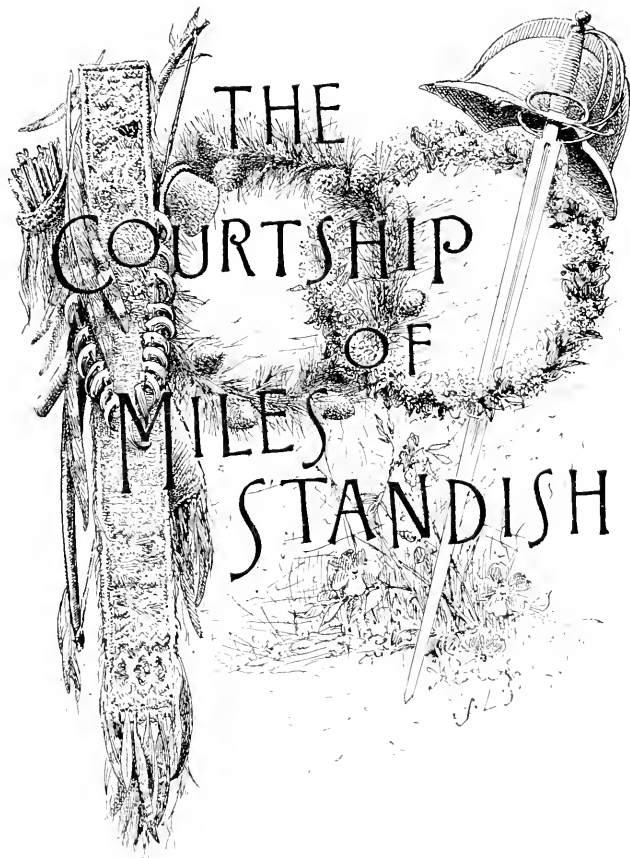


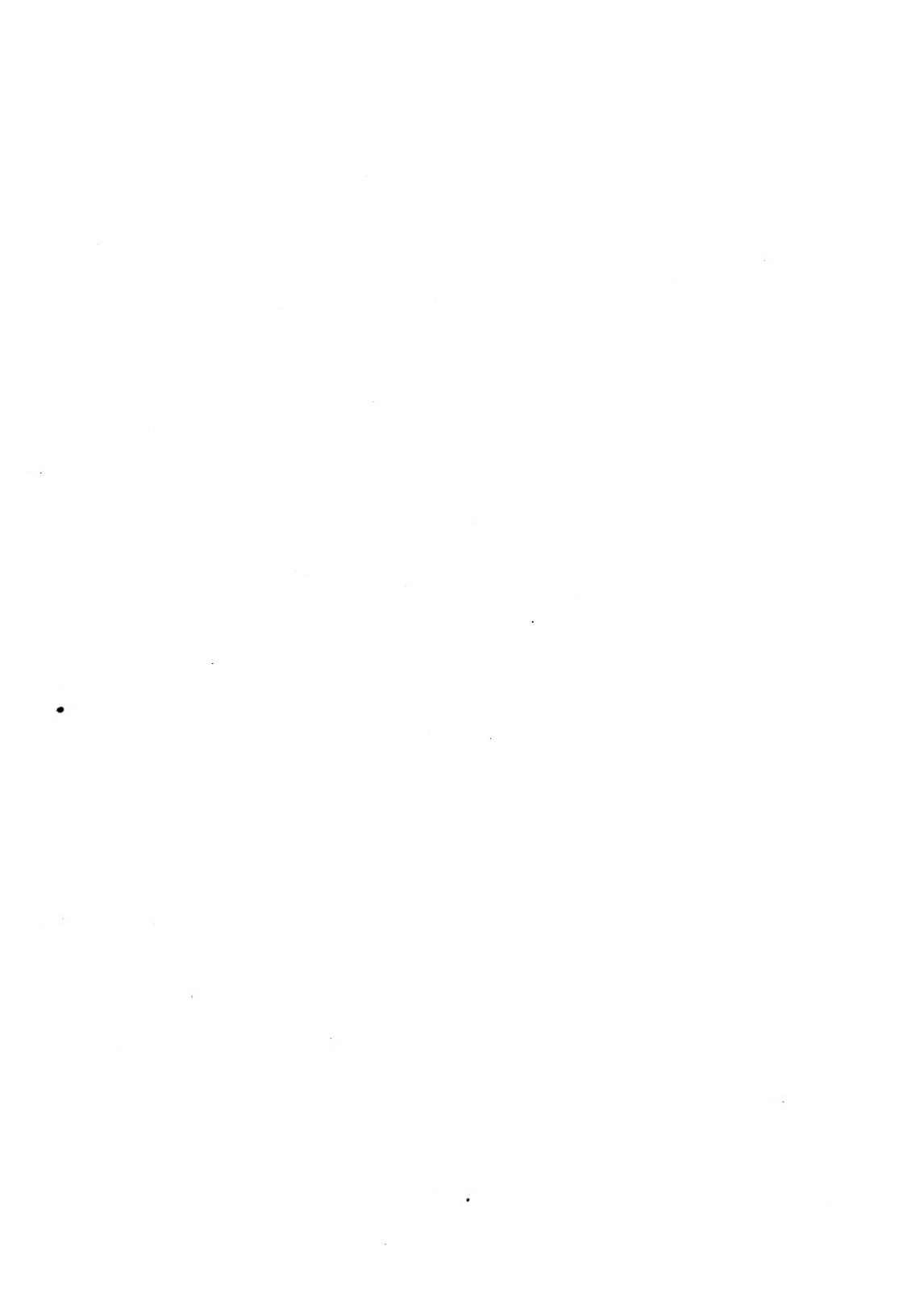
1920



THE
COURTSHIP
OF
MILES
STANDISH









THE
COURTSHIP OF MILES STANDISH

BY
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

With Illustrations

*FROM DESIGNS BY BOUGHTON, MERRILL, REINHART, PERKINS,
HITCHCOCK, SHAPLEIGH, AND OTHERS*



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
M DCCC LXXXVIII

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

MR. LONGFELLOW'S *Evangeline* was published in 1847, and the discussion which his use of hexameters aroused was renewed repeatedly in the following years. His next important poetical work was *The Golden Legend*, published in 1851, and he was still brooding over the full conception of *Christus* when his reading of the Finnish epic *Kalevala* gave impulse to a desire he had long had to weave the Indian legends into a connected poem. The result was *Hiawatha*, at which he worked with great enthusiasm; not only because the theme interested him, but because he felt the exhilaration of release from daily academic duties, his resignation of his professorship having taken place in 1854. *Hiawatha* appeared in 1855, and then his mind reverted to *Christus*, and he began to consider the subjects which afterward took form in *The New England Tragedies*. Possibly the sombre character of the material he was working in caused a reaction, and led him to look about for a subject of a lighter cast, but in the same general vein. At any rate, he notes in his diary, under the date of December 2, 1856: "In the evening, wrote the first scene in *The Courtship of Miles Standish*."

There is no evidence that he ever completed this dramatic representation of the subject. He went back in a few days to his Puritans and Quakers, and during the next few weeks was reading books which bore on this subject. But in March he struck upon Charles Wyllis Elliott's *The New England History*, then just issued, which he characterizes as "done cleverly, with a light hand, but depth of research enough," and the next day the desire returned to him to produce some comedy drawn from early New England life. He seems to have continued, however, to work fitfully at *The New England Tragedies*, and by the end of August had made a rough draft of *Wollock Christison*, the title which he gave to the first form of *John Endicott*.

Exactly a year after he wrote the first scene in *The Courtship of Miles*

Standish, on the second of December, 1857, we find this entry in his diary: "Soft as spring. I begin a new poem, *Priscilla*, to be a kind of Puritan pastoral; the subject, the courtship of Miles Standish. This, I think, will be a better treatment of the subject than the dramatic one I wrote some time ago;" and the next day: "My poem is in hexameters; an idyl of the Old Colony times. What it will turn out I do not know; but it gives me pleasure to write it; and that I count for something." It is not unlikely that the change of name was due in part to the impression made upon him not long before by a Quakeress from England, Priscilla Green, whom he heard speak at a public meeting. "She spoke," he says, "with a sweet voice and a very clear enunciation; very deliberately, and breaking now and then into a rhythmic chant, in which the voice seemed floating up and down on wings. I was much interested, and could have listened an hour longer. It was a very great pleasure to hear such a musical voice." The identity of the name with the historic one of his heroine may easily have served to transfer something of the personality of the living woman into the poet's fancy of the Puritan maiden when he came to resume his treatment of the subject of Miles Standish's courtship.

The pages of his diary, and extracts from his correspondence, give glimpses of the poet at work on his poem, and afterwards enjoying the reception which it had at the hands of the public.

"December 29, 1857. Work a little at *Priscilla*. Toward evening, walk in a gently falling snow, under the shaded lamp of the moon.

"January 29, 1858. Began again on *Priscilla* and wrote several pages, finishing the second canto.

"February 17. Have worked pretty steadily for the last week on *Priscilla*. To-day finish canto four.

"March 1. Keep in-doors, and work on *Priscilla*, which I think I shall call *The Courtship of Miles Standish*. But not feeling much in the mood, took to reading Homer; the death of Hector, and Priam's visit to Achilles in his tent.

"March 16. Rowse resumes portrait. But I find time, notwithstanding, to write a whole canto of *Miles Standish*, namely, canto eight.

"March 22. The poem is finished, and now only needs revision, which I begin to-day. But, in the main, I have it as I want it.

"April 23. Printing *Miles Standish*, and seeing all its defects as it stands before me in type. It is always disagreeable, when the glow of composition is

over, to criticise what one has been in love with. We think it is Rachel, but wake to find it Leah.

“*May 27.* Get all the plate-proofs of *Miles Standish*, and look it over with a keen eye to its defects. It is not pleasant to go over a work in this way.

“*June 3.* [In a letter to Charles Sumner.] And now of more private matters. I have just finished a poem of some length,—an idyl of the Old Colony times; a bunch of Mayflowers from the Plymouth woods.

“*July 10.* [To the same.] I wrote you about my new poem, *Miles Standish*, founded on the well-known adventure of my maternal ancestor, John Alden. The heroine’s name is Priscilla; and so you have the chief characters, and the chief incident before you,—taking it for granted that you remember the traditional anecdote. I am now going upon something more important.

“*August 12.* [To the same.] *Miles Standish* will not be out till next month. I get in England one hundred and fifty pounds for the advance sheets; a good round sum for a small book. I hope you will like it.

“*October 7.* Fields comes out to make a new proposition about *Miles Standish*. They have printed ten thousand copies, and want to print ten thousand more without delay.

“*October 16.* *The Courtship of Miles Standish* published. At noon Ticknor told me he had sold five thousand in Boston, besides the orders from a distance. He had printed ten thousand, and has another ten thousand in press. Met George Vandenhoff, who reads the poem in public to-night.

“*October 23.* Between these two Saturdays, *Miles Standish* has marched steadily on. Another five thousand are in press; in all, an army of twenty-five thousand, in one week. Fields tells me that in London ten thousand were sold the first day.

“*November 6.* I give a dinner to Ticknor and Fields, the publishers, in honor of the success of *Miles Standish*; the other guests, T. Starr King and Whipple.

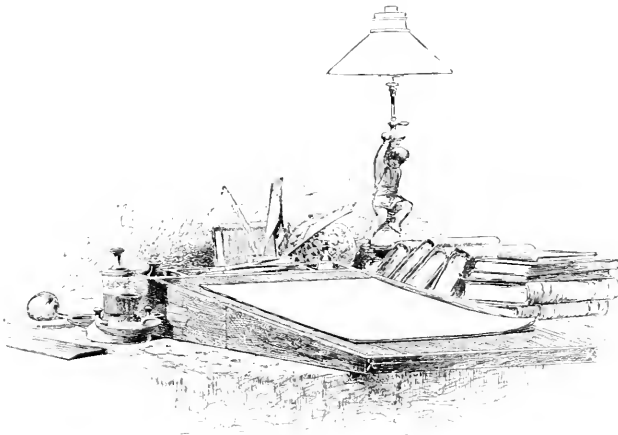
“*November 28.* Elmyer has sent me a beautiful illustration of *Miles Standish*. It is the bridal procession going through the Plymouth woods, and is full of feeling.”

In this, as in other of his poems, Mr. Longfellow drew his material from near rather than from remote sources. As intimated above, the incident on which the story of the poem turns was a tradition in his family, and had

been freshly brought to notice in Mr. Elliott's *The New England History*. From this book, which aims to reconstruct the interior household life, as well as to record the more public events, of New England, Mr. Longfellow gathered a number of details which give color to the poem. Dr. Alexander Young's *Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers* also was at his hand, and Winslow's *Relation*, included in it, furnished him with an explicit narrative of Standish's expedition against the Indians. Between the first projection of the poem and its final form occurred the important publication of Bradford's *History of Plymouth Plantations* with Dr. Charles Deane's *Notes*. The poet did not think it necessary to follow the early Plymouth history with scrupulous regard to chronological sequence, nor was he writing a merely metrical version of the results of antiquarian research. It was sufficient to him to catch the broad features of the colonial life and to reproduce the spirit of the relations existing between Plymouth and the Indians. There is, so to speak, a universal history underlying that which concerns itself with the local affairs of men. It is the business of the historian to record with scrupulous accuracy the acts and circumstances of history, more anxious to furnish all the evidence to be won from documents, monuments, and tradition than to put his own interpretation upon the bearings of this evidence; and yet the historian, unless he be a mere annalist,—and even then he will inevitably select from fuller material in accordance with his own judgment,—is quite sure to impart something of his own rationalizing and generalizing to his record of fact. It is the business of the poet, on the other hand, to be, first of all, an interpreter, to take of the material which the historian furnishes and to disclose its relations to universal experience, its spiritual import, its meaning as read in the light of the history of human nature; and yet, in doing this, the poet finds he cannot stray from the concrete, actual occurrence without introducing an error into his calculations. It is not possible to say how far Mr. Longfellow would have modified his *Evangelium* if he had had access to the historical material now so copious, instead of being shut up to the Abbé Raynal and Haliburton, but it is quite certain that the popular judgment of the deportation of the Acadian is determined by Longfellow, and not by Parkman. There has been no such accession to our knowledge of Plymouth affairs since *The Courtship of Miles Standish* was written, and the historical questions involved in it are the trifles of antiquarianism, but the popular conception of life in the Old Colony, in the early years, may be said to follow, in some measure, upon this poem, though in writing it Mr. Longfellow

played variations upon a familiar theme rather than composed a new melody. Those who are curious to note the superficial discrepancies between the narrative contained in this poem and that which has been sifted by scholars from contemporaneous documents, will find suggestions in the notes which are appended to this volume, and which relate chiefly to the historic basis of the poem.

Boston, *May*, 1888.





I.

MILES STANDISH.

IN the Old Colony days, in Plymouth the land of the Pilgrims,
To and fro in a room of his simple and primitive dwelling,
Clad in doublet and hose, and boots of Cordovan leather,
Strode, with a martial air, Miles Standish the Puritan Captain.
Buried in thought he seemed, with his hands behind him, and
pausing

Ever and anon to behold his glittering weapons of warfare,
Hanging in shining array along the walls of the chamber, —
Cutlass and corselet of steel, and his trusty sword of Damascus,
Curved at the point and inscribed with its mystical Arabic sen-
tence,

While underneath, in a corner, were fowling-piece, musket, and
matchlock.

Short of stature he was, but strongly built and athletic,
Broad in the shoulders, deep-chested, with muscles and sinews of
iron ;

Brown as a nut was his face, but his russet beard was already
Flaked with patches of snow, as hedges sometimes in November.
Near him was seated John Alden, his friend, and household com-
panion,

Writing with diligent speed at a table of pine by the window :
Fair-haired, azure-eyed, with delicate Saxon complexion,
Having the dew of his youth, and the beauty thereof, as the cap-
tives

Whom Saint Gregory saw, and exclaimed, "Not Angels, but Angels."

Youngest of all was he of the men who came in the Mayflower.

Suddenly breaking the silence, the diligent scribe interrupting, Spake, in the pride of his heart, Miles Standish the Captain of Plymouth.

"Look at these arms," he said, "the warlike weapons that hang here

Burnished and bright and clean, as if for parade or inspection!

This is the sword of Damascus I fought with in Flanders; this breastplate,

Well I remember the day! once saved my life in a skirmish;

Here in front you can see the very dint of the bullet

Fired point-blank at my heart by a Spanish arcabucero.

Had it not been of sheer steel, the forgotten bones of Miles Standish Would at this moment be mould, in their grave in the Flemish morasses."

Thereupon answered John Alden, but looked not up from his writing:

"Truly the breath of the Lord hath slackened the speed of the bullet;

He in his mercy preserved you, to be our shield and our weapon!"

Still the Captain continued, unheeding the words of the stripling:

"See, how bright they are burnished, as if in an arsenal hanging:

That is because I have done it myself, and not left it to others.

Serve yourself, would you be well served, is an excellent adage;

So I take care of my arms, as you of your pens and your inkhorn.

Then, too, there are my soldiers, my great, invincible army,

Twelve men, all equipped, having each his rest and his matchlock,

Eighteen shillings a month, together with diet and pillage,

And, like Caesar, I know the name of each of my soldiers!"

This he said with a smile, that danced in his eyes, as the sunbeams
Dance on the waves of the sea, and vanish again in a moment.
Alden laughed as he wrote, and still the Captain continued :
“ Look ! you can see from this window my brazen howitzer planted



High on the roof of the church, a preacher who speaks to the
purpose,
Steady, straightforward, and strong, with irresistible logic,
Orthodox, flashing conviction right into the hearts of the heathen.
Now we are ready, I think, for any assault of the Indians :
Let them come, if they like, and the sooner they try it the
better, —

Let them come, if they like, be it sagamore, sachem, or pow-wow,
Aspinet, Samoset, Corbitant, Squanto, or Tokamahamon!"

Long at the window he stood, and wistfully gazed on the land-
scape,
Washed with a cold gray mist, the vapory breath of the east-wind,
Forest and meadow and hill, and the steel-blue rim of the ocean,
Lying silent and sad, in the afternoon shadows and sunshine.
Over his countenance flitted a shadow like those on the landscape,
Gloom intermingled with light; and his voice was subdued with
emotion,
Tenderness, pity, regret, as after a pause he proceeded:
"Yonder there, on the hill by the sea, lies buried Rose Standish;
Beautiful rose of love, that bloomed for me by the way-side!
She was the first to die of all who came in the Mayflower!
Green above her is growing the field of wheat we have sown
there,
Better to hide from the Indian scouts the graves of our people,
Lest they should count them and see how many already have
perished!"
Sadly his face he averted, and strode up and down, and was
thoughtful.

Fixed to the opposite wall was a shelf of books, and among them
Prominent three, distinguished alike for bulk and for binding;
Bariffe's Artillery Guide, and the Commentaries of Caesar
Out of the Latin translated by Arthur Goldinge of London.
And, as if guarded by these, between them was standing the Bible.
Musing a moment before them, Miles Standish paused, as if
doubtful
Which of the three he should choose for his consolation and
comfort,

Whether the wars of the Hebrews, the famous campaigns of the
Romans,

Or the Artillery practice, designed for belligerent Christians.

Finally down from its shelf he dragged the ponderous Roman,

Seated himself at the window, and opened the book, and in silence
Turned o'er the well-worn leaves, where thumb-marks thick on the
margin,

Like the trample of feet, proclaimed the battle was hottest.

Nothing was heard in the room but the hurrying pen of the strip-
ling.

Busily writing epistles important, to go by the Mayflower,

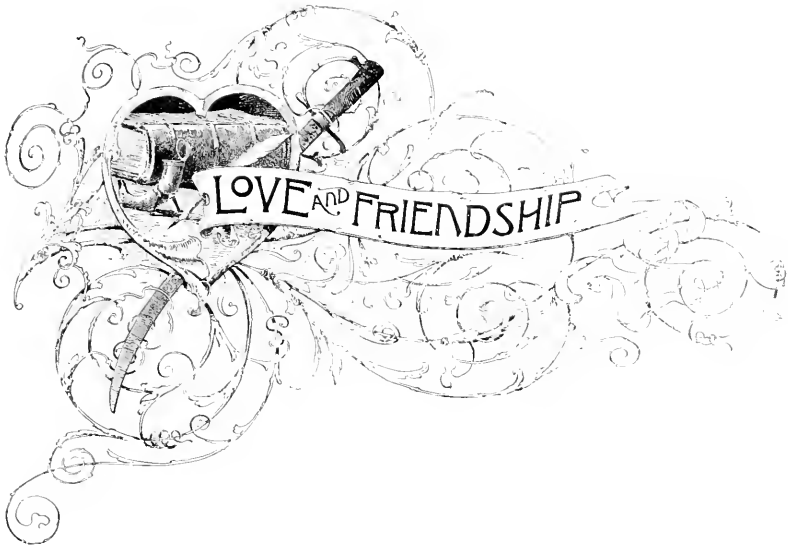
Ready to sail on the morrow, or next day at latest, God willing!

Homeward bound with the tidings of all that terrible winter,

Letters written by Alden, and full of the name of Priscilla!

Full of the name and the fame of the Puritan maiden Priscilla!





II.

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP.

NOTHING was heard in the room but the hurrying pen of the strip-
ling,

Or an occasional sigh from the laboring heart of the Captain,
Reading the marvellous words and achievements of Julius Caesar.
After a while he exclaimed, as he smote with his hand, palm down-
wards,

Heavily on the page : " A wonderful man was this Caesar !
You are a writer, and I am a fighter, but here is a fellow
Who could both write and fight, and in both was equally skilful !"
Straightway answered and spake John Alden, the comely, the
youthful :

" Yes, he was equally skilled, as you say, with his pen and his
weapons.

Somewhere have I read, but where I forget, he could dictate
Seven letters at once, at the same time writing his memoirs."

" Truly," continued the Captain, not heeding or hearing the other,
" Truly a wonderful man was Caius Julius Caesar !

Better be first, he said, in a little Iberian village,

Than be second in Rome, and I think he was right when he said it.

Twice was he married before he was twenty, and many times after ;
Battles five hundred he fought, and a thousand cities he con-
quered ;

He, too, fought in Flanders, as he himself has recorded :

Finally he was stabbed by his friend, the orator Brutus !

Now, do you know what he did on a certain occasion in Flanders,
When the rear-guard of his army retreated, the front giving way
too,

And the immortal Twelfth Legion was crowded so closely together
There was no room for their swords? Why, he seized a shield
from a soldier,

Put himself straight at the head of his troops, and commanded the
captains,

Calling on each by his name, to order forward the ensigns ;

Then to widen the ranks, and give more room for their weapons ;

So he won the day, the battle of something-or-other.

That's what I always say ; if you wish a thing to be well done,

You must do it yourself, you must not leave it to others !”

All was silent again ; the Captain continued his reading.

Nothing was heard in the room but the hurrying pen of the strip-
ling

Writing epistles important to go next day by the Mayflower,

Filled with the name and the fame of the Puritan maiden Pris-
cilla ;

Every sentence began or closed with the name of Priscilla,

Till the treacherous pen, to which he confided the secret,

Strove to betray it by singing and shouting the name of Priscilla !

Finally closing his book, with a bang of the ponderous cover,

Sudden and loud as the sound of a soldier grounding his musket,

Thus to the young man spake Miles Standish the Captain of
Plymouth :

“ When you have finished your work, I have something important
to tell you.

Be not however in haste : I can wait ; I shall not be impatient !”

Straightway Alden replied, as he folded the last of his letters,

Pushing his papers aside, and giving respectful attention :

“Speak; for whenever you speak, I am always ready to listen,
Always ready to hear whatever pertains to Miles Standish.”

Thereupon answered the Captain, embarrassed, and culling his
phrases:

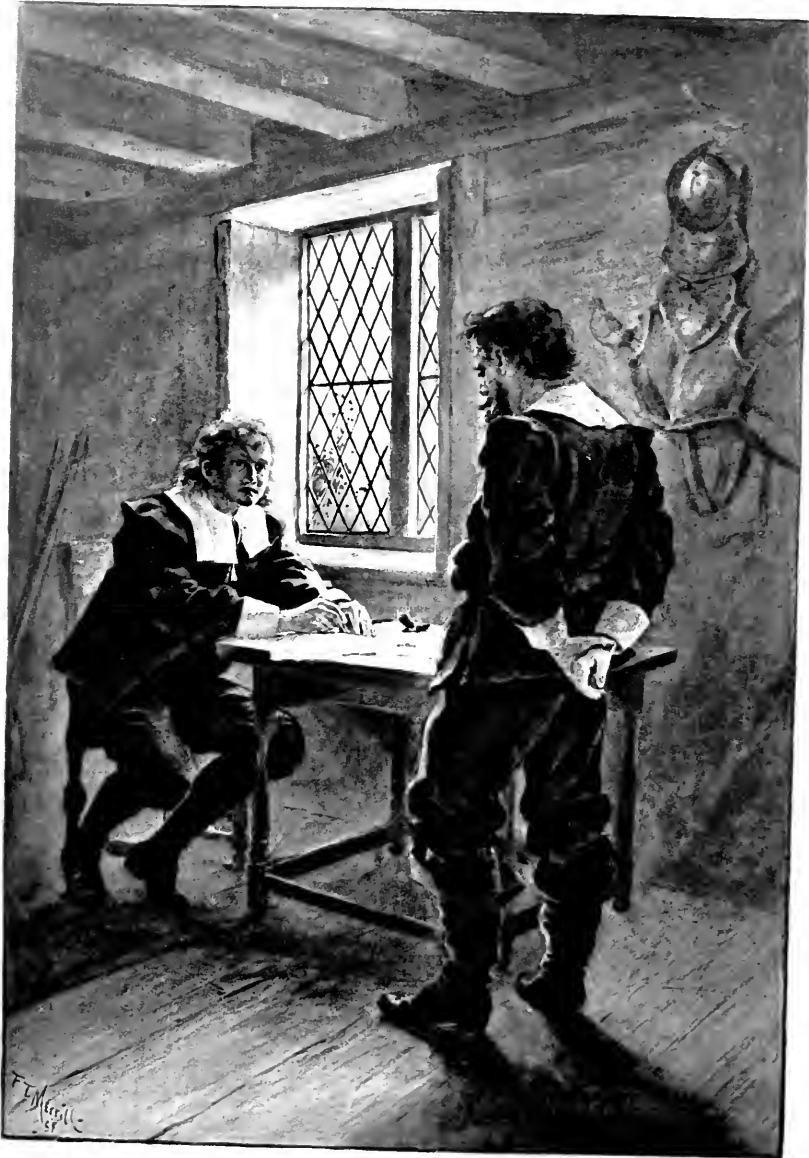
“’Tis not good for a man to be alone, say the Scriptures.
This I have said before, and again and again I repeat it;
Every hour in the day, I think it, and feel it, and say it.
Since Rose Standish died, my life has been weary and dreary;
Sick at heart have I been, beyond the healing of friendship;



Of in my lonely hours have I thought of the maiden Priscilla,
 She is alone in the world; her father and mother and brother
 Died in the winter together; I saw her going and coming,
 Now to the grave of the dead, and now to the bed of the dying,
 Patient, courageous, and strong, and said to myself, that if ever
 There were angels on earth, as there are angels in heaven,
 Two have I seen and known; and the angel whose name is Priscilla
 Holds in my desolate life the place which the other abandoned.
 Long have I cherished the thought, but never have dared to
 reveal it,

Being a coward in this, though valiant enough for the most part.
 Go to the damsel Priscilla, the loveliest maiden of Plymouth,
 Say that a blunt old Captain, a man not of words but of actions,
 Offers his hand and his heart, the hand and heart of a soldier.
 Not in these words, you know, but this in short is my meaning;
 I am a maker of war, and not a maker of phrases.
 You, who are bred as a scholar, can say it in elegant language,
 Such as you read in your books of the pleadings and wooings of
 lovers,
 Such as you think best adapted to win the heart of a maiden."

When he had spoken, John Alden, the fair-haired, taciturn strip-
 ling,
 All aghast at his words, surprised, embarrassed, bewildered,
 Trying to mask his dismay by treating the subject with lightness,
 Trying to smile, and yet feeling his heart stand still in his bosom,
 Just as a timepiece stops in a house that is stricken by lightning,
 Thus made answer and spake, or rather stammered than answered:
 "Such a message as that, I am sure I should mangle and mar it:
 If you would have it well done, — I am only repeating your
 maxim, —
 You must do it yourself, you must not leave it to others!"



But with the air of a man whom nothing can turn from his purpose,

Gravely shaking his head, made answer the Captain of Plymouth :

“ Truly the maxim is good, and I do not mean to gainsay it :

But we must use it discreetly, and not waste powder for nothing.

Now, as I said before, I was never a maker of phrases.

I can march up to a fortress and summon the place to surrender,

But march up to a woman with such a proposal, I dare not.

I'm not afraid of bullets, nor shot from the mouth of a cannon,

But of a thundering ‘No!’ point-blank from the mouth of a woman,

That I confess I'm afraid of, nor am I ashamed to confess it !

So you must grant my request, for you are an elegant scholar,

Having the graces of speech, and skill in the turning of phrases.”

Taking the hand of his friend, who still was reluctant and doubtful,

Holding it long in his own, and pressing it kindly, he added :

“ Though I have spoken thus lightly, yet deep is the feeling that prompts me :

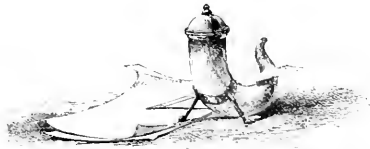
Surely you cannot refuse what I ask in the name of our friendship !”

Then made answer John Alden : “ The name of friendship is sacred ;

What you demand in that name, I have not the power to deny you !”

So the strong will prevailed, subduing and moulding the gentler.

Friendship prevailed over love, and Alden went on his errand.





HE LOVER'S
ERRAND.



III.

THE LOVER'S ERRAND.

So the strong will prevailed, and Alden went on his errand,
Out of the street of the village, and into the paths of the forest,
Into the tranquil woods, where bluebirds and robins were building
Towns in the populous trees, with hanging gardens of verdure,
Peaceful, aerial cities of joy and affection and freedom.
All around him was calm, but within him commotion and conflict,
Love contending with friendship, and self with each generous
impulse.

To and fro in his breast his thoughts were heaving and dashing,
As in a foundering ship, with every roll of the vessel,
Washes the bitter sea, the merciless surge of the ocean!
"Must I relinquish it all," he cried with a wild lamentation, —
"Must I relinquish it all, the joy, the hope, the illusion?
Was it for this I have loved, and waited, and worshipped in
silence?

Was it for this I have followed the flying feet and the shadow
Over the wintry sea, to the desolate shores of New England?
Truly the heart is deceitful, and out of its depths of corruption
Rise, like an exhalation, the misty phantoms of passion;
Angels of light they seem, but are only delusions of Satan.
All is clear to me now; I feel it, I see it distinctly!
This is the hand of the Lord; it is laid upon me in anger,
For I have followed too much the heart's desires and devices,
Worshipping Astaroth blindly, and impious idols of Baal.
This is the cross I must bear; the sin and the swift retribution."



So through the Plymouth woods John Alden went on his errand;
Crossing the brook at the ford, where it brawled over pebble and
shallow,
Gathering still, as he went, the May-flowers blooming around him,
Fragrant, filling the air with a strange and wonderful sweetness,
Children lost in the woods, and covered with leaves in their
slumber.
“Puritan flowers,” he said, “and the type of Puritan maidens,
Modest and simple and sweet, the very type of Priscilla!
So I will take them to her; to Priscilla the May-flower of
Plymouth,

Modest and simple and sweet, as a parting gift will I take them ;
Breathing their silent farewells, as they fade and wither and perish,
Soon to be thrown away as is the heart of the giver."

So through the Plymouth woods John Alden went on his errand ;
Came to an open space, and saw the disk of the ocean,
Sailless, sombre and cold with the comfortless breath of the
east-wind ;

Saw the new-built house, and people at work in a meadow ;
Heard, as he drew near the door, the musical voice of Priscilla
Singing the hundredth Psalm, the grand old Puritan anthem,
Music that Luther sang to the sacred word of the Psalmist,
Full of the breath of the Lord, consoling and comforting many.
Then, as he opened the door, he beheld the form of the maiden
Seated beside her wheel, and the carded wool like a snow-drift
Piled at her knee, her white hands feeding the ravenous spindle,
While with her foot on the treadle she guided the wheel in its
motion.

Open wide on her lap lay the well-worn psalm-book of Ainsworth,
Printed in Amsterdam, the words and the music together,
Rough-hewn, angular notes, like stones in the wall of a churchyard,
Darkened and overhung by the running vine of the verses.
Such was the book from whose pages she sang the old Puritan
anthem.

She, the Puritan girl, in the solitude of the forest,
Making the humble house and the modest apparel of home-spun
Beautiful with her beauty, and rich with the wealth of her being !
Over him rushed, like a wind that is keen and cold and relentless,
Thoughts of what might have been, and the weight and woe of his
errand ;

All the dreams that had faded, and all the hopes that had vanished,
All his life henceforth a dreary and tenantless mansion,
Haunted by vain regrets, and pallid, sorrowful faces.

Still he said to himself, and almost fiercely he said it,
“ Let not him that putteth his hand to the plough look backwards ;
Though the ploughshare cut through the flowers of life to its
fountains,



Though it pass o'er the graves of the dead and the hearths of the
living,
It is the will of the Lord ; and his mercy endureth forever !”

So he entered the house : and the hum of the wheel and the
singing
Suddenly ceased ; for Priscilla, aroused by his step on the thresh-
old,
Rose as he entered, and gave him her hand, in signal of welcome.

Saying, "I knew it was you, when I heard your step in the
passage :

For I was thinking of you, as I sat there singing and spinning."
Awkward and dumb with delight, that a thought of him had been
mingled

Thus in the sacred psalm, that came from the heart of the maiden,
Silent before her he stood, and gave her the flowers for an answer,
Finding no words for his thought. He remembered that day in
the winter,

After the first great snow, when he broke a path from the village,
Reeling and plunging along through the drifts that encumbered
the doorway,

Stamping the snow from his feet as he entered the house, and
Priscilla

Laughed at his snowy locks, and gave him a seat by the fire-side,
Grateful and pleased to know he had thought of her in the snow-
storm.

Had he but spoken then ! perhaps not in vain had he spoken ;
Now it was all too late ; the golden moment had vanished !
So he stood there abashed, and gave her the flowers for an answer.

Then they sat down and talked of the birds and the beautiful
Spring-time,

Talked of their friends at home, and the Mayflower that sailed on
the morrow.

"I have been thinking all day," said gently the Puritan maiden,
"Dreaming all night, and thinking all day, of the hedge-rows of
England, —

They are in blossom now, and the country is all like a garden ;
Thinking of lanes and fields, and the song of the lark and the
linnet,

Seeing the village street, and familiar faces of neighbors

Going about as of old, and stopping to gossip together,
 And, at the end of the street, the village church, with the ivy
 Climbing the old gray tower, and the quiet graves in the church-
 yard.

Kind are the people I live with, and dear to me my religion ;
 Still my heart is so sad, that I wish myself back in Old England.
 You will say it is wrong, but I cannot help it : I almost
 Wish myself back in Old England, I feel so lonely and wretched."

Thereupon answered the youth : " Indeed I do not condemn
 you ;

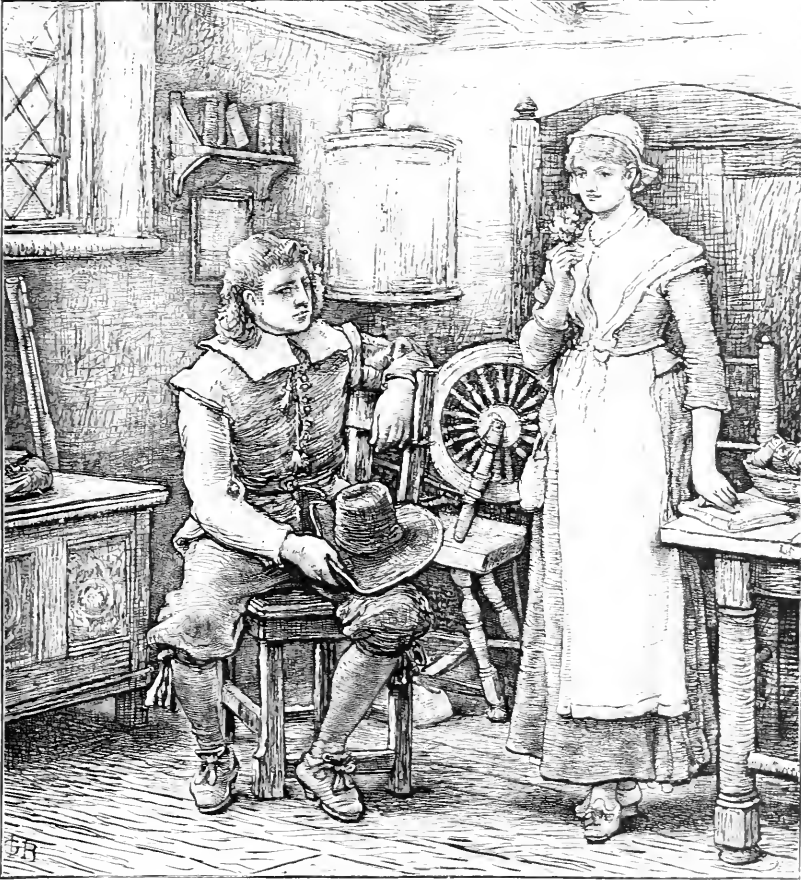
Stouter hearts than a woman's have quailed in this terrible winter.
 Yours is tender and trusting, and needs a stronger to lean on ;
 So I have come to you now, with an offer and proffer of marriage
 Made by a good man and true, Miles Standish the Captain of
 Plymouth ! "

Thus he delivered his message, the dexterous writer of letters, —
 Did not embellish the theme, nor array it in beautiful phrases,
 But came straight to the point, and blurted it out like a school-
 boy ;

Even the Captain himself could hardly have said it more bluntly.
 Mute with amazement and sorrow, Priscilla the Puritan maiden
 Looked into Alden's face, her eyes dilated with wonder,
 Feeling his words like a blow, that stunned her and rendered her
 speechless ;

Till at length she exclaimed, interrupting the ominous silence :
 " If the great Captain of Plymouth is so very eager to wed me,
 Why does he not come himself, and take the trouble to woo me ?
 If I am not worth the wooing, I surely am not worth the win-
 ning ! "

Then John Alden began explaining and smoothing the matter,



Making it worse as he went, by saying the Captain was busy. —
Had no time for such things; — such things! the words grating
harshly
Fell on the ear of Priscilla; and swift as a flash she made answer:
“Has he no time for such things, as you call it, before he is
married,

Would he be likely to find it, or make it, after the wedding?
 That is the way with you men; you don't understand us, you
 cannot.
 When you have made up your minds, after thinking of this one
 and that one,
 Choosing, selecting, rejecting, comparing one with another,
 Then you make known your desire, with abrupt and sudden
 avowal,
 And are offended and hurt, and indignant perhaps, that a woman
 Does not respond at once to a love that she never suspected,
 Does not attain at a bound the height to which you have been
 climbing.
 This is not right nor just: for surely a woman's affection
 Is not a thing to be asked for, and had for only the asking.
 When one is truly in love, one not only says it, but shows it.
 Had he but waited awhile, had he only showed that he loved me,
 Even this Captain of yours— who knows?— at last might have
 won me,
 Old and rough as he is; but now it never can happen."

Still John Alden went on, unheeding the words of Priscilla,
 Urging the suit of his friend, explaining, persuading, expanding:
 Spoke of his courage and skill, and of all his battles in Flanders,
 How with the people of God he had chosen to suffer affliction;
 How, in return for his zeal, they had made him Captain of
 Plymouth;
 He was a gentleman born, could trace his pedigree plainly
 Back to Hugh Standish of Duxbury Hall, in Lancashire, England,
 Who was the son of Ralph, and the grand-son of Thurston de
 Standish;
 Heir unto vast estates, of which he was basely defrauded,
 Still bore the family arms, and had for his crest a cock argent

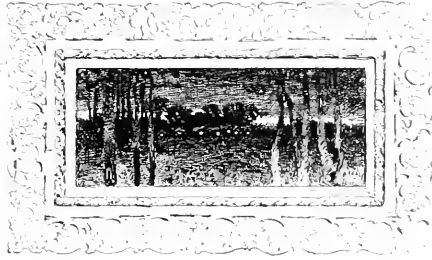
Combed and wattled gules, and all the rest of the blazon.
He was a man of honor, of noble and generous nature ;
Though he was rough, he was kindly ; she knew how during the
winter

He had attended the sick, with a hand as gentle as woman's ;
Somewhat hasty and hot, he could not deny it, and headstrong,
Stern as a soldier might be, but hearty, and placable always,
Not to be laughed at and scorned, because he was little of stature :
For he was great of heart, magnanimous, courtly, courageous ;
Any woman in Plymouth, nay, any woman in England,
Might be happy and proud to be called the wife of Miles Standish !

But as he warmed and glowed, in his simple and eloquent
language,
Quite forgetful of self, and full of the praise of his rival,
Archly the maiden smiled, and, with eyes overrunning with
laughter,
Said, in a tremulous voice, " Why don't you speak for yourself,
John ? "



JOHN
ALDEN



IV.

JOHN ALDEN.

INTO the open air John Alden, perplexed and bewildered,
Rushed like a man insane, and wandered alone by the sea-side ;
Paced up and down the sands, and bared his head to the east-wind,
Cooling his heated brow, and the fire and fever within him.
Slowly as out of the heavens, with apocalyptical splendors,
Sank the City of God, in the vision of John the Apostle,
So, with its cloudy walls of chrysolite, jasper, and sapphire,
Sank the broad red sun, and over its turrets uplifted
Glimmered the golden reed of the angel who measured the city.

“ Welcome, O wind of the East ! ” he exclaimed in his wild
exultation,

“ Welcome, O wind of the East, from the caves of the misty
Atlantic !

Blowing o'er fields of dulce, and measureless meadows of sea-grass,
Blowing o'er rocky wastes, and the grottos and gardens of ocean !
Lay thy cold, moist hand on my burning forehead, and wrap me
Close in thy garments of mist, to allay the fever within me ! ”

Like an awakened conscience, the sea was moaning and tossing,
Beating remorseful and loud the mutable sands of the sea-shore.
Fierce in his soul was the struggle and tumult of passions con-
tending ;
Love triumphant and crowned, and friendship wounded and
bleeding,



Passionate cries of desire, and importunate pleadings of duty !
 "Is it my fault," he said, "that the maiden has chosen between us ?
 Is it my fault that he failed, — my fault that I am the victor ?"
 Then within him there thundered a voice, like the voice of the
 Prophet :
 "It hath displeased the Lord !" — and he thought of David's
 transgression,
 Bathsheba's beautiful face, and his friend in the front of the battle !
 Shame and confusion of guilt, and abasement and self-condemnation,
 Overwhelmed him at once : and he cried in the deepest contrition :
 "It hath displeased the Lord ! It is the temptation of Satan !"

Then, uplifting his head, he looked at the sea, and beheld there
 Dimly the shadowy form of the Mayflower riding at anchor,
 Rocked on the rising tide, and ready to sail on the morrow :
 Heard the voices of men through the mist, the rattle of cordage

Thrown on the deck, the shouts of the mate, and the sailors' "Ay, ay, Sir!"

Clear and distinct, but not loud, in the dripping air of the twilight. Still for a moment he stood, and listened, and stared at the vessel, Then went hurriedly on, as one who, seeing a phantom,



Stops, then quickens his pace, and follows the beckoning shadow.
 "Yes, it is plain to me now," he murmured; "the hand of the

Lord is

Leading me out of the land of darkness, the bondage of error,
 Through the sea, that shall lift the walls of its waters around me,
 Hiding me, cutting me off, from the cruel thoughts that pursue me.
 Back will I go o'er the ocean, this dreary land will abandon,
 Her whom I may not love, and him whom my heart has offended.
 Better to be in my grave in the green old churchyard in England,
 Close by my mother's side, and among the dust of my kindred;
 Better be dead and forgotten, than living in shame and dishonor;
 Sacred and safe and unseen, in the dark of the narrow chamber
 With me my secret shall lie, like a buried jewel that glimmers

Bright on the hand that is dust, in the chambers of silence and darkness, —
 Yes, as the marriage ring of the great espousal hereafter !”

Thus as he spake, he turned, in the strength of his strong resolution,

Leaving behind him the shore, and hurried along in the twilight,
 Through the congenial gloom of the forest silent and sombre,
 Till he beheld the lights in the seven houses of Plymouth,
 Shining like seven stars in the dusk and mist of the evening.
 Soon he entered his door, and found the redoubtable Captain
 Sitting alone, and absorbed in the martial pages of Cæsar,
 Fighting some great campaign in Hainault or Brabant or Flanders.
 “ Long have you been on your errand,” he said with a cheery demeanor,

Even as one who is waiting an answer, and fears not the issue.
 “ Not far off is the house, although the woods are between us ;
 But you have lingered so long, that while you were going and coming
 I have fought ten battles and sacked and demolished a city.
 Come, sit down, and in order relate to me all that has happened.”

Then John Alden spake, and related the wondrous adventure,
 From beginning to end, minutely, just as it happened ;
 How he had seen Priscilla, and how he had sped in his courtship,
 Only smoothing a little, and softening down her refusal.
 But when he came at length to the words Priscilla had spoken,
 Words so tender and cruel : “ Why don't you speak for yourself,
 John ? ”

Up leaped the Captain of Plymouth, and stamped on the floor, till
 his armor
 Clanged on the wall, where it hung, with a sound of sinister omen.

All his pent-up wrath burst forth in a sudden explosion,
 E'en as a hand-grenade, that scatters destruction around it.
 Wildly he shouted, and loud : "John Alden ! you have betrayed
 me !
 Me, Miles Standish, your friend ! have supplanted, defrauded,
 betrayed me !
 One of my ancestors ran his sword through the heart of Wat
 Tyler :
 Who shall prevent me from running my own through the heart of
 a traitor ?
 Yours is the greater treason, for yours is a treason to friendship !
 You, who lived under my roof, whom I cherished and loved as a
 brother ;
 You, who have fed at my board, and drunk at my cup, to whose
 keeping
 I have intrusted my honor, my thoughts the most sacred and
 secret, —
 You too, Brutus ! ah woe to the name of friendship hereafter !
 Brutus was Cæsar's friend, and you were mine, but henceforward
 Let there be nothing between us save war, and implacable hatred !"

So spake the Captain of Plymouth, and strode about in the
 chamber,
 Chafing and choking with rage : like cords were the veins on his
 temples,
 But in the midst of his anger a man appeared at the doorway,
 Bringing in uttermost haste a message of urgent importance,
 Rumors of danger and war and hostile incursions of Indians.
 Straightway the Captain paused, and, without further question or
 parley,
 Took from the nail on the wall his sword with its scabbard of iron,
 Buckled the belt round his waist, and, frowning fiercely, departed.

Alden was left alone. He heard the clank of the scabbard
Growing fainter and fainter, and dying away in the distance.
Then he arose from his seat, and looked forth into the darkness,
Felt the cool air blow on his cheek, that was hot with the insult,
Lifted his eyes to the heavens, and, folding his hands as in child-
hood,
Prayed in the silence of night to the Father who seeth in secret.

Meanwhile the choleric Captain strode wrathful away to the
council,
Found it already assembled, impatiently waiting his coming ;
Men in the middle of life, austere and grave in deportment,
Only one of them old, the hill that was nearest to heaven,
Covered with snow, but erect, the excellent Elder of Plymouth.
God had sifted three kingdoms to find the wheat for this planting,



Then had sifted the wheat, as the living seed of a nation ;
 So say the chronicles old, and such is the faith of the people !
 Near them was standing an Indian, in attitude stern and defiant,
 Naked down to the waist, and grim and ferocious in aspect ;
 While on the table before them was lying unopened a Bible,
 Ponderous, bound in leather, brass-studded, printed in Holland,
 And beside it out-stretched the skin of a rattle-snake glittered,
 Filled, like a quiver, with arrows : a signal and challenge of war-
 fare,
 Brought by the Indian, and speaking with arrowy tongues of
 defiance.

This Miles Standish beheld, as he entered, and heard them debating
 What were an answer befitting the hostile message and menace,
 Talking of this and of that, contriving, suggesting, objecting ;
 One voice only for peace, and that the voice of the Elder,
 Judging it wise and well that some at least were converted,
 Rather than any were slain, for this was but Christian behavior !
 Then out spake Miles Standish, the stalwart Captain of Plymouth,
 Muttering deep in his throat, for his voice was husky with anger,
 What ! do you mean to make war with milk and the water of
 roses ?

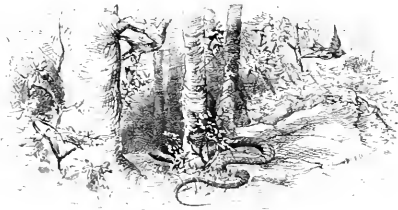
Is it to shoot red squirrels you have your howitzer planted
 There on the roof of the church, or is it to shoot red devils ?
 Truly the only tongue that is understood by a savage
 Must be the tongue of fire that speaks from the mouth of the
 cannon !”

Thereupon answered and said the excellent Elder of Plymouth,
 Somewhat amazed and alarmed at this irreverent language :
 “ Not so thought St. Paul, nor yet the other Apostles ;
 Not from the cannon’s mouth were the tongues of fire they spake
 with !”

But unheeded fell this mild rebuke on the Captain.

Who had advanced to the table, and thus continued discoursing :
“ Leave this matter to me, for to me by right it pertaineth.
War is a terrible trade : but in the cause that is righteous,
Sweet is the smell of powder ; and thus I answer the challenge ! ”

Then from the rattlesnake’s skin, with a sudden, contemptuous
gesture,
Jerking the Indian arrows, he filled it with powder and bullets
Full to the very jaws, and handed it back to the savage,
Saying, in thundering tones : “ Here, take it ! this is your answer ! ”
Silently out of the room then glided the glistening savage,
Bearing the serpent’s skin, and seeming himself like a serpent,
Winding his sinuous way in the dark to the depths of the forest.



THE SAILING OF THE MAYFLOW



V.

THE SAILING OF THE MAYFLOWER.

JUST in the gray of the dawn, as the mists uprose from the meadows,

There was a stir and a sound in the slumbering village of Plymouth;

Clanging and clicking of arms, and the order imperative, "Forward!"

Given in tone suppressed, a tramp of feet, and then silence.

Figures ten, in the mist, marched slowly out of the village.

Standish the stalwart it was, with eight of his valorous army,

Led by their Indian guide, by Hobomok, friend of the white men,

Northward marching to quell the sudden revolt of the savage.

Giants they seemed in the mist, or the mighty men of King David;

Giants in heart they were, who believed in God and the Bible, —

Ay, who believed in the smiting of Midianites and Philistines.

Over them gleamed far off the crimson banners of morning:

Under them loud on the sands, the serried billows, advancing,

Fired along the line, and in regular order retreated.

Many a mile had they marched, when at length the village of
Plymouth

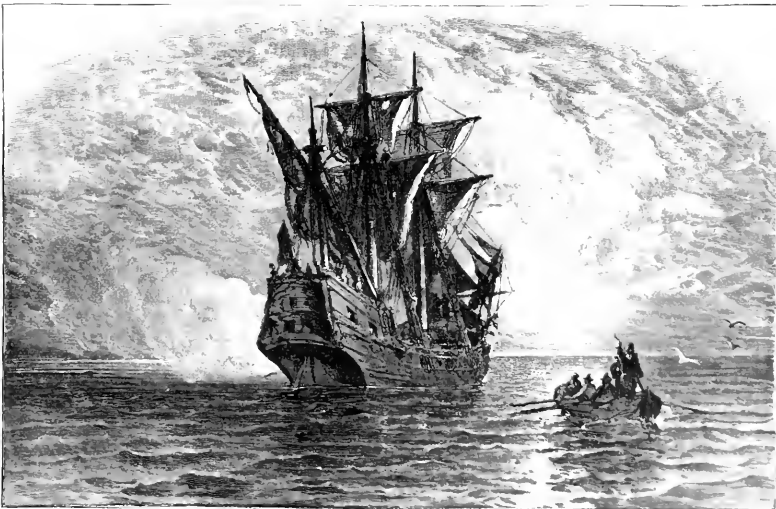
Woke from its sleep, and arose, intent on its manifold labors.

Sweet was the air and soft; and slowly the smoke from the
chimneys

Rose over roofs of thatch, and pointed steadily eastward:



Men came forth from the doors, and paused and talked of the weather,
Said that the wind had changed, and was blowing fair for the Mayflower ;
Talked of their Captain's departure, and all the dangers that menaced,
He being gone, the town, and what should be done in his absence.
Merrily sang the birds, and the tender voices of women
Consecrated with hymns the common cares of the household.
Out of the sea rose the sun, and the billows rejoiced at his coming ;
Beautiful were his feet on the purple tops of the mountains ;
Beautiful on the sails of the Mayflower riding at anchor,
Battered and blackened and worn by all the storms of the winter.
Loosely against her masts was hanging and flapping her canvas,
Rent by so many gales, and patched by the hands of the sailors.
Suddenly from her side, as the sun rose over the ocean,
Darted a puff of smoke, and floated seaward ; anon rang



Loud over field and forest the cannon's roar, and the echoes
Heard and repeated the sound, the signal-gun of departure!
Ah! but with louder echoes replied the hearts of the people!
Meekly, in voices subdued, the chapter was read from the Bible,
Meekly the prayer was begun, but ended in fervent entreaty!
Then from their houses in haste came forth the Pilgrims of Ply-
mouth,
Men and women and children, all hurrying down to the sea-shore,
Eager, with tearful eyes, to say farewell to the Mayflower,
Homeward bound o'er the sea, and leaving them here in the desert.

Foremost among them was Alden. All night he had lain without
slumber,
Turning and tossing about in the heat and unrest of his fever.
He had beheld Miles Standish, who came back late from the
council,
Stalking into the room, and heard him mutter and murmur,
Sometimes it seemed a prayer, and sometimes it sounded like
swearing.
Once he had come to the bed, and stood there a moment in
silence;
Then he had turned away, and said: "I will not awake him;
Let him sleep on, it is best; for what is the use of more talking!"
Then he extinguished the light, and threw himself down on his
pallet,
Dressed as he was, and ready to start at the break of the morn-
ing, —
Covered himself with the cloak he had worn in his campaigns in
Flanders, —
Slept as a soldier sleeps in his bivouac, ready for action.
But with the dawn he arose; in the twilight Alden beheld him
Put on his corselet of steel, and all the rest of his armor.

Buckle about his waist his trusty blade of Damascus,
Take from the corner his musket, and so stride out of the chamber,
Often the heart of the youth had burned and yearned to embrace
 him,
Often his lips had essayed to speak, imploring for pardon ;
All the old friendship came back, with its tender and grateful
 emotions ;
But his pride overmastered the nobler nature within him. —
Pride, and the sense of his wrong, and the burning fire of the
 insult.
So he beheld his friend departing in anger, but spake not,
Saw him go forth to danger, perhaps to death, and he spake not !
Then he arose from his bed, and heard what the people were
 saying,
Joined in the talk at the door, with Stephen and Richard and
 Gilbert,
Joined in the morning prayer, and in the reading of Scripture,
And, with the others, in haste went hurrying down to the sea-
 shore,
Down to the Plymouth Rock, that had been to their feet as a
 doorstep
Into a world unknown, — the corner-stone of a nation !

There with his boat was the Master, already a little impatient
Lest he should lose the tide, or the wind might shift to the east-
 ward,
Square-built, hearty, and strong, with an odor of ocean about him,
Speaking with this one and that, and cramming letters and parcels
Into his pockets capacious, and messages mingled together
Into his narrow brain, till at last he was wholly bewildered.
Nearer the boat stood Alden, with one foot placed on the gun-
 wale,



One still firm on the rock, and talking at times with the sailors,
 Seated erect on the thwarts, all ready and eager for starting.
 He too was eager to go, and thus put an end to his anguish,
 Thinking to fly from despair, that swifter than keel is or canvas,
 Thinking to drown in the sea the ghost that would rise and pursue
 him.

But as he gazed on the crowd, he beheld the form of Priscilla
 Standing dejected among them, unconscious of all that was pass-
 ing.

Fixed were her eyes upon his, as if she divined his intention,
 Fixed with a look so sad, so reproachful, imploring, and patient,
 That with a sudden revulsion his heart recoiled from its purpose,
 As from the verge of a crag, where one step more is destruction.
 Strange is the heart of man, with its quick, mysterious instincts!
 Strange is the life of man, and fatal or fated are moments,
 Whereupon turn, as on hinges, the gates of the wall adamantine!

“Here I remain!” he exclaimed, as he looked at the heavens above him,

Thanking the Lord whose breath had scattered the mist and the madness,

Wherein, blind and lost, to death he was staggering headlong.

“Yonder snow-white cloud, that floats in the ether above me,
Seems like a hand that is pointing and beckoning over the ocean.

There is another hand, that is not so spectral and ghost-like,
Holding me, drawing me back, and clasping mine for protection.
Float, O hand of cloud, and vanish away in the ether!

Roll thyself up like a fist, to threaten and daunt me: I heed not
Either your warning or menace, or any omen of evil!

There is no land so sacred, no air so pure and so wholesome,
As is the air she breathes, and the soil that is pressed by her foot-
steps.

Here for her sake will I stay, and like an invisible presence
Hover around her forever, protecting, supporting her weakness;
Yes! as my foot was the first that stepped on this rock at the
landing,

So, with the blessing of God, shall it be the last at the leaving!”

Meanwhile the Master alert, but with dignified air and im-
portant,

Scanning with watchful eye the tide and the wind and the weather,
Walked about on the sands, and the people crowded around him
Saying a few last words, and enforcing his careful remembrance.

Then, taking each by the hand, as if he were grasping a tiller,
Into the boat he sprang, and in haste shoved off to his vessel,
Glad in his heart to get rid of all this worry and flurry,

Glad to be gone from a land of sand and sickness and sorrow,
Short allowance of victual, and plenty of nothing but Gospel!
Lost in the sound of the oars was the last farewell of the Pilgrims.

O strong hearts and true ! not one went back in the Mayflower !
No, not one looked back, who had set his hand to this ploughing !

Soon were heard on board the shouts and songs of the sailors
Heaving the windlass round, and hoisting the ponderous anchor.
Then the yards were braced, and all sails set to the west-wind,
Blowing steady and strong ; and the Mayflower sailed from the
harbor,
Rounded the point of the Gurnet, and leaving far to the southward
Island and cape of sand, and the Field of the First Encounter,
Took the wind on her quarter, and stood for the open Atlantic,
Borne on the sand of the sea, and the swelling hearts of the
Pilgrims.

Long in silence they watched the receding sail of the vessel,
Much endeared to them all, as something living and human ;
Then, as if filled with the spirit, and wrapt in a vision prophetic,
Baring his hoary head, the excellent Elder of Plymouth
Said, “ Let us pray ! ” and they prayed, and thanked the Lord and
took courage.
Mournfully sobbed the waves at the base of the rock, and above
them
Bowed and whispered the wheat on the hill of death, and their
kindred
Seemed to awake in their graves, and to join in the prayer that
they uttered.
Sun-illuminated and white, on the eastern verge of the ocean
Gleamed the departing sail, like a marble slab in a graveyard ;
Buried beneath it lay forever all hope of escaping.
Lo ! as they turned to depart, they saw the form of an Indian,
Watching them from the hill ; but while they spake with each
other,

Pointing with outstretched hands, and saying, "Look!" he had
vanished.

So they returned to their homes; but Alden lingered a little,
Musing alone on the shore, and watching the wash of the billows
Round the base of the rock, and the sparkle and flash of the
sunshine,

Like the spirit of God, moving visibly over the waters.





VI.

PRISCILLA.

THUS for a while he stood, and mused by the shore of the ocean,
Thinking of many things, and most of all of Priscilla ;
And as if thought had the power to draw to itself, like the load-
stone,
Whatsoever it touches, by subtile laws of its nature,
Lo! as he turned to depart, Priscilla was standing beside him.

“Are you so much offended, you will not speak to me?” said she.
“Am I so much to blame, that yesterday, when you were pleading
Warmly the cause of another, my heart, impulsive and wayward,
Pleaded your own, and spake out, forgetful perhaps of decorum?
Certainly you can forgive me for speaking so frankly, for saying
What I ought not to have said, yet now I can never unsay it ;
For there are moments in life, when the heart is so full of emotion,
That if by chance it be shaken, or into its depths like a pebble
Drops some careless word, it overflows, and its secret,
Spilt on the ground like water, can never be gathered together.
Yesterday I was shocked, when I heard you speak of Miles Standish,
Praising his virtues, transforming his very defects into virtues,
Praising his courage and strength, and even his fighting in Flanders,
As if by fighting alone you could win the heart of a woman,
Quite overlooking yourself and the rest, in exalting your hero.
Therefore I spake as I did, by an irresistible impulse.
You will forgive me, I hope, for the sake of the friendship be-
tween us,

Which is too true and too sacred to be so easily broken !”

Thereupon answered John Alden, the scholar, the friend of Miles Standish :

“ I was not angry with you, with myself alone I was angry,
 Seeing how badly I managed the matter I had in my keeping.”
 “ No !” interrupted the maiden, with answer prompt and decisive ;
 “ No ; you were angry with me, for speaking so frankly and freely.
 It was wrong, I acknowledge ; for it is the fate of a woman
 Long to be patient and silent, to wait like a ghost that is speechless,
 Till some questioning voice dissolves the spell of its silence.
 Hence is the inner life of so many suffering women
 Sunless and silent and deep, like subterranean rivers
 Running through caverns of darkness, unheard, unseen, and un-
 fruitful,
 Chafing their channels of stone, with endless and profitless mur-
 murs.”

Thereupon answered John Alden, the young man, the lover of women :

“ Heaven forbid it, Priscilla ; and truly they seem to me always
 More like the beautiful rivers that watered the garden of Eden,
 More like the river Euphrates, through deserts of Havilah flowing,
 Filling the land with delight, and memories sweet of the garden !”
 “ Ah, by these words, I can see,” again interrupted the maiden,
 “ How very little you prize me, or care for what I am saying.
 When from the depths of my heart, in pain and with secret mis-
 giving,
 Frankly I speak to you, asking for sympathy only and kindness,
 Straightway you take up my words, that are plain and direct and in
 earnest,
 Turn them away from their meaning, and answer with flattering
 phrases.
 This is not right, is not just, is not true to the best that is in you :

For I know and esteem you, and feel that your nature is noble,
 Lifting mine up to a higher, a more ethereal level.
 Therefore I value your friendship, and feel it perhaps the more
 keenly
 If you say aught that implies I am only as one among many,



If you make use of those common and complimentary phrases
 Most men think so fine, in dealing and speaking with women,
 But which women reject as insipid, if not as insulting."

Mute and amazed was Alden: and listened and looked at Priscilla,
 Thinking he never had seen her more fair, more divine in her
 beauty.
 He who but yesterday pleaded so glibly the cause of another,
 Stood there embarrassed and silent, and seeking in vain for an
 answer.

So the maiden went on, and little divined or imagined
What was at work in his heart, that made him so awkward and
speechless.

“ Let us, then, be what we are, and speak what we think, and in all
things

Keep ourselves loyal to truth, and the sacred professions of friend-
ship.

It is no secret I tell you, nor am I ashamed to declare it :

I have liked to be with you, to see you, to speak with you always.

So I was hurt at your words, and a little affronted to hear you

Urge me to marry your friend, though he were the Captain Miles
Standish.

For I must tell you the truth : much more to me is your friendship
Than all the love he could give, were he twice the hero you think
him.”

Then she extended her hand, and Alden, who eagerly grasped it,
Felt all the wounds in his heart, that were aching and bleeding so
sorely,

Healed by the touch of that hand, and he said, with a voice full of
feeling :

“ Yes, we must ever be friends ; and of all who offer you friend-
ship

Let me be ever the first, the truest, the nearest and dearest ! ”

Casting a farewell look at the glimmering sail of the *Mayflower*,
Distant, but still in sight, and sinking below the horizon,
Homeward together they walked, with a strange, indefinite feeling,
That all the rest had departed and left them alone in the desert.
But, as they went through the fields in the blessing and smile of
the sunshine,

Lighter grew their hearts, and Priscilla said very archly :

“ Now that our terrible Captain has gone in pursuit of the Indians,

Where he is happier far than he would be commanding a household,

You may speak boldly, and tell me of all that happened between you,

When you returned last night, and said how ungrateful you found me."

Thereupon answered John Alden, and told her the whole of the story, —

Told her his own despair, and the direful wrath of Miles Standish. Whereat the maiden smiled, and said between laughing and earnest,

"He is a little chimney, and heated hot in a moment!"

But as he gently rebuked her, and told her how he had suffered, — How he had even determined to sail that day in the *Mayflower*, And had remained for her sake, on hearing the dangers that threatened, —

All her manner was changed, and she said with a faltering accent, "Truly I thank you for this: how good you have been to me always!"

Thus, as a pilgrim devout, who toward Jerusalem journeys,
Taking three steps in advance, and one reluctantly backward,
Urged by importunate zeal, and withheld by pangs of contrition;
Slowly but steadily onward, receding yet ever advancing,
Journeyed this Puritan youth to the Holy Land of his longings,
Urged by the fervor of love, and withheld by remorseful misgivings.





THE MARCH OF
MILES STANDISH

The title is rendered in a stylized, hand-drawn font. The words "THE MARCH OF" are on the top line, and "MILES STANDISH" is on the bottom line. The text is integrated into a decorative graphic that includes a shield on the left, a sword pointing upwards and to the right, and various flourishes and scrollwork. The entire design is in black ink on a white background.

VII.

THE MARCH OF MILES STANDISH.

MEANWHILE the stalwart Miles Standish was marching steadily
northward,

Winding through forest and swamp, and along the trend of the
sea-shore,

All day long, with hardly a halt, the fire of his anger
Burning and crackling within, and the sulphurous odor of powder
Seeming more sweet to his nostrils than all the scents of the forest.
Silent and moody he went, and much he revolved his discomfort :
He who was used to success, and to easy victories always,
Thus to be flouted, rejected, and laughed to scorn by a maiden,
Thus to be mocked and betrayed by the friend whom most he had
trusted !

Ah ! 't was too much to be borne, and he fretted and chafed in his
armor !

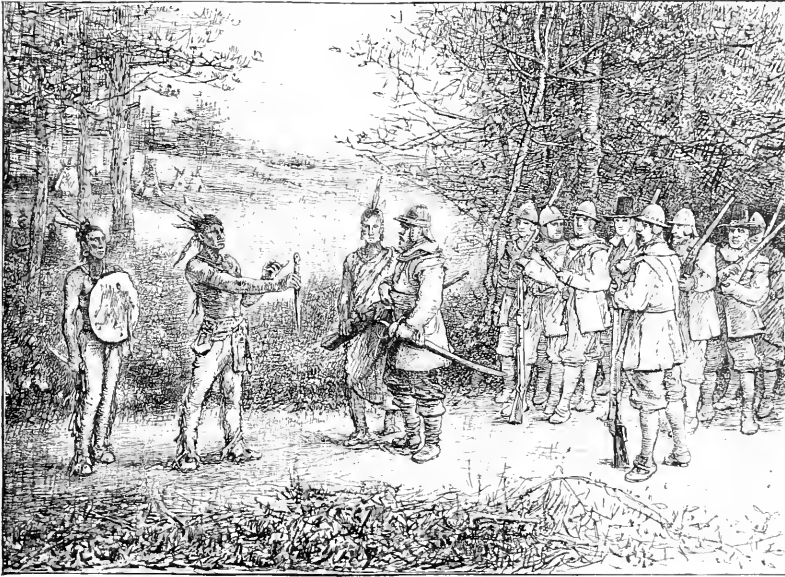
“ I alone am to blame,” he muttered, “ for mine was the folly.
What has a rough old soldier, grown grim and gray in the harness,
Used to the camp and its ways, to do with the wooing of maidens ?
'T was but a dream, — let it pass, — let it vanish like so many
others !

What I thought was a flower, is only a weed, and is worthless :
Out of my heart will I pluck it, and throw it away, and hence-
forward

Be but a fighter of battles, a lover and wooer of dangers !”
Thus he revolved in his mind his sorry defeat and discomfort,
While he was marching by day or lying at night in the forest,
Looking up at the trees, and the constellations beyond them.

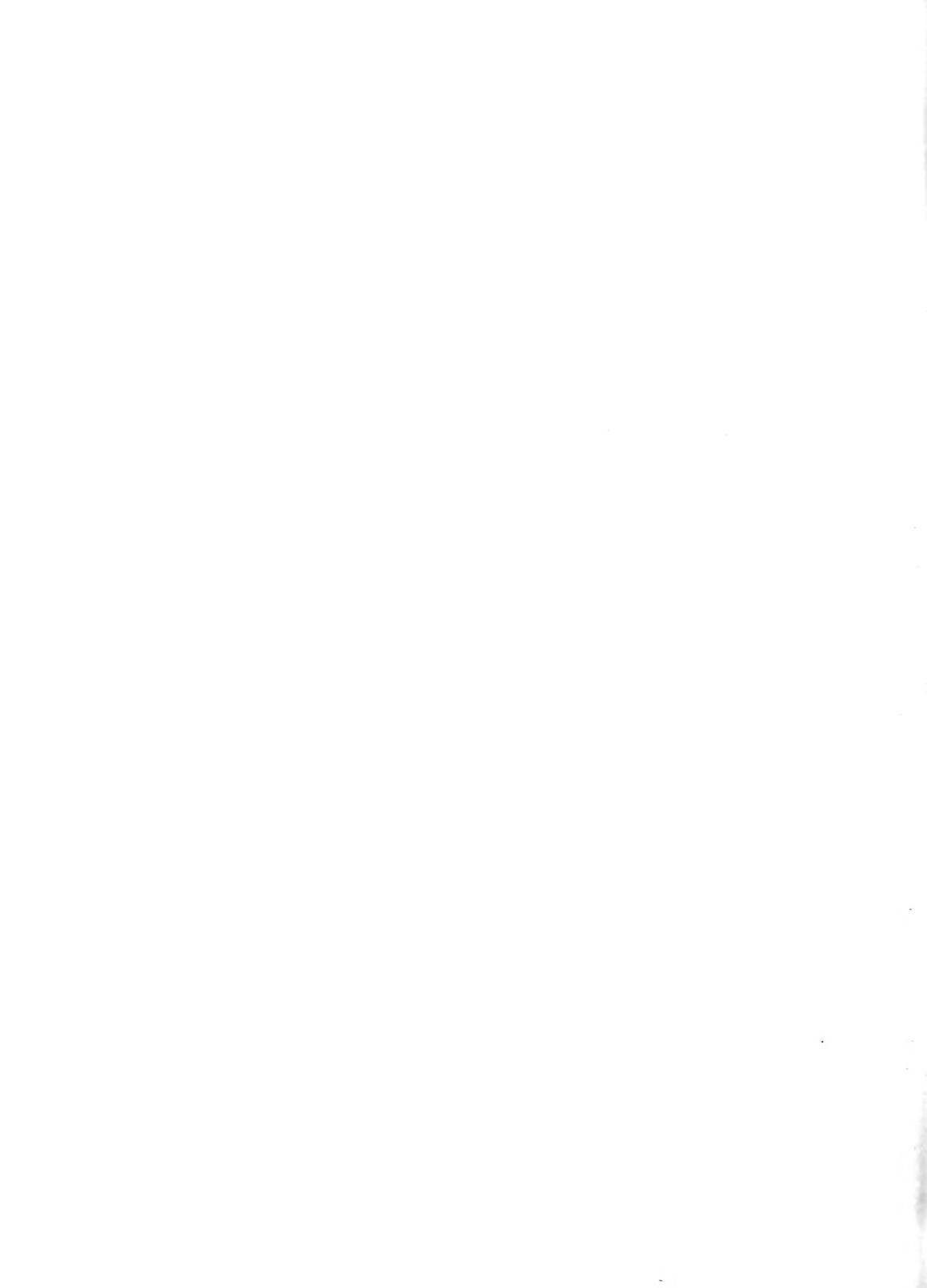
After a three days' march he came to an Indian encampment
Pitched on the edge of a meadow, between the sea and the forest ;
Women at work by the tents, and warriors, horrid with war-paint,
Seated about a fire, and smoking and talking together ;
Who, when they saw from afar the sudden approach of the white
men,
Saw the flash of the sun on breastplate and sabre and musket,
Straightway leaped to their feet, and two, from among them
advancing,
Came to parley with Standish, and offer him furs as a present ;
Friendship was in their looks, but in their hearts there was hatred.
Braves of the tribe were these, and brothers, gigantic in stature,
Huge as Goliath of Gath, or the terrible Og, king of Bashan ;
One was Pecksuot named, and the other was called Wattawamat.
Round their necks were suspended their knives in scabbards of
wampum,
Two-edged, trenchant knives, with points as sharp as a needle.
Other arms had they none, for they were cunning and crafty.
“ Welcome, English !” they said, — these words they had learned
from the traders
Touching at times on the coast, to barter and chaffer for peltries.
Then in their native tongue they began to parley with Standish,
Through his guide and interpreter, Hobomok, friend of the white
man,
Begging for blankets and knives, but mostly for muskets and
powder,
Kept by the white man, they said, concealed, with the plague, in
his cellars,

Ready to be let loose, and destroy his brother the red man !
But when Standish refused, and said he would give them the Bible,
Suddenly changing their tone, they began to boast and to bluster.
Then Wattawamat advanced with a stride in front of the other,
And, with a lofty demeanor, thus vauntingly spake to the Captain :



“Now Wattawamat can see, by the fiery eyes of the Captain,
Angry is he in his heart ; but the heart of the brave Wattawamat
Is not afraid at the sight. He was not born of a woman,
But on a mountain at night, from an oak-tree riven by lightning,
Forth he sprang at a bound, with all his weapons about him,
Shouting, ‘Who is there here to fight with the brave Watta-
wamat?’”

Then he un-sheathed his knife, and, whetting the blade on his left
hand,



Held it aloft and displayed a woman's face on the handle ;
Saying, with bitter expression and look of sinister meaning :
" I have another at home, with the face of a man on the handle ;
By and by they shall marry ; and there will be plenty of children ! "

Then stood Pecksnot forth, self-vaunting, insulting Miles Standish :

While with his fingers he patted the knife that hung at his bosom,
Drawing it half from its sheath, and plunging it back, as he
muttered,

" By and by it shall see ; it shall eat ; ah, ha ! but shall speak
not !

This is the mighty Captain the white men have sent to destroy us !
He is a little man ; let him go and work with the women ! "

Meanwhile Standish had noted the faces and figures of Indians
Peeping and creeping about from bush to tree in the forest,
Feigning to look for game, with arrows set on their bow-strings,
Drawing about him still closer and closer the net of their ambush.
But undaunted he stood, and dissembled and treated them
smoothly ;

So the old chronicles say, that were writ in the days of the fathers.
But when he heard their defiance, the boast, the taunt, and the
insult,

All the hot blood of his race, of Sir Hugh and of Thurston de
Standish,

Boiled and beat in his heart, and swelled in the veins of his
temples.

Headlong he leaped on the boaster, and, snatching his knife from
its scabbard,

Plunged it into his heart, and, reeling backward, the savage
Fell with his face to the sky, and a fiendlike fierceness upon it.

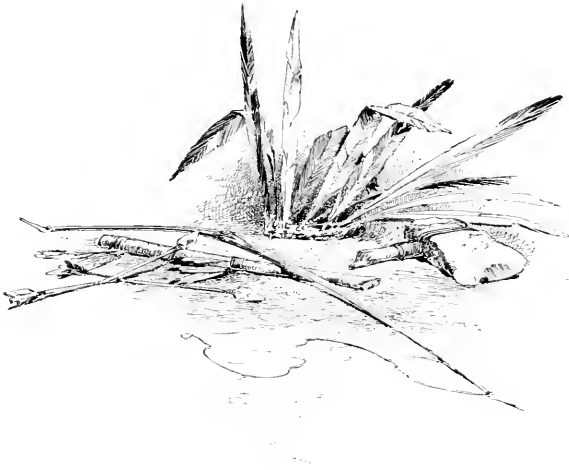
Straight there arose from the forest the awful sound of the war-whoop,
And, like a flurry of snow on the whistling wind of December,
Swift and sudden and keen came a flight of feathery arrows.
Then came a cloud of smoke, and out of the cloud came the lightning,
Out of the lightning thunder; and death unseen ran before it.
Frightened the savages fled for shelter in swamp and in thicket,
Hotly pursued and beset; but their sachem, the brave Watawamat,
Fled not; he was dead. Unswerving and swift had a bullet
Passed through his brain, and he fell with both hands clutching the greensward,
Seeming in death to hold back from his foe the land of his fathers.

There on the flowers of the meadow the warriors lay, and above them,
Silent, with folded arms, stood Hobomok, friend of the white man.
Smiling at length he exclaimed to the stalwart Captain of Plymouth: —
“Pecksuot bragged very loud, of his courage, his strength, and his stature, —
Mocked the great Captain, and called him a little man; but I see now
Big enough have you been to lay him speechless before you!”

Thus the first battle was fought and won by the stalwart Miles Standish.
When the tidings thereof were brought to the village of Plymouth,
And as a trophy of war the head of the brave Watawamat
Scowled from the roof of the fort, which at once was a church and a fortress,



All who beheld it rejoiced, and praised the Lord, and took courage,
Only Priscilla averted her face from this spectre of terror,
Thanking God in her heart that she had not married Miles
Standish ;
Shrinking, fearing almost, lest, coming home from his battles,
He should lay claim to her hand, as the prize and reward of his
valor.







VIII.

THE SPINNING-WHEEL.

MONTH after month passed away, and in Autumn the ships of the
merchants

Came with kindred and friends, with cattle and corn for the
Pilgrims.

All in the village was peace; the men were intent on their labors,
Busy with hewing and building, with garden-plot and with mere-
stead,

Busy with breaking the glebe, and mowing the grass in the
meadows,

Searching the sea for its fish, and hunting the deer in the forest.

All in the village was peace; but at times the rumor of warfare
Filled the air with alarm, and the apprehension of danger.

Bravely the stalwart Standish was scouring the land with his forces,
Waxing valiant in fight and defeating the alien armies,

Till his name had become a sound of fear to the nations.

Anger was still in his heart, but at times the remorse and contrition
Which in all noble natures succeed the passionate outbreak,

Came like a rising tide, that encounters the rush of a river,
Staying its current awhile, but making it bitter and brackish.

Meanwhile Alden at home had built him a new habitation,
Solid, substantial, of timber rough-hewn from the firs of the forest.
Wooden-barred was the door, and the roof was covered with
rushes;

Latticed the windows were, and the window-panes were of paper,
Oiled to admit the light, while wind and rain were excluded.
There too he dug a well, and around it planted an orchard:
Still may be seen to this day some trace of the well and the
orchard.

Close to the house was the stall, where, safe and secure from
annoyance,

Raghorn, the snow-white bull, that had fallen to Alden's allotment
In the division of cattle, might ruminant in the night-time
Over the pastures he cropped, made fragrant by sweet pennyroyal.

Oft when his labor was finished, with eager feet would the
dreamer
Follow the pathway that ran through the woods to the house of
Priscilla,





Led by illusions romantic and subtle deceptions of fancy,
 Pleasure disguised as duty, and love in the semblance of friend-
 ship.
 Ever of her he thought, when he fashioned the walls of his
 dwelling ;
 Ever of her he thought, when he delved in the soil of his garden ;
 Ever of her he thought, when he read in his Bible on Sunday
 Praise of the virtuous woman, as she is described in the Prov-
 erbs, —
 How the heart of her husband doth safely trust in her always,
 How all the days of her life she will do him good, and not evil,
 How she seeketh the wool and the flax and worketh with gladness,
 How she layeth her hand to the spindle and holdeth the distaff,
 How she is not afraid of the snow for herself or her household,
 Knowing her household are clothed with the scarlet cloth of her
 weaving!

So as she sat at her wheel one afternoon in the Autumn,
 Alden, who opposite sat, and was watching her dexterous fingers,
 As if the thread she was spinning were that of his life and his
 fortune,
 After a pause in their talk, thus spake to the sound of the spindle.
 “Truly, Priscilla,” he said, “when I see you spinning and spinning,
 Never idle a moment, but thrifty and thoughtful of others,
 Suddenly you are transformed, are visibly changed in a moment :
 You are no longer Priscilla, but Bertha the Beautiful Spinner.”
 Here the light foot on the treadle grew swifter and swifter : the
 spindle
 Uttered an angry snarl, and the thread snapped short in her
 fingers ;
 While the impetuous speaker, not heeding the mischief, continued :
 “You are the beautiful Bertha, the spinner, the queen of Helvetia :



She whose story I read at a stall in the streets of Southampton,
 Who, as she rode on her palfrey, o'er valley and meadow and moun-
 tain,

Ever was spinning her thread from a distaff fixed to her saddle.
 She was so thrifty and good, that her name passed into a proverb.
 So shall it be with your own, when the spinning-wheel shall no
 longer

Hum in the house of the farmer, and fill its chambers with music.
 Then shall the mothers, reproving, relate how it was in their child-
 hood,

Praising the good old times, and the days of Priscilla the spin-
 ner!"

Straight arose from her wheel the beautiful Puritan maiden,
 Pleased with the praise of her thrift from him whose praise was
 the sweetest,

Drew from the reel on the table a snowy skein of her spinning,
 Thus making answer, meanwhile, to the flattering phrases of
 Alden :

"Come, you must not be idle ; if I am a pattern for housewives,
 Show yourself equally worthy of being the model of husbands.
 Hold this skein on your hands, while I wind it, ready for knit-
 ting ;

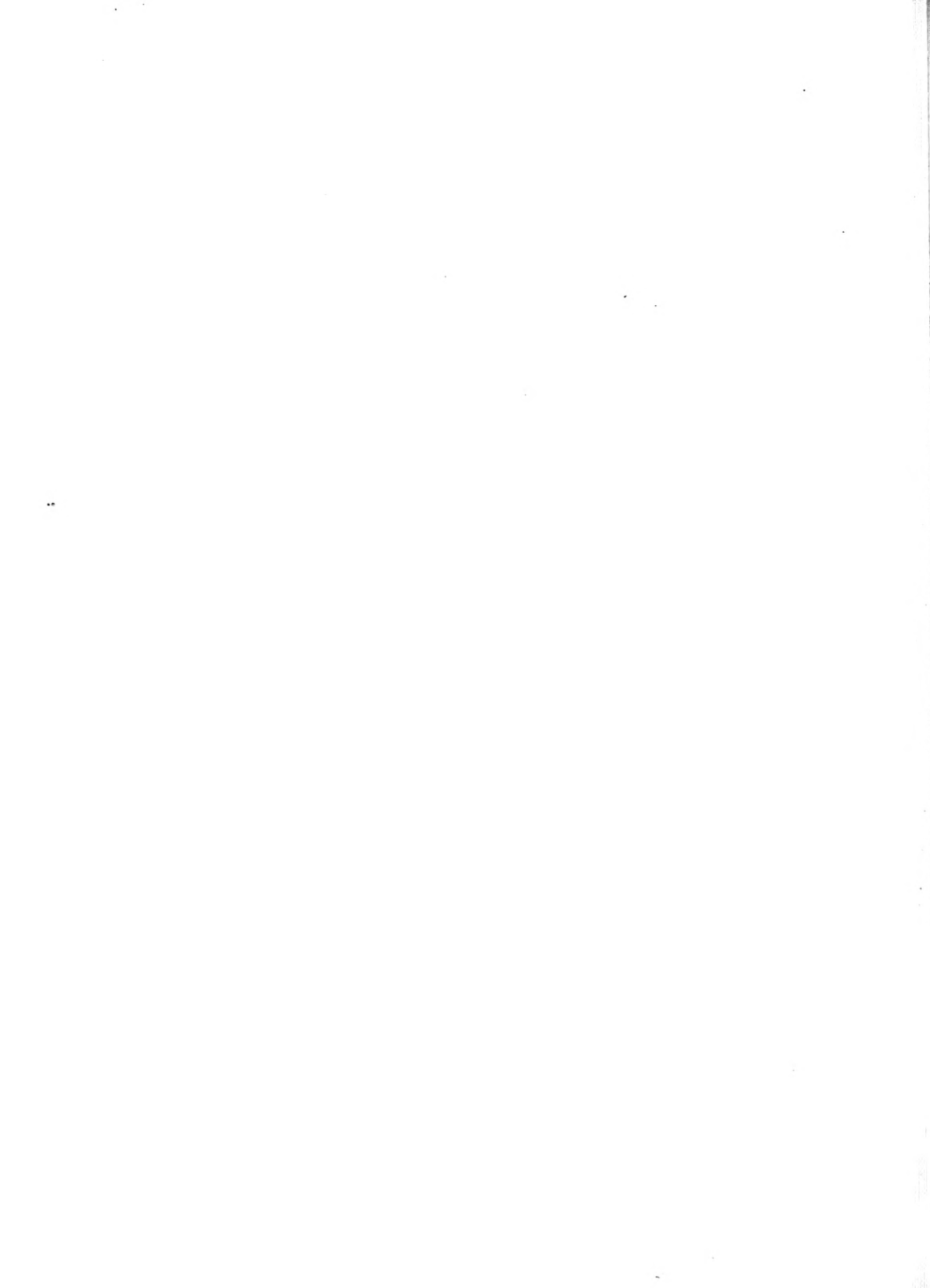
Then who knows but hereafter, when fashions have changed and
 the manners,

Fathers may talk to their sons of the good old times of John
 Alden !"

Thus, with a jest and a laugh, the skein on his hands she adjusted,
 He sitting awkwardly there, with his arms extended before him,
 She standing graceful, erect, and winding the thread from his
 fingers,

Sometimes chiding a little his clumsy manner of holding,
 Sometimes touching his hands, as she disentangled expertly





Twist or knot in the yarn, unawares — for how could she help it? —

Sending electrical thrills through every nerve in his body.

Lo! in the midst of this scene, a breathless messenger entered, Bringing in hurry and heat the terrible news from the village. Yes; Miles Standish was dead! — an Indian had brought them the tidings, —

Slain by a poisoned arrow, shot down in the front of the battle, Into an ambush beguiled, cut off with the whole of his forces; All the town would be burned, and all the people be murdered! Such were the tidings of evil that burst on the hearts of the hearers.

Silent and statue-like stood Priscilla, her face looking backward Still at the face of the speaker, her arms uplifted in horror; But John Alden, upstarting, as if the barb of the arrow Piercing the heart of his friend had struck his own, and had sundered

Once and forever the bonds that held him bound as a captive, Wild with excess of sensation, the awful delight of his freedom, Mingled with pain and regret, unconscious of what he was doing, Clapsed, almost with a groan, the motionless form of Priscilla. Pressing her close to his heart, as forever his own, and exclaiming:

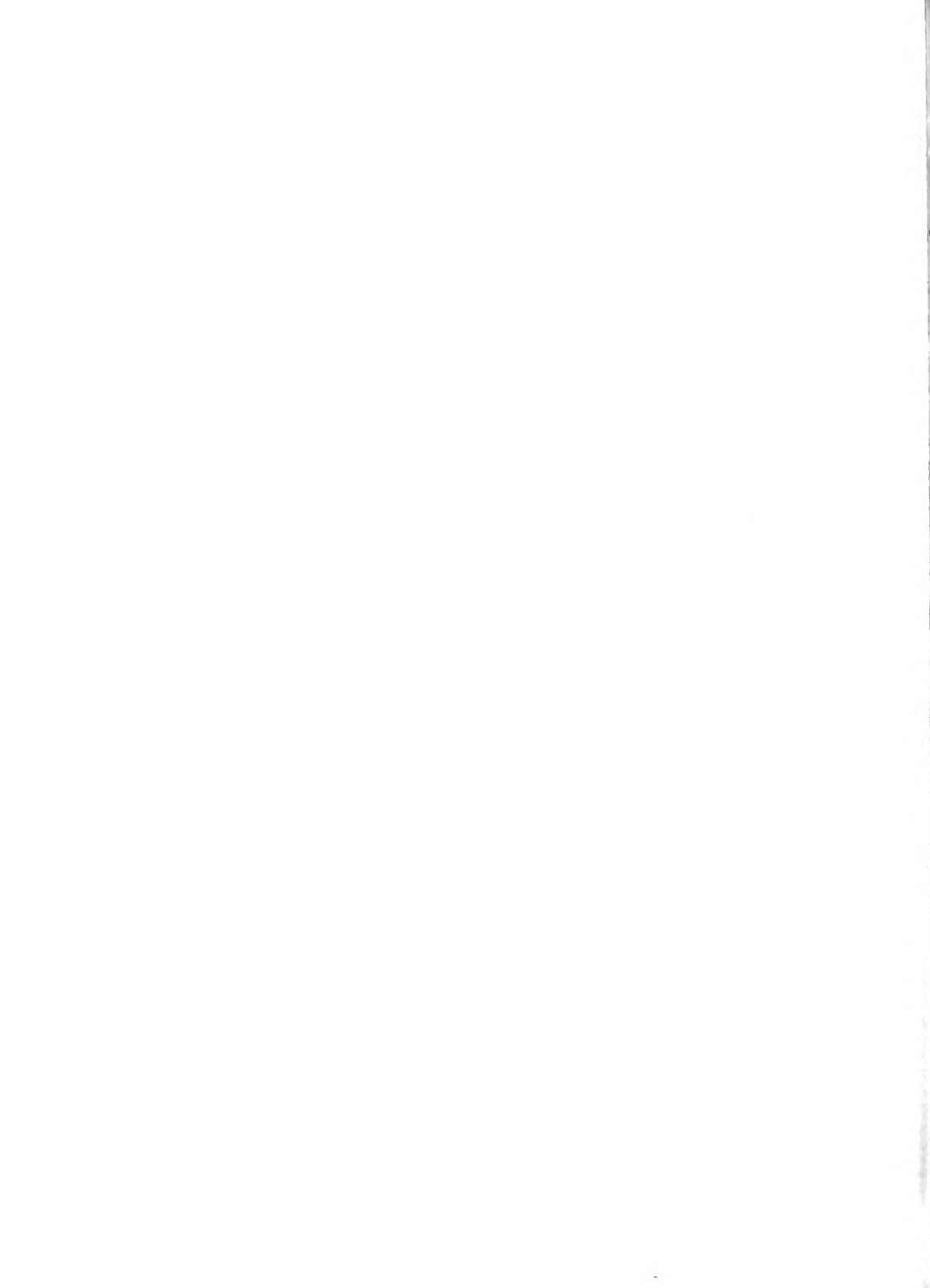
“Those whom the Lord hath united, let no man put them asunder!”

Even as rivulets twain, from distant and separate sources, Seeing each other afar, as they leap from the rocks, and pursuing Each one its devious path, but drawing nearer and nearer, Rush together at last, at their trysting-place in the forest:



So these lives that had run thus far in separate channels,
Coming in sight of each other, then swerving and flowing asunder,
Parted by barriers strong, but drawing nearer and nearer,
Rushed together at last, and one was lost in the other.







THE WEDDING-DAY



IX.

THE WEDDING-DAY.

FORTH from the curtain of clouds, from the tent of purple and
scarlet,
Issued the sun, the great High-Priest, in his garments resplendent,
Holiness unto the Lord, in letters of light, on his forehead,
Round the hem of his robe the golden bells and pomegranates.
Blessing the world he came, and the bars of vapor beneath him
Gleamed like a grate of brass, and the sea at his feet was a laver!

This was the wedding morn of Priscilla the Puritan maiden.
Friends were assembled together; the Elder and Magistrate also
Graced the scene with their presence, and stood like the Law and
the Gospel,
One with the sanction of earth and one with the blessing of
heaven.
Simple and brief was the wedding, as that of Ruth and of Boaz.
Softly the youth and the maiden repeated the words of betrothal,
Taking each other for husband and wife in the Magistrate's
presence,
After the Puritan way, and the laudable custom of Holland.
Fervently then, and devoutly, the excellent Elder of Plymouth
Prayed for the hearth and the home, that were founded that day
in affection,
Speaking of life and of death, and imploring Divine benedictions.



Lo! when the service was ended, a form appeared on the thresh-
old,
Clad in armor of steel, a sombre and sorrowful figure!
Why does the bridegroom start and stare at the strange apparition?
Why does the bride turn pale, and hide her face on his shoulder?
Is it a phantom of air, — a bodiless, spectral illusion?
Is it a ghost from the grave, that has come to forbid the betrothal?
Long had it stood there unseen, a guest uninvited, unwelcomed:
Over its clouded eyes there had passed at times an expression

Softening the gloom and revealing the warm heart hidden beneath them,

As when across the sky the driving rack of the rain-cloud
Grows for a moment thin, and betrays the sun by its brightness.

Once it had lifted its hand, and moved its lips, but was silent,
As if an iron will had mastered the fleeting intention.

But when were ended the troth and the prayer and the last
benediction,

Into the room it strode, and the people beheld with amazement
Bodily there in his armor Miles Standish, the Captain of Ply-
mouth!

Grasping the bridegroom's hand, he said with emotion, "Forgive
me!

I have been angry and hurt, — too long have I cherished the
feeling;

I have been cruel and hard, but now, thank God! it is ended.

Mine is the same hot blood that leaped in the veins of Hugh
Standish,

Sensitive, swift to resent, but as swift in atoning for error.

Never so much as now was Miles Standish the friend of John
Alden."

Thereupon answered the bridegroom: "Let all be forgotten be-
tween us, —

All save the dear, old friendship, and that shall grow older and
dearer!"

Then the Captain advanced, and, bowing, saluted Priscilla,

Gravely, and after the manner of old-fashioned gentry in Eng-
land,

Something of camp and of court, of town and of country, com-
mingled,

Wishing her joy of her wedding, and loudly lauding her hus-
band.

Then he said with a smile: "I should have remembered the adage,—
If you would be well served, you must serve yourself; and moreover,
No man can gather cherries in Kent at the season of Christmas!"

Great was the people's amazement, and greater yet their rejoicing,
Thus to behold once more the sunburnt face of their Captain,
Whom they had mourned as dead: and they gathered and crowded about him,
Eager to see him and hear him, forgetful of bride and of bridegroom,
Questioning, answering, laughing, and each interrupting the other,
Till the good Captain declared, being quite overpowered and bewildered,
He had rather by far break into an Indian encampment,
Than come again to a wedding to which he had not been invited.



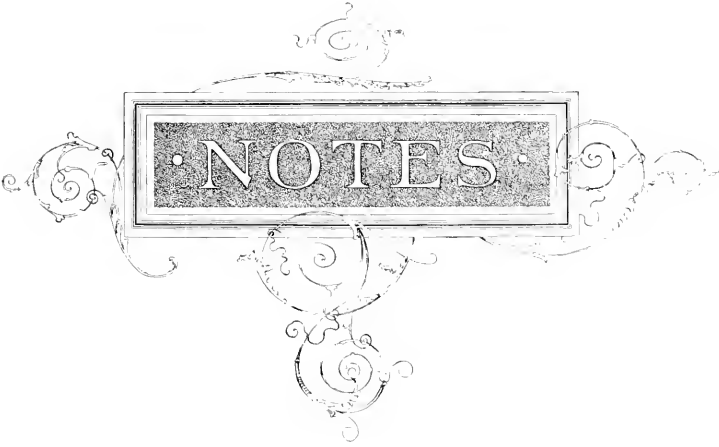
Meanwhile the bridegroom went forth and stood with the bride
at the doorway,
Breathing the perfumed air of that warm and beautiful morning,
Touched with autumnal tints, but lonely and sad in the sun-shine,
Lay extended before them the land of toil and privation :
There were the graves of the dead, and the barren waste of the
sea-shore,
There the familiar fields, the groves of pine, and the meadows ;
But to their eyes trans-figured, it seemed as the Garden of Eden,
Filled with the presence of God, whose voice was the sound of the
ocean.

Soon was their vision disturbed by the noise and stir of de-
parture,
Friends coming forth from the house, and impatient of longer
delaying,
Each with his plan for the day, and the work that was left uncom-
pleted.
Then from a stall near at hand, amid exclamations of wonder,
Alden the thoughtful, the careful, so happy, so proud of Priscilla,
Brought out his snow-white bull, obeying the hand of its master,
Led by a cord that was tied to an iron ring in its nostrils,
Covered with crimson cloth, and a cushion placed for a saddle,
She should not walk, he said, through the dust and heat of the
noonday ;
Nay, she should ride like a queen, not plod along like a peasant.
Somewhat alarmed at first, but reassured by the others,
Placing her hand on the cushion, her foot in the hand of her
husband,
Gayly, with joyous laugh, Priscilla mounted her palfrey.
“ Nothing is wanting now,” he said with a smile, “ but the distaff :
Then you would be in truth my queen, my beautiful Bertha ! ”



Onward the bridal procession now moved to their new habitation,
Happy husband and wife, and friends conversing together.
Pleasantly murmured the brook, as they crossed the ford in the forest,
Pleased with the image that passed, like a dream of love through its bosom,
Tremulous, floating in air, o'er the depths of the azure abysses.
Down through the golden leaves the sun was pouring his splendors,
Gleaming on purple grapes, that, from branches above them suspended,
Mingled their odorous breath with the balm of the pine and the fir-tree,
Wild and sweet as the clusters that grew in the valley of Eschol.
Like a picture it seemed of the primitive, pastoral ages,
Fresh with the youth of the world, and recalling Rebecca and Isaac,
Old and yet ever new, and simple and beautiful always,
Love immortal and young in the endless succession of lovers.
So through the Plymouth woods passed onward the bridal procession.





NOTES

Page 7. *Strode, with a martial air, Miles Standish, the Puritan Captain.*

There is no absolutely authenticated portrait of the doughty captain. The accompanying sketch follows an old painting owned by the late Captain A. M. Harrison, of Plymouth, and now hanging in Pilgrim Hall, which purports to be a likeness of Standish taken at the age of thirty-eight, in the year 1625. Captain Harrison gives an account of the history of the picture, as far as known, in a letter printed in the *Mass. Hist. Soc. Proceedings*, xv. 324 (October, 1877). A large engraving on wood, from a photograph of the painting, may be seen in *The Memorial History of Boston*, i. 65.



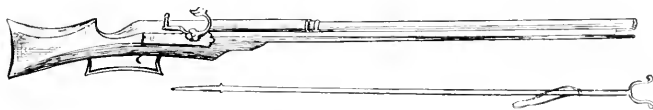
Miles Standish

Page 7. *Short of stature he was, but strongly built and athletic.*

All reports agree that Standish was a little fellow. His detractors characterize him as a "silly boy." Bradford's *History of Plymouth Plantation*, Book II. p. 180.

Page 7. *While underneath, in a corner, were fowling-piece, musket, and matchlock.*

A fowling-piece was a light gun for shooting birds; a matchlock was a musket, the lock of which held a match or piece of twisted rope prepared to retain fire.



MATCHLOCK AND REST.


As late as 1687 matchlocks were used instead of flint-locks, which had then come into general use. In Bradford and Winslow's *Journal* (*Young's Chronicles*



of the *Pilgrims*, p. 175), we are told of a party setting out "with every man his musket, sword, and corselet, under the conduct of Captain Miles Standish." That these muskets were matchlocks, appears from another passage in the same journal, p. 142: "Then we lighted all our matches and prepared ourselves, concluding that we were near their dwellings."

Page 7. *Fair-haired, azure-eyed, with delicate Saxon complexion.*

Tradition, as well as characteristics in the descendants of Alden, bears out the poet's description. Tradition, however, varies as to whether Alden or the girl Mary Chilton was the first to step on Plymouth rock after the *Mayflower* reached the harbor. He was one of the signers of the compact in the cabin of the *Mayflower* at Provincetown, and the last survivor of that company.



Page 8. *This is the sword of Damascus I fought with in Flanders.*

Standish's sword is preserved in the group contained in the cabinet of the Massachusetts Historical Society, which includes also the swords of Governor Carver and Elder Brewster. Another sword belonging to Standish is preserved in Pilgrim Hall, in Plymouth. His service in the English contingent that aided the Dutch in their contest with Spain



MILES STANDISH'S SWORD

is a matter of history, and the details of the conflict during Standish's service are well given in Mr. Clements R. Markham's *The Fighting Veres*. Standish was not one of Robinson's church before it left England, but he fell in with Robinson and his congregation, and joined the Pilgrims in their venture to America. He never belonged to the Pilgrims' church, and circumstantial evidence has been elaborately built upon by Dr. John Gilmary Shea, in *Magazine of American History*, i, 390, to demonstrate that he was a Romanist.

Page 9. *Look! you can see from this window my brazen harviter planted High on the roof of the church, a preacher who speaks to the purpose.*

The time of this conversation is made by the poet to be before the return of the *Mayflower*, which was in April, 1621. But the meeting-house which Standish only, if the conjecture of his early training be assumed, was likely to call a church was not built for a year after this time. There was in the spring of 1621 a platform on Burial Hill, with ordnance upon it.

Page 10. *Aspicut, Samoset, Corbitant, Squanto, or Tokamahamon.*
Names of Indians who are mentioned in the early chronicles.

Page 10. *She was the first to die of all who came in the Mayflower.*

Rose Standish died January 29, 1621. Of the one hundred and two passengers of the Mayflower, fifty-one died within a few months. Perhaps the captain was thinking of the dreadful mortality which befell the company after the exposure incident to the landing. Bradford's wife, Dorothy, fell overboard and was drowned early in December, when the exploring party, including her husband, was absent. The bill of mortality, as collected by Prince, from Bradford's pocket-book, shows that six died in December.

Page 10. *Green above her is growing the field of wheat we have sown there.*

"The burials of that first winter were made on what was later known as Coale's Hill, identical with the present terrace above the rock." (*Narrative and Critical History of America*, iii. 273.) The tradition of the effacement of the marks of burial, lest the Indians should discover how the colony had been weakened, is preserved in Holmes's *Annals*. Grass, however, and not wheat, was the seed sown.

Page 10. *Barriffe's Artillery Guide, and the Commentaries of Casar.*

The inventory of Miles Standish's books may be found in *N. E. Hist. and Gen. Reg.* i. 54. The elaborate title of the military manual was: *Militarie Discipline; or the Young Artillery Man, Whercin is Discoursed and Shown the Postures, both of Musket and Pike, the exactest way, &c., Together with the Exercise of the Foot in their Motions, with much variety: As also, diverse and several Forms for the Imbatteling small or great Bodies demonstrated by the number of a single Company with their Reducements. Very necessary for all such as are Studios in the Art Military. Whereunto is also added the Postures and Beneficiall Use of the Half-Pike joynd with the Musket. With the way to draw up the Swedish Brigade.* By Colonel WILLIAM BARRIFFE. Barriffe was a Puritan, and added to his title-page: "Psalmes 144: I. Blessed be the Lord my Strength which teacheth my hands to warre and my fingers to fight." Arthur Golding was in the service of the Protector Somerset, and was a voluminous translator.

Page 11. *Full of the name and the fame of the Puritan maiden Priscilla.*

Among the names of the Mayflower company are those of "Mr. William Mullines and his wife, and 2 children, Joseph and Priscila; and a servant, Robart Carter."

Page 14. *So he won the day, the battle of something-or-other.*

The account of this battle may be found in *Cesar's Commentaries*, Book II, chapter 10.

Page 16. *She is alone in the world; her father and mother and brother Died in the winter together.*

“Mr. Molines, and his wife, his sone and his servant dyed the first winter. Only his daughter Priscila survived.” *Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation*, p. 452.

Page 20. *So through the Plymouth woods John Alden went on his errand.*

The description of Alden's walk is circumstantial, but, in point of fact, a sense of danger led the Pilgrims, at first, to reside in close contiguity with each other.

Page 21. *Singing the hundredth Psalm, the grand old Puritan anthem.*

The words in the version which Priscilla used sound somewhat rude to modern ears, but the music is substantially what we know as Old Hundred. Ainsworth became a Brownist in 1590, suffered persecution, and found refuge in Holland, where he published learned translations and commentaries. His version of Psalm C is as follows:—

AINSWORTH'S PSALM-BOOK.

PSALME 100.

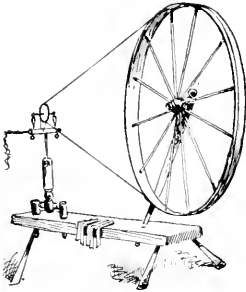
Shout to Jehovah, all the earth. 2.
 Serve ye Jehovah with gladnes: before
 him come with singing-mirth. Know
 that Jehovah he God w:

1. Shout to Jehovah all the earth.
2. Serve ye Jehovah with gladness: before him come with singing-mirth.
3. Know that Jehovah he God is. It's he that made us and not we, his flock and sheep of his feeding.

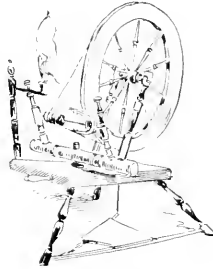
4. Oh, with confession enter ye his gates, his courtyard with praising. Confess to him, bless ye his name.
5. Because Jehovah he good is; his mercy ever is the same, and his faith unto all ages.

Page 21. *Seated beside her wheel, and the carded wool like a snow-drift.*

Mr. Longfellow received a number of letters questioning his description of Priscilla's wheel, upon the ground that while she was spinning wool, the motions and apparatus were applicable only to flax. He examined the question carefully, especially with the aid of his friend Mr. Charles Folsom, and as a considerable number of authorities made it appear that wool was spun upon the small treadle-wheel in Germany and the Low Countries, the lines were suffered to remain as they



WOOL SPINNING-WHEEL.



FLAX SPINNING-WHEEL.

stood. Mr. Folsom suggested to the poet the following revision:—

Piled at her knee, her left hand feeding the ravenous spindle,
While with her right hand she sped and stayed the wheel in its motion.

Page 26. *He was a gentleman born, could trace his pedigree plainly
Back to Hugh Standish of Duxbury Hall, in Lancashire, England.*

“There are at this time in England two ancient families of the name, one of Standish Hall, and the other of Duxbury Park, both in Lancashire, who trace their descent from a common ancestor, Ralph de Standish, living in 1221. There seems always to have been a military spirit in the family. Froissart, relating in his *Chronicles* the memorable meeting between Richard II. and Wat Tyler, says that after the rebel was struck from his horse by William Walworth, then a squyer of the kynges alyted, called John Standysse, and he drewe out his sworde, and put into Wat Tyler's belye, and



STANDISH HALL, ENGLAND.

so he dyed.' For this act Standish was knighted. In 1415 another Sir John Standish fought at the battle of Agincourt. From his giving the name of Duxbury to the town where he settled, near Plymouth, and calling his eldest son Alexander (a common name in the Standish family), I have no doubt that Miles was a scion from this ancient and warlike stock." (Young's *Chronicles of the Pilgrims*, foot-note, p. 125.) In his will, Miles Standish gives to his "son and heir-apparent, Alexander Standish," certain lands, "given to me as right heir by lawful descent, but surreptitiously detained from me; my great grandfather being a second younger brother from the house of Standish of Standish." He removed to Duxbury about the year 1630, and died there October 3, 1656.

Page 32. *Till he beheld the lights in the seven houses of Plymouth.*

In a letter written by Edward Winslow, December 11, 1621, just a year, therefore, after the landing, to a friend in England, he says: "You shall understand that in this little time that a few of us have been here, we have built seven dwelling-houses, and four for the use of the plantation." (Young's *Chronicles*, p. 230.)

Page 34. *Only one of them old, the hill that was nearest to heaven,
Covered with snow, but erect, the excellent Elder of Plymouth.*

William Brewster was the ruling elder of the Pilgrim church. When the church had a minister to teach and administer the sacraments, such a pastor was aided by an officer named the ruling elder, whose function was much the same as that of the deacon in Congregational churches at the present day. The teaching elder included ruling among his duties; the ruling elder sometimes taught in the absence of his superior; the teaching elder was maintained by the people; the ruling elder was not withdrawn from other occupations, and maintained himself. Brewster thus, as the ruling elder in the little Plymouth Church, was also, in the absence of Robinson, their teacher. He was seventy-seven or seventy-eight at the time of his death in 1644.

William Brewster



ELDER BREWSTER'S SWORD.

Page 34. *God had sifted three kingdoms to find the wheat for this planting.*

In Stoughton's Election Sermon of 1668 occurs the first use, apparently, of the oft-quoted phrase: "God sifted a whole nation that he might send choice grain over into this wilderness."



Page 35. *While on the table before them was lying unopened a Bible.*

The Geneva Bible, first printed in Geneva in 1560, was the favorite version of the Puritans, and was clung to long after the King James version had been issued. Owing to obstacles in England, the Bible was frequently printed on the continent; once, at any rate, at Amsterdam.



ELDER BREWSTER'S CHAIR.

Page 35. *And beside it outstretched the skin of a rattlesnake glittered.*

As a matter of history, the meeting to which Standish was suddenly summoned took place about the first of December, 1621, about two months after the date assigned by the poet to the wedding; the first recorded instance of the rattlesnake skin challenge was in January, 1622, when Tisquantum, the Indian, brought a defiance from Canonicus, who was of the tribe of Narragansetts, and not one of the Pecksnots, and the governor returned the skin stuffed with bullets. Holmes, in his *Annals* (i. 177), reminds the reader: "There is a remarkable coincidence in the form of this challenge given by the Scythian prince to Darius. Five arrows made a part of the present sent by his herald to the Persian king. The manner of declaring war by the Aracaunian Indians of South America was by sending from town to town an arrow clinched in a dead man's hand."

Page 35. *Judging it wise and well that some at least were converted.*

The poet here uses the sentiment of John Robinson when he wrote to the colonists after the first encounter with the Indians: "Oh, how happy a thing had it been, if you had converted some before you had killed any!"

Page 41. *With Stephen and Richard and Gilbert.*

These names are not taken at random. Stephen Hopkins, Richard Warren.

and Gilbert Winslow were all among the Mayflower passengers, and were alive at this time.

Page 44. *O strong hearts and true! not one went back in the Mayflower!
No, not one looked back, who had set his hand to this ploughing!*

The Mayflower sailed on her return voyage April 5, 1621, her stay through the winter being due, as Bradford explains, to the necessity of the Pilgrims for shelter while they were settling themselves, the bad weather, and the unwillingness of the captain to sail with a crew diminished by sickness and death, until the more inclement season was passed. "It is a circumstance worthy of notice, that, notwithstanding the hardships, privations, and mortality among the Pilgrims, not one of them was induced to abandon the enterprise and return home in the Mayflower. Young's *Chronicles*, note, p. 199.

Page 44. *Rounded the point of the Gurnet, and bearing far to the southward
Island and cape of sand, and the Field of the First Encounter.*

The Gurnet, or Gurnet's Nose, is a headland connecting with Marshfield by a beach about seven miles long. On its southern extremity are two light-houses, which light the entrance to Plymouth Harbor.

"So after we had given God thanks for our deliverance, we took our shallop and went on our journey, and called this place The First Encounter." Bradford and Winslow's *Journal*, in Young's *Chronicles*, p. 159. This place, on the Eastham shore, marked the spot where the Pilgrims had their first encounter with the Indians, December 8, 1620. A party under Miles Standish was exploring the country while the Mayflower was at anchor in Provincetown Harbor.

Page 51. *He is a little chimney, and heated hot in a moment.*

Hubbard, in his *History of New England*, speaks of Standish as a "small chimney soon fired."

Page 54. *After a three days' march he came to an Indian encampment.*

The poet apparently has taken his material for this expedition of Standish from the report of *Standish's Expedition against the Indians of Weymouth, and the breaking up of Weston's Colony at that place*, as given in Winslow's *Relation*, reproduced in Young's *Chronicles*, pp. 327-345. The historic incident took place in March, 1623, and the party went to the place where the combat took place in a shallop, and not on foot.

Page 55. *Forth he sprang at a bound, with all his weapons about him.*

"Among the rest Wituwamat bragged of the excellency of his knife. On

the end of the handle there was pictured a woman's face; 'but,' said he, 'I have another at home wherewith I have killed both French and English, and that hath a man's face on it, and by and by these two must marry.' Further, he said of that knife he there had, *Hinnim nimen, hinnim nichen, matta cuts*; that is to say, By and by it should see, and by and by it should eat, but not speak. Also Pecksuot, being a man of greater stature than the captain, told him, though he were a great captain, yet he was but a little man; and, said he, though I be no sachem, yet I am a man of great strength and courage." (Winslow's *Relation*.) In the historic scene, the combat took place within a lodge, here out of doors. The poet turns the whole incident of Standish's parley and killing of the Indian into a more open and brave piece of conduct than the chronicle permits us to see.

Page 57. *Silent, with folded arms, stood Hobomok, friend of the white man.*

"Hoblamock stood by all this time as a spectator, and meddled not, observing how our men demeaned themselves in this action. All being here ended, smiling, he brake forth into these speeches to the captain: 'Yesterday Pecksuot, bragging of his own strength and stature, said, though you were a great captain, yet you were but a little man; but to-day I see you are big enough to lay him on the ground.'" Winslow's *Relation*.

Page 57. *And as a trophy of war the head of the brave Watawamat
Scowled from the roof of the fort, which at once was a church
and a fortress.*

"Now was the Captain returned and received with joy, his head being brought to the fort and there set up." (Winslow's *Relation*.) The custom of exposing the heads of offenders in this way was familiar enough to the Plymouth people before they left England. As late as the year 1747 the heads of the lords who were concerned in the Scots' Rebellion were set up over Temple Bar in London.

Page 60. *Month after month passed away, and in Autumn the ships of
the merchants
Came with kindred and friends, with cattle and corn for the
Pilgrims.*

The poet appears to take Standish's return from his expedition as the date from which after events are measured. The *Anne* and the *Little James* came at the beginning of August, 1623.



Page 61. *Latticed the windows were, and the window-pans were of paper, Oiled to admit the light, while wind and rain were excluded.*

When the *Fortuna*, which visited the colony in November, 1621, returned to England, Edward Winslow sent by it a letter of advice to those who were thinking of emigrating to America, in which he says: "Bring paper and linseed oil for your windows." Even in the time of Henry VIII. glass windows were considered a luxury. When the Duke of Northumberland, in Elizabeth's time, left Alnwick Castle to come to London for the winter, the few glass windows which formed one of the luxuries of the castle were carefully taken out and laid away, perhaps carried to London to adorn the city residence.

Page 61. *Still may be seen to this day some trace of the well and the orchard.*

The Alden family still retain John Alden's homestead in Duxbury, and the present house is said to stand near the site of the one originally built there. In point of fact, however, Alden did not settle in Duxbury until 1631.

Page 61. *Raghorn, the snow-white bull, that had fallen to Alden's allotment.*

Bradford, in his *History of Plymouth Plantation*, p. 109, under date of 1624, says: "Shortly after [March] Mr. Winslow came over, and brought a pretty good supply, and the ship came on fishing, a thing fatal to this plantation. He brought 3 heifers and a bull, the first beginning of any cattle of that kind in y^e land." The division of the cattle, according to the same authority, took place in 1627.

Page 63. *She whose story I read at a stall in the streets of Southampton.*

Bradford, in his list of passengers by the *Mayflower*, reports as follows of John Alden: "John Alden was hired for a cooper, at South-Hampton, wher the ship victuled; and being a hopfull young man, was much desired, but left to his owne liking to go or stay when he came here; but he stayed, and married here."

Page 67. *After the Puritan way, and the laudable custom of Holland.*

"May 12 [1621] was the first marriage in this place, which, according to the laudable custome of the Low-Cuntries, in which they had lived, was thought most requisite to be performed by the magistrate, as being a civill thing, upon which many questions aboute inheritances doe depende, with other things most proper to their cognizans, and most consonante to the scripturs, Ruth 4, and no wher found in the gospel to be layed on the ministers as a part of their office.

. . . And this practiss hath continued amongst, not only them, but hath been followed by all the famous churches of Christ in these parts to this time, — Anno. 1646.” (Bradford, *History of Plymouth Plantation*, p. 62.) Miles Standish, it may be added, was not inconsolable. In the *Fortune* came a certain Barbara, whose last name is unknown, whom Standish married. He had six children, and many descendants are living. As is well known, the captain took up his home in Duxbury, where he must have had his rival for a neighbor. One tradition, however, reports that Standish never forgave Alden.

