snatch her as a brand from the burning from the clutch of Satan, who sought to destroy her soul.

The child lay quiet enough during the prayer, regarding the minister with a wistful look. Did

he really care aught for her, as his words seemed to indicate?

At the close of the prayer, Mr. Russell, coming to the bedside, laid his hand kindly on Submit's hot forehead, saying impressively, —

“The Lord our God, who is mightier far than Satan and all his hosts, guard and protect thee, my daughter.”

Submit lay so quietly now, that Mr. Russell said, —

“I think, friends, we may leave her for the present. Satan's arts seem quelled for a season. And here cometh our good healer, Granny Allison, whose wisdom in physical arts may be of some avail, even in this sad case.”

Mr. Russell and the deacons walked gravely away, arranging for a day of fasting and prayer at Deacon Goodman's house on the morrow, to be observed by all those in authority in the settlement, “in view of the sad face of things among us”

## CHAPTER XII.

### GRANNY ALLISON TO THE RESCUE.

THE exciting news that "the Widow Burnham's bound girl is bewitched" had spread rapidly through the village, reaching at last the ears of Granny Allison, who exclaiming "Fudge and fiddlesticks!" seized a bag of simples and her good staff, and hastened down to the widow's as fast as she could hobble. She found a crowd of gossips around Submit's bed, trying to force further testimony from her about her bewitchment by Goodwife Dickinson, and recounting sundry strange and unaccountable happenings which had not struck them at the time, but which they now perceived to be passing strange.

As Granny entered, Goodwife Goodman was saying, —

"'T was Wednesday se'nnight that I was spinning, and my yarn tangled so sorely that I could do naught with it. I had but just said to Mercy that I verily believed it was bewitched, when Goodwife Dickinson came in. She said she had come for a porringer of emptyings for yeast, knowing that I was about to empty our beer

barrel. When she had gone out, lo, my yarn straightened as if by magic, as I doubt not it was. I thought naught of it at the time, but now I see — ”

“ Fiddlesticks ! ” burst in Granny, unable longer to contain herself. “ I tell ye Goodwife Dickinson is no more bewitched than I. Have a care, gossips, how ye take up lightly this charge of witchcraft. To-morrow it may fall on you, next day on me. None, not e’en the most upright and godly, hath surety against it.”

The talk stopped, partly from the general respect felt for Granny, partly from curiosity to see the effect of her entrance on the afflicted child, who was lying rigid, her eyes fixed, answering nothing to all their queries.

Granny Allison regarded Submit a few moments in silence. Then she said, —

“ Leave me alone with the child. ’T were best that all go home, and that the house be quiet, if I am to do aught to relieve her.”

Left alone with Submit, Granny first opened a window, letting a draught of sweet, pure air into the stifling little room. Then she sat down beside the child, took her hand, and held it quietly, saying nothing, but regarding her kindly yet shrewdly through her round horn spectacles, with the keen blue eyes, bright still in spite of age.

Presently Submit began to cry, not in the wild,

dramatic fashion she had been assuming, but simply and naturally, — the plaintive sobbing of a sick and sorry child.

Granny Allison had often given Submit a friendly nod or kind word when they had chanced to meet, and the forlorn child had felt drawn to her, as a possible friend.

“What is it, Submit?” asked Granny, gently. “Thou canst open up thy heart freely to me. But let us have no more bewitchments.”

“Oh, Granny Allison!” burst out Submit, with a flood of tears, “I would I were dead!”

“Tut, tut, child,” said Granny. “We must all live out our appointed time.”

“I do wish so,” sobbed Submit. “Ofttimes when I have been drawing water from the well, it looked so cool and still down in the mossy bottom where the blue sky and the white clouds lie, that I have been tempted to throw myself in. But I knew ’t was Satan that tempted me, and I fled away. And oft, when the widow hath beaten me, I have wished with all my might that the devil would indeed show himself to me, and I would gladly give myself up to him, body and soul, if he would but help me to plague and torment her with bewitchments. And now I fear that Satan hath heard me and gotten possession of me, for I have lied to godly Mr. Russell. I lied about Goodwife Dickinson too. She spoke cruelly of my

dear, dear daddy, and my dead mother. Oh, what will become of me! What will become of me!"

And Submit broke into what threatened to be a hysterical fit of weeping.

"Hush, child, hush," said Granny, stroking the little forehead where the full, throbbing veins stood out in blue cords.

There seemed some soothing influence in her touch, for gradually the violence of Submit's sobs subsided. She was comforted somewhat, too, by her confession. Now she was not alone with her dreadful sin.

Seeing her more quiet, Granny said, —

"Submit, thou hast doubtless done most wrongly. Yet God loveth thee."

"But He hateth sinners. He will be sore angry with me, and punish me," said the child, regarding Granny with great terrified eyes, and clinging tightly to her hand, as if it were a possible protection from this awful, overhanging wrath of the mighty God.

"He hateth the sin, but I think not that He hateth the sinner," said Granny. "Doth not Scripture say that He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins?"

"An God loveth me, I should not think He would have taken my dear daddy away from me," said Submit, with a piteous sob.

"Didst ever think, Submit, who gave thee thy



daddy, and put all the love in his and thy heart for each other? Was not that a sure token of God's love? And if God, who knoweth all things, who knowest well how thou lovest thy daddy, hath yet taken him away, 't is for some wise purpose that thou canst not know now. 'When I awake, I shall be satisfied,' " murmured Granny, to herself rather than to Submit.

"Scripture saith, Submit, that God loveth us e'en as a father pitieth his children," continued Granny, after a moment's pause, when her thoughts seemed far away. "Always remember that. Thou art never alone or friendless, for thy great Father in heaven is ever nigh. But before He can forgive thy sins, thou must sincerely repent, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance."

"I do repent, but what can I do?" asked Submit, pondering with softened feeling this new thought that possibly God loved even her.

"Thou must confess to Widow Burnham and to Mr. Russell that thou hast lied, and above all, that thou hast falsely accused Goodwife Dickinson," said Granny.

"I like not to do that," said Submit.

"But thou must. This is thy punishment. God doth not punish us, methinks. Every sin brings its own retribution with it. But thou art worn and exhausted now. First, thou must take a composing draught that I will prepare for thee,

and go to sleep. I will stay by thee till thou wakest."

Granny Allison went out into the kitchen, and made a tea of saffron and poppy seeds.

Widow Burnham asked her eagerly, —

"How doth the afflicted child carry herself now? Hath she seen any more apparitions?"

"Good neighbor," replied Granny, regarding the widow with the authority of the skilled healer, "the child is not bewitched."

"Think'st thou so?" asked the widow, in a disappointed tone.

While it was no doubt inconvenient to have a bewitched child in the house, yet it lent a touch of dramatic excitement to humdrum living, and gave a certain prominence to her house as the centre of interest, that was not unwelcome to the widow.

"I know it," said Granny. "Doubtless Satan hath tempted her, and she hath sinned grievously. The child is but a tender plant, unlike others, and she hath many strange fancies. I must tell thee plainly, widow, that thou must carry it somewhat more gently with her, or thou wilt have a dead or distracted child to answer for."

"I have sought but her good," said the widow, "to train her up in the way she should go, that when she is old, she may not depart from it."

"That which only nourisheth the stout tree, crusheth the tender sapling," said Granny. "I

will talk with thee further on this matter another time. Now 't is necessary that she go to sleep, for her nerves are sorely wracked and wrought upon. When she waketh, she will have somewhat to say unto thee. Give me thy Bible. I would fain read to her."

The widow approved of this, knowing that reading the Scriptures aloud rarely failed to put the devil to flight.

After Submit had drunk the draught, Granny, undoing the clasps of the Geneva Bible with stout leathern covers that Widow Burnham's husband had brought from England, read from the quaint, black-lettered text the words of the Psalm that has comforted so many generations of troubled souls.

"The Lorde is my shepheard, I shall not want. Hee maketh mee to rest in greene pastures, and leadeth mee by the still waters."

As Granny's comfortable voice read on, Submit's breathing grew quieter, and she lay with closed eyes.

"Doubtless kindnesse and mercie shall followe mee all the dayes of my life, and I shall remaine a long season in the house of the Lord."

Faintly the last words blended with the rippling song of a robin, whose notes floated in at her window, farther and farther away. Feeling dimly in her soul the dawn of a new hope, Submit sank into a deep, restful sleep.

To return to John and Sam; their excitement over the "possession" of Submit Carter did not prevent them from hurrying at once to the constable with the wolf's head, for, to ensure the bounty, the head must be fresh.

Ensign Aaron Cooke, chairman of the townsmen, as he laid in John's hand twenty good English shillings, said, —

"These vermin have made sad havoc of late among our swine, sheep, and calves. It stands our youth in hand to be vigilant. The more thou canst slay the better, e'en though in truth it consume great part of the county tax money to pay our wolf bounties."

Twenty shillings was a large sum for any one in those days, especially a boy. It seemed exhaustless wealth to John, and he planned many uses for it. He and Sam resolved on a day's wolf hunting the first day they could be spared from work.

But now they hastened home, eager to tell tidings sure to create a sensation.

Hardly had John delivered himself of the tale of Submit's bewitchment, amidst many exclamations of wonder and awe from his mother, than Prudence surprised them by breaking forth into loud crying.

"What aileth the child? Art ill? Tell me at once," cried her mother, alarmed lest Prudence too be bewitched.

“Nay, nay, but I have sinned sorely, and I fear lest Satan ensnare me also,” sobbed Prudence. “When Submit sang and danced on the Pine Plain yesterday, I tarried to look upon her, because ’t was so pleasing. And I liked to listen unto her tales of the devil, too.”

Deeply alarmed, not knowing how far Submit might have carried her dangerous arts, Goodwife Ellis hastened to take Prudence up to Chileab Smith’s to consult with Goodwife Smith, and furthermore, to learn if Hannah had revealed aught of these wrong doings.

They found Hannah also in the agonies of confession, afraid longer to keep so dangerous a secret. Hannah kept nothing back. She had secretly been much troubled, and it was a relief to unburden herself of all.

“I doubt an I be not the chief sinner,” she said, “for I began it by placing the bright wreath on my head. Had I not done so, perchance Submit had not been tempted to dance, and sing play-actors’ songs.”

“Many a time have I told thee, Hannah Smith,” said her mother, “that thy vanity and giddiness would be thy undoing. Now thou seest that thy mother knew best. Methinks,” she said, turning to Goodwife Ellis, “that we should haste to summon Mr. Russell, and see if perchance his prayers may be effectual to save these erring ones.”

Mr. Russell came and prayed long and fervently with the two girls, who were greatly sobered and downcast, yet experienced a secret feeling of relief and safety now that the minister had prayed with them.

“The Lord hath greatly multiplied signs and portents among us of late,” said Mr. Russell, as he was about leaving. “What they portend, we know not. One that hath recent letters from Old England hath told me that in June last two armies were seen fighting in the air, on a Lord’s day at even, for three hours or more, by many credible persons. And Widow Burnham saw a sword of fire last night in the sky over Thomas Coleman’s house. I trust it bodeth no ill to that godly, ancient man, who hath been somewhat valetudinarian of late.”

That night, at Scripture reading, Hannah was made to read aloud the twenty-fourth chapter of Isaiah, which she did with many tears, appalled by its direful denunciations and threats of destruction, all of which, she felt, were about to fall on her sinful head.

The next night, Sam came over to ask Goodman Ellis if John might go with him to Springfield on Saturday.

“My Grandsire wisheth to send some wheat down, to truck with Mr. Pynchon for some blue duffe, and other wares. Mr. Pynchon payeth

sixpence a bushel more for wheat than they of Northampton. I can carry but half of the wheat on my horse, an couldst thou spare John and thy horse to carry the rest, grandfather would be grateful for thy civility, he bade me say."

Goodman Ellis was pleased at an opportunity to make some slight return for his kinsman's kindness to him, and replied promptly, —

"Yea, John may go with thee. I can hire Naushapee for the day, an I cannot manage alone."

Naushapee was a Hadley Indian who hung about the settlement, and could sometimes, when pressed by hunger or thirst for liquor, be induced to work in the fields for a day or two.

"Fail not to set forth in ample season, Samuel," said Goodman Ellis, "that thou mayst return ere the Sabbath eve begin. But doubtless thy godly Grandsire Smith will guard that, for he was ever a friend of sober and virtuous living."

"He saith we must set forth ere sunrise," said Sam.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE JAUNT TO SPRINGFIELD.

JOHN'S head was so full of the coming trip that he thought of little else. Even dread of witchcraft faded before his anticipations; the more easily as it was understood that Submit Carter had confessed to Mr. Russell and the deacons that all the apparitions she had described were false, born only of her own fancy; and especially that all she had said of Goodwife Dickinson was a malicious untruth.

It was said that she had entreated the good men with tears to believe her, and that Mr. Russell had accepted her confession as sincere, and had prayed with and counselled her. And it was known that Granny Allison stoutly scouted all idea of witchcraft in the case.

But still many doubted whether this professed confession might not be another delusion of Satan, one of his many cunning devices to discomfit the godly, and clung fondly to their belief in Submit's bewitchment.

John feared it might rain Saturday, and so postpone his pleasure. He was up in the small



hours of the morning to look out his window and inspect the weather.

Above the dewy stillness of the street, where, in the dim gray light, John saw only the dark forms of horses or cattle scattered here and there, still shone the stars, and the fading sickle of the old moon hung low in the west.

“Not a cloud in sight,” thought John, joyfully. “Ne’er saw I tokens of a fairer day.”

He was too excited to sleep any more. As soon as the gray light of early dawn permitted, he was up again, and quickly dressed. Then he counted out ten shillings from his precious store, and stowed them carefully away in the strong pouch hanging from the leathern girdle which belted down his doublet.

Not forgetting the luncheon which his mother had prepared for him the night before, and taking his trusty snaphance, he slipped as quietly as possible out of the house, caught White Bess, grazing in the street near by, saddled her, and trotted over to Sam’s. Watch, who had quite recovered from his fight with the bear, was resolved to go too, and John had to tie him up, leaving him tugging at his strap in vain efforts to escape, and howling with a loud despair that John thought would awaken the whole community.

Sam was not behindhand. John found him strapping a big bag of wheat across his saddle.

“Here is thy portion of the load,” said Sam, bringing another big bag, which the boys fastened on John’s saddle across White Bess.

The grain settled down into the two ends of the bags, making them project wide each side of the horses, and the boys had to adapt their legs to the situation as best as they could.

However, they were in no mood for complaining, as they rode out the south gate of the street, and jogged on slowly, as their loads compelled, beside the Connecticut, through Fort Meadow, along the Springfield road to the south.

The red rim of the sun was just peeping above the eastern hills, dazzling their eyes, and giving the mountains’ rocky summits a roseate hue. The broad surface of the river, flowing beside them with strong yet quiet current, glowed with the ruddy dawn that brightened all the sky above.

“’T will be a goodly day for our jaunt,” said Sam. Then, looking as they rode along at the familiar fields so well acquainted with his hoe, with the feeling of one who has, for once, the better of his enemy, he said, —

“No work to-day, John. I know ’t is lazy not to love work, and, in truth, I mind it not o’er-much. Yet, nevertheless, it maketh me glad that we have this whole day free. Art not glad to go on this jaunt?”

“In troth I am,” said John, heartily. “And

I shall see the country roundabout, new to me. How far is it to Springfield?"

"About sixteen miles as the crow flies," said Sam, "but our path is more devious."

"Hast e'er been there? Art sure thou canst find the way?" asked John.

"I have been there only once, and that was two years since," said Sam; "but I can hardly miss the path, for there is none other to the southward, and 't is oft travelled. The Northampton folk go chiefly this way to Springfield and Windsor, though of late some take the Waranoake path."

"Is Springfield a large settlement?" asked John.

"Yea, 't is the largest settlement on the Connecticut, or in all this region, save Hartford. It hath nigh a hundred houses, on both sides the river."

The path now, to avoid the swampy land in parts of Hockanum meadow, left the river, and ran through the woods on the lower slope of Mount Holyoke.

"Look back, John," said Sam, as they stopped to rest their horses at top of a steep, rocky declivity on the mountain side. "Those are the last houses thou wilt see till we reach Springfield. 'T is wilderness all the way."

Through a gap in the trees they had a glimpse of Hadley and its meadows, the winding river,

the distant hills to the north, and the woods which stretched to Canada, unbroken save by the little settlements at Deerfield and Northfield.

Now their path plunged down into the forest that lay between them and Springfield. The boys saw much small game : squirrels scampering across their path and vanishing up trees, foxes and rabbits that disappeared at the tread of horses' feet and the sound of human voices ; but felt it not worth while to waste lead on these. They must press on. On the homeward way they might pick up some game, perhaps.

Presently they came to a spot where the path divided. Sam was perplexed.

"I know not which is the Springfield path," he said, "but I judge 't is safe to stick to the river. The right hand pathway should be it, methinks."

The boys had not ridden far on this path when the roar of falling water began to be heard.

"How loudly the river roareth !" said Sam. "I wonder what causeth its turmoil."

His doubts were soon solved, for the path came out of the woods and ended abruptly on the bank of the river. An impressive sight was before them : the Connecticut dashing and foaming down great rocks in solitary grandeur, nothing in sight but the silent forest around, the sky overhead, and the two boys on horseback.

"Verily these be the great falls of the Con-

necticut!" said Sam. "I have oft heard of them, but ne'er seen them before."

As he spoke, an Indian emerged from the woods on the opposite bank of the river. His quick eye at once observed the boys, and he made a gesture signifying friendliness. In one hand he held a long stick whose end was pointed with a sharp flint spear-head.

He stepped deftly from one bare rock to another projecting from the foaming falls, until he reached the point where the main current swirled swiftly over. Here he stopped, and stood like a statue in the midst of the roaring water, his eyes intently fixed upon it.

"What meaneth this? What seeketh he?" asked John, full of interest at a sight so novel to him.

"Yon is Squiskhegan, a Northampton Indian," said Sam. "He seeketh to spear a sturgeon, mayhap, thinking the fish will already be going down to the sea. But we must on, and take the other path."

"I would fain tarry awhile and watch Squiskhegan spear a sturgeon," said John.

"I dare not tarry now," said Sam. "The sun mounteth high. Next spring perchance our fathers will come down to the fishing, and bring us. There is great sport fishing at the falls in the spring time. The shad and salmon come up from the sea in vast numbers then."

The boys regained the Springfield path, and journeyed slowly southward. The sun had now mounted so high above the forest trees, that Sam said, as they were fording a large stream, —

“’T is time now, methinks, that we eat our luncheon and rest our horses. The bank of this brook will be a good place to stop.”

“I feel as empty as a drum,” said John, “and would gladly be munching.”

The horses were unloaded and watered from the brook, and then turned loose to graze on its margin, while the boys lightened not a little the luncheons, put up by mothers who knew the capacities of a growing boy’s appetite. The coarse bread, the smoked fish and cold boiled pork, were eaten with a healthy hunger, after the early rising and long ride in the fresh air. Their dessert the boys gathered from the huckleberry bushes, which grew in profusion each side the path.

Busy picking and eating, they strayed farther from the path and from each other than they were aware. Suddenly Sam was startled by a cry of alarm from John.

“Sam! Sam! Your gun! Quick!”

Running towards the spot whence the cry came, Sam saw, — what John had but just discovered as he rose up from bending over the bushes — a huge, reddish-brown, cat-like creature stealthily creeping out on a overhanging limb. Its eyes glared with

hunger, its long tail lashed furiously from side to side, and it crouched in the act of springing.

The boys, over confident, in the knowledge of the friendliness of the neighboring Indians, had carelessly left their guns by the wheat bags on the bank of the brook. Sam, who luckily was near them, seized his gun. Hardly could he aim it before the panther made a flying leap for John.

John stooped, and the creature went over his head. It sprang back into the tree, scrambling rapidly up the trunk. Sam fired a ringing shot, and the panther tumbled to the ground, where it rolled about with terrific screams, half human, until another shot from Sam's gun stretched it out, lifeless.

John looked pale and bewildered. This danger had come upon him so suddenly, that he could hardly realize it even now, as he stood looking down on the bloody form of this dangerous animal, lying at full length on the mossy ground before him.

"What beast is this?" he asked. "I ne'er saw aught like it before, and ne'er heard I such a scream. It curdled my blood."

"'Tis a catamount," said Sam, looking with pride on his victim. "They are not o'er plenty round here now."

"In truth, I am glad to hear that," said John "I'd not care to meet one often."

“Sometimes we hear them screeching over on the mountains,” said Sam. “Some call them lions. They are dangerous beasts. ’T is lucky I happened to be so near the guns. He is a huge fellow, four feet and a half long, I ’ll warrant. Doubtless he must have failed to catch a deer, and was starving, or he would hardly have attacked us.”

“Shalt take his head for the bounty?” asked John.

“I want both his head and his skin,” said Sam. “’T is not every day one can bag a catamount. But I must needs leave him here till we return, and take my chances. We must ride on now, for the sun mounteth high, and we have yet some distance to journey.”

John was no coward, but his nerves had received a shock. Often did he cast his eyes upward with a sudden start, when some thickly leaved branch above him quivered in the breeze, realizing the possibility of dangers hitherto undreamed of in the wild wood, and he rode on more soberly.

When they reached a small river tumbling down over rocks in modest imitation of the great falls of the Connecticut, as they rode through it at the ford below the rapids, where the stream rippled, shallow and clear, over a stony bottom, Sam said :

“John, cheer up. We cannot be far from Springfield. This must be the place the Indians call Scanunganunk, and this river the Chicopee, as



they call it in their heathen tongue. We shall reach Springfield settlement an hour before high noon."

"A speedy trip," said John.

It was something over an hour ere the path emerged from the woods, and passed through the gate of the fence surrounding the thriving young settlement of Springfield. John looked about with great interest on this place, of which he had heard so much, as he and Sam rode through the gate.

He saw a row of houses scattered along between the one grassy street and the river's bank. Across the street from the houses was a meadow, evidently portioned among the settlers, as it was divided by mere-stones, and checkered with patches of divers colored crops, — rye, corn, wheat, and flax. Beyond the meadow rose quite a high hill, thickly wooded with primeval forest. Across the broad river they saw other meadows stretching out, also divided into patches by various growing crops. Two or three canoes were crossing the river, bringing home some of the planters for their dinners.

Some of the houses were built of logs, others were frame houses two stories high in front, the long roofs sloping down to one story in the rear.

John's attention was at once attracted to a stately two-story brick house with high pitched roof, whose many windows set with diamond-

paned, leaded glass, sparkled in the sun. A projecting porch in front rising to the second story, added to the imposing appearance of this house.

“What great mansion may yon be, so stately and grand above all others?” asked John.

“’Tis the mansion of Mr. John Pynchon, with whom we are to deal,” said Sam. “’Tis built so strongly that ’t will serve for a fort, an need be.”

“’Tis much like a great nobleman’s house,” said John. “There be few houses so grand, e’en in Boston. Master Pynchon must be a man of fortune.”

“Thou mayst well say that,” said Sam. “He is one of the foremost men in the Massachusetts Colony. His father, Mr. William Pynchon, was the founder of the settlement. He came hither from Roxbury about forty years since to begin it, when there was none other settlement in all the Colony beyond the Bay. He was a mighty power. But e’en so great an one as he fell under the censure of the General Court, for a book which he was moved to write, called ‘The Meritorious Price of Man’s Redemption.’ I’ve oft heard my grandsire lament that a man so godly and great as Mr. Pynchon should have been led away by Satan to write this book against the nature of the atonement. He was so sore about the matter that he returned to England to dwell.

But his son John remained in the settlement that his father had begun. He hath control of the trading for all the region roundabout, and carrieth on much traffic with the Indians."

The boys having tied their horses now entered the trading-house of Mr. Pynchon.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### SHOPPING IN SPRINGFIELD.

THE boys found Mr. Pynchon engaged in dealing with several Indians who were laden with huge packs of skins of the beaver, otter, fox, marten, mink, and wild cat, the products of their hunting in the woods far to the north, which they had brought down the Connecticut in their canoes, to truck with John Pynchon. He paid them partly in strings of white wampum, partly in barter.

One old sachem gave a satisfied grunt as he put on a blue-coat and waistcoat, for which he had just traded five fathoms' worth of furs. Another lugged away a big kettle, doomed to swing over camp-fires in the forests by New Hampshire lakes.

Another took a clumsy iron hoe, to replace the clam-shell tool with which his squaw hoed the corn. Yet another was vastly pleased with a strip of red shag cotton and a knife. Several took pipes and tobacco in part exchange for their bundles of skins.

The boys particularly noticed one tall Indian, with fierce, bright eyes, who said with a determined air, —

“Umpanchala buy gun,” pointing to some snap-hances of latest fashion suspended from the beams overhead. “Umpanchala want gun and powder. He shoot deer from afar, like white man. White man’s gun has long arm.”

“Nay, not so, Umpanchala,” said Mr. Pynchon, firmly. “Thou knowest well that the Great Father over the ocean will not suffer me to sell firearms to my Indian brother.”

Umpanchala glared at Mr. Pynchon with a dark, fierce look that made the boys feel uneasy. He bought two long, sharp knives, took the balance due him in wampum, and left without further words.

While Sam showed Mr. Pynchon his grandfather’s order for the articles wanted, and while Mr. Pynchon had the wheat measured, and then cut the dowlas, the holland, the blue duffle, and the sad-colored serge which the order called for, John looked about the trading-house.

It was a low store-room, with heavy beams across the ceiling, and, though large, much darkened and cumbered by the merchandise piled high on all sides. Evidently it was a busy place, the centre of much traffic. Huge piles of skins cumbered the floor, which an assistant was busily

packing into hogsheads, to be shipped down the river, around to the Bay, and thence to England.

Another clerk was measuring bushels of loose shell beads, lately come up the river from Hartford; the beads used for wampum, made from sea-shells by the Indians on Long Island.

Two women were dickering with this clerk over sundry measures of the beads, which they were about taking home to string for Mr. Pynchon.

“What doth good Mr. Pynchon allow now for stringing the wampum, Richard Sykes?” asked one of the women.

“He payeth three ha’pence for stringing a fathom six feet long,” said the clerk, “and a goodly price it is.”

“Methinks ’t is but little,” said the woman. “I am half a mind not to take it at that rate.”

“Bethink thee,” said her companion, “that it serveth to keep the children from idleness. ’T is easy work, and they earn some pence, when otherwise Satan might tempt them to sin. Satan loveth naught so well as your idler.”

“Thou speakest words of truth and soberness,” said the first speaker. “I’ll e’en take half a measure of the beads, Richard Sykes.”

John’s roving eyes detected on one of the crowded shelves some rare objects, the like of which he had thought was not in this country. These were two wooden dolls, with heads rudely

cut and painted in a distant resemblance to that of the human being. Mr. Pynchon had recently received them from London in his last consignment of goods, and had felt serious doubts of his correspondent's wisdom, when he came upon them.

"How Prudence would leap for joy, an I should carry her one of those poppets!" thought John.

He had never felt so rich in his life, as with ten shillings of his own in his pocket to spend as he pleased. Most of it was going for lead and moulds, wherewith he would mould his own shot and bullets. But John, who had a kind and generous heart, meant to take home a mould for spoons which he saw, and pewter to run in it, as a gift to his mother; and now the thought of Prudence's surprise and delight should he take her a doll so strongly tempted him, that finally he actually spent one shilling for the smaller of the twain ornamenting Mr. Pynchon's shelves, though secretly doubtful whether his parents would approve of this expenditure.

Sam could not contain his astonishment at this prodigal waste of money.

"John," said he, "I must say that I wonder at thee, to waste a good shilling on a useless poppet. Shillings grow not on the bushes hereabouts, as thou wilt soon learn."

"I care not to spend all my money for myself," said John. "Prudence's chief friend in England,

Rose Hathaway, had one of these poppets, and Prudence hath sorely longed for one. Little maids, thou knowest, delight in foolish gewgaws that lads care naught for."

"'Tis thy money," said Sam, unconvinced. "Thou canst spend it as thou seest fit."

John knew that Sam thought him both foolish and extravagant. But he carried the parcel wrapped in coarse gray paper carefully, with a warm glow at his heart, as he fancied his sister's joy when he should give her the poppet.

Much to the boys' embarrassment, Mr. Pynchon, wishing to show civility to Lieutenant Smith's grandson, said, —

"Come ye both home with me to dinner. 'Tis a wearisome jaunt from Hadley when the horses are laden with country goods, and a hot dinner will doubtless refresh ye. Mistress Pynchon and her handmaidens have ever ample cheer prepared for travellers, of whom we see many."

The boys were in a strait between awe of venturing to the stately mansion to dine, and a craving for the good dinner. Finally, Mr. Pynchon's cordial urgency and hunger triumphed over diffidence, and they went, escorted by Mr. Pynchon's negro slave, Roco, to whom Mr. Pynchon said, —

"Tell thy mistress, Roco, that these be two youths from Hadley who will dine with us to-day."



Safely out of his master's hearing, Roco, with a friendly grin that showed his white teeth, confided to Sam, —

“Mighty fine dinner to-day, sah, at the house,” smacking his lips in a manner to whet the boys' anticipations.

They felt that Roco had spoken whereof he knew, when they ate first of the hot suet pudding, sweetened with that rare dainty, sugar, which Mr. Pynchon imported direct from Barbadoes, which pudding good Mistress Pynchon piled high on the plates of her shy guests; and secondly the delicious fried venison, great quantities of which meat Mr. Pynchon was constantly taking, in his dealings with the Indians. There were vegetables in plenty too, and fine wheaten bread.

In spite of more elegance than they had ever seen, the boys managed to eat a hearty dinner, and then went through the ordeal of making their adieux and thanks to Mistress Pynchon, and escaped into the outdoor air. They failed not to tell their mothers afterwards that Mistress Pynchon had several silver spoons on her table, a cloth of fine linen, and a polished pewter flagon for the beer that shone like burnished silver.

“We must give the horses somewhat longer rest,” said Sam. “Let us go down to the wharf. In truth, I feel not o'er eager for riding so soon

after Mistress Pynchon's noble dinner. What a savory treat it was!"

"Yea," said John, heartily, "'t was a feast of fatness. Ne'er tasted I aught so toothsome as that pudding. I fear I ate immoderately, all was so savory, and I so sharp, after our long ride."

The boys sat lazily awhile, looking with pleasure on the novel scenes at the wharf, where there was much activity. Some of the Indians they had seen in the trading-house were setting off in their canoes for their northern homes; planters were going over to the meadows west of the river to their afternoon work; and Mr. Pynchon's slaves, superintended by some of his clerks, were loading large boats with skins, wheat, etc., to go down the river to the point where they could be transferred to pinnaces bound for the Bay.

The busy scene gave Sam a vague longing to travel, and see somewhat more of the outside world.

"I would I too were going down the river," he said, as one of the large boats put off. "I would gladly go around to the Bay, and e'en cross the ocean."

"An thou hadst lately had a two months' voyage, as I have," said John, "thou wouldst be well content on shore."

When the sluggishness of their dinner had somewhat worn away, the boys rambled about the

street, down Meeting House Lane, back of the meeting house into the burying ground on the bank of the broad river, a lovely and peaceful resting-place for the dead. They were attracted by the unusual sight of some monuments. The few graves in Hadley burying ground were as yet unmarked.

One seemed to the boys most imposing; its inscription John read aloud, —

“HERE LYETH YE BODY OF MARI,  
YE WIFE OF ELIZUR HOLYOKE,  
WHO DIED OCTOBER 26, 1657.

Shee yt lyes here was while she stood  
A very glory of womanhood;  
Even here was sowne most pretious dust,  
Which surely shall rise with the just.”

“That stone was doubtless brought from Old England,” said Sam. “Lieutenant Holyoke is one of the foremost men in these parts. Our great mountain is called from him.”

“But tell me, Sam,” said John, “why hath this meeting house two towers?”

“One is for the bell,” said Sam; “the other is a watch tower, where the watch may stand in time of war and keep sharp lookout o’er the meadows, lest the savages fall upon the men at work there, unawares.”

“I looked not to see such grandeur in the wilderness as I have seen to-day,” said John.

"But thinkest not, Sam, 't is time we were riding homewards? Thou know'st 't is Saturday afternoon."

"Have no fears," said Sam. "Our horses will travel speedily, being not so heavy laden, and knowing that they go towards home."

The boys, having carefully fastened their purchases to their saddles, trotted out of Springfield gate to the north as fast as the rough path permitted, and made good headway as far as the Chicopee River.

But, in fording this stream, White Bess stumbled and fell on her knees, pitching John over her head into the water.

Sam, who had already ridden up the farther bank, heard the splash and turned in his saddle, to see the dripping John gathering himself up, raising his gun on high with one hand, and with the other holding tight Bess's bridle, lest she get away.

"Art hurt, John?" asked Sam, dismounting and coming to his cousin's aid.

"Nay," said John. "Verily 't is by God's mercy that I broke not my neck in that somersault! I hope my snaphance and the poppet did not get wet."

Leading White Bess up out of the stream, he discovered that she had broken the crouper in her fall, and that her knee was grazed.

"And she hath cast a shoe somewhere on our

journey, from one of her forefeet," said John. "I had not noticed that. Verily an unlucky chapter of accidents, here in the forest!"

"'Tis no marvel she stumbled," said Sam. "Doubtless she stepped on a stone with that foot. Perchance we can mend the crouper with one of thy stirrup leathers."

This the boys contrived to do, but it took time; and John had to dry and rub his gun, which, in spite of his care, had been somewhat splashed in his downfall.

At length they again set forth, but now were obliged to travel slowly, as John's horse began to limp on the shoeless foot. When they neared the spot where they had left the dead panther, half a dozen wolves ran away at their approach. Sam shot at them, but the wolves were too quick for him.

"Doubtless the rogues are at my panther," he said. "So they have left me the head, they are welcome to the rest."

But, drawing nearer, they found that some one had saved Sam trouble by not only cutting off the head, but also skinning the panther, and the wolves had already half devoured the carcass.

"Doubtless Squiskhegan hath my bounty money rattling in his pouch long ere this," said Sam. "No Indian is o'er honest. I'm loath to lose my bounty, but I could not help it. The panther was

shot within Hadley bounds, so 't would have been useless to take the head to Springfield."

There was a lovely sunset that night. The sun sank from sight in a blaze of glory, and a brilliant afterglow lit up the western sky with a solemn radiance, as if the gates of heaven had swung ajar for an instant, revealing to mortals a brief foreglimpse of the inconceivable glories beyond. The birds, twittering their evening songs, seemed already to utter more subdued notes, as if aware that the Sabbath had begun.

Little did the anxious boys note the glories of the sunset sky as they pressed on up Fort Meadow, towards the south gate of the settlement.

"Ride thou on speedily, Sam," said John, as they neared the south gate into Hadley street. "Delay no longer for my lame mare. I trow, do our best, we shall be soundly rated for our tardy home coming, though verily 't is hardly our fault."

Sam, keenly realizing the importance of reaching home as quickly as possible, put his horse to its best pace up the deserted street, where Sabbath quiet already reigned. He galloped on, his tired horse not half keeping pace with his impatience, and was nearing home, when suddenly a voice behind him hailed him in a stern tone of command:

"Halt, Samuel Smith!"

Sam stopped, and saw to his dismay Stephen

Ferry, the constable, bearing his long black staff tipped with brass.

"I arrest thee, Samuel Smith," said the constable, "for transgressing our laws by Inordinate Galloping on the Eve of the Lord's Day. I looked not to find a Sabbath Breaker in the son of the godly Philip Smith, or among the descendants of thy grave and judicious Grandsire, who, methinks, only taketh New England in his way to heaven."

Sam meekly explained the cause of his riding so late and so fast, but Constable Ferry would not relent.

"Ungodliness creepeth in like a flood in our midst," he said. "It standeth in hand those in authority not to wink at iniquity, e'en in high places. An example must be made."

But he consented to accompany Sam home, where his father paid the fine necessary to release him, and further promised Constable Ferry to suitably admonish his son.

"I doubt not, Samuel," said his father, when the constable had departed, "that thou and John loitered and idled unduly in Springfield, or thou hadst not been so late, and brought this condemnation on thine head."

"Let the boy have his supper now," said his mother. "In truth, it gladdens me that naught worse hath happened to him. My heart was heavy

lest some dire disaster might have befallen him in the wilderness betwixt here and Springfield."

"Speak not lightly, good wife, of Sabbath breaking," said her husband. "What worse could happen to him than breaking the fourth commandment? After thy supper, Samuel, I will hear thee say that portion of the catechism pertaining to the fourth commandment, and will reason with thee thereon."

John, meantime, was riding slowly up the street on his tired, lame horse, wondering if his excuses would be accepted at home. Passing the house of Mr. Russell, he glanced up at it, hoping devoutly that the minister would not see him riding so late Saturday night. It was not likely, for doubtless he was now at prayer, preparing himself for the Sabbath.

The red light of the afterglow still shone on the window panes of the upper windows, and suddenly, to his fright, at one of these same upper windows, John saw plainly the face of the mysterious stranger, of whom he had not lately thought, but whose striking visage he could never forget.

The gaze of the face was fastened with a wistful look on the sunset sky, as of one lost in sad revery. Suddenly the form of the moving horseman below in the quiet, darkening street, where twilight shadows already began to settle heavily, seemed to attract its notice, and it disappeared.



“’Tis passing strange,” thought the startled John. “I certainly saw it, as clearly as e’er I saw my own father’s face. And now ’tis gone. I like it not. Belike it betokens some dire calamity to Hadley. We look not for magic arts under the roof of our godly Mr. Russell. Yet Satan hateth the saints, and ever seeketh to drag them down to destruction. Perchance Goody Webster hath some hand in this matter. I know not if I should speak to my father of this apparition or not.”

John was careful to keep on the opposite side of the wide street from Goody Webster’s house, and felt relieved and safe when at last he dismounted at his father’s door.

Goodman Ellis, knowing that many possibilities of danger lurked in the wilderness, had begun to feel a real anxiety lest some accident had befallen John, and was so rejoiced to have him arrive safely, having met no more serious disaster than the broken crouper and lamed horse, that he was more lenient in his rebukes than John had dared hope. He listened with complacency to the account of John’s dining with so great a man as Mr. Pynchon, though he felt it his duty to testify, on hearing of the pudding, the silver and fine linen, and the slaves, —

“Those in high places should beware how they set an example of sinful, luxurious living. We

came not here into the wilderness for eating and drinking."

John now ventured to display his purchases. Having given his mother her mould and pewter for spoons, he handed the gray bundle to Prudence, saying, —

"And here is somewhat for thee too, Pruda, from Springfield."

Prudence was surprised, for presents were rare and unexpected. She wondered much what it could be.

"It feeleth like a poppet," she said, as she fumbled in her excitement at the string, "but I know well it could not be that. Oh, it is! It is! A true poppet! Oh, how I thank thee, John. 'Tis a finer one far than Rose Hathaway's. Is't verily mine, John?"

"'Tis verily thine," said John, smiling at his sister's joy, while Abigail, in the trying fashion of little sisters, pulled on Prudence's linsey woolsey gown, begging, —

"Let me take the pretty poppet, I want the poppet."

"Thou mayst hold her for one moment in thine arms, Abigail, an thou wilt use great care," said Prudence. When John had been so generous to her, ought she not to be generous to her little sister?

Goodman Ellis did not share the children's

delight in the wooden poppet, but gazed frowningly upon it.

“Methinks,” he said, “this savoreth of graven images and pagan idols. I like it not. ’T was an exceeding spendthriftness on thy part, my son, which amazeth me. We may see sore straits ere the coming winter be o’erpassed. ’T is now clear to me, John, that ’t was thy wastefulness and lightmindedness that sore displeased the Lord, causing Him to send disasters upon thee in token of His anger. ’T is of His mercy that thou hast escaped so lightly.”

John’s face fell, and Prudence was ready to burst into tears, while Abigail hugged the dear poppet tightly, fearing lest she be deprived of it.

Goodwife Ellis, with a mother’s sympathy for her children’s joy, and softened too, by the unexpected and most acceptable gift of the pewter and mould, showing so much generosity on the part of her son, said gently, —

“Father, bear not too hardly on our son. He hath a kindly heart and meaneth well, e’en if somewhat lacking in judgment. Thou canst not look for a man’s head on a boy’s shoulders. Prudence loveth not her needle o’er well, and methinks ’t will help teach her to sew, to make clothing for her poppet. That can be her treat when she worketh diligently. ’T will incite her in ways of industry.”

"She should work because 't is her duty," said the good man, "not from a vain love of rewards."

"Give me the poppet now, Prudence," said her mother. "I will e'en put it away, for the Sabbath hath begun."

Prudence knew there was no use in objecting to this decree. She must give up the precious poppet, and not see her again before Monday.

"Let us at once to our evening Scripture reading and prayer," said Goodman Ellis. "Discourse of vain and unprofitable trifles hath kept us too long from this sacred duty."

In the midst of the psalm singing, came an imperative rap at the door.

"What roisterer may this be, disturbing the peace on Sabbath Eve?" asked Goodman Ellis, in stern displeasure.

Opening the door, lo, there stood Constable Ferry, with his black staff of office.

"Goodman Ellis," he said sternly, "thy son, riding after shutting in on the Eve of the Sabbath, hath left the south gate of the settlement open. The fine for this misdemeanor is, as thou knowest, two shillings and sixpence."

There was no help for it: John had to go upstairs and reluctantly bring down that sum from what was left of his wolf bounty. In his lateness and hurry, he had forgotten to close the gate behind him.

His father made some apology to Stephen Ferry, while commending his vigilance and faithfulness.

“Our youth would carry things with a high hand, I trow, were I not vigilant,” said the constable.

When he had gone, Goodman Ellis said to John, —

“Thou seest, John, ’t is e’en as I told thee. The Lord’s eye is never shut, and His face is ever against them that do evil. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked. Of His mercy, thou hast been punished but slightly this time for thy light-mindedness. But have a care lest thou provoke Him to greater anger.”

John went to bed, lame and tired in body, and also rather crushed and sober in spirit. But as he entered his room, Prudence, opening her door from the chamber beyond, thrust out her head and whispered softly, joy still beaming in her face, —

“John, thou wast so kind. I cannot thank thee enough. I’ll ne’er forget it. I will do anything thou wishest me to, e’en to helping thee dress thy fish, and skin thy muskrats. I verily will, John.”

John could not help feeling warmed and comforted within, although he had some misgivings that this might be a sinful feeling, to which he ought not to give any countenance.

All day Sunday, through the long services, in fancy Prudence hugged the poppet to her heart, and the joy of its possession shone in her face. She contrived to find a chance to whisper to her cousin Hannah and to Priscilla a hint of the wonderful new treasure.

So overflowing was she with happiness, that she was even tempted to tell Submit about the poppet; Submit, whose sober little face looked wistfully across at Prudence from the shadow of the self-righteous Widow Burnham.

But Prudence well knew that it would not do for her even to whisper to Submit. Goodwife Ellis, like the other prudent mothers, had strictly admonished her daughter that she must hereafter have nothing to do with the bewitched child. The children hardly needed this caution, but shunned Submit of their own accord.

## CHAPTER XV.

### SUBMIT AND THE POPPET.

AFTER Submit's confession, Granny Allison, who had come to feel a strong interest in the friendless child, had a long talk with her, urging her to be a good girl henceforth, especially to deceive no more.

"I would I could live with thee, Granny, and be thy bound girl," said Submit. "'T would be easy then to be good, methinks. Widow Burnham careth naught for me. She is cruel and hard. I care not to live, and I must needs dwell always with her."

"Thou art bound to her, Submit, and must dwell with and serve her till thou art of age. Tell me truly," said Granny, "didst e'er try heartily to please the widow, and gain her good will?"

"Nay, in truth, not o'er much," said Submit, rather shamefacedly.

"Perchance, shouldst thou try that plan, thy lot might be easier. Those who kick against the pricks ever wound themselves. Believe what I tell thee, that God, the Father of the fatherless,

loveth and watcheth o'er thee. He will be pleased with thy faithfulness, whether Widow Burnham noticeth it or not. If thou doest thy duty as in His sight, He will reward thee in ways thou canst not foresee. Doth not Scripture say, 'Trust in the Lord and *do good*, and thou shalt dwell in the land'? Take that for thy motto, Submit. Try each day to do what is well pleasing in the sight of the Lord."

"I will try, Granny," said Submit, "though I doubt an it be not useless."

"And I will befriend thee as opportunity serveth," added Granny. "'Tis many a weary year since God took away my own sweet little daughter into His heavenly places of peace, because, methinks, she was o'er pure and gentle for this world of sin and trouble. Her little body hath lain these many years under the churchyard daisies in Old England. Yet still my empty heart hath a warm nook for all children for her dear sake. Thou canst tell me all thy troubles. I will ever gladly help thee."

This promise of friendliness comforted Submit most of all. God was so far away, on His mysterious throne high above the sky, so easily angered, and His wrath so terrible. But friendly Granny Allison was close by. Submit could see her kindly face, and grasp her warm hand, and pour out all her troubles safely to her.



Granny Allison's advice, combined with some awe and doubt still lingering in her mind about Submit's bewitchment, caused Widow Burnham to task her less heavily, and, above all, to cease beating her. Granny had said that she could not be answerable for the consequences, were a child of Submit's temperament beaten. Indeed, it seemed to the widow that since her bewitchment Submit was changed.

She expressed her sense of this change to Granny Allison one day, when that good woman dropped into the widow's, as she did more frequently of late, although now busier than ever. The recent death of Dr. Westcarr had left her the only person practising the art of healing in the community. If a surgeon were needed, one must be brought from Connecticut. For the rest, Granny had sole charge of the health of Hadley.

"How fareth Goodman Coleman to-day?" asked the widow.

"Very low and languishing," replied Granny. "My herbs lack potency in his case. Methinks the good man is not long for this world. How doth Submit now?"

"I know not what aileth the child since her bewitchment," replied the widow. "I always mistrusted she could be quick and handy, did she so will; but she was ever so rebellious and stiff-necked, she was in very truth a thorn in my

side. Had I not beaten her soundly and oft, I could have gotten naught out of her. But now she seemeth to work of her own free will, almost like a woman. Sometimes I doubt whether she hath not aid from the powers of evil, she turneth off her tasks so handily for a child."

"Stuff and nonsense!" exclaimed Granny. "But tell me, gossip, dost ever praise her?"

"Nay, verily," said the widow, looking surprised. "Praise is unprofitable for youth, and tendeth to vanity and conceit. An I chide her not, 't is enough, methinks."

"A colt runneth swifter to a measure of oats than to a whip," said Granny. "An she doeth well and pleaseth thee, thou shouldst tell her so. Kind words cost but a little breath, and yet they lighten the road. How seemeth her health now?"

"I doubt an she ought not to take Physic," said the widow. "She looketh pale and pining, and eateth not so much as a bird would peck."

"Dost give her leave to play now and then with the other children after her tasks are well done?" asked Granny.

"I trow not. I am not one to favor idleness in youth, especially in a bound girl," said the widow, with prim self-satisfaction. "When her tasks about the house are done, she can rest herself by sitting to knit. Moreover, thou knowest since her bewitchment the other children shun her."

"'T is as natural for children to frisk about as for young lambs or colts," said Granny. "That child's blood will be on thy head, widow, an she die. And thou canst ne'er raise her, unless thou sufferest her to play sometimes. Mark my words, widow; she will work all the better for it. Thou 'lt lose nothing in the end by following my advice."

"Perchance I will e'en try it since thou urgest it so strongly," said the widow, half convinced by Granny's earnestness. "But thinkest not I should brew some boneset for her?"

"Nay, nay, 't is not medicine the child needeth," said Granny.

Going out, she found Submit feeding the pigs. One, a raw-boned, half-grown young pig, stood complacently, giving little satisfied grunts as Submit scratched his back with a stick.

"See, Granny," said Submit, a brighter look than usual lighting up her sober face. "This pig is the one that I play is mine. He knoweth me. See, he looketh up almost lovingly at me with his little eyes, and he always cometh running first, when I call the swine."

"Poor child!" thought Granny. Then she said, —

"The widow speaketh well of thee, Submit."

"Doth she?" asked Submit, looking surprised, but pleased too.

“Dost not find it as I said? Art not happier, since thou tryest to do right?” asked Granny.

“Yea,” said Submit. “The widow chideth me not so sorely of late, and ’t is long since she hath beaten me. And I feel better in my heart. When I go to bed, I am not so afraid in the dark. But, Granny —”

“But what, child?” asked Granny, as Submit hesitated.

“I am so lonely,” said the child, tears filling her great eyes, that looked larger and darker than ever in the pale, thin face. “Every one shunneth me, and looketh at me askance. I cannot bear it.”

“Tut, tut, child,” said Granny, her horn spectacles suddenly dimming over. “Do thou but go on as thou hast begun, being a good girl, and thou wilt find all will be well with thee yet. ‘Trust in the Lord and do good.’ Take Granny’s word for it.”

She left Submit feeling comforted and encouraged, as she always did after a talk with her old friend.

Granny Allison, meantime, turned her steps homeward, stopping in at the Ellises’, where she was cordially greeted by Goodwife Ellis.

Prudence sat working on a coarse tow sheet. It being worn in the middle, while the sides were yet strong and good, it was Prudence’s task to rip out the long seam down the centre, tightly sewed

with strong linen thread in closely set over and over stitches. Prudence must pick these out carefully, stitch by stitch, winding the thread as she drew it out on a wooden bobbin for use again. Then she must sew the outside edges together.

Turning a sheet was an occupation of which Prudence was not over fond, but to-day she was working like a little woman, having had the promise of playing with her poppet if her task were well done.

"Wilt let Prudence go out for a while?" asked Granny. "I would fain see thee alone."

Prudence laid down her work without any urging, and joyfully went outdoors, where she found Nathan, Abigail, their cousin Pelatiah, and little Sarah Coleman playing "meeting."

Abigail had struck up a close friendship with Sarah Coleman, who was just her own age. Sarah's father, John Coleman, lived in Hatfield on the West Side; but now her mother, Hannah Coleman, was staying in Hadley street, at the house of her father-in-law, Thomas Coleman, to aid in nursing him, and it was a help to have little Sarah spend much of her time at the Ellises', as she was kindly asked to do.

On a log in the back yard sat contentedly the two plump and rosy little girls, hand in hand, while Nathan and Pelatiah were, alas, quarrelling as to who should be minister.

“Thou art always the minister, Nathan Ellis,” said Pelatiah, hotly. “’Tis my turn to-day, I say.”

“Nay, thou wast minister last time, I tell thee,” said Nathan, stoutly.

This dispute might have ended in very unministerial blows; but, seeing Prudence coming, a happy thought struck Nathan on learning the glad news that she was free to play with them a while.

“Let Prudence be the minister,” he said. “She is the biggest. Then we shall have as many men as women, and one end of the log can be the men’s side of the meeting house, and the other the women’s.”

The difficulty thus happily settled, Nathan said, —

“Thou must give out a psalm, Prudence, and I will set the tune.”

The “meeting” rose decorously, and soon in at the living room window floated the sound of the childish voices singing their psalm, as Granny Allison and Goodwife Ellis talked.

“I have come to ask thee somewhat about Submit Carter,” began Granny.

“Is she bewitched again?” asked Goodwife Ellis. “’Tis well thou hast sent Prudence out, an that be the case, for I like not to have her hear much talk of such evil carryings on.”

“Tush, nay,” said Granny. “The poor child was ne’er bewitched. Thou hast a kind heart,

and, in truth, more sense than some of our gossips, and 'tis my desire that thou set them a wholesome example by suffering thy Prudence to play with Submit."

Goodwife Ellis grew grave at this request.

"I would gladly pleasure thee, Granny Allison, and that thou knowest full well. But in aught endangering my child's eternal welfare I dare not have regard to the favor of man. Submit Carter is a strange child. I cannot consent that Prudence consort with her, lest she become infected with Submit's evil antics."

"Submit's strangeness is chiefly caused by her friendlessness," said Granny. "True, she hath some fancifulness of nature. But she hath too a heart that craveth love. 'T were not strange an a child of her nature be left alone as she is, that she become in very truth distracted, or perchance pine away and die."

Goodwife Ellis looked uncomfortable, but gave no signs of yielding, and Granny went on with greater earnestness, —

"I ask thee but to put it to thyself, Goodwife Ellis. There is no surety in this fleeting world. We have here no abiding place. Thou knowest well how that scourge, smallpox, sweepeth away whole families, oft in a week's time. Nor have we any surety that the Lord may not suffer the savages to come in upon us like a flood, slaying

and devouring. Perchance, ere long, thy Prudence or Abigail, thine own daughters, that thou broodest tenderly under thy wings lest e'en the winds of heaven blow on them too roughly, may be left orphans, alone in a hard world, bound out to strangers. And the suspicion of witchcraft might fall e'en on them too, for none is safe from the speech of idle tongues. Wouldst desire them to be treated as Submit is? Remember the words of Him who died for us: 'Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto thee.' Art doing thus unto the bound child?"

As Granny paused, in at the window floated the words of the children's psalm. There was something touching in the childish voices, chanting words they but vaguely understood, Prudence's sweet, girlish voice rising above the others.

"But he that in his temple is,  
 most holy and most high,  
 And in the heavens hath his seat  
 of royal majesty,  
 The poor and simple man's estate,  
 considereth in mind,  
 And searcheth out full narrowly  
 the manners of mankind."

"Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings," said Granny, waving her staff towards the window.

Tears stood in Goodwife Ellis's eyes, as she sat looking down, her mother heart rent within her



at the picture Granny's words had vividly called up, of her own little daughters left orphans; a picture far from being an impossibility in those troubled and unsettled times, as she well knew.

"I feel the truth of what thou sayest, Granny," she said at last, in subdued tones. "I will e'en venture to suffer Prudence to play with Submit, under my own eye, and, if naught ill come of it, the motherless child shall come here as freely as Widow Burnham permitteth."

"Goodwife Ellis, thou wilt ne'er regret showing mercy unto one of His little ones who hath said, 'Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these little ones, ye did it unto me,' " said Granny, warmly.

Late that very afternoon, Submit sat knitting by the open door, that she might at least glance out sometimes into the free, out-door world, where the grass lay green in the sunlight, and the birds hopped merrily about.

Widow Burnham, stepping briskly to and fro as she whirled her spinning-wheel, glanced sharply at her now and then, to make sure that she was not idling.

Suddenly, to Submit's surprise, she saw Prudence coming up the narrow footpath worn in the grass, to the widow's door.

"Good day, Widow Burnham," said Prudence, respectfully. "My mother sendeth thee her regards, and desireth to know if thou wilt suffer

Submit to come up to our house and stay until the supper hour."

Prudence, as she said this, glanced half shyly, half cordially, at Submit, whose thin face flushed with mingled feelings, her intense longing to go, and her certainty that the widow was sure to refuse.

"How far art along on thy stocking, Submit?" asked the widow.

"I have just finished the heel," said Submit, bringing her work for the widow's inspection.

"In truth, thou hast worked diligently," said the widow. "I discern some signs of promise in thee. Thou mayst go with Prudence, an thou wilt not fail to return in ample season before supper to do thy evening chores. Watch the sun, and come ere it be low. And have a care that thou play none of thy wild pranks at Goodwife Ellis's."

Submit's face flushed deeper at this, and she said, —

"Thou shalt see that I will be good, an thou lettest me go."

No sooner were the girls well out the door, than Prudence said eagerly, —

"Submit, thou canst ne'er guess what I have to show thee! A poppet, of my very own, that came from London! John bought it for me at Mr. Pyncheon's trading-house in Springfield."

“A poppet? How I long to see it!” said Submit. “My daddy bought me a brave poppet in London, but ’t was lost on shipboard. I cried, but daddy said, ‘Ne’er cry for a poppet, lass. Daddy will buy thee a far finer one.’ And now I shall ne’er have another. But ’t will gladden me to see thine.”

As the girls walked on, chatting happily about the poppet, Submit would hardly have been recognized as the child who sat, so little while ago, pale and drooping, in the shade of Widow Burnham’s living room. To be outdoors in the sweet air, to be free for a little while from the monotonous grind of daily drudgery, to have Prudence, whom she liked, so kind, treating her as she might any other girl friend, all helped to lift the depression weighing down her heart. Her eyes so shone, and her face was so brightened, that when Goodwife Ellis met her at the door with friendly greeting, she thought, —

“I knew not that the child was so comely. But nevertheless she hath an ailing, pining look.”

Prudence brought out the precious poppet, which Submit admired enough even to satisfy the fond heart of its proud mother. The children sat on the grass before the front door, planning a gown for Susanna, as Prudence had named her doll.

Goodwife Ellis was careful to sit with her

knitting near the window, where she could see and hear all the children did.

Abigail and her friend Sarah Coleman were hanging about Prudence, greatly hindering her work in their inconveniently warm admiration of Susanna.

"Do go away, Abigail," said Prudence. "No, thou canst not take Susanna now. I must needs measure her for her gown."

"Please, Prudence, please," begged Abigail.

"I would I had a little sister," said Submit, looking wistfully at the chubby arm that wound itself coaxingly around Prudence's neck.

"She is a sweet child," said Prudence, "but she pestereth me sorely sometimes."

"Come, little Abigail, and I will tell thee a pretty play," said Submit, while Goodwife Ellis pricked up her ears and listened intently, fearful of witchcraft practices.

"Come thou and Sarah with me and be my little girls," continued Submit. "Our house shall be over in yon corner of the paling, by the great stump. The stump shall be our table, and we will make ready a goodly supper, and ask Prudence and her child to visit us and stay to supper. Will not that be a pretty play?"

Abigail and Sarah were favorably impressed with this plan, and skipped away with Submit, each holding one of her hands. How good each

plump little hand felt to Submit, as it clasped hers confidently!

Submit showed the little ones how to set the stump table, with plantain leaves and chips for dishes. Then they played journey to Springfield, like John and Sam, to buy venison and other good things for supper. Springfield was in the back yard, and grey moss from the log lying there answered to fill the plates and trenchers. Submit's lively fancy made all seem so real, that the children were wholly absorbed in the play.

As they came back from a trip to Springfield, merrily galloping on their make-believe horses, they saw a robin lighting on their stump table.

"'Sh," said Submit, softly. "Lo, Mistress Robin cometh to sup with us!"

When the robin, hopping about the stump, actually pecked at a bit of the moss venison on the chip trencher, Abigail and Sarah laughed so loudly in their glee, that away flew Mistress Robin, to return no more.

"Verily, as Granny saith, there seemeth naught evil about the child," thought Goodwife Ellis, as she watched Submit's bright, pleasant ways with the happy little girls.

When all was ready, Prudence and Susanna came over to supper, with much ceremony.

Susanna's face was painted white, with round spots of bright red on her cheeks. Her eyes were

a staring black, her painted hair the same hue, and her expression, to tell the truth, somewhat woodenish, as she stood on a block leaning stiffly against the stump, with her nose on her plate. But in the eyes of all the girls she was beautiful, and the chief guest of the occasion. Prudence's feelings were really hurt when Nathan, who, with Pelatiah, had insisted on coming to the feast, said, —

“Susanna is a blockhead.”

“Nathan Ellis,” said Prudence, “thou art most unkind to speak so rudely of Susanna, right before her, too.”

“Is not her head made of wood?” asked Nathan, while Pelatiah upheld him by giggling disrespectfully.

“Thou and Pelatiah had best go away and play by yourselves, methinks,” said Prudence, with offended dignity.

“We will e'en play be troopers, Pelatiah,” said Nathan. “We care not for the girls' stupid make-believe supper.”

And astride sticks, armed with other sticks for pikes and guns, the boys galloped about the yard, with frequent loud banging of the guns that somewhat disturbed the feast, which was being conducted with all the high courtesy and solemnity befitting so important an occasion.

In the midst of her happiness, Submit suddenly

noticed how long the shadows lay from the west along the grassy street.

“Prudence,” she cried, “I fear ’t is o’er late. I must go home. An I tarry late Widow Burnham will ne’er suffer me to come again. We have had such a merry time, I shall delight to think on ’t.”

“Thou must come again as soon as thou canst,” said Prudence, who had found Submit a fascinating playfellow.

The children, loath to part with her, begged to be allowed to walk part way home with Submit. As they walked happily, hand in hand, down the street, Goodwife Ferry chanced to look out her window. She shook her head forebodingly, and said to her daughter Mindwell, —

“’T is much to be feared that the bewitched child hath cast her spell o’er Goodman Ellis’s children. She seemeth to have them in her possession, an my eyes delude me not. ’T is passing strange that a sober liver like Goodwife Ellis hath not more watchful care o’er her flock.”

Submit, fortunately unconscious of Goodwife Ferry’s dark forebodings, came home looking bright, stepping lightly about setting the supper table, even humming to herself as she did so, fortunately a psalm tune, to which Widow Burnham could not well object. And she ate a larger porringer of bread and milk that night than for many a day before.

The widow thought, —

“Perchance Granny Allison was right. ’Tis certain she hath much wisdom in things physical. But I doubt an she hath not some leanings in her heart towards the flesh-pots of the Church of England. ’Twas commonly reported last winter, that she had a mince pie on the day called Christmas.”

After supper that night, John, who had been down on Hockanum Meadow all day, helping his father garner his crops, thought he had at last a chance to try the new bullet mould he had brought from Springfield.

There was still a good fire in the kitchen fire-place, and John raked out some red hot coals from beneath the cob-irons, and proceeded to put some of his lead melting, in a little iron skillet his mother had given him expressly for this use.

Prudence was with him, trying to help, and Nathan looking on, full of interest.

“I will hold the mould for thee, John,” said Prudence, “when thy lead is melted, and then thou canst pour it in handily.”

But here their father came out into the kitchen, with even a graver look than usual on his face.

“My children,” he said, “make ready speedily to go with me to the bedside of the godly Thomas Coleman. ’Tis not thought that the good man will tarry with us till the dawning. Philip and Chileab Smith have had their children to receive



his dying blessing, and I would fain have him lay his hands on you also, e'en as the dying Israel laid his hands upon the children of Joseph, ere he breathed his last."

The children looked awe-struck. John dared not object, or say a word about his plan of moulding bullets, his partly melted lead.

Soon Goodman Ellis, leading Nathan and Abigail, with John and Prudence walking soberly behind, were crossing the wide, grassy street, in the gathering darkness of the early evening.

In the stillness the rushing of the river, the evening wind that wailed with a foreboding of autumn through the rustling dry leaves of the trees, took on a dreary sound to the older children's fancy, and Prudence walked close to John, taking his hand, which he did not refuse. Abigail so stumbled with sleepiness that her father carried her in his arms.

Entering Thomas Coleman's bedroom, they found his family assembled around his bedside, also Mr. Russell, and Deacons Tilton and Goodman, engaged in prayer. The dying man, the pallor of death settling fast on his face, his eyes solemn with the far-away look of those about to depart on the long journey, lay propped up on pillows to assist his labored breath. He had his reason perfectly, and was still able to speak in broken, feeble sentences.

"As thou enterest Jordan, good brother, are its

waters sweet unto thy taste ? ” asked Mr. Russell  
 “ Art prepared for the last great change ? ”

“ My sole trust is in the unspeakable riches of Christ,” said the dying man, while all listened solemnly to the last utterances of the soul so soon to be ushered into the nearer presence of its Creator.

His mind seemed to turn back over his past life ; all its struggles, its toils, its broken hopes seemed to rise up before him.

“ God doth with us,” he gasped feebly, “ as a goldsmith ; knock, knock, knock, till He finisheth the plate. Praised be His name. In Him only will I glory. He is my refuge. Under me are the everlasting arms.”

“ Goodman Ellis would fain have thy dying blessing on his children,” said Deacon Tilton.

The children were brought nearer the bed.

“ The Lord God of your fathers, whose faithfulness is unto all generations, watch over you, and bless you, and strengthen you to walk in His ways all the days of your life,” gasped the sick man, with great effort.

“ Methinks his strength faileth,” said Mr. Russell.  
 “ Brother Tilton, wilt lead us to the throne of grace ? ”

The children went home, where their father had John read aloud the thirty-eighth psalm, and Prudence the last chapter of Revelation.

Then he talked to them about the need of being prepared for death, and expressed his hope that the benediction of that dying Christian, Thomas Coleman, might be blessed to their souls' eternal welfare.

The children went to bed much sobered. Later, Goodwife Ellis, hearing the sound of weeping from Prudence's room, went up to her. When she returned, she said, —

“Prudence is in sore disquiet and cannot sleep. She feareth that her sins are not pardoned, that she may not be elected, and that she may die and go to hell to burn forever. I answered her fears as well as I could, and prayed with her, and left her somewhat comforted.”

“’T would be well to have Mr. Russell here to-morrow to reason and pray with her,” said Goodman Ellis. “And now, my wife, let us give our children to God in solemn prayer, that the blessing of the dying saint may be made effectual to their salvation.”

## CHAPTER XVI.

### SUNDRY ROISTERERS.

TWO days after the death of Thomas Coleman came his funeral. Late in the afternoon towards sundown, most of the people of the settlement assembled at the Coleman house. There was no prayer or other service at either the house or grave, to "avoid superstition." The burial service of the Church of England, which spoke of all, both good and bad, alike, was regarded with especial disfavor by the Puritans, who called it a "lying service," and, in their reaction, went to the other extreme.

But, after an old English custom, both cake and wine were served at the house to all present, "to the value of forty shillings," as Goodwife Ferry told Goodwife Goodman next day.

The coffin, covered with a flowing black pall, rested on a bier, which was carried on the shoulders of six strong men. The solemn procession started for the grave.

First walked the pall-bearers with their burden, the black pall falling on the heads of the men.

Behind the bier walked the aged widow supported by the arm of her son John. After them walked the other children of Thomas Coleman with their families. Next came the large family of Wellses, closely connected with the Colemans by marriage, the widow Frances Wells, mother of Thomas Wells senior, and grandmother of the younger Thomas, Jonathan, and the rest, having wedded Thomas Coleman as her second husband.

Behind the chief mourners came the neighbors and friends, walking two by two, many children being among them, as funerals were held to exert a peculiarly impressive religious influence on the minds of the young.

It was a cloudy day in early autumn, chilly and depressing as such days are, with the consciousness they bring that summer is over, winter close at hand. Down one side of the street walked slowly and solemnly the long procession to the Middle Highway, leading to the Meadow, and out to the spot where, on the meadow plain, rose two ridges with a little valley between. This spot, rising as it did somewhat above exposure to the floods of spring, had been paled in for a burying ground, and here a few grassy hillocks, unmarked by stones, showed the last resting-place of the Hadley Puritans.

There were two sets of bearers. As the pro-

cession neared Goody Webster's house, it stopped, that a change of bearers might be made. Goody Webster's face was seen looking darkly out her window. She lived apart from her neighbors, sharing neither their joys nor sorrows.

Samuel Porter, one of the head bearers, as he lifted the end of the bier to his shoulders, stumbled over a stone and almost fell, giving the coffin an unseemly lurch. Glances of awe were exchanged along the procession, and Deacon Goodman whispered to Deacon Tilton, —

“Verily, this is a wanton offence in the witch, to jostle thus rudely the body of the godly Thomas Coleman in its journey to the grave.”

“An she carry things with such violence, our magistrates must perforce deal with her with a strong hand,” replied Deacon Tilton.

The procession wound out upon the Meadow Plain, entered the little burying ground, and silently formed on one of the ridges around the open grave dug by neighbors' hands for the friend who walked with them no more.

The autumn sun, low in the west, near its setting, now glanced soberly through a rift in the sombre clouds. Death was always invested to Puritan children with terror. The waning light, the autumn wind that swept across the plain, rustling mournfully the tall, dry, wild grass, and blowing about the black pall on the coffin which

rested beside the open grave, all added to the gloomy impression on the children's minds.

Prudence, weeping, held tightly to her mother's hand, as something warm, and living, and human. Submit, her face blanched, her eyes great and solemn, looked across the grave at Prudence, and felt more desolate than ever at the thought that there was no loving mother's hand for her to clasp. She felt too awe-stricken and depressed with a certain terror of both life and death to shed a tear, but stood with a rigid look on her white face, watching the bearers, as, amidst reverent silence, the coffin was lowered, and the clods of the valley echoed on its lid with hollow, heart-breaking sound.

Not a word was said at the grave. When it was filled, the procession re-formed as before, and silently returned to the street. That evening, Mr. Russell, the deacons, and several of the leading lights in the church, assembled at the house of the widow, to pray and sing psalms with the afflicted family. When the meeting broke up, Goodman Ellis requested Mr. Russell to call at his house next day, to pray with Prudence and deepen the impression evidently made on the child's mind by the event of the day.

When she reached home from the funeral, Widow Burnham said reproachfully to Submit:

“Saw'st thou not Prudence Ellis weeping at the

grave to-day? This death should be an awakening to thee also. Didst not notice little hillocks in the burying place not a span long? Death may be waiting to clutch thee e'en this very night. But I sorely fear thou wilt die impenitent and have thy portion 'where their worm dieth not, and their flames are not quenched.' Thou stood'st there looking as hard as the nether millstone, not shedding a tear. I could have shaken thee. Folk will say I neglect thy soul's salvation."

Submit could not explain to Widow Burnham the sadness beyond tears filling her young heart. Indeed, she understood it not herself. She only felt it. She said, —

"Methinks death is not the saddest thing."

The widow took this for further stubbornness.

"Thou art a graceless child. Have a care lest thou fall into the hands of an angry God."

When Submit went to bed that night, in her dreary attic chamber under the sloping roof, she lay long trembling, with tightly closed eyes, lest some nameless horror befall her in the darkness, listening to the dreary "hoot, hoot," of the wolves out on the plain, and thinking of the widow's warning. Then somehow the words of the psalm Granny Allison had told her to learn, came into her mind with a strong comforting assurance, as if something told her that this was the truth, rather than Widow Burnham's dark, hard prophecies.



Repeating to herself, —

“The Lord is my Shepheard, I shall not want. . . . Yea, though I should walke through the valley of the shadowe of death, I will feare no evill: for thou art with mee: thy rod and thy staffe, they comfort mee” — at last she glided away into the peaceful world of dreams.

Her face wore a happy smile, and her lips murmured words of love in her sleep, for were not she and her dear daddy walking, hand in hand, through the flowery, terraced garden of a beautiful castle, where peacocks spread their splendid tails in the soft sunlight?

John, like the other boys, had worked hard these autumn days, helping his father clear the crops from the meadow land. When the meadows were wholly cleared, the fence viewers would carefully look over the many rods of common fence surrounding the meadow land, calling upon each proprietor to repair his own section wherever necessary; and then the cattle, swine, and horses now running wild over their woodland pastures on hill and plain for many a mile to the north, east, and west, would be gathered in, and pastured until winter in the great common field.

“’T is merry sport, John,” his cousin Sam had assured him, “when we go riding forth to gather in the herds and flocks from the woods. The older and soberer men go not. ’T is the young

men and big boys that have this business in charge. Some among them are jovial sparks. Thou wilt see lively sport that day, I warrant thee."

Looking eagerly forward to this unusual outing, John had worked so faithfully and willingly as to win rare praise from his father.

"Thou wilt be a man yet, John, and one, I trust, after mine own heart," said his father, as they were riding home at night from Hockanum Meadow, with all the flax that could be loaded on their horses piled on before and behind their saddles. "I would rather have thee for help now than ten Naushapees."

This was hardly enthusiastic praise. But it was not so much his father's words, as the look of approval he cast on John that warmed his heart, and made him work harder than ever next day.

The fall ploughing was done, winter rye, meslin, and wheat sown for early crops in the spring; beans were gathered, turnips pulled, corn picked, and the stalks cut for the cattle's use, and a goodly crop of pumpkins stored in the cellar. Great stacks of hay, made from the rank, wild grass, were mowed away in the barn.

With all these stores of his own raising safely housed in barn and cellar, Goodman Ellis felt rich indeed. He and his were abundantly provided with the necessities of life for the long winter

soon to be upon them. There was naught to waste, but enough with frugal care.

But the good man was careful to read at evening devotions from the twelfth chapter of Luke the parable of the rich man whose ground brought forth so plentifully that he purposed to pull down his barn and build greater, and earnestly did he pray that he and his might not be as those who lay up treasures on earth, where moth and rust do corrupt, and thieves break through and steal, but might ever be rich towards God, and accepted in His sight.

His own herds were as yet so small that they were kept near home, pastured in the street or on the home lot; but he willingly consented that John should go to aid his cousin Sam, Jonathan and Noah Wells, the Belding and Warner boys, in gathering in their fathers' herds from the forests. Samuel Russell, the minister's son, was also to be of the company.

This was reassuring to Goodwife Ellis, who said, —

“I am glad, John, that thou wilt be in such staid company. Mr. Russell's son is a sober and godly youth, who goeth shortly to Harvard College, to fit for the ministry.”

“Doubtless sundry of our roisterers, like Joseph Selden and his sort, will go on this day's business,” said John's father, “but do thou, my son,

pay no heed to them and their vile ways. Scripture warneth us, 'Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men.' 'If sinners entice thee, consent thou not.' "

"Have no fears for me, father," said John. "I have small liking for Joseph Selden and his noisy crew."

Early in the morning a troop of about thirty young men and boys, mounted on horseback, rode out the Middle Highway eastward, towards the woods. White frost still lay thick on grass and palings, and the air was keen yet exhilarating. The Hadley youths were in the best of spirits, with no work for at least a whole day, perhaps for several days, and a wild, free excursion in the woods before them. All carried guns, with lively expectations of picking up some game.

John and Sam were of course of the party. As they rode along, John said, —

"Verily, I see not how thou knowest where to look for thy cattle, Sam. It seemeth much like seeking a needle in a hay mow."

"In truth, we know not," said Sam. "We must e'en hunt till we chance upon them. They have a wide range o'er all the hills and plains to the east, as well as north and south, though Mount Holyoke serveth as a barrier to the south as doth the river on the west. 'Tis much like hunting wild game, they have run in the woods so long.

Some years we are forced to go out every day for a week ere we run them all in."

When they were well out in the woods, a mile or more from the settlement, Joseph Selden cried, —

"Ho, ye merry lads, a song, a song! Methinks we need not drone psalms here in the wildwood."

Edward Grannis, who had a pleasant tenor voice, struck up this song.

"Of all the gay birds that e'er I did see,  
The owl is the fairest by far to me;  
For all the day long she sits on a tree,  
And when the night comes, *away* flieth she!"

This old English song was sung to a rollicking air that gave it a flavor of wickedness in the ears of Sam and John, as well as others of the more strictly trained youth, especially when Joseph Selden and others of the wilder sort came in on the last line with a shout that rang uproariously through the silent forest, —

"And when the night comes, *away* flieth she!"

Nathaniel Warner, riding somewhat in advance, had espied a fine deer drinking at a spring, and carefully drawn what he felt a sure aim upon her, when this roaring chorus broke out, and the startled deer bounded away with long, graceful leaps into remoter depths of the wilderness.

Nathaniel was vexed.

“Edward Grannis,” he said, “an thou goest roaring thy roistering songs through the woods in this riotous fashion, ’t is little we shall see of game, or our cattle either, methinks.”

“Thou art hard to please, Brother Warner,” said Grannis, scoffingly.

“’T is a pity an we cannot let ourselves out sometimes,” said Joseph Selden. “That is a merry catch, more to my taste, I trow, than any of Tom Sternhold’s prick songs. Troll another stave, Ed.”

“Scripture saith, if any be merry, let him sing psalms, and that thou hast oft heard,” said Stephen Belding, who disliked Selden, and was as willing to quarrel with him about psalm singing as anything else.

“Hearken unto godly Deacon Belding,” said Selden, mockingly, through his nose, while Stephen colored, and his eyes flashed in most undeaconly fashion.

“Mayhap our saints will like better this jovial strain,” said Grannis. “’T is merrier far than any of your Genevan jigs.” And he struck off into

“Nose, nose, jolly red nose,  
And what gave me this jolly red nose?  
Nutmegs and cinnamon, spices and cloves,  
And *they* gave me this jolly red nose!”

Whenever the words, “jolly red nose” occurred, they were shouted in chorus by the band of con-

vivial spirits, who grew wilder and more lawless the farther behind they left the restrictions of Hadley street, and the more they saw by the darkening countenances of their comrades that they were succeeding in annoying them.

Moses Gilbert, at the last line of the song,

“ And *they* gave me this jolly red nose,”

drew a flask of aqua-vitæ from the inside breast of his leathern doublet and handed it to Selden, saying, —

“ There’s somewhat stronger than spices and cloves in this flask, something that will warm up the cockles of thy heart, and give thee a jolly red nose in good truth, an thou drinkest enough on’t.”

Selden took the flask, held it aloft, and, as he drew the cork, repeated with mock solemnity, —

“ Made in London,  
Sold at York,  
Stops a bottle,  
And is a cork.”

The flask circulated among the singers, and their mirth grew more boisterous.

Seeing Samuel Russell rein in his horse, and drop behind the others, Sam Smith and John did the same.

“ It ill becometh me to countenance such lewd

practices as these," said Samuel. "My father would ill brook my consorting with these fuddle-caps. An needs be, I will e'en return to Hadley street without our cattle."

"I care not to ride farther in such loose company," said Sam.

"Nor I," said John.

While the boys were debating what they should do, they saw the Wells boys, Nathaniel Warner, Stephen Belding, and the rest of the soberer ones of the party riding back towards them.

"'Tis worse than useless for us to go on with these rioters," said Nathaniel. "Their uproar will scare our cattle so we shall ne'er lay eye upon them. Moreover, we may be held answerable for some of their wild pranks. They'll bring up in the stocks, or I am no prophet."

"I'll be no snook to inform on them," said Stephen Belding, "but methinks they will let the cat out of the bag themselves. Let them alone. Give them enough rope, and they'll e'en hang themselves."

"Let them go on," said Jonathan Wells, "and let us bend our course more to the north, and drive in whatever creatures we hap to find in that region."

This course was adopted. The boys travelled all day through the woods, not only finding many of the Hadley cattle, but managing to gather here



and there under the tall chestnuts and walnuts good store of nuts, which filled the ends of the bags hung across their saddles with this very object in view. And some game was brought down too.

It was a hard day's work. Often they must walk, leading their horses, stumbling through bushes and over rocks and stones, as, with many shouts and cries, they sought to circumvent and surround a wild horse or refractory steer, determined to go any way except towards Hadley.

Towards night Sam Smith said, —

“’T is passing strange that I find nowhere my father's young bay mare. He deemed her too young to put to work this summer, and suffered her to run in the woods, thinking to break her in this fall.”

“She will be as wild as a deer, by this time, doubtless,” said Stephen Belding. “’T is strange she hath not kept with the Hadley horses. Creatures know each other, and have their friendships like folks. Our Hadley herds mostly keep together all summer. It seemeth that we have here most of the Hadley horses turned out to pasture last spring, save thy father's mare.”

“I remember that bay mare well,” said Nathaniel Warner. “She is a high spirited creature. ’T would be a pity had the Maquas stolen her, which is not unlikely.”

The troop of horses the boys were driving began to show signs of alarm and uneasiness. They sniffed the air wildly, and tried to break through the surrounding circle of their captors, back into the woods. The cattle too caught the infection.

"Wild beasts or Indians about, I trow," said Jonathan Wells. "The cattle scent something they like not."

"Methinks yonder I catch a glimpse of a light through the trees," said Stephen.

He and Sam rode forward to investigate.

In a hollow beside a spring in the woods, they found several Indians encamped around a fire, over which venison was cooking. It being near their own supper hour, the appetizing odor was most tantalizing to the half famished boys.

Wequogon seemed to be head sachem of the little band.

Sam bethought himself, —

"Perchance Wequogon may know somewhat of the whereabouts of the mare. The Indians roam the forests all the time, far and near, and naught escapeth their keen eyes."

In reply to Sam's queries, Wequogon shook his head, signifying that he had not seen the missing animal. But a young Indian brave sitting wrapped in his blanket the other side of the fire, who apparently had taken no notice of the boys, now looked up and said, —

“Englishman’s squaw horse far away, down the great river. Womscom saw her last moon. She run like the deer.”

“How far away, thinkest thou, Womscom?” asked Sam.

“Many bow shots. Below the great mountain,” said Womscom, pointing off to the south.

Here was news indeed.

“She must have gone through the crack in the mountain,” said Sam. “’T is strange she should wander so far away by herself.”

“Doubtless Goody Webster had some hand in the matter,” said Stephen. “’T will be a great mercy an thou e’er seest her again.”

“She must be somewhere in the wilderness to the southward, by what Womscom tells us,” said Sam. “Had she strayed among the Springfield herds, they would know where she belongeth, for she hath the Hadley brand on her flank. We shall have a fine chase after her.”

It was late that night when a large herd of cattle, horses, and swine were with much ado driven in through the meadow gate. Wildly did they run to and fro, and watchful would the fence viewers now have to be that the common fence was kept staunch and tight, and all gates shut, lest these restless wild animals break out and take to the woods again.

Still later that night, when sober folk were

abed and asleep, they were wakened by an unwonted whooping and hallooing through the quiet street, when Joseph Selden and his noisy gang came roaring and galloping home, more than half drunk. Constable Ferry and the night watch soon laid the firm grip of the law on these roisterers, and having taken their names, bound them to appear before the magistrate next morning and answer for their evil practices, and then suffered them to go home, which they did in much quieter fashion.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### GOING TO THURSDAY LECTURE.

THE next morning Joseph Selden and the other offenders duly appeared before Magistrate Henry Clarke, in the hall or great room of his house, which served as the court room. The culprits bore themselves with a mixture of sheepish shame and sullen defiance.

Philip Smith had been greatly scandalized by his son Sam's account of the previous day's doings, and felt it his duty as one of the townsmen, in the interests of public morality, to appear at the presentation of the offenders and see that justice was done. He urged Magistrate Clarke to "lay on and spare not."

"These sons of Belial must be made an example of," he said sternly, frowning upon the surly group who stood with hanging heads before the magistrate. "We came forth into the wilderness to train up our youth in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The lewd practices of these roisterers are a scandal and an offence to all Hadley, and will surely call down the vengeance

of God upon our settlement, an they are not put down with a firm hand. I trust, worshipful Mr. Clarke, thou wilt make them sweat for their evil doings."

Here Joseph Selden cast an insolent look of bold defiance at Philip Smith, angering that excellent but quick-tempered man, and he continued emphatically,—

"An thou wilt hearken to my opinion, twenty lashes on the bare back, well laid on, were none too weighty a punishment."

"Please God, no such sentence shall e'er be executed on me," flashed out Selden, hotly.

He had taken up the tongs to use a coal from the fire to light his pipe. As he spoke, he threw the tongs violently down on the hearth stone, with a loud bang.

"Joseph Selden," said Magistrate Clarke, sternly, "thou art fined twenty shillings for drunkenness and rioting yesterday, and for thy turbulent and disrespectful demeanor in this court. Thou must also give bond of ten pounds for quiet and decent behavior hereafter, or, in default of such bond, go to Northampton jail. Edward Grannis, Moses Gilbert, and the rest of thy lewd companions are fined five shillings for yesterday's misdemeanor. For a second offence of like nature, I shall sentence you all to sit in the stocks on Lecture day, for three hours; and a third transgression will

bring the twenty lashes on the bare back which our good Mr. Philip Smith, in his zeal for righteous living, hath recommended be meted out to you to-day. I am loath to use hardness for the first offence, but if clemency avail not to restrain you, then look to feel the full weight of the arm of the law."

Edward Church, Selden's father-in-law, promptly went on his bond. As Selden left the court, red with rage, his wrath seemed directed even more towards Philip Smith than against Magistrate Clarke. In passing him, he returned Smith's frown of disapproval with an insulting stare, muttering something under his breath about "shooks" and "meddlers" as he went out.

Philip Smith shook his head darkly, saying to Magistrate Clarke, —

"Yon is a bold sprout of evil. Perchance 't is our duty to order him out of town."

"But for his good father-in-law, I would proceed against him at once," said the magistrate.

Not long after these events, one Wednesday afternoon Submit appeared at the Ellises', her face lit up with eager anticipation.

"Goodwife Ellis," she said, "Widow Burnham sendeth her respects and desireth to know if thou wilt take me under thy care to the Thursday Lecture? 'T is held at Hatfield this week, as thou knowest."

“Why goeth not the widow to the Lecture herself?” asked Goodwife Ellis. “I trust she groweth not heedless of spiritual exercises.”

“She is feeble, and feeleth not strong enough to go, sorely to her sorrow,” said Submit. “She hath a touch of her old trouble, the king’s evil.”

“’Tis a pity she were not in London now,” said Goodwife Ellis. “While we tarried there, ere sailing, a company of those afflicted with king’s evil gathered at Whitehall, and his Majesty, King Charles, graciously came forth and laid his hands upon them, and ’t was said that many of those that were ill were mightily helped thereby.”

“Granny Allison hath concocted a distillation for her of dandelion and burdock root, which she saith is a sovereign remedy,” said Submit. “And Goodwife Ferry hath loaned her a hare’s foot to hang about her neck.”

“Hath it one joint of the leg attached?” asked the good wife, anxiously.

“Yea. Goodwife Ferry saith that otherwise it would have little virtue,” said Submit, who, while she answered all Goodwife Ellis’s inquiries politely, was all the time in an inward fever of impatience to know whether she could go to the Lecture.

“She spoke truly,” said Goodwife Ellis, still intent on the hare’s foot. “Thou canst say to the widow, Submit, that it grieves me to hear that she is valetudinarious, and that I will willingly take



thee to the Lecture with Prudence. But Hannah Coleman hath craved me to leave Prudence and Abigail to sup at her father's. Our John will go over for his sisters and bring them home by early candle-lighting. Think'st thou the widow will spare thee so long?"

"I know not, but I will ask her," said Submit, eagerly.

"I do hope thou canst go, Submit," said Prudence, who had come to love Submit almost as a sister.

"I long to go with thee more than I can tell," said Submit, "but I sorely fear Widow Burnham will not suffer me to be away for so long."

The widow, who had found Submit much more tractable and helpful since she had taken Granny's advice and allowed her to play now and then, surpassed any hopes Submit dared entertain by consenting that she might accept Goodwife Ellis's kind invitation.

"Thou mayst go," she said, "an thou canst work briskly enough this morning to get thy tasks done for the whole day. I deem it for thy soul's good to go to the Lecture, above all, in the godly company of Goodman Ellis and wife. I trust Mr. Russell and the deacons will notice that I am mindful of thy soul's welfare."

Submit flew about the house that morning as if her feet were borne by invisible wings, accomplish-

ing an amount of work that would have been creditable in a girl of eighteen. Nor was she very tired at noon, for all the time, as she worked, she was buoyed up within by happy anticipations.

Was Lecture day then so gay and delightful an occasion, that a child's heart should thus sing for joy because of it? Alas, no, it was but a modified Sunday.

The Thursday lectures were held every week, at either Northampton, Hadley, or Hatfield, as the settlement on the west side the river had lately been named. Lecture day service was considered almost as binding a duty as that of Sunday. Hard as they worked at other times, business was largely dropped Thursday afternoons, and the people of the three settlements assembled in church to listen to an exhortation and sing psalms, as on Sunday.

So great was the throng crossing the river on these days, that at the ferry between Hadley and Northampton, kept by Joseph Kellogg at the south end of Hadley street, it was voted by the town that on Lecture days passengers going to attend the Lecture, if six or more crossed at once in Kellogg's canoe, should pay but a penny apiece, instead of two pence, the usual fare.

But though Lecture days were a sort of Sunday, still they furnished the nearest approach to a social gathering and excitement that the Puritans knew.

It was no wonder that Submit, so closely confined, looked forward with keen delight to this outing from her daily routine of drudgery and Widow Burnham's ceaseless supervision, to the trip to Hatfield, where she had never been, and above all, to the supper at John Coleman's in company with her friend Prudence and the little girls, whom she loved, and who loved her.

Lecture day dawned a perfect October day, of brilliant blue sky overhead, and of an almost intoxicatingly clear, crisp, stimulating air. Each breath of it filled one with fresh life and hope. Every tree was radiant in its own autumn brightness of crimson, yellow, orange, or bronze. Mount Tom, and Mount Holyoke and its whole wild range, blazed in a splendor of hue made only more vivid by the many dark green pines and hemlocks that rose unchanged from amidst this wealth of color.

Submit sat by the window, impatiently watching for the coming of the Ellises. To not lose a moment, she had already put on her drab cloak with a wide white linen collar over it, and her sad-colored woollen hood which turned back from her face. But the unusual pink tinge on her cheeks, and the happy light of joyous anticipation shining in her dark eyes, seemed to light up even her sombre dress.

Widow Burnham regarded doubtfully this changed, hopeful aspect, and mumbled in tones

stified by the bandage under her chin encircling her head, —

“ I trust thou wilt walk soberly, and carry thyself as befitteth the day, and thy condition as a bound girl. 'Tis a marvellous condescension in Goodwife Ellis to suffer thee to go with her daughters to visit the Colemans. It is becoming that thou carry thyself humbly and gratefully.”

A shadow fell on Submit's brightness. These words almost spoiled her pleasure. Oh, that she were not a bound girl, but free, free as her soul longed to be !

As she mused, discontentedly, on the hardships of her lot, the Ellis party appeared walking sedately down the street: first, Goodman Ellis and wife, leading Abigail; behind them walked John, Prudence, and Nathan.

As Submit came out the door, Abigail dropped her mother's hand, and running to Submit, seized the small hand, already stained and hardened by labor, in her own plump, soft little hand.

Submit's face brightened again, and still more, when Prudence, her face all smiles of joy, said, —

“ Oh, Submit, thou knowest not how it gladdens me to have thee go too.”

Goodwife Ellis greeted her kindly, and Goodman Ellis, whose stern dignity usually made Submit afraid of him, perhaps softened a little, uncon-

sciously, by the glowing beauty all around, gave her a staid welcome almost cordial.

As for John, Submit had nothing to say to him, or he to her. Perhaps she would not have been quite so shy of John, had she known that he had been pleased lately to remark to Prudence, —

“Thy friend Submit is by no means ill-favored, and she hath shrewd wits. ’Tis a pity she is a bound girl.”

The fresh air and the bright sunshine were a rapture to Submit, coming from the dark, smoky kitchen, scented with the sickly odors of Widow Burnham’s lotions and extracts. Then it was a scene of unusual liveliness to see both sides of the long street stirring with people walking down towards the river, while along the grassy centre jogged on horseback various of the older men, with their wives on pillions behind them. Most of the sturdy folk, not spoiled by luxury and inured to walking, felt the two miles’ walk to Hatfield but a pleasure jaunt. Submit only wished the distance were twice as great.

Just before the Ellises walked Thomas Wells with his wife Hepzibah and her friend, Mistress Mary Broughton. The bright day had tempted these young women to air some of their finery, which they had been more cautious about displaying since the deacons had formally waited upon and admonished them.

But when the sun shone so fairly, and the sky was so blue, and all nature in holiday array, and when the people of three settlements were to be assembled to look at them, it was not in the heart of human woman to resist the temptation to look her prettiest.

A pleasant sight indeed were these young women in their bright silk hoods and dresses of flowered damask, their cloaks trimmed with lace and bows of ribbon, and their silken scarves fluttering gayly in the breeze as they walked demurely along; and quite conscious were they of the fact.

Submit whispered to Prudence,—

“Wouldst not delight in a hood lined with pink silk, like Mistress Hepzibah’s? Doth it not please thine eye?”

“In truth it doth,” said Prudence, “but I wot ’t is because of my sinful heart. Yet I wish much that bright colors were not so wicked.”

Goodman Ellis gazed frowningly on the young women’s finery, and, when the Wellses were delayed on the river’s bank, waiting for a canoe to cross, felt it his duty to testify against it as follows,—

“Mistress Hepzibah, methinks thou art clad somewhat o’er bravely and flauntingly for Lecture day, when we strive to trim our soul’s wings for a flight above creature comforts.”

"Yon tree hath donned a scarlet coat," said Mistress Hepzibah, with a saucy smile, pointing to a brilliant maple, whose bright image was reflected in the river below the bank.

Goodman Ellis was not to be softened by coquettish smiles or graces.

"Yon tree hath not a soul to be lost. Knowest thou not that Time is but a dressing room for Eternity?" he asked. Then, turning to the husband, "Thomas, doubtless thou wilt be held to answer for thy wife's soul, she being the weaker vessel, and looking up to thee in all things, as the Church looketh to Christ. Thou shouldst use thy authority to prohibit this vain and pernicious example set by thy spouse, liable to corrupt and lead astray our youth."

Thomas Wells looked uncomfortable, and said nothing. He was by no means so certain as Goodman Ellis that he was the stronger vessel. And his wife looked very pretty to him in her wedding finery. He felt that the elders were too rigid in their ideas; but it would not do to say so, therefore he maintained a discreet silence.

Many log canoes and some larger boats were plying to and fro across the river, which glistened so brightly in the sun that Goodman Ellis was fain to shade his eyes from its sparkle as he watched John landing on the opposite shore his important passengers, Mr. Russell and wife.

Mr. Russell held his horse by the bridle, and it swam or walked behind the canoe according to the depth of the water.

John paddled swiftly back, his canoe leaving a long ripple on the broad river's shining surface. When the Ellises and Submit were all seated in the canoe, it sank so low in the water that Goodman Ellis said, —

“Ye must carry yourselves sedately, or we shall all be in the river, methinks. Canst safely stem the current with such a load, my son?”

“Yea, father,” said John. “I am oft on the river, and thou wilt see that I know full well how to manage.”

The Connecticut presented an animated scene, with people coming and going on its banks, and canoe loads paddling to and fro, the passengers leading their horses, who swam behind the canoes, to Nathan's intense interest. In truth, Nathan felt crossing the river to be the best part of Lecture day.

Submit looked up and down the broad beautiful river whose shining waters reflected the blue sky, and the fringe of bright-hued trees and bushes bordering its shores. As the canoe glided on swiftly, impelled by John's strong arms, she felt free and happy, floating on amidst this almost unreal world of beauty above and below. She whispered to Prudence, —



"Being on the water mindeth me of sailing the ocean with daddy."

"I like not the water o'er well," said Prudence, regarding fearfully the edge of the canoe, almost dipping into the river, and the pebbly bottom eight feet below them, but plainly seen through the clear water. She sat carefully as if holding up the whole canoe.

"I could live on it always," said Submit, "or in it, were I only a fish. See yon great fish, how he seemeth to stand still on the water! Ah, away he goeth with one dash of his tail, behind yon tree root! How free he is! I would I were a fish to roam at my will in the clear, cool water."

"Thou art a strange girl, Submit, methinks," said Prudence, looking in wonder at Submit, whose eyes were fixed wistfully on the smooth flowing water, in which she trailed one hand.

John displayed considerable skill in the management of the canoe. At first, to Prudence's surprise, he rowed up stream, keeping close to the hither shore in the still water under the bank.

"Why, John," exclaimed Prudence, "what doest thou? We want to cross the river, and thou rowest up."

"Little maids should not talk about what they do not understand," said John. "Wait and see."

After he had rowed up stream a few rods, John

suddenly veered his course, and shot out into the main current, which bore him swiftly down stream, he at the same time paddling strongly for the further shore, so that he reached the landing-place on the opposite side without much difficulty.

His passengers climbed the bank, as did John, after tying his canoe to an overhanging bush, and all took the path which led north through the meadow to the fertile intervale plain where stood, each side its one street, the cluster of thirty houses that made the plantation of Hatfield.

From the other end of the street they saw the people from Northampton pouring in, while the Hatfield people had generally turned out, for their young minister, Mr Hope Atherton, was to preach the lecture this day, and it was a point of both pride and duty to uphold his hands. The throng bent their way to the small wooden meeting house standing in the centre of the wide street.

The meeting house, only thirty feet square, was crowded full, galleries and all. Long were the prayers, long the discourse, and psalm singing was not stinted. When the service at last concluded, late in the afternoon, as the congregation came out they lingered for exchange of greetings with friends from the other settlements, and there was more sedate visiting done than would have been countenanced on a Sunday.

Goodwife Ellis, giving Goodwife John Coleman hearty greeting, said, —

“Thy young minister, Mr. Atherton, is verily a pious, painful preacher. He hath given us a sound gospel treat to-day.”

“Yea,” added Goodman Ellis, “’t was a sermon, as the phrase in Old England is, that might have been preached at St. Paul’s Cross.”

Goodwife Coleman was well pleased at these praises of her pastor.

“We of Hatfield deem him a sweet, affecting pastor, for one still so young. But though young in years, he is old in grace. He oft besiegeth the throne of grace for o’er an hour in prayer, with acceptance.”

“Goodwife Coleman,” said Goodwife Ellis, “Prudence hath brought with her the Widow Burnham’s bound girl, Submit Carter, whom the widow was desirous should profit by the Lecture to-day. Will it be an inconveniency should she tarry at thy house with my daughters this even, till John come for them?”

“She is heartily welcome to remain,” said Goodwife Coleman. “’T was she that was so sorely bewitched not long since, was ’t not?”

“Yea, e’en so,” replied Goodwife Ellis. “But Satan hath left her for a season, and verily the child showeth many signs of a regenerate nature.”

“My little Sarah hath talked oft of her since she met her at thy house, at the time when Father Coleman was called to go up higher,” said Goodwife Coleman.

John Coleman’s house stood near the centre of the east side of Hatfield street. Young Hannah Coleman, who was about Prudence’s age, welcomed her guests gladly, while Abigail and Sarah giggled for joy at being once more together, and Sarah hastened to take Abigail out doors to play.

“I know thou couldst not bring thy new London poppet on Lecture day, Prudence,” said Hannah, “but I would thou couldst, ’t is so pleasing. I will e’en show thee mine, tho’ ’t is but a poor thing. I made her myself, after seeing thine, I wanted a poppet so sorely.”

The girls were much interested in Hannah’s rag doll, which, in spite of the staring features depicted on its face in ink, bore only distant resemblance to the human form. But a child’s imagination could easily fill out whatever was lacking. Besides, the fair Huldah wore a beauteous cloak of figured red and white damask silk.

“She is a proper poppet,” said Prudence. “But where didst get this bright cloak?”

“Young Mistress Hannah Lyman, of Northampton, gave me the silk once when I visited at her father’s house with my mother. ’T is a bit of that brave gown that she wore to-day. Marked ye her

not, that comely damsel, sitting near the fore-seat on the women's side, so gayly attired?"

"She with the spirited black eyes?" asked Prudence. "She looked as if she cared not who saw her."

"Nor doth she," said Hannah. "My mother deemeth her too much given to giddiness and new fangledness in dress and behavior. But I cannot help liking her, for she was so pleasant and kind to me, and I think this red cloak most desirable. My mother liketh not to see it, so I put it on Huldah only upon great occasions, as to-day, when I have company."

"'Tis most beauteous," said Prudence. "I would Susanna could have one like it."

While the girls talked, Submit had been struck with a new idea. She said, —

"Prudence, I believe I could fashion me a poppet like Huldah, had I aught to make it of. And I should so love to have a poppet of mine own. But I well know that Widow Burnham would not give me any bits of linen to make it."

"I will ask my mother to give thee some linen," said Prudence, full of interest in this new plan. "Then thou canst work on the poppet at our house whene'er thou comest up there to play, and I will gladly help thee."

The girls now went out doors with Huldah to play "keep house." Abigail and Sarah were no-

where to be seen, but presently Abigail came running up to Prudence from behind the barn, pulling her gown, and wanting her to come and see something, Prudence could not understand what.

“ ’T is doubtless Sarah’s little fawn she wisheth thee to go to see,” said Hannah.

“ A fawn ! ” exclaimed Prudence.

“ Yea,” said Hannah. “ Last summer, when my father was on the mountain, he shot a deer, the mother of this fawn. He felt sorry for the poor little fawn, and brought it home to Sarah. We feed it milk and bits of bread, and ’t is so tame it followeth us everywhere, e’en around the house, to Sarah’s great glee.”

The girls patted and played with the gentle fawn, a pretty, graceful creature, with great, dark eyes that had an almost human expression. Submit looked pityingly at the motherless little creature, half believing that she saw a loneliness like her own in its sad eyes. Sarah loved her fawn almost as much as she did her little new baby sister, Bethia, and Abigail could not tell which she wanted most, a tame fawn or a baby sister, so greatly did she envy the doubly fortunate Sarah.

After supper, when Hannah and her brother Thomas walked down to the river bank with their guests to see them off, the fawn followed too. Abigail kept her arm around its neck, and laughed

with glee when it thrust its nose into her hand in search of a bit of bread.

John was sitting in his canoe, waiting for them, and was not long in paddling his light load across the river, bright now with the reflected glory of the sunset sky.

Submit, after this day of rare happiness, felt like a prisoner returning to her dungeon as she parted with Prudence at Widow Burnham's door. But there was one consolation, the rag poppet! Prudence's last words, whispered cautiously, lest Widow Burnham hear, were, —

“Come up the first day thou canst, Submit, and I will have the linen pieces all ready, that we may begin the poppet at once.”

As Submit entered the kitchen, it seemed darker and closer than ever, after her glad afternoon in the fresh outside world. Widow Burnham regarded fresh air as a dangerous poison, to be excluded as far as possible.

The widow, who was sitting huddled over the fire, greeted Submit more cordially than usual. Alone all day in the almost deserted settlement, she craved a touch of the news and excitement of Lecture day.

“Put on thy old gown, Submit,” she said, “and wash the dishes, and red up the kitchen. Then thou mayst sit down by the fire, and tell me Mr. Atherton's text, and about the Lecture, and who

went, and what Goodwife Coleman said to thee, and what she had for supper. Did any one ask for me? I thought to sit by the window and watch the folk come home, but I felt a sore draft there. I must stuff more rags into the chinks to-morrow morn."



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### HUNTING FOR THE BAY MARE.

ONE Saturday morning in late October, Sam and John, with Stephen Belding and Jonathan Wells, rode off to the southward in search of Philip Smith's bay mare. Sam was delighted when Stephen and Jonathan offered to go with him, as they were older boys, and Jonathan especially had much knowledge of woodcraft, having often gone out hunting with his older brother Thomas.

The boys took the Springfield road through Fort Meadow, but left it before reaching Hockanum Meadow, and crossing Fort River, they passed the old Indian fort which gave the river and meadow their name, and began to ascend the lower slope of Mount Holyoke. The mountain rose before them bare and brown, save for the many hemlocks and pines, whose dark-green pointed tops still gave some verdure to its rock-ribbed sides. Now that the trees were bare, the slender trunks of the white birches became things of beauty, mingled among the evergreens. The mountain looked more rugged

and forbidding than when its boldness was softened by summer foliage.

“I am glad, Jonathan, that thou couldst come, for thou knowest the pass through the crack of the mountain,” said Sam, looking up at the rocky heights above. “I have ne’er crossed it, and in truth know not its exact whereabouts; and as for John, he is but a new-comer in these parts, as thou know’st.”

“I know the path well,” said Jonathan, “for I have been o’er it more than once in hunting with Thomas. We are wont to find game plentiful on the south side of the mountain, where there are no inhabitants as yet.”

“Doubtless that side will ne’er be settled,” said Stephen. “The land is poor and sandy, compared to our river meadows. He would fare ill, methinks, who should forsake our fertile, open meadow lands, to go over there into the wilderness, covered with forests, which must be felled and cleared ere the land, e’en such as ’tis, is fit for use.”

The boys rode on up the mountain in single file along the narrow footpath, made by hunters and animals in crossing the crack, beguiling the way with friendly talk as they fared on. The path was but poorly defined, and wound irregularly up among trees and rocks. Sometimes the reports of their guns rang along the moun-

tain side, and soon gray squirrels and partridges dangled at their saddle bows as witness to their skill as marksmen.

The path grew steeper and rougher as they mounted higher. When, after a hard scramble that made the horses pant, they reached the summit of "the crack," the name given a low gap in the Holyoke range where it was possible to cross over into the forest to the south, Jonathan Wells drew rein, and leaping lightly down, said, —

"Well, lads, here we must e'en tie our horses, and go the rest of the way on foot. And here 't were best to eat our luncheons, to save carrying them."

"An we had a fire," said Stephen, "we might eke out our dry fare savorily by cooking some of our game. I know not how 't is with the rest of you, but scrambling up the mountain in this sharp, frosty air hath made me as keen as a trooper. Did any one bring a tinder box?"

No one had, it seemed, and Sam said, —

"What a sorry numb-scull was I not to think of that!"

"Gather some dry pine branches and sticks," said Jonathan, "and it shall go hard but I 'll kindle them for thee."

"Art a witch, like Goody Webster?" asked Stephen, jokingly. "Have a care of any hocus-

pocus here, alone on the mountain, where 't is said that Goody cometh full oft on her broomstick to hold midnight trysts with Satan."

"This is honest woodcraft, as thou shalt speedily see," said Jonathan, "an I make it work."

Plenty of dry, dead branches were scattered about, wrenched off in bygone winter storms, and the boys gathered a large pile, with withered brown leaves heaped up below for kindling.

Then they watched Jonathan, as he stopped the touch-hole of his gun, and struck fire. The spark fell on the leaves, which blazed up quickly, kindling the dry sticks, and soon a bright fire blazed and blew about in the mountain wind.

"That is one of thy brother Thomas's tricks, I dare say," said Sam.

"Yea, he hath much wisdom in woodcraft, as he need have to venture forth alone in the wilderness as he doth," said Jonathan.

The boys dressed their small game with the deftness born of much practice, and then roasted it on pointed sticks over the fire.

The scene was picturesque. To the north from the "crack," the Connecticut Valley, brown and bare now, stretched away to the northern hills, purple blue in the keen, clear air. The river wound through the meadows, blue in the sunlight, like the sky it reflected. To the southeast

and west rose the rugged mountain chain, and below, to the south, was the far-reaching unbroken forest. The bareness of the trees gave a peculiar clearness and extent to the view.

On the rocks jutting out above and around them stunted cedars and gnarled pines grew, to some of which the boys' horses were tied, contentedly munching the oats the boys had brought for them. Around the brightly blazing fire, alone here on the mountain, sat the four boys, clad in buckskin breeches and leathern doublets, wearing on their closely cropped heads rude caps made from the skins of foxes or minx killed and cured by themselves. Their guns lay ready to their hands. Their faces were red and glowing from the climb in the cold fresh air, and also from the blaze of their fire as they roasted their game. They were thinking less of the picturesque scene than of their dinner.

"This partridge relisheth well, e'en without salt," said John, as he threw the bone of what had been a plump drumstick into the fire.

"Salt! John, thou hast been pampered," said Sam. "Hast thou sojourned for a season at King Charles's court that thou art so dainty? Why, I am so near famished I verily believe I could eat these partridges and squirrels, fur, feathers, and all."

"Didst hear the tidings from Old England

brought by Mr. Tilton when he came from Boston yestere'en?" asked Stephen.

"Nay. What was it?" asked John, who still felt a strong interest in his old home. Letters were few and far between, and any news received was passed along from mouth to mouth.

"Samuel Russell was telling me on't," said Stephen. "It seems that one from Old England hath recently come to Boston by way of Barbadoes. He left London in March, so 't is late news. He saith that debauchery increaseth abominably, especially at court, and it fareth ill with non-conformists. A scandalous play, called 'The Puritan,' hath lately been enacted before King Charles and his lewd court, greatly delighting them. Plays, and masks, and dancing schools abound. The Bishops carry it with a high hand. They make every one stand bare in church, and they are setting up courts, and imprisoning all who speak against them or their ways. One non-conforming minister hanged himself lately, and another went distracted, such are the sorrows of the saints."

"I am heartily glad that I am here and not there," said John. "Here we are free to worship God in the true way. And I like the wild life here. Would I be out on a mountain top like this hunting, were I in Old England? I trow not."

"Mr. Russell saith that doubtless awful judg-

ments are impending over Old England," said Stephen.

"Didst hear that a two-headed calf was born in New Haven last summer?" asked Sam. "Mr. Davenport writ my grandsire of it. He said he knew not what this omen might portend, but he apprehended it boded some dire ill to the Connecticut plantations."

"It looketh ominous," said Jonathan. "But see, yonder smoke riseth from the woods," he said, pointing off to the southeast, where above the tree-tops curled a faint blue line of smoke, hardly to be seen save by eyes trained in forest life.

"I hope that doth not portend that Maquas are about," said Sam. "I should ill like to meet a party of them."

"The Maquas come from the west, from Albany way," said Stephen. "This smoke doubtless cometh from a camp of some friendly Connecticut Indians. I hope they have not gotten hold of thy bay mare, Sam."

"I doubt an I e'er lay eyes on her," said Sam, as he looked off over the almost limitless expanse of wilderness below. "It looketh a hopeless task to search for her in that vast forest."

"Still there is no harm in trying," said Jonathan. "Thou mightst have the good fortune to chance upon her. And we'll have a day's sport seeking her, I trow."

The boys, refreshed by their luncheon, carefully beat and stamped out their fire, lest it spread to the woods and endanger their horses, which they must leave tied here until their return.

"I'll e'en take a rope with me, in case I should by good luck chance on the mare," said Sam.

The boys struck down the mountain side into the pathless forest below. Owing to the annual burning by the Indians, and by the white hunters who followed the Indian custom, there was little underbrush. As the boys descended, coming from the evergreen belt higher up into the region of oaks, beeches, and chestnuts, in the woods below they heard an exciting sound; simply "gobble, gobble, gobble."

"Wild turkeys!" exclaimed they as one boy.

"Tarry ye here," said Jonathan, "and I'll slip down and see if I can get a crack at them."

"I'd give a shilling for a shot at one," said John.

The boys stood still, watching Jonathan as he slipped cautiously from tree to tree, towards the oaks where the turkeys were probably feeding on acorns. The crack of his gun rang out. The flock of turkeys fled wildly up the mountain side right upon the three boys.

Bang! bang! bang! went three guns. Three fat turkeys fell. The rest disappeared as if by magic.

"Good shots for us," said Stephen. "If Jona-



than hath done as well, the folks at home will not deem this day wasted, I trow."

"I know well that my mouth watereth for roast turkey," said John. "'Tis long since I've tasted flesh save pork and venison, or fish from the river, when I happed to have good luck at my fishing."

Jonathan came out from the wood below, bearing a huge turkey gobbler, a beautiful bird. His plumage was brilliant with shifting hues of golden bronze, blue, violet, and green. From his breast hung a tuft almost a foot long.

"Here is the king of the mountain," said Jonathan, triumphantly. "This fellow weigheth a good twenty pounds or more. 'T will be a weary tug to carry him, but 't will pay well in the end."

The boys were in great spirits. Cattle and sheep were still so few and valuable that beef and mutton were almost unknown as food. Pork and fish, with such wild game as they could kill, furnished the meat of the settlement.

As Sam, who happened to be ahead of the others, came out on a rocky place, where the trees were scattered but thinly, with few evergreens, he caught a fleeting glimpse down the aisles of the farther woods of some large animal. Halting, he reconnoitred cautiously. Was it a deer? A moment more, and he called softly to the other boys :

“Boys, I verily believe I see a horse yonder in the woods, and I am almost certain ’t is our Nan. Now how can we contrive to capture her, if it be indeed she?”

“’T is likely,” said Jonathan, “that hunger and scant pasturage were urging her towards home. We must try our best to surround her, and drive her up in the direction of the crack. If we can get her where she seeth the other horses, doubtless she will gladly go with them.”

The boys, scattering off into the woods, gliding as slyly as Indians from tree to tree lest they scare the mare, managed to surround the spot where Sam thought he had seen her. Then, at a signal from Jonathan, in they all swept towards the centre.

Out of the woods pranced the bay mare, head up, galloping straight for the crack of the mountain. She was not alone, for at her heels ran a bay colt, with a white forefoot, “as dainty a little nag as e’er I laid eyes on,” cried Sam, delighted at his double good fortune.

“Father will rejoice greatly can we bring Nan and her colt home safely,” he said.

“We will manage the business somehow,” said Jonathan, “though she is as wild and nimble as a deer. See, she hath already vanished out of our sight among the pines up the mountain.”

"We must needs follow hard and fast, an we o'ertake her," said Stephen.

The boys scrambled up through the trees, Sam a little ahead in his eagerness. When he came in sight of their horses, lo, there was Nan rubbing noses in a friendly way with his horse, whinnying with delight at again meeting her old friend.

Sam, with utmost caution, slipped quietly up behind her, and with a quick throw had the halter over her head before she saw him. Then began a struggle.

When the other boys came up, Nan was plunging and rearing, pulling with all her might, while the colt, a wild creature of the woods that had never seen human beings before, ran wildly about, whinnying in terror at this strange disaster that had befallen its mother. The other horses, excited by the tumult, were also tugging at their tie reins, doing their best to get away.

"Ye got here none too soon," panted Sam, breathlessly, "would ye not go home afoot. My arms are nigh pulled off. The rope is skinning my hands."

"I'll cut a stout switch, and let her have a taste of that," said Stephen.

"Nay, not so," said Jonathan. "To lash a frightened creature is but a poor way to soothe it. Give me the rope, and do thou, Sam, try feeding her. Her bones stand out with lean-

ness. Doubtless she hath found scant pasture of late."

Sam had still some oats left in the bag behind his saddle. Filling his cap, he held it towards Nan, crying, —

"Here, Nan, Nan."

At sight of the oats, Nan stopped her jumping, ran eagerly to the cap, and plunged her nose into the welcome feast, munching greedily, while Jonathan patted her side kindly.

"I warrant thou hast tasted naught so relishing as that since the new grass last spring," said Jonathan.

Sam, meantime, was smoothing her tangled mane, stuck full of burrs and twigs.

"She 's a fine creature," said Stephen. "When thou gettest her fattened and curried, there 's no finer beast on Hadley street. What a noble long tail she hath! And her mane too is most full and long."

"She is a real Narragansett pacer," said Sam. "That sort are most easy under the saddle. Father would be loath to lose her. And he will rejoice o'er the little colt, an we can manage to get it home."

When the boys started for home, Nan, tamer now since her good meal, and glad to be with the other horses, allowed herself to be led without much opposition. The colt came running wildly

along behind, terrified at these strange new monsters, men, yet clinging to its mother.

Towards sunset, as they entered the south meadow gate, Sam said, —

“I shall take Nan and her colt up to our home lot. We must try to tame and break her, and fit her for use. And a little meal and oats will do her no hurt.”

When John reached home, bearing his fat turkey and a good store of nuts in his bag, it was felt that his day had not been spent in vain. He said, —

“Prudence, Nathan, what present think ye Sam hath found in the forest? A tiny wild colt, no bigger than a little fawn. Sam put her in their paddock.”

The children were full of excitement and interest.

“Mother, may we go over e’en now and see the little colt?” asked Prudence, while Nathan seized his fur cap and stood with his hand on the latch, ready to start the instant his mother should say “yes.” For surely she could not say “no,” when so important a matter as this was concerned.

But Goodwife Ellis, with a firmness that encouraged no teasing, said, —

“Nay, not to-night. The sun sinketh low, and the Sabbath Eve draweth on apace. Monday morn, an ye are all good children, and recite your catechism faithfully to-morrow, ye shall go.”

The children were almost certain that the colt would run away or disappear somehow before far-away Monday; but well knew there was no help for their disappointment, and so, after supper, fell to studying their catechisms with more than usual diligence.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE GREAT BURNING.

IT seemed long indeed to Submit before Widow Burnham felt her entitled to another holiday, after the Thursday Lecture at Hatfield. But finally came an afternoon when everything seemed done.

There were no more rolls ready to spin, the house was in perfect order, Submit had finished the last one of a pair of stockings, and yet there were two hours before it would be time to get supper.

Perhaps this advanced state of affairs had been brought about by the peculiar energy with which Submit had thrown herself into work that day. She now ventured to ask, —

“May I go up to Prudence’s to stay till supper time?”

The widow, who had been racking her brain to think of something to set Submit at, said reluctantly :

“I see no reason why thou canst not. Only have a care that thou hinder not Prudence from work by thy idling. Shouldst thou find her at work, come thou straight home. I like not that

Goodwife Ellis should deem me one to encourage idling."

"Prudence hath always leave to play, when she hath done her stint," said Submit.

"Mayhap," said the widow. "But I sorely fear that it is with thee as with the Youth in that instructive dialogue in the back of the catechism, who saith to the devil, —

"Those days which God to me doth send,  
In pleasure I 'm resolved to spend; —"

And,

"So I resolve in this my prime  
In sports and play to spend my time."

Mind thee how the devil answereth, —

"The resolution which you take,  
Sweet youth, it doth me merry make."

Naught pleaseth the devil better than idling and playing."

The widow, having thus partly spoiled Submit's pleasure, felt complacently that she had "been faithful" to her. Submit listened in silence, and the moment she decently could, hastened to put on her cloak and hood, and slip out the door, drawing a sigh of relief as she closed it behind her.

She longed to run all the way to Prudence's, but knowing that running on the street would scandalize some of the good folk, and would certainly cut off her chance of going to Prudence's hereafter



should it come to the widow's ears, she restrained her impatience, and only walked as fast as she dared, wondering if Prudence had obtained any linen for her poppet.

She found Prudence sitting on her block before the fire, sewing on a hood for Susanna, making it from some pretty stuff that at once caught Submit's eye. Abigail, sitting as close to her as Prudence would allow, was proud and happy in holding the lovely Susanna.

"I was wishing thou wouldst come to-day," said Prudence, joyfully.

"Thou canst not tell how I have been longing to come," said Submit. "But what a rare piece of goods. Where didst get it?"

"Is it not beauteous?" said Prudence. "I am so glad that Susanna will have a silken hood, or almost silk. 'T is part linen, methinks. 'T was Mistress Hepzibah Wells that gave it to me. Was she not kind? My mother saith as 't is mostly sad-colored, with only this tiny red sprig in it, and part linen, she thinketh no harm in my using it. And I have saved enough for thy poppet a hood, too!"

"Oh, Prudence, I thank thee!" said Submit, delighted to own even a tiny scrap of anything so pretty.

"Mother will give thee linen for a poppet, and we will straightway go to work on it. Nathan hath saved a piggin full of sawdust from the chip-yard to stuff her."

Here Goodwife Ellis appeared from her bedroom, a roll of coarse linen pieces in her hand.

"I know not if Widow Burnham will relish thy having a poppet, Submit. But it seemeth useful to me in teaching little maids to sew. Prudence hath made vast headway in her sewing since she hath stitched so diligently and carefully for her poppet. 'Tis to promote industry and not idleness that I give thee the linen, and so thou mayst tell the widow."

In truth, Goodwife Ellis was partly justifying herself to herself, for she knew that, secretly, her gift was prompted quite as much by sympathy for the lonely, motherless child as by zeal for her improvement. It is pleasant to give pleasure, and the happy look on Submit's face, and her shining eyes as she eagerly thanked her, well repaid the good wife for her little kindness.

A happy afternoon did the children have, as Submit skilfully fashioned the rag doll, with the active help and interest of Prudence and Abigail. Submit had a strong even though dormant artistic faculty, and her delight in creating something was new and keen.

The doll, when done, was nearly as well formed as Susanna, and her features, marked with ink, had really some human expression.

Prudence could not enough admire her friend's skill.

“I see not, Submit,” she said, “how thou camest to think of putting that splint of wood underneath, to raise up her nose. And thou hast made her mouth to smile, and her hair to curl! Verily, she is as comely — almost — as Susanna!”

“Next summer I shall stain her cheeks red with berry juice,” said Submit, looking fondly upon her child. “But I must tarry no longer now. I must hasten home. I will leave Francesca here, — her name is Francesca, thou knowest, — till her gown and hood are fashioned. I wot thou wilt keep her carefully for me. Some time I will make thee a dear little poppet of thine own, Abigail, if thy mother is willing.”

Little Abigail began to dance about for joy at this. Her mother, checking her, said, —

“Quiet, quiet thee, Abigail. If thou art a good child, I will gladly suffer Submit to fashion thee a poppet, and then thou needst not tease Prudence so sorely for hers.”

Submit went home with a new happiness in her heart.

“Well, how didst pass the time?” asked the widow.

“We sewed,” said Submit, not thinking it wise to go into details of her afternoon’s work.

“Goodwife Ellis is a wise and prudent woman. She traineth up her children in the way they should go,” said the widow.

The days dragged to Submit until she was again allowed to go to Prudence's. But at last another happy afternoon was spent in making Francesca's clothes. When she was dressed, Prudence thought her more lovely than ever, and so in truth did Submit.

She walked home that night holding Francesca tenderly in her arms. At last she had something of her own to love. Indeed she so loved Francesca, that she half believed Francesca loved her in return.

On the way, she chanced to meet Mistress Hepzibah Wells.

"Good even, Submit," said good-natured Mistress Hepzibah, more kindly than most people were wont to accost Submit. "What bearest thou so carefully?"

Submit proudly displayed her poppet, saying, —  
"I made her myself."

"In sooth, 't is an excellent piece of handiwork," said Mistress Hepzibah, holding up the poppet admiringly. "Thou hast skill. Verily she is the comeliest rag poppet I e'er laid eyes on. An thou canst come across to our house a moment, I'll e'en give thee somewhat to trim her."

Submit could not resist this invitation, and her lively anticipations of something pretty from Mistress Hepzibah were more than realized when she brought out a strip of narrow red ribbon, saying kindly, —

“T will match the sprig in her hood, and serve for a scarf.”

The bright color of the ribbon seemed to satisfy a hungry craving in Submit's nature. But knowing well that Widow Burnham was certain to frown on the red ribbon, even if she tolerated the doll, Submit felt it prudent to tuck it down the neck of her gown, ere she entered the house, with some inward quakings as to Francesca's reception.

The widow greeted the poppet with more violence than Submit — fortified as she was by Goodwife Ellis's approval, and the general admiration of her work — was prepared for.

“I looked not for such sinful extravagance in Goodwife Ellis,” said the widow, with scornful sniffs. “I marvel at her! To waste good scraps of linen, that would have served to clout garments, on a useless, silly poppet! She will have to answer to her own conscience, and to an angry God I doubt not also, for such wicked wastefulness, and for countenancing thee in sin. But I am responsible for thy soul, and thy sins shall not be on my skirts. I will not suffer thee to make images, contrary to the commandment which saith ‘thou shalt not make unto thee a likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath.’ Give me the image. I will e'en burn her, as Moses burnt the golden calf that caused the

people of Israel to sin. She shall be a burnt offering unto the Lord."

The widow attempted to pull the doll out of Submit's arms, but stopped, terrified at the change that came over the child's face, which was transformed by passion. Her eyes blazed fiercely, and pressing her doll tighter to her bosom, she cried, with a storm of tears, stamping her foot. —

"Thou shalt not burn my child, thou wicked old hag! An thou layest so much as a finger upon her, I'll bewitch thee in good earnest! I'll send dreadful pains darting through thee, I'll double thee up with cramps, I'll ask Satan to drag thee off to his own place, I'll —"

Here Submit stopped, choked with rage and tears.

She looked so desperate, that the widow, who more than half believed in her power of bewitchment, made haste to say, —

"Take the vile thing away, thou bad, wicked child, I care not whither, so 't is out of my sight. Ne'er let me lay eye on it again, or hear tell on 't. And then come and read some chapters in thy Bible, and see if that will exorcise the evil spirit in thee."

Submit flew up the rude stairs into her attic chamber and tenderly placed Francesca in her own little truckle bed.

"There, there," she said caressingly, "thou shalt

not be burnt. I will burn with thee an thou must."

By the time she went to bed, her anger had cooled, and she began to feel heartily sorry and ashamed. What would her kind friend, Granny Allison, have thought, had she seen her in such a rage? Granny had said that she was never to mention Satan or bewitchment again. And would Goodwife Ellis deem her a fit playmate for Prudence and Abigail, had she heard her language to the widow?

"Great God, my Father in heaven, who knowest all things, who knowest how hard it was, pardon my sin for Christ's sake, and help me to be a better girl," was her tearful prayer that night. As she took Francesca in her arms and tenderly kissed her, she said, —

"I have been most wicked for thy sake, my dear child. But I love thee so."

She fell asleep with Francesca clasped tight to her heart, the bit of red ribbon tied, scarf-wise, around the poppet's linen neck.

In the morning, her conscience, grown more tender of late under the influence of love, would not let her rest until she had begged the widow's pardon. Hard indeed was it to speak the words, but something within forced her to say, —

"Widow Burnham, I beg thy pardon for the rude words I said to thee yester even."

The widow, who was skimming milk, paused, skimmer in hand, and looked in surprise over the big round horn spectacles that bestrode her nose ; then she said, —

“Hoity toity, my fine mistress ! So you have come to your senses, have you ? Go to thy churning now, and have a care after this how thou darest to use pert, saucy words towards thy betters.”

In spite of this ungracious reception of her apology, Submit's heart felt lighter for making it, because her conscience told her that she had done right. All day as she toiled, underneath was the thought brightening her drudgery, that up stairs Francesca waited her coming, and that to her she could tell all her troubles.

It was this same night that Hannah Smith could not go to sleep, for some unknown reason, possibly from too hearty a supper of baked beans. As she tossed restlessly on her bed, she noticed a strange red light on the boards of her ceiling. A red glare lighted up her window too.

Thinking the light supernatural, at first she buried her head under her sheet, with fast beating heart, listening breathlessly for something awful, she knew not what ; perchance a black cat with red eyes jumping on her bed, or a mysterious voice. But all was so still that finally she ventured to peep out. The red glare was evidently stronger.



“Perchance some one’s house is in flames,” thought Hannah. “I must e’en venture to the window. ’Tis plainly my duty to look out, that I may give the alarm, an needs be.”

Leaping out of bed, with a fearful glance over her shoulder, Hannah ran to the window. What she saw there filled her with greater terror than before. The street lay in deep quiet below, no house was burning, yet all the bare tree limbs and houses gleamed red, with a greater light than any house in flames could give. Even the clouds in the sky shone with a fiery angry crimson.

There could be but one explanation in Hannah’s mind of this sight. This must be the awful last great conflagration, which Mr. Atherton had pictured vividly on Lecture day, and portended might be near at hand. Filled with awe and terror, she burst into her parents’ chamber, crying loudly, —

“Oh, father, mother, waken! The end of the world hath come! ’Tis the day of judgment! The world burneth up!”

Her startled parents woke, and as soon as they could understand Hannah’s cries, hastened to the window. Half asleep, at first they too were filled with awe. But when Goodman Smith had become fully awake and collected his senses, he said, —

“Now I bethink myself that Thomas Wells told me, Wednesday se’nnight, that he and others of our hunters and youth were going out ere long for

the Great Burning, as they call it, when they burn the underbrush in all the woods and mountains. 'T is doubtless the light of the great burning that we see reflected on the sky."

"I trust no harm will come of it," said his wife, anxiously scanning the red sky.

"'T is much to be feared that some among them of the wilder sort will use the occasion as license for folly," said Goodman Smith. "But, although happily it be not the terrible fires of the last conflagration that smote upon thy eyes, my daughter, and caused thy amazing cries, let this be a solemn warning to thee, and to us all, of that great and awful day of doom, that cometh we know not how soon, when the earth shall melt with fervent heat, and the firmament roll up as a scroll. Let us beseech God to keep us ever prepared, for it cometh like a thief in the night."

The next day was November fifth, as the youth of the settlement were not slow to remember. Some of the wilder spirits among them, inspired perhaps by a desire to renew the delights in a small way of the Great Burning of the night before, determined to celebrate the day in a proper manner, feeling in secret that here was at least one chance to let themselves out safely.

They built a huge bonfire at the north end of Hadley street. Some of them paraded up and down the street a scarecrow figure, dressed as a

guy, with a lantern in its hand, singing, or rather shouting uproariously, as they marched, —

“Remember, remember!  
The fifth of November,  
The Gunpowder treason and plot;  
There is no reason  
Why the Gunpowder treason  
Should ever be forgot!”

John Barnard, whose turn it was to pace the street as watchman that night, was in attendance to see that the celebration was kept within due bounds. He stood looking on with disapproval, yet feeling that a degree of license was perhaps permissible on the fifth of November.

But ere long up the street stalked Mr. Peter Tilton and Noah Coleman, two of the townsmen, accompanied by Deacon Goodman and Philip Smith.

“What meaneth this immoderate rioting in our sober community? Watchman Barnard, art here? We looked to find thee perchance slumbering at thy post, when the uproar of this unseemly revelry smote upon our ears, as we were engaged in prayer at the house of Goodman Ellis,” said Mr. Tilton, severely.

“Nay, not so, worshipful Mr. Tilton,” said John Barnard. “I trust I shall ne’er be found wanting in my duty. But thou knowest the custom hath long been observed both in Old England and in

this country, of commemorating the overthrow of the Gunpowder plot. My father hath oft told me of the huge bonfires in Lincoln Inn Fields the fifth of November, when oft times two hundred cartloads of wood were blazing in one great pile. Though I favor not such carryings on myself, I judged some license must be suffered in our youth this night."

"'Tis little they reckon of the fifth of November, or any other day. 'Tis seized upon as a cover for looseness," said Philip Smith, sternly. "Maudlin chants and indecent roistering suit not the godly inhabitants of Hadley. Put out thy fire, Joseph Selden, and go thou and thy comrades home and to bed, thankful an ye be not hauled up before the magistrate for disturbing the peace."

Joseph Selden made no movement towards obeying this mandate, but grumbled in a surly undertone, —

"What concern is 't of that marplot, Philip Smith, an we have a little sport? Methinks he is not in authority o'er us. He delighteth to nose around, and spoil sport."

But here Noah Coleman seconded Philip Smith decidedly, saying, —

"E'en now the bell ringeth for nine o' the clock; time that all decent folk were home and abed. Such license will not be countenanced. 'Twill lead to no good. Put out the fire, and get ye

quietly and decently home, or Mr. Tilton and I will soon have Constable Ferry here."

The fire was now quenched, and the surly rioters dispersed, grumbling not a little among themselves at the iron hand held over them.

"I swear I'll get even with Philip Smith yet," said Selden. "He ever beareth a special spite against me. But I'll pay the old snook off."

The Ellis children had been delighted with Cousin Philip's little colt, and it was only the morning after the Guy Fawkes celebration that Prudence asked,—

"May we go o'er to Cousin Philip's again this morn, mother, to see the colt?"

"Yes, child," said her mother, with unwonted indulgence. "Thou canst carry to Cousin Rebecca some of my fresh emptyings which she craved. Tarry not o'er long. Hasten back speedily to thy tasks. Nathan, thou mayst go too. Thou didst exceeding well in thy catechism yesterday for one of thy years, though thou didst need some prompting on 'effectual calling.' Take little Abigail with thee, and lead her carefully."

"We will hasten, mother," said Prudence, as she joyfully tied on Abigail's hood.

The children walked briskly, for it was a cloudy, raw November day, a cold wind which swept down from the northwest with unbroken force across the wide meadows roaring through the naked

branches of the trees with a wintry sound. Their cheeks and noses too were red when they reached Cousin Philip's, where his little daughter Rebecca ran out to meet them.

"Oh, Prudence, what dost thou think?" said Rebecca. "A shameful thing hath been done. Thou canst not e'en fancy what 't is."

"The little colt is not dead?" asked Prudence and Nathan in one breath.

"Nay, 'tis not so bad as that," said Rebecca. "But come out to the paddock, and ye shall e'en see for yourselves."

A sad sight greeted the children when they reached the paddock. The beautiful, thick, long mane and flowing tail of the bay mare had been sheared off close. The poor creature, seemingly conscious of her disfigurement, was huddled in one corner of the paddock, with a wild, hunted look in her brown eyes, the pretty little colt nestling close to its mother.

"Who could have done such a wicked deed?" asked Prudence. "Was it Indians, think'st thou?"

"Nay. Father hath evidence that 'twas the revengeful work of that son of Belial, Joseph Selden. He hath breathed out sore threatenings of late against my father. Doubtless he slipped into the paddock last night, when we were asleep. He was in a great rage because my father broke up his riotous burning of Guy Fawkes yestere'en.

Father will have him presented for this offence next March, at the court at Northampton."

"And serve him right," said Prudence. "'T is a cruel shame."

"Joseph Selden ought to be set in the stocks, or cast into Springfield prison," said Nathan.

"Doubtless he will be," said Rebecca. "My father will make him smart for it."

Nathan tried to entice the colt to intimacy by picking handfuls of grass and thrusting through the palings, calling, —

"Co-nan, Co-nan, Co-nan!"

But the mare and the colt only bounded in wild terror round the paddock, the mare seeking a place where she might leap out, and return to her wild life in the woods.

"Come away, Nathan," said Prudence. "Thou only fillest the poor things with fright."

The children went home, full of this last flagrant offence of Joseph Selden. Their father shook his head, saying, —

"I deemed no good could come of yestere'en's rioting. Give Satan but an inch, and he is ne'er slow in taking an ell."

The next day Joseph Selden was hauled up before Magistrate Clarke, and cited to appear at the March court to answer for his proceedings.

## CHAPTER XX.

### UNWELCOME GUESTS.

ONE night at dusk, early in December, John Ellis came running into the house, snaphance in hand, banging the door after him with unusual noise.

"Tut, tut, my son," said his mother. "What aileth thee? Why this unseemly haste and violence?"

"'T is grievously cold, mother," said John. "I have been o'er on the Pine Plain with Sam and Jonathan, to examine our wolf pits. Not a wolf have we caught. I verily believe the wolves themselves are frozen. 'T is piercing cold. The wind is northeast, and cuts like a knife. I was so sore chilled that I must needs run, e'en though the tithing man did see me."

John wore no overcoat or cloak, but his usual dress of thick doublet of gray duffle belted at the waist, buckskin breeches, coarse woollen hose, stout, clumsy shoes fastened with broad buckles, and his fur cap pulled well over his ears, red with cold.



“’T were well to put another log on the fire, and then sit in the chimney seat till thou art well toasted,” said his mother. “There hath been a biting draft this afternoon around the door and windows. I could scarce keep my feet warm e’en at my spinning.”

“Jonathan predicteth that a snowstorm cometh, which causeth it to be so chilly. The sun set early in a gray cloud which crept up the sky from the south. Jonathan said ’t was a snow bank,” said John, throwing a big log on the fire so vigorously that he sent a shower of sparks flying up the cavernous black throat of the chimney.

“I would I had as many shillings as there are sparks yonder,” said Nathan, craning his neck to watch the bright sparks fly up.

“’T is idle wishing vain wishes,” said his mother. “Shillings come not by wishing, but by toil and economy. Granny Allison said this afternoon that the sputtering of the fire prognosticated snow. I like not o’er much the coming of the snow,” she added. “I dread the long winter in this New English country, when we shall be wholly cut off from the world for so weary a time. The post cannot go to Boston again till late spring-time.”

“Methinks ’t will be long ere we see the pretty spring blossoms again,” said Prudence, who sat in one corner of the settle before the fire, holding Abigail on her lap, while the happy Abigail held in

her lap Susanna, brave in her best cloak and hood, her bead-like eyes glistening in the firelight until Abigail fancied they really winked.

“See, Prudence, do but look! Susanna winketh at the pretty sparks!” she said, with a merry little laugh.

Goodman Ellis had come in from the barn in season to hear his wife’s last remarks.

“Goodwife,” he said, “bethink thee of the example thou settest our children, by thy murmurings against the wise orderings of Providence. I oft fear that thou hast thy seasons of looking back towards Sodom, like unto Lot’s wife. God, who in His loving kindness hath brought His people out into this wide place, will watch o’er them in winter, e’en as in summer. Saith not Scripture, ‘He sendeth the hoar frost as wool’? So verily ’t is in good truth, for those who have sojourned here during the winter season tell me that the snow is craved by them as a warm cover for the grass and herbs. But why sit our children here with idle hands in slothfulness?”

“’T is blindman’s holiday,” replied his wife. “It seemed to me not wise to waste our store of candlewood while waiting for thee to come to supper, as the fire lights the room amply for my work.”

“Let us to supper then, that there be no more vain expense of precious time,” said her husband.

The children stood around the rude, uncovered table, scoured white with rushes and sand from the river, while their father made the long evening prayer. In the centre of the table Goodwife Ellis placed a large earthen pan. Into it she emptied hasty pudding, hot from the pot hanging on the crane over the fire, and milk from another pan. All ate from the same pan, with the pewter spoons cast by John in the mould bought by him at Mr. Pynchon's, save Nathan and Abigail, who used smaller wooden spoons carved by their father.

The light from the blazing logs in the huge fireplace danced with a warm glow through the room, reflecting brightly from the modest store of pewter that glistened on the dresser's shelves, and sending quaint shadows flickering all over the dark, low ceiling from the strings of dried apple and pumpkin, bunches of herbs, and various utensils dangling from poles fastened to the rough-hewn beams.

The hot hasty pudding relished well this cold night, especially to John, warming him through and through. Indeed, in his hunger, he ate so rapidly as to alarm Nathan lest he should not get his own share, and he whined, —

“My spoon is so little, I cannot eat so fast as John.”

“There is no need of greediness,” said his mother. “Make no haste, John. There is good

store of pudding yet in the pot, ample for supper, and also to fry for breakfast."

After Scripture reading and singing a psalm, all took up their evening occupations.

Goodwife Ellis, having lighted a splinter of fat candlewood, set it up in the corner of the room on a flat stone to catch its resinous drippings, and then resumed her spinning, the wheel whirling with a cheerful hum as she stepped lightly to and fro, keeping it swiftly turning by deft strokes of a wheel-finger.

"Knit industriously, Prudence," she said, "and perchance thou mayst finish thy stint in season to read some in your father's 'Book of Martyrs' before bedtime."

Abigail sat on a block near the candlewood splint, enjoying the rare privilege of looking at the cuts in Fox's "Book of Martyrs." Lieutenant Smith had lately sent to Boston by Nathaniel Warner on his last trip as post this year, and purchased this book, which he had presented to his kinsman in return for certain services Goodman Ellis had rendered him.

Except the Bible, the psalm book, the New England Primer, and John's Latin Accidence, this was the only book in the house, and a much prized treasure.

Prudence's fingers flew swiftly, and her needles clicked and flashed in the firelight, the leg of

Abigail's stocking rapidly growing long, in her haste to get hold of this fascinating volume,—fascinating because it was “adorned with cuts.” Prudence never failed to shudder with horror over the rude pictures of the saints being sawn asunder, boiled in oil, drawn in twain by wild horses, or otherwise tormented. Still, pictures are pictures, and children are children, and it was with delight that Prudence at last put away her knitting, and lost all knowledge of her surroundings as she pored over the black-lettered text, hard to decipher.

“Father,” she asked presently, “wouldst suffer me to loan this book to Submit? I have told her so much of it, she longeth sorely to see it.”

“Submit can read but poorly, methinks,” said Goodwife Ellis. “She goeth not to the dame school.”

“Doth not Widow Burnham instruct her at home, an she sendeth her not to the dame school?” asked Goodman Ellis, looking up from the corner by the fire where he was fashioning a wooden shovel, Nathan helping by handing his tools, and throwing the shavings in the fire, delighting in the “brave blaze” they made.

“Nay,” said Goodwife Ellis. “The widow saith that book learning is not needful for a girl, above all, for a bound girl.”

“Our townsmen must look to this,” said her

husband. "Such barbarism is not permitted among us, that children should be suffered to grow up in ignorance. The widow will be presented at court for this negligence, as Goodman Granger of Suffield was last session, an she have not a care."

"Submit longeth grievously to go to Dame Twitchell's with me," said Prudence.

"Granny Allison said to-day that she would admonish the widow on this matter shortly," said Goodwife Ellis.

John sat before the bright fire astride a big wooden shovel, on whose iron-clad edge he rasped ears of corn, the corn rattling off briskly into a wooden measure below. When the measure was full, John brought from the buttery a large wooden mortar, made from the trunk of a tree set upright, with one end hollowed out to hold corn.

Into this mortar, copied by the settlers from those used by the Indians, John put some of his corn, and began pounding it with a stout wooden pestle, to crack it into hominy for to-morrow's supper.

Watch had lain peacefully snoozing before the fire, his head between his paws. Suddenly he lifted his head, with ears sharply pricked up, and began growling fiercely; then ran to the door and barked loudly.

Goodwife Ellis stopped her wheel.

"Hush, John," she said. "Watch scenth some one; and methinks I hear something at the door. 'Tis nearly nine at night, o'er late for any one to be stirring, unless there is illness."

Goodman Ellis opened the door, and peered into the outside darkness. Even he was startled for an instant to find two tall, dusky Indians standing on his doorstep.

Although the Hadley settlers had, so far, lived in peace with their Indian neighbors, still they had a feeling of insecurity, a sense that it was not safe to place too much reliance upon their professions of friendship.

"Netop," grunted the Indians, crowding into the warm kitchen without waiting for an invitation.

"Netop, Nuxco," replied Goodman Ellis, recognizing one of the Norwottucks from the Indian fort on the west side of the river, within Northampton boundaries. "What brings Nuxco and his comrade from their wigwams at so late an hour?"

"It is dark and cold crossing the great river, and Nuxco and Wequanunco would sleep by the Englishman's warm fire to-night," replied the Indian.

Little Abigail was already sound asleep in her truckle bed in her mother's bedroom. Prudence waked suddenly from the delightful horrors of Fox's Martyrs to the real horror of seeing these

two dark, wild-looking savages huddled in their blankets, who towered so tall in the low-ceiled kitchen that the feathers stuck in their black hair brushed against the beam overhead.

She longed to beg her father not to allow the Indians to stay. She was in the habit of seeing Indians hanging about the settlement, especially since the cold weather, and knew that they often spent the night in the settlers' houses, but this was the first time any had demanded hospitality of the Ellises.

Goodman Ellis did not eagerly welcome these self-invited guests. He hesitated, and looked dubiously at his wife, who shook her head. But he knew it was not considered wise to offend the Indians, in whose savage minds a slight or insult rankled long, never failing to be avenged. So finally he said, —

“Thou art welcome, Nuxco, and thou, Wequanunco, to tarry here to-night. Goodwife,” he added, “canst give our guests some supper?”

The Indians were not long in greedily swallowing the hasty pudding which Goodwife Ellis had reserved to fry for breakfast.

Prudence made haste to slip off upstairs to her bed, feeling some protection from the fact that no one could enter her chamber without first passing through John's.

When John came up, somewhat later, she was



still awake, and called to him through the crack of her door in a loud whisper, —

“John, please shut fast thy door, and push the heavy chest against it.”

“Thou art but a foolish child, Pruda,’ said John, “to be so afeared at sight of an Indian. Thou seest them daily, and thou knowest well that they are harmless.”

“But for all that, I relish not the sight of them,” said Prudence. “I know not why, but my blood creepeth in me as if I had trod on a serpent at sight of one.”

“Thou likest Awonusk well,” said John.

“Awonusk is different. She is kind and friendly, though she be but an old squaw. She gave me a goodly little basket one day, when mother gave her a dinner. But these huge, dark savages fill me with fright. Please push the chest against thy door.”

“’T is done, silly one,” said John. “Thou canst rest easy.”

The two Indians rolled themselves up in their greasy blankets, and lay down on the kitchen floor, their feet to the fireplace, where the great bed of coals left by the consumed back-log, carefully buried in ashes to keep fire over night, still sent out a grateful warmth.

Soon all, Indians and whites, were fast asleep. The last sound drowsily heard was the watch-

man's steady tramp, tramp, as he paced to and fro, and his voice chanting in a professional monotone, —

“Past ten o' the clock, and a cold, cloudy night!”

## CHAPTER XXI.

### WINTER IN EARNEST.

WHEN Prudence woke the next morning, it was very cold. Her nose felt cold, even in bed, and her sheet was stiffened by her frozen breath. A cold gray light filled the low chamber.

“It must be full early yet,” thought Prudence. “The sun hath not risen.”

But soon she heard John dragging a fresh backlog into the kitchen below, and knew it must be time for her to rise. Springing out of bed, and seizing her clothes to jump into them as quickly as possible that she might get downstairs into the warm room, her eyes, glancing out the window, saw the air full of driving snowflakes, whirling, leaping, criss-crossing in a wild dance that dazzled her to look upon. Snow was already piled high on the window sill, and lay thick on the ground below as far as she could see. She could not see far, however, for the thick, whirling mist of snowflakes, which almost cut off even the sight of Francis Barnard's house next door.

Prudence felt excited by the glorious storm.

“ ’Tis most pleasing. I like it. My mates and I will have merry sport in the snow, I trow,” she thought. “ I hope, though, that those fearsome Indians have gone ere this.”

But when she came downstairs, there sat the Indians toasting themselves before the warm fire, evidently altogether too well contented to think of stirring out into the driving storm. Nor did the savory odor from a large pot of bean porridge boiling and bubbling on the crane incline to hasten them away. They sat sniffing its fragrance, watching the pot with greedy eyes.

Goodwife Ellis was getting breakfast as fast as she could with the Indians sitting in her way, and Abigail clinging to her skirts and tagging her every step, peeping around her mother at the Indians, with large fearful eyes.

Prudence followed her mother into the buttery, and whispered cautiously, —

“ Mother, will not my father send those dreadful savages away speedily after breakfast ? ”

“ We must wait their own motion, my child, I fear. ’Tis verily a grievous trial to my patience to have these filthy savages lingering about here in my clean kitchen under foot, but ’tis not prudent to anger them. The other women of the settlement have oft to endure their presence. We must e’en bear uncomplainingly our portion



"But when she came downstairs, there sat the Indians  
toasting themselves before the warm fire."



of whatever trials God seeth fit to send upon us sojourners here in the wilderness," said the mother, with a patient sigh.

Prudence said no more. Puritan children early learned that one must do one's duty, and bear submissively trials sent by God. But she regarded their guests with much distaste, and wondered at John, who was talking to them, examining with interest a pair of snowshoes belonging to Wequanunco.

"Wequanunco, wilt show me how to make a brave pair of snowshoes for myself?" asked John.

"Humph," grunted Wequanunco. "Has the English boy strips of the deer's skin, and stout walnut wood?"

"Yea," said John. "My strips are all cut and ready. Look," and he brought his strips of dried deerskin from where they hung on a wooden pin behind the buttery door.

Wequanunco examined the strips.

"Good," he said. And "Good" again, when John brought in a supple strip of walnut sapling.

But now breakfast was ready. The Indians, eager to be eating, wondered much in their own minds at the foolishness of the white man's customs, as Goodman Ellis, with a special eye to the possible salvation of their souls, read a longer Bible chapter than usual, and made a long prayer

too, beseeching the Lord to bless this opportunity of hearing the gospel to these benighted souls, to open their blind eyes and thaw their cold hearts, even as many of their brethren had received saving light from the blessed ministry of God's chosen messenger to the wilderness heathen, that savory and pious saint, Mr. John Eliot.

Meanwhile the tempting porridge steamed up aggravatingly under the very noses of the hungry Indians. When Goodman Ellis at last concluded his prayer, he said graciously, —

“Nuxco and Wequanunco, I trust this providential opportunity of knowing the true God may be blessed to your everlasting salvation.”

Wequanunco gave a grunt of dissent, and Nuxco said, —

“Nuxco follows the God of his fathers. He knows not the Englishman's God.”

Goodwife Ellis did not ask the Indians to the table, but brought to them where they sat by the fire large pieces of rye bread, and pewter porringers full of steaming porridge in which swam fat lumps of pork. More than once was she obliged to refill the porringers, the Indians following their usual habit of stuffing when in the midst of plenty. If a season of starvation followed, they tightened their belts, and bore it in grim patience.

The wind roared ferociously through the bare



branches of the trees and down the chimney, and the snow blew and drifted about the house with no sign of lessening. Yet Prudence was anxious to go to her school, chiefly to escape from the presence of the two Indians, who sat in lazy content before the fire, showing no signs of departing; but her mother said,—

“Nay, my daughter, thou must needs tarry at home to-day. ’T would not be prudent for little maids to venture forth in so sore a storm. Thou canst take the quill wheel and fill some quills for the weaving I begin to-morrow. Perchance Abigail can help thee somewhat. So thou wilt lighten my labors.”

John was divided in his mind between a desire to stay at home and work on his snowshoes while he had Wequanunco’s for a pattern, and the temptation to go forth and battle with the storm. In the part of England where he had lived, he had never seen so great a snow. But his father decided the matter for him by saying,—

“John, the storm need not hinder thy going forth to thy school. Our youth here in the wilderness must early learn to endure hardness, and I would not have thee lose e’en one day of the fruitful instructions of that godly and learned young man, Master John Younglove. In truth,” he added, glancing out the window, “’t is verily a mercy

that we hauled our portion of wood to the school-house ere this great snow fell."

John, like all the large boys in the settlement, attended the Hopkins Grammar School, kept down near the other end of the long street in the house which Nathaniel Ward had lately left to the town for the use of the school. The master was Mr. John Younglove, who had preached at Quabaug a short time before coming to Hadley, and who later became the minister at Suffield; and the Hadley parents felt themselves favored in securing the services of so learned and godly a young man as they deemed him to be.

Each parent had to contribute his share of the great stack of about sixty cords of wood, piled up near the schoolhouse door, cut in four foot lengths ready for the huge fireplace, and destined to keep off some of the piercing cold of winter.

John's studies were reading in the Bible and Psalter, Latin grammar, and a little arithmetic. Samuel Russell and other boys fitting for Harvard College added Greek to these studies. In addition, every Saturday afternoon, two hours were spent by Master Younglove in examining the boys in the catechism.

John, at his mother's suggestion, muffled his ears in a gray woollen scarf, twisted around his head and neck, and tied behind. Then he plunged out into the snow, already a good foot deep on a level,

with drifts several feet deep in spots exposed to the full fury of the blast.

One such drift was by the paling. As John plunged through it, turning to throw a big snowball at the window, where Nathan was peeping wistfully out after him, Nathan said, in an aggrieved tone, —

“I would I might go out to my school in the snow, as John doth. I trow I am not a girl, to be coddled up in the house.”

“Nay, my son,” said his mother, smiling kindly at him, “thou art too little. Thy short legs would sink out of sight in those huge drifts. I doubt an Dame Twitchell keepeth any school to-day. Be a good boy, and by and by I will hear thee say thy a-b-abs.”

This promise did not comfort Nathan as much as his mother seemed to expect. He said, in rather scornful tone, —

“I love not my primer. And I am past a-b-ab long since. I can e'en spell ‘age’ and ‘babe’ and ‘cat.’ May I not go out to the barn and help father? He swingleth flax to-day.”

“Yea, thou mayst go,” said his mother. “Mayhap thou canst go in thy father’s track, an it be not already buried up.”

Nathan was a long time travelling the short distance to the barn, improving the opportunity to make plenty of tracks on his own account, wading

and wallowing about in the snow to his heart's content, until he was white from head to foot, greatly to the interest and admiration of Abigail, who was watching him from the back window, and for whose special benefit he threw in several extra capers.

At noon the Indians were still there to enjoy their full share of the dinner of boiled pork and turnips, stewed dried peas and home-brewed beer. Nor had they gone at night when John, who had carried a luncheon, came home from school, barely able to struggle through the great drifts, above the palings in places.

As soon as he had stamped and brushed off the snow that whitened him all over, John fell to work on his snowshoes, whose making his father approved as something likely to be of use.

A little before sundown the snowstorm began to show signs of stopping. The flakes grew smaller and fewer, and finally ceased to fall. The gray clouds broke and rolled away to the east, and the sun, low down over the western hills, shone forth with one last burst of splendor. After the long, gray day, its radiance on the fresh fallen snow was almost more than the eye could bear, and the beauty of the scene was inspiring.

"Get thy shovel, John," said his father, almost jovially. "Our neighbors are all at work, I see, and it becometh us not to be sluggards."

To Goodwife Ellis's unspeakable joy and relief, her Indian visitors now slowly gathered themselves up and departed, silently, with no word of thanks to their hostess. Binding snowshoes on their moccasoned feet, they walked off across the unbroken snow down the centre of the street towards the river. To John's admiration, their feet sank but a few inches in the light, fresh snow, on which their snowshoes left a long, fish-like track.

"I'll e'en finish my snowshoes this even, ere I sleep," thought John, as he threw the snow out faster than ever.

At the river's bank, the Indians dug out a canoe from under the snow, and, crunching through the white skim of ice on the edge of the water, paddled swiftly off towards their fort on the Northampton side.

Goodwife Ellis set wide the front door for a moment, the better to air the kitchen, letting the long, level rays of the setting sun pour into and glorify the room, and lingered in the door for a few moments of rare idleness, to draw deep breaths of the pure, snowy air, and to watch the lively scene without.

The wide street, so lately deserted and lifeless, was now alive and astir its whole length. Across the street were the Wells and Porter boys, the Dickinsons and Philip Smith's sons, filling the air with flying snow as they threw it out in high banks

each side the paths they shovelled; while her own neighbors, the Barnards, and John Church, Samuel Boltwood, and the rest, were as briskly at work.

All were animated by the snow and the clear, cold air. There was unusual talk and laughter. Now and then a boy ventured to stop and send a quickly massed snowball flying at some other boy, who was not slow in paying his enemy back in his own coin. Even Goodman Ellis smiled indulgently at these pranks.

Prudence and Abigail, to their delight, were allowed to go out into the freshly shovelled path, high above Abigail's head.

"Oh, mother," said Prudence, "I see not why thou didst dread the snow. It is so goodly. See, every branch and little twig is heavy laden with it, like down, and it all gloweth pink, like the wild roses!"

The sunset had been followed by a deep purple-pink afterglow, that, beginning in the east, flushed the whole sky, turning to rosy hues the few fleecy white clouds still floating above, and reflecting a delicate pink upon the pure unbroken fields of fresh fallen snow. Mount Holyoke, covered with snow, caught also the rosy tint of the afterglow, and shone in the southeast with rare beauty.

Above the western horizon the evening star shone brilliantly, and overhead sailed high in the radiant sky the white half moon. Through all the beauty

seemed to breathe God's peace and love. So felt Goodwife Ellis, as the pink afterglow brightened her face too, and she replied, —

“Yea, Prudence, thou art right. God's loving care is over *all* His works.”

## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE DAME SCHOOL.

THE sun shone radiantly next morning, and there was nothing to prevent Prudence and Nathan from setting forth for the little school which Dame Twitchell kept in her own house for the girls, and a few of the small boys.

Prudence wore a gray cloak coming almost to her feet. Her close gray hood kept her ears cosy and warm, but gave no protection to her eyes, which blinked, half-blinded, in the dazzling glare of the sunlight reflected from the expanse of glistening snow over the wide street, broken only here and there by straggling paths.

Coming out her yard, she almost ran into her Cousin Hannah, who, with her brothers Ebenezer and Pelatiah, was also bound for Dame Twitchell's.

"Why, Prudence, art blind?" asked Hannah, laughing.

"In truth, I verily am," said Prudence. "The sun on the snow maketh me blink like an owl or a bat."



“I have something sad to tell thee,” said Hannah, as they walked along. “Hast heard ’t is sorely feared that my little cousin Ichabod, Uncle Philip’s babe, is bewitched? Yesterday he cried grievously all day, without any cause. My aunt thinketh Goody Webster hath a hand in it. She searched the babe all over for witch-pins. Though she found none, there were sundry red marks on his body where doubtless he hath been pricked.”

“’T is a cruel deed in Goody Webster to torment that innocent babe. I wish our townsmen would order her out of town,” said Prudence, glancing down the Middle Highway, where the very smoke rising from Goody Webster’s chimney seemed to curl and writhe in uncanny, snake-like forms.

“I doubt not she rideth forth gayly from that chimney top on her broomstick with her black cat behind her full many a night, to keep her evil tryst with the devil, perchance in the forest on top Mount Holyoke. Yon is as handy a place for her to reach as any,” said Hannah.

“Lo, there is her black cat now!” cried Prudence.

Goody Webster’s cat was indeed picking her way daintily along the top of the paling, deftly balancing herself, as she stopped to shake the snow from her feet.

The boys had been throwing snowballs all the way, at each other, the girls, the trees, everything hitable

“Ha, there’s the witch’s boon companion! See me hit her, Ebenezer,” cried Nathan, at the same time letting a big snowball fly with such good aim that it tumbled the cat off into a deep snowdrift.

“Nathan Ellis! thou naughty, wicked boy!” gasped Prudence. “See what thou hast done. Run quickly and pick up the cat ere the witch see her in that sorry plight.”

“I thought not I could hit her so surely,” said Nathan, a little scared himself at his exploit.

He hurriedly scrambled into the drift, pulled out the struggling cat, and replaced her on the paling.

“She hath clapper-clawed me soundly for my pains,” he said, drawing off his mitten and showing a long scratch on the back of his hand, to the girls’ horror.

“Nathan Ellis!” they exclaimed in chorus.

“That scratch may kill thee,” said Prudence.

“’T is doubtless envenomed,” said Hannah.

“Pooh, what care I for the old witch and her cat? I fear her not,” said Nathan, bracing his courage by boastful words.

“Of course boys would not care for her, — very much,” said Ebenezer, not without an uneasy glance towards the witch’s house.

“Let us talk no more of the witch and her black doings,” said Prudence. “It maketh me shudder e’en in daylight. An no harm cometh of thy scratch, Nathan, thou hast made a lucky escape.”

“Hath thy friend Submit suffered bewitchment of late?” asked Hannah.

“Nay. But she pineth grievously this winter. Widow Burnham saith she is valetudinarious. Why, lo, there she cometh now, out of the widow’s door! Dost think it credible that the widow suffereth her to go to school?”

Submit’s face, that looked so small and thin and pinched in its close gray hood, lit up with joyful smiles as she saw the other girls coming down the street.

“Oh, Prudence,” she said, “is not Granny Allison most kind? I do love her. She hath persuaded Widow Burnham to send me to dame school! I am so glad to go.”

“And I to have thee go,” said Prudence.

Submit’s joy in going to school rose partly from her delight at escaping anywhere for a few hours from the widow’s hot, dark kitchen and her constant oversight, and from natural pleasure in the companionship of other children, but partly, also, from a real eagerness to learn.

She carried a New England Primer, and said to Nathan, who with Ebenezer trudged on ahead of the girls, their small fur caps not coming to the top of the high banks of snow either side the path, —

“Thou seest, Nathan, great girl as I am, I must be in the primer class with thee and Ebenezer.”

"Ho," said Nathan, "that's nothing. I trow boys know vastly more than girls."

"Nathan thinketh so much of himself because already he spelleth 'babe' and other words of four letters," said Prudence. "He is puffed up with pride."

"Ere long, Mistress Prue, I shall go to the grammar school with the big boys, and learn to write," said Nathan. "Girls cannot go to the grammar school, or learn to write."

"Pray, what care we?" asked Hannah. "We are well rid of the pains of learning, methinks. Girls have no use for writing."

"I would I could learn to write," said Submit. "And I would gladly learn Latin, and Greek too, were it permitted to girls."

Prudence gazed at her friend in amazement.

"Thou wast ever a strange girl, Submit," she said.

"I see not what putteth such new-fangled notions into thy head," said Hannah. "A girl studying Latin, forsooth!"

"I only wish I could take Francesca to school too. I know she would joy to go," said Submit, who, as she breathed the pure, exhilarating air, thought with a pang of her cherished child, stifled in the close chest upstairs where it seemed prudent to keep her during the daytime.

"Thou wouldst soon see what Dame Twitchell

would do, an thou shouldst venture to bring a poppet to school," said Hannah. "'T is plain thou knowest but little of school."

"She keepeth a brave bundle of rods ready to her hand to trounce evil doers," said Nathan.

"Yea, that she doth," affirmed Ebenezer.

"Nathan and Ebenezer know that full well," said Prudence.

The children had now reached Dame Twitchell's house, and filed quietly into the closet where they left their outer garments, discussing her methods no more.

Mistress Tabitha Twitchell was a thin, wiry, energetic widow of three score, who added to her small income by keeping during the winter what was known as a "dame school;" one in high repute among the Hadley parents as a "true New English woman," a grave and sober person thoroughly versed in and fully believing Solomon's precepts, "A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back," and "He that spar-eth the rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes;" one sure to bring up children in the way they should go. Her pupils often had cause to wish she did not bear them so zealous an affection.

Her school was the only one in Hadley for girls. Here they were taught to read, sew, knit, and embroider samplers: all the learning considered

necessary for girls. After finishing the New England Primer they read in the Bible, the universal and only reader for both boys and girls.

Submit looked with interest around the dame's large kitchen and living room combined, which was also the schoolroom. About twenty girls and a few little boys sat on blocks or backless wooden benches around the room on the neatly sanded floor. A blazing fire in the huge fireplace, which nearly filled one side of the room, fed by logs furnished by the children's fathers, thriftily boiled sundry of the dame's pots hanging on the crane, and at the same time scorched the children's faces, while yet their backs were cold. This was not felt to be a hardship, but rather a matter of course, none of the children having known any greater comfort.

Near the fireplace, conspicuous on a wooden pin in the wall, hung a large bundle of rods. From other pins and the poles resting in hooks beneath the beams dangled hanks of blue yarn, bunches of dried herbs, strings of dried apples and peppers, etc.

Mistress Twitchell, believing literally that

"Satan finds some mischief still  
For idle hands to do,"

not only kept her pupils busy, but either knit or spun herself, as was most convenient, while teach-

ing them. The first exercise was reading. While all took turns in reading, she knit briskly. Then she set the girls to work on their samplers. They being well started, she said, —

“Nathan, do thou and Ebenezer con thy catechisms diligently. Thou knowest, Nathan, that when I asked thee yesterday, ‘Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?’ thou didst show a woful ignorance more becoming a young heathen than a Christian child, brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

Nathan and Ebenezer immersed themselves in their catechisms with buzzing lips, and the dame turned her attention to the still smaller boys.

“Pelatiah and Ephraim, take your hornbooks, and note carefully ‘P,’ ‘Q,’ and ‘R,’ that ye may recite them glibly when I point at them. Mind your books, all of ye. Let me see no idle dawdling or sinful waste of precious time.”

Ephraim Wells was almost the youngest scion of the numerous Wells family, which ranged all the way from Thomas, the husband of Hepzibah, down to Ephraim’s successor in the cradle, baby Joshua. Ephraim and Pelatiah Smith were congenial friends, and fully agreed in detesting their hornbooks, to which nevertheless they felt it wise to seem to apply themselves.

A hornbook was a coarse sheet of paper, pasted on a thin board, containing the alphabet and the

Lord's prayer, and covered with transparent horn which showed the letters through, but preserved the paper from soiling or wear. There was no possible diversion in a hornbook, as Ephraim and Pelatiah knew full well: no pictures to look at, no leaves to roll or tear, no cover to pull off.

Dame Twitchell having thus set all her pupils busily to work, herself began to spin. Briskly as her wheel hummed, she failed not to look often and sharply over her round horn spectacles towards the corner where the boys sat. The girls she knew she could trust, for not only were they much older than the boys, but also they were happily engaged in working on their samplers, their only fancy-work, and far more to their taste than the plain sewing on which so much time must be spent. There were the various fancy stitches, the elaborate borders, and the most advanced pupils were even embroidering with colored crewels stiff roses in still stiffer flower-pots, or rectangular dogs and trees.

Mehitable Porter, who excelled in sewing, was putting the finishing stitches to a family genealogy embroidered in black silk, with a colored border; a work of art not to be enough admired by the other girls, and which Mehitable's mother hoped to have framed when done.

Submit worked with pleasure at the cross-stitch marking letters which Mistress Twitchell had



given her to copy. With her artist instinct for creating, she eagerly anticipated the time when she too should be allowed to use colored crewels in making flowers and fanciful borders.

"Methinks I could make a prettier rose than that Hannah copieth," thought Submit. "I wonder if Dame Twitchell will suffer me to make a rose of mine own sometime?"

Widow Burnham, foreseeing the advantage of having Submit able to mark linen for her, had urged special diligence on the sampler, even suggesting that Submit bring it home nights, to improve any possible idle moments in working on it. So for once Submit's tastes chimed with the widow's will. But she thought to herself, —

"Perchance 't were wiser not to let the widow know that I love to work on my sampler, lest she forbid my doing it, as a sinful diversion."

For a while the room was a scene of quiet diligence. The hum of Mistress Twitchell's wheel might have been the buzzing of a giant bee in this hive of industry. There was loud buzzing too from the lips of Nathan and Ebenezer, as they repeated over and over the words of whose meaning they had not the faintest idea, stopping sometimes to refresh themselves by a peep at the pictures in the front of the primer.

True, they knew those pictures by heart; still, they were more interesting than the catechism,

and, moreover, they were a stolen pleasure, having the natural fascination of all forbidden fruit.

Ebenezer, happening to see Dame Twitchell's back turned, as she put a fresh bunch of wool on her distaff, cautiously kicked Nathan, whispering, —

“This is the best cut of all.”

He pointed to the tiny woodcut, illustrating —

“Zaccheus he  
Did climb a tree  
Our Lord to see.”

Zaccheus was depicted quite as large as the tree from which his body stiffly protruded.

“Pooh,” answered Nathan, in a discreet whisper, “I like this far better; I would I might have seen that happen,” pointing to

“Proud Korah's troop  
Was swallowed up.”

Korah's troop were disappearing stiffly in the yawning earth, their arms all raised high above their heads.

“Had I been one of them, I would have run speedily away, and not have been swallowed up,” said Ebenezer. “They were but a stupid troop, methinks.”

So absorbed was Ebenezer that he did not notice Dame Twitchell's keen eye fixed on him over her

shoulder. Before he even knew that he was observed, with one swift stride, as it seemed to the startled Ebenezer, she pounced upon him, and seizing him by the ear, twitched him out upon the floor.

“Thou art verily a pernicious idler, Ebenezer Smith. Doubtless Satan desireth to have thee, that he may sift thee like wheat. An thou canst not this very instant repeat the answer in the catechism, thou shalt have a sound basting, I promise thee. Now tell me,” continued Dame Twitchell, severely, taking down the bunch of rods as she spoke, “Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?”

Confused by the suddenness with which he, like “Proud Korah’s troop,” had been “swallowed up,” Ebenezer began, in faltering accents, —

“‘The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell consists in-in-the guilt of Adam’s first sin —’”

So far, it was comparatively smooth sailing. But when it came to “the want of original righteousness,” and “corruption,” and “actual transgressions,” and the other big words, Ebenezer stammered painfully, and finally came to a dead halt, stuck fast.

“‘Withhold not correction from the child; for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die,’” said the dame, quoting her favorite authority, Solomon. “Come here, Ebenezer. I must e’en

deal faithfully with thee, as though thou wert my own son."

The dame laid on and spared not, plying the rod so energetically about Ebenezer's legs that he hopped and danced for pain. Nor could he help crying aloud, though he tried hard not to, lest the other boys laugh at him, and call him a "puling babe."

"Let us have no squeakings or grumblings," said Dame Twitchell, when she at length paused, her face flushed with her vigorous exercise. "Better suffer a moment here than fall into the clutches of the Evil One forever and ever. None shall accuse me of unfaithfulness to thy soul. Sit thou here, with a dunce cap on thy head, and see if that will aid thee to master thy catechism."

Ebenezer was plumped down on the dunce block in the centre of the floor, wearing a tall, pointed paper cap, on which was inscribed in large letters, "DUNCE."

The industries of the room went on, not greatly disturbed by what was a common incident. Ephraim and Pelatiah had taken a sort of fearful pleasure in the scene, any diversion being a welcome relief from the loathsome dulness of their hornbooks. They now bent themselves upon those detested books with fresh energy.

Ephraim had not the most remote idea which of the uninteresting crooked black marks before him,

glaring at him through the horn like enemies (as they were), was supposed to be "P" or "Q" or "R." Dame Twitchell would certainly switch his legs if he could not tell. Warned by Ebenezer's fate, he felt that something must be done.

Watching cautiously until he saw the dame with her back turned, bending over his big sister Mary to show her a new stitch, he ventured to lean towards Pelatiah, who was a bright scholar, generally knowing his letters, and ask, —

"Canst tell me the names of these hateful letters, Pelatiah?"

"I know 'Q' by its curly tail," whispered back Pelatiah, who regarded "Q" with approval, as a more frisky letter than his fellows, an "O" with a touch of fun in him. "But 'P' and 'R' pass my knowledge. I know not one from t' other."

"Thou dar'sn't balance thy hornbook on thy head like this, Pelatiah Smith," whispered Ephraim, seizing the rare chance for a little sport, as he balanced his hornbook on his head, with a cheerful grimace at Pelatiah.

Alas, Dame Twitchell's quick ears caught the faint sound of whispering. She wheeled about, and the hornbook fell with a loud bang on the floor from the head of the dismayed Ephraim.

"Ephraim Wells, thou art both idling and whispering," said the dame, sternly, at the same time reaching for her ever ready rod.

A coward instinct seized Ephraim. Anything to escape the impending whipping.

"Nay, Mistress Twitchell, I whispered not," he stammered, with a shame-faced look that belied his words. "I only chanced to drop my hornbook as I studied."

Ephraim was ashamed to look at Pelatiah as he said this, for Puritan children well knew that lying was one of the most dreadful of sins.

"Ephraim Wells," said the dame, with a stern frown, "come here. Satan loveth a liar above all other sinners, because he knoweth his own. Knowest thou not the portion of them that make a lie?"

She made Ephraim repeat after her twice the fifteenth verse of the last chapter of Revelation. Then, from her dresser, she took down a fat earthen pepper box, with large holes.

"Thrust out thy tongue," she commanded.

Ephraim obeyed, and the dame sprinkled the tip of the small tongue liberally with red pepper. Ephraim began to howl, holding his burning mouth with both hands.

"'T is hotter than that in hell," said the dame. "Mind thee of that, when next the devil tempteth thee to lie. I mercifully burn thy tongue a little now, lest by and by thou burn forever in the bottomless pit, 'where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched.' Now I'll e'en make

an example of thee, where all can see and take warning."

The dame printed the word "LIAR" in large letters, which she pinned to Ephraim's breast. Then she wound a strong hank of blue yarn under his arms, and hung him up on a stout wooden pin on the wall. Pelatiah was too frightened to dare laugh at Ephraim's forlorn situation, but bent all his energies to preparing for his own hour of trial, striving to guess which of those puzzling letters might possibly be "P" and which "R."

As Ephraim dangled there, it was not his burning tongue, or his disgrace before the school, or the discomfort of his dangling legs that troubled him the most. It was the word "Liar" on his breast, and the fear that the devil might indeed claim his own, as the dame had darkly predicted.

When school closed that night, Ephraim did not stop with the other little boys, to see and help about a snow fort on a large scale which they found the big boys from the grammar school building on the town lot, next to Parson Russell's house.

The walls of the fort, under the boys' busy hands, were rising fast, and Sam Smith hailed Ephraim, as he hurried along, —

"Hold fast, Ephraim. Why art in such haste? Shortly we are going to have such a stout battle

'twixt the Pequots and the settlers as thou ne'er took part in. We need more forces, and thou mayst be one of the settlers, and help defend the fort."

Generally Ephraim would have greatly appreciated this rare honor of being urged to take part in the sports of the big boys; but to-night he only said, as he hastened on, —

"I cannot tarry to-night, Sam."

Ephraim hurried home, away from the dangerous neighborhood of Goody Webster's house, at which he glanced fearfully as he passed it, thinking he saw her face at the window pane peering out at him with wicked glee. More than once did he look over his shoulder to see whether possibly the devil might not be on his track, ready to seize him.

He was so downcast, and ate so little supper that night, that his mother said, —

"Ephraim, thou seemest valetudinarious. I trust it may not be the beginning of smallpox. Thou must take a good portion of physic."

Ephraim could contain himself no longer, but burst forth into loud crying, and confessed the whole story of his sin.

His father took him apart, and after a solemn prayer that this chastisement might be blessed to the salvation of his son, soundly whipped him and put him to bed.



Although the whipping hurt his body, Ephraim felt relieved and comforted in his mind; as if somehow his confession had settled the account, and he were safe for this time from the clutches of the devil.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### FOREBODINGS OF WAR.

**A**LTHOUGH Nathan had carried himself with so brave a face before the girls about the scratch from the witch's cat, yet many a time that day did he look ruefully at the long red mark, which smarted badly, and think of that familiar verse in the primer where Death, a grim skeleton, scythe in hand, says to the giddy youth, —

“Youth, I am come to fetch thy breath,  
And carry thee to th' shades of death ;”

and also the conclusion :

“Thus end the days of woful youth  
Who won't attend, nor mind the truth;  
Nor hearken to what teachers say,  
But do their parents disobey.”

He thought too about another verse in the primer that had often given him an uncomfortable feeling, —

“I in the burying place may see  
Graves shorter there than I;  
From death's arrest no age is free,  
Young children too must die.”

"I'll e'en ask my mother to-night if Granny Allison may look at my hand," thought Nathan.

So subdued was he by a sense of his probably approaching end, that he was unusually sedate during school all day, so much so as to attract Dame Twitchell's attention, who said at night, —

"I marvel at thee, Nathan Ellis. Thou canst carry thyself soberly enough an thou choosest, and be a bright and shining example to Pelatiah and the other boys. 'Tis verily a shame to thee to play such pranks as thou often dost, when thou canst be so good an thou wilt."

When Nathan was so good as to be praised by Dame Twitchell, he felt that his case must indeed be serious.

By great good fortune, as he was going home from school, he overtook Granny Allison, who was able to hobble but slowly on her staff over the slippery snow. He hastened to display his scratched hand to Granny, to tell her his story, and get her opinion of his case.

"I take not much thought of Goody Webster's witchcraft," said Granny. "Still 'tis safe enough to bind some healing lotion on thy wound. Thou wilt feel better in thy mind, I dare say."

"Yea, verily, Granny," said Nathan, eagerly.

"Ask thy mother then to suffer thee to come up to my house presently, and I will attend to it for thee," said Granny.

Goodwife Ellis felt the possible seriousness of Nathan's hurt, and was glad to have Granny Allison prescribe for him.

As Nathan entered Granny's kitchen, his nose was greeted by the most delicious odor that had ever blessed that small member, an odor new to him.

"Is it my lotion that smelleth so savory?" asked he, sniffing the goodly smell that filled the whole kitchen.

"Nay, not so," replied Granny, her bright eyes twinkling merrily behind her round horn spectacles. "Let me bind this poultice of dried elder leaves steeped in milk on thy scratch, and then thy tongue shall e'en have a taste of that which thy sharp nose hath discovered."

The surgery finished, Granny took down the door of her brick oven, and with her long-handled iron slice drew from its dark depths a large pie, steaming with deliciousness. Nathan's mouth watered at the mere sight and smell of it, for pies or puddings were the greatest rarity, only seen on occasion of high feasts. Sugar was too costly to permit of many dainties being eaten, and the Puritans were forced to content themselves with plain food that supported life, without pampering luxurious tastes.

"Knowest thou what day this is?" asked Granny, as she cut a generous section of the pie, and placing it on a pewter plate, handed it to

Nathan. Nathan almost doubted his eyes when he actually saw two fat plums tumbling out of the pie's richness!

"'T is the twenty-fifth day of December," mumbled Nathan, as plainly as he could with his mouth already stuffed full of pie. What a toothsome pie it was!

"Yea. 'T is the day called Merry Christmas in Old England, and a merry day 't is there. The mummers and the carol singers parade gayly about the streets, and all the houses are dressed up with green, as the poem saith, —

“ ‘So now is come our joyfullest feast;  
Let every man be jolly;  
Each room with ivy leaves is drest,  
And every post with holly.’

And the eating and drinking, and merry-making, — ah, thou canst not conceive of it! 'T is as that same poet saith, —

“ ‘Now all our neighbors' chimneys smoke,  
And Christmas blocks are burning;  
Their ovens they with baked meat choke,  
And all their spits are turning.’

Ah, many is the Merry Christmas I have kept in Old England with those that have lain under the sod full many a weary year!”

“But I thought it was a grievous sin to keep

Christmas day, like the Papists and the folk of the Church of England," said Nathan, before whom the pie was fast melting away.

"Oh, well, that is as folk look at it," said Granny. "'T was ever a season of much love and kindness to the poor, I wot well. I am not as the more straitlaced among us. When old Christmas cometh round again, I think it no harm to at least bake a toothsome mince pie, in memory of old times at home.

" ' Without the door let sorrow lye;  
And if for cold it hap to die,  
We 'll bury it in a Christmas pie,  
And evermore be merry, ' "

hummed Granny cheerfully to herself, as she cut a section of the pie for her own supper.

But at that moment she noticed that Nathan had stopped eating.

"What aileth thee, Nathan?" she asked kindly. "Finish thy pie, boy, and have another portion."

"If this be verily mince pie," said Nathan, gazing ruefully on the small but oh, how tempting morsel left on his plate, "I doubt an it be not a sin for me to eat it. My father will be sore angry with me for committing this sin."

"Perchance Goodman Ellis may object. I wot he is one who wisheth to be ever foremost in godliness. He and I think not alike in some

things. Yet since thou hast eaten so much, surely 't is no greater sin to finish thy portion," said Granny, with kindly thought of the little boy's longings.

Nathan wavered only an instant. Then, seizing his cap, he turned his back resolutely on temptation, and hastily fled, saying, —

"Good even, Granny; methinks I shall be late home to my supper."

As he hurried home in the gathering darkness, Nathan debated whether or no to confess to his father that he had actually eaten mince pie. Perhaps, had it not been for the scratch on his hand from Goody Webster's black cat, he might have been tempted to keep to himself what he well knew his father would consider a great sin; but now he felt it wise to keep on the safe side of Satan and all his works.

When he entered the house, the family were already at supper, and his father, looking at him with an ominous frown, said severely, —

"Thou art o'er late, Nathan. I fear thou hast idled on the way, like the sluggard, instead of coming home straightway."

"Nay, father, I e'en came home from Granny's as swiftly as I could," said Nathan, his rapid breathing witnessing the truth of his story.

"Why didst tarry so long at Granny Allison's then?"

"After she had dressed my hand, Granny gave me a portion of mince pie," stammered Nathan. "She affirmed 't was Merry Christmas —"

"Merry Christmas! Mince pie!" exclaimed Goodman Ellis, hardly believing his ears, while his wife looked almost in horror on her son.

"Such lewd departure from the faith is not to be countenanced or excused e'en in so young a child as thou, Nathan," she said.

"I looked not to see a son of mine thus transgress the tradition of the elders," said Goodman Ellis, severely. "I must e'en do my duty by thee."

"I knew not that 't was mince pie till after I had begun eating of it," said Nathan, almost crying, as his father's eye rested on a stout rod hanging on the wall. "The moment I knew 't was mince pie, I ate not another morsel. Verily I did not. Granny Allison will witness to it."

"'T is well thou didst not," said Goodman Ellis, looking softened and relieved. "'T is passing strange that a woman like Granny Allison practises these idolatrous fashions of Old England. In spite of her healing skill, she must be admonished by our townsmen. 'T is said that this anti-Christian heresy of observing the twenty-fifth instant idolatrously beginneth to creep into Boston, favored by sundry of the king's officers. But Mr. Mather and



the other watchmen on the towers of Zion set their faces like a flint against this pernicious practice, crying aloud and sparing not."

"Those that would be godly should beware e'en of the name 'Merry Christmas,'" said Goodwife Ellis. "Canker beginneth in the tongue."

"No child of mine shall e'er transgress after that fashion," said Goodman Ellis. "That thou mayst ne'er unwittingly sin again, Nathan, thou mayst e'en now take thy catechism in hand, and con the question, 'What is the second commandment?' and its answer, with the three following questions and answers, expounding the reasons for a pure worship, free from idolatry, and I will hear thee recite them e'er thou sleepest."

As Nathan sat in the warm chimney seat, half nodding over his book, while he drowsily studied "the reasons annexed to the second commandment are God's sovereignty over us, His property in us, and the zeal He hath to His own worship," the too delicious taste of the forbidden mince pie still lingered in memory, and he could not help thinking, —

"'Tis verily a sore pity that mince pie is so wicked when 't is so toothsome."

The big boys had great fun that afternoon when their fort was done. Divided into two parties, a storm of snowballs flew fast back and forth between the settlers inside and the besieging party

of Indians without, whose mock warwhoop echoed far and near, attracting the gaze of several real Indians, who, wrapped in furs or blankets, strode down the street in the direction of the river, bound, no doubt, for the Indian fort on the heights upon its west shore.

The boys knew by sight most of the Indians who were in the habit of coming into the settlement to traffic their furs and skins for various articles, especially rum, when they could find any one that would sell it to them.

Richard Goodman, the deacon's son, a lively youth, threw a snowball at the band of Indians, shouting, —

“Have a care, Naushapee. We are slaying Indians here by the cartload!”

Naushapee did not seem to take this jest as Richard expected. Shaking the snow from his blanket, he, as well as the other Indians, scowled savagely at the boys, making no reply.

“Give us the warwhoop, Wappaye,” cried Richard, nothing daunted. “We know not an we sound it right. Thou knowest it full well, I dare say.”

Wappaye, a tall, fiercer looking Indian than the others, said grimly, —

“Before many moons the English boy will know well the sound of the Indian warwhoop.”

“What thinkest thou Wappaye meaneth by that

dark saying, Richard?" asked Sam Smith, as the Indians strode on down the street.

"How know I what an Indian meaneth by his heathenish gibberish?" said Richard. "Indians care not what lies they utter. Are not they Satan's own children?"

But though Richard affected to make light of Wappaye's saying, nevertheless it haunted and troubled him. Another thing too added to his vague uneasiness.

In the early dusk of evening, when the other boys had hurried home to do their chores, Richard had lingered a few moments behind the others. As he was repairing some breaches made by the enemy in the fort walls to be ready for the morrow's sport, he fancied he saw a strange face regarding him from the back chamber window of Mr. Russell's house, close by. It was not that of the minister himself, for Richard had seen him walk gravely up the street not long before. Besides, it looked like the face of a venerable old man.

It disappeared even as Richard saw it, so quickly that he was uncertain whether he had really seen something, or whether it was a vision.

He felt it best to tell his father that night both Wappaye's saying, and about the strange face.

"Thou couldst have seen no living face in the house of our godly minister," said Deacon Goodman, "for there is no stranger abiding under his

roof. 'T was doubtless an apparition. I know not what it portendeth. There be many dark omens and portents of late that it is to be greatly feared point towards overflowing and heaped up vials of wrath ready to be poured out upon the heads of God's people."

"Thinkest thou Wappaye spoke but in jest?" asked Richard.

"I like not his saying," replied his father. "Our Indians have not carried themselves o'er friendly of late. Wappaye darkly hinted to me last week that there would be war between the Indians and the white men when the leaves came again. And 't is a bad omen that our Indians have not begun to apply for land to plant upon next spring, as usual with them at this season."

"But why should the Indians desire to fight us, father?" asked Richard.

"In truth, I know not, my son," replied the deacon. "We of Hadley and Northampton and Springfield bought our lands of the Indians in this valley, paying them their own price, and have ever striven to carry ourselves friendly towards them, meting out justice to them in our courts. Perchance we have been negligent of their souls, not laboring in season and out as we should for their redemption from heathenism, and so the Lord sendeth His judgments upon us. I will counsel with Mr. Russell whether a day of fasting, humilia-

tion, and prayer might not serve to avert the just wrath of God."

The next day, as they walked to school together, Richard told John Ellis his father's forebodings of a war with the Indians.

"Perchance 't is even so," said John, "for Nathaniel Warner was at our house yester even. He returned from his last trip to the Bay the day before the snowstorm. He can go no more till spring time, for the path is now impassable. He told father that there is great uneasiness in Plymouth and the other settlements on the Bay over the unfriendly carriage of King Philip of the Pokanokets, a powerful and war-like sachem, sorely to be feared, an he be unfriendly."

"But I thought that Philip had been brought before the Plymouth court and had humbled himself and promised to amend his ways, and had signed an instrument, promising to carry himself peaceably towards the English henceforth; moreover, that he paid yearly a tribute of five wolves' heads to the government at New Plymouth, as a sign of fealty. So Mr. Tilton told my father. He had it direct from the lips of the godly Mr. Increase Mather, on his last trip to Boston."

"Yea, 't is as thou saith," said John. "But all savages are crafty, and Philip above all, 't is said. He worketh in the dark. Nathaniel saith the late alarm is caused by tidings brought to the Governor

of New Plymouth by one Sausaman, a praying Indian. Sausaman is a Natick Indian, brought up in the college at Cambridge, who readily both speaketh and writeth English. He dwelt for a season in the Pokanoket country, and was employed by Philip to write for him, so he knoweth that sachem full well. Now Sausaman preacheth to the Indians at Natick. Going of late on a visit to his friends among the Pokanokets, he saw sundry suspicious doings that alarmed him. Being a baptized Indian, he felt it his duty to warn the Governor of Plymouth."

"What saith he?" asked Richard, full of interest.

"He saith that Philip schemeth to engage all the sachems in the Massachusetts in a destructive war against the English; that he keepeth his men ever in arms, and that many strange Indians gather around him. The English too that live near Philip are filled with the same forebodings and jealousy of Philip's intentions."

"What do the people of the Bay purpose doing about it?" asked Richard.

"The Governor of New Plymouth will send for King Philip to appear before the March court, and demand that his arms be delivered up."

"Methinks 'tis most unlikely that our river Indians, the Norwottucks and Agawams and Pocumtucks, would join with Philip," said Richard.

“Surely they have no grievances against the English.”

“Philip hath much power over them, and he worketh like a mole in the ground,” said John. “Thou thyself heardst the dark saying of Wappaye, which soundeth not o’er friendly, though perchance ’t was but idle talk to terrify us, and pay us for snowballing him.”

“Should the Indians make war upon us, I can handle a gun as well as a man,” said Richard, “and I trow I would as soon shoot an Indian as a wolf.”

“An war break out, I stand ready to do my part, I promise thee,” said John. “For all Mr. Eliot’s teachings, ’t is doubtful to my mind that these filthy savages have any souls. My good Watch seemeth to me to have as much soul as such fellows as that drunken Naushapee and Squiskhegan, and the rest, — yea, and more too. I’ll warrant thee that my goodly snaphance will make fell havoc among them, an they assault our settlement.”

“Men and boys, we can send forth a goodly troop of brave fighters here in Hadley,” said Richard. “But why dost not put on thy new snowshoes, John?”

John carried hung over his shoulder by the thongs his pair of snowshoes, which had taken several evenings instead of one to finish. He had

bent his strips of walnut wood into an oblong, fish-like shape, ending in a point behind. Across this framework were fastened two light pieces of wood for his feet to rest upon. The whole frame was laced across and across by a network of strong strips of dried deerhide, the shoe looking not unlike a modern tennis racket. Long thongs of the hide were attached to lash the shoes to his feet.

“Are they not a brave pair of snowshoes?” asked John, regarding his work with pride. “I dare not put them on now, lest I be tardy at school, and Master Younglove give me an extra Latin verb to learn, which suits me not. The shoes are as yet cumbersome to me. I flounder about in the drifts like a moose. I know not how ’t is. It looketh full easy when the Indians stride off in them over the snow.”

“Thou must bethink thee that the Indians grow up on snowshoes from their youth,” said Richard. “’T is no wonder they are so dextrous.”

“Coming home from school to-night I will practise their use,” said John. “I can be a scout going out to reconnoitre from our fort.”

“Thou ’dst best practise,” said Richard, laughing, “so that, by another winter, thou ’lt be ready to pursue the Indians through the woods to Canada, an need be.”

“I’ll stand ready to do that, or anything else



against the savages, thou mayst safely wager," said John.

The older and wiser heads among the settlers did not look so lightly upon a possible war with the Indians as did the boys. Some among the older of them, who had emigrated from Connecticut, remembered too well the heart-rending anxiety, bloodshed, and expense of the Pequot war to welcome another contest with the Indians.

The tidings from the Bay were indeed such as to fill the hearts of the settlers in the isolated frontier plantations on the Connecticut River with grave forebodings. The snow lay unusually deep that winter over the almost unbroken, pathless forests between them and the Bay, wholly cutting off communication with the outside world for long months.

They could only await with anxious hearts the coming spring and whatever it might have in store for them. Would it be war, — war in its most hideous shape, with cruel, blood-thirsty savages? Such was the dread thought of many a heart in Hadley that winter.

THE END.



*Historically Accurate Adventure Stories*

# "THE YOUNG PURITAN" SERIES

By MARY P. WELLS SMITH

---

1. THE YOUNG PURITANS OF OLD HADLEY
2. THE YOUNG PURITANS IN KING PHILIP'S WAR
3. THE YOUNG PURITANS IN CAPTIVITY
4. THE YOUNG AND OLD PURITANS OF HATFIELD

Illustrated.      Cloth.      Each \$1.20 net

MRS. Smith deserves very hearty commendation for the admirable pictures of Puritan life which are drawn with a skilful hand in this book ("Young Puritans of Old Hadley"). She has chosen a representative Puritan village as the scene, and the period of very early settlement of western Massachusetts for her story, a village which retains many of its early features to this day.—*The Churchman*, New York.

Mrs. Smith has proven that she can write as simple and natural a story of child-life when the scene is laid two hundred and fifty years ago as when she chooses to describe country life in the New England of the present century.—*Christian Register*.

She shows the same power of graphic description, the same faithful use of the best available material, and the same logical way of putting it into shape.—*Commerical Advertiser*, New York.

Mrs. Smith has made history live again in her life-like narrative. The children of to-day may well learn something of the sterner virtues in reading this story of the endurance and fortitude of children of two centuries ago.—*Springfield Republican*.

She catches the very spirit of Puritan life.—*Chicago Inter-Ocean*.

---

LITTLE, BROWN, & CO., *Publishers*

34 BEACON STREET, BOSTON

*New Colonial Stories for Young People*

## OLD DEERFIELD SERIES

By MARY P. WELLS SMITH

Illustrated. 12mo. Cloth. Each \$1.20 net

A NEW series of colonial and revolutionary stories by the popular author of "The Young Puritans Series" with its scenes laid principally in Western Massachusetts.

### 1. *The Boy Captive of Old Deerfield*

Mrs. Smith is the first to use the story of Stephen Williams, the captured son of Parson Williams, and his adventures among the Indians will be new to all young readers. The descriptions of Indian ways are faithful to truth. — *Boston Journal*.



### 2. *The Boy Captive in Canada*

Tells in a life-like manner young Stephen's adventures during his wanderings as captive. — *Philadelphia Press*.

### 3. *Boys of the Border*

Tells in a most spirited way the events in the Deerfield valley from 1746 to 1755 as they affected the Rice family. There is plenty of lively action. — *Philadelphia Press*.

### 4. *Boys and Girls of Seventy-Seven*

A story of the Revolutionary War, more especially of the events culminating in the surrender of Burgoyne.

---

LITTLE, BROWN, & CO., Publishers

34 BEACON STREET, BOSTON







