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"A rare BOHEMIAN, full of jests and fancies."

OLD PLAY.

THE BOHEMIAN.

No. 1.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

We gathered at the close of day,
Around her dying bed,
With tears that could not be restrained,
And hearts that ached and bled.

Her eyes lit with a holy smile,
She said we must not grieve;
She heard the angels calling her
That mournful Christmas eve.

She passed away with morning light,
In awe we ceased to weep;—
It seemed as if she only fell
Into a gentle sleep.

Dear Lamb of God, by whom our sins
Are freely all forgiven,
Thou calledst her home with Thee to hail
Her Christmas morn in Heaven.

SOME ACCOUNT OF MRS. SOPCHOPPY, AND OF HER SINGULAR DREAM ON CHRISTMAS EVE.

Everybody has, doubtless, a vivid remembrance of having heard a long time ago of strange dreams. Everybody can remember of having listened with greedy interest, when a child, to the recital of extraordinary visitations that came, in the dead of the night, to affright the nursery-maid, or to worry the cook; but I doubt whether anyone has ever partaken of the terror that arose from the account of a more wonderful dream than that which came, on a dark night in December, to Mrs. Sopchoppy, landlady of the Friendly Greeting Inn.

Before commencing to relate the events connected with this dream—events that Mrs. Sopchoppy continues to be, to this day, garrulous upon—a few words concerning the landlady, and the inn itself, will not be out of place. From these few words, then, the reader may gather the following information.

The Friendly Greeting—as it is called the country around—is situated a few miles out from Dover, on the Canterbury road, and stands upon the verge of a bleak and lonely moor. From its position it has, naturally, quite a large share of custom. This custom is chiefly due to the class of rough Dover residents (or people from foreign parts) who stop there on their way to London. When the Inn was first established (a trifle over eighty years ago, by the grandfather of the late Thomas Sopchoppy, whereof the present Mrs. S. is the relict) travel was not as safe as it is in these days. In those times gentlemen were frequently known to have left Dover, with the view of reaching Canterbury, and never to have got further than the moor in question. Sometimes even the boldest of them would return to Dover when the setting sun found them staring disconsolately over the desolate tract of ground which lay before them, and which it was necessary to cross before they could proceed upon their journey. Sometimes others, not so bold, perhaps, but more rash, would venture to cross the moor, in spite of the remonstrances of

their companions, even though the night-shadows were gathering heavily, in conjunction with the mists, about it; and such would be found, not uncommonly, when travel was resumed with the rising sun, slain by the roadside and pillaged.

The fact of the matter is that the moor was infested by innumerable foot-pads and knights-of-the-road who first plundered unfortunate wayfarers, and then, for fear that those who had been so plundered might cause them to be apprehended, slew them.

It was, therefore, a notable idea that came to old Joe Sopchoppy, the retired Dover fisherman—after hearing a narrative, one day, of a crime of this kind that had been committed on the moor, on the night previous—to build an Inn on the confines of this debateable ground wherein timid travellers might find shelter during those hours when the bold highwaymen gallopped hither and thither over the moor, waiting for their prey. But, notable as this idea was, that was a more notable act when he commenced to have the house built in earnest.

When the house was built finally, quite a discussion arose as to the name that should be given to it. One of old Joe's gossips (a deaf weaver who had had no use for his legs for a matter of ten years) suggested, in a friendly way, "Neptune's Head," which title, he insisted, would pleasantly recall Joe's old avocation of fisherman; but, contrary to a'l expectations, old Joe (who was an obstinate man at times) refused to listen to any such suggestion, declaring that, as he wasn't a sea-faring man then, he didn't want to be reminded of the times when he was, and more to the same effect; which, very naturally, produced quite a coldness between him and his gossip.

How the matter would have ended—and whether the Inn would ever have been inhabited at all, Joe refusing to open the house until it had been named, and insisting that a Inn wasn't a Inn unless, don't you see, it had a name—it would have been hard to say, had it not been that Mrs. Sopchoppy, (Joe's wife,) becoming impatient, took upon herself to name the Inn. Which she did, and called it the Friendly Greeting Inn, and put a stop to the discussion.

Having thus happily settled this difficult matter, Mrs. Sopchoppy's next act was to remove, bag and baggage, Joe included, to the house, from Dover; and in a few days Joe was driving a great business in the landlord's way.

It is not necessary to say, in so many words, that old Joe prospered.

When he deserted the little bench, by the side of the front door, that had been his seat for so many years, in the summer with his pot of ale by his side, and in the winter warming his old limbs in the pleasant glow of the sun, and took to his bed saying that he would never leave it again, he left the care of his Inn to his only son Simon, and went, for the last time, down the dusty road, to Dover, there to be laid with his fathers.

Nor is it necessary to say—although the fact might be mentioned—that Simon himself became, in the course of time, old and rheumatic, and that he, too, like old Joe, gave up the Inn and his breath at the same time, leaving his son Thomas in charge of the establishment, and went down the dusty road to Dover as his father had gone before him.

When this family change took place Thomas stepped into his father's business, and, although the highwaymen had become things of the past and no longer alarmed

travellers across the lonely moor by sudden sallies from ambush and fierce orders to "stand and deliver," the little parlor of the Friendly Greeting waxed more and more uproarious as the years passed on, whitening the hairs upon Thomas' head.

About the time that Thomas stepped—by right of inheritance—into the proprietorship of the Inn that his grandfather had built, and which his father had left to him he, at the same time, stepped into something else; which was the affections of the buxomest and liveliest of the Dover lassies, whom he made Mrs. Sopchoppy, she being the third of that name who had presided over the larder and general arrangements of the Friendly Greeting Inn, and the subject of the singular coincidence to be hereinafter narrated.

In the course of time Thomas became old Tom, (as his grandfather had been old Joe) and, in the course of time, he, too, went down the dusty road, and was placed with those who had preceded him.

After Thomas' departure from the cheerful fire-side, Mrs. Sopchoppy became lonely, and refused to be comforted. Her loneliness, and her refusal to receive comfort, (other than that contained in the little black bottle in the cupboard,) took first one shape and then another. Sometimes—and more especially after a longer, and more attentive, examination than usual of the bottle referred to—it presented Mrs. Sopchoppy in the light of an irascible old woman who *would* sit out in the rain, if she was to die for it, and who would like to see anybody what *could* make her git out of it—so she would. Sometimes—and on these occasions, too, the bottle had been consulted—it took the shape of plunging Mrs. Sopchoppy in great grief and tribulation, and led her to beat her aged bosom wofully and to remark, addressing the chairs and the fireplace in an oratorical way, "that she was a wretched old creeter, so she was, and he knowed it, so he did, which if he never didn't say nothing about it when the gin what was took was laid on the house-maid, which never did drink nothing 'ceptin when she could git it, which wasn't frequent seein' as she kept the keys herself, and the many, many times, oh, Lord! oh, Lord! when he used to grumble if his slippers wasn't ready, and his pipe couldn't be found, and he'd haunt her yet, she knew he would."

These extravagancies of manner and language gave way, after awhile, to the most remarkable phase that Mrs. Sopchoppy's loneliness had yet assumed. This phase was a perpetual custom of seeing visions and dreaming dreams on her part—a marvelous facility of seeing that which had no existence in fact, and of being on familiar and conversational terms with all sorts of wonderful people who used to come, about twelve o'clock at night, and sit on her bed and talk with her on the most friendly terms imaginable, and ask questions in regard to the state of her health, and then bow gravely to her, and disappear, with a sad smile upon their wan faces, saying that they must be gone before the cock crowed, or else it would be the death of them. Owing to this singular gift, Mrs. Sopchoppy became renowned, among the simple country-folks around, as the happy possessor of vague powers of communication with people of the other world, and was much looked up to, and respected, accordingly. Inflamed by this celebrity, Mrs. Sopchoppy gave herself up entirely to dreaming, and succeeded so well in that peculiar branch as to forget, in a measure, the claims possessed by

the Inn upon her attention. By means of her invaluable art of dreaming, and seeing sights, she was enabled to foretell, to her own satisfaction, the most ordinary, as well as the most extraordinary, events of life. Thus, as in the former case, she predicted—the prediction being based upon a dream—that a certain young and pretty girl would soon get married, which came to pass as she had foretold; and, as in the latter case, she was equally happy in another dreamful prophecy which gave out that a vinegarish old maid of her acquaintance, of forty or thereabouts, would not get married, which, strange to say, proved to be the truth. In the matter of dreaming about births and deaths she was unnapproachable; and woe to the wretched consumptive of whom it was said that Mrs. Sopchoppy had dreamed, for then might he, or she, know that his, or her, days were numbered

As has been before remarked, Mrs. Sopchoppy had somewhat neglected the interests of the Inn in her new-found accomplishment.—It became a more pleasurable enjoyment for her to sit in her chair all day and dream, than to be about and doing, and attending to her guests. The natural result whereof was, that the guests not having that high appreciation of the landlady's talents that they should, perhaps, have had, became less frequent in their visits, and sometimes whole days elapsed without the sound of a horse's hoof, stamping upon the hard road before the door, coming to her ear. But this gave the excellent old lady no uneasiness. In the course of a long life the late Thomas Sopchoppy had not failed in laying something aside for the future, and on this something his relict lived right merrily. As she had no dissipations—apart from the bottle and her dreams—to waste her substance in the pursuit of, she became fatter, and more prophetic, the older she grew.

In this condition, then, was Mrs. Sopchoppy when the wonderful event occurred that stamped her as the most remarkable dreamer on record. In this fit condition, then, to receive into her mind the most methodical and logical vision that had ever entered there, was she when the crowning dream of her life came to her. The circumstances attendant upon this dream, and which preceded it, are these.

At the close of the 24th day of December the front-door of the Friendly Greeting Inn opened to receive three guests, afoot, on their way to Canterbury. They were wrapped up in great cloaks and their teeth chattered in their heads as they came through the passage, and into the parlor, and sat before the cheerful fire. Two of the guests were large men, and the third was a foreigner, and a small man. The large men were Englishmen, and were sober; the little man was a Frenchman, and was drunk. Not so drunk, though, as to cause him to stagger or in any way to commit himself; but drunk enough to lead him to sing merry staves of drinking songs, and to throw broad golden pieces about the floor with the request to the other men to pick them up and put them in their pockets, and keep them.

Sitting by the table, and knitting, Mrs. Sopchoppy, apparently immersed in her work, listened to them. From the random remarks that she caught, here and there, she understood these things: that the little Frenchman was not long from Paris, and that his destination, as well as that of his companions, was London; that he had much money and was a good fellow, *pardieu!* and that his comrades should have wine, *diable!;* that he would consider it a personal insult to him, *morbleu!* if

his friends refused to drink at his expense; that he made his money easily, *mille tonnerres!* and that it was his to spend; and finally, and again, that he was a good fellow, and that his comrades should join him in wine, and that he would sing a song for them afterwards.

When the little foreigner had got this far in his remarks, he slapped his hands violently upon his knee, and called for wine. Mrs. Sopchoppy bustled about for a few moments in answer to this call; and, in a little while, the little Frenchman was tossing off his Chateau-Margaux, whilst his companions, who had called for ale, were busy in their attention to their national beverage.

Mrs. Sopchoppy was not asleep at this time, and, therefore, what transpired, between the call for the wine, and her ascending the stairs on her way to her room, could not have been a dream. What transpired in that given time might briefly be stated as being to this effect: Mrs. Sopchoppy having resumed her knitting at the table could not help observing—whether she desired to do so, or not—something mysterious about the conduct of the two Englishmen, who were sober, sitting with the foreigner over the wine and ale.—This mysterious something in their conduct took the shape of nods and winks given to each other when the Frenchman's head was thrown back, and when the Frenchman's eyes were shut, as he drank off his wine; and it was also apparent to the landlady—who was not ignorant of the proper intoxicating guage of ale—that the two Englishmen had no intention, by over drinking themselves, of changing their condition of sobriety into that doubtful state enjoyed by their companion.

Mrs. Sopchoppy having remarked these peculiarities, with a miserable feeling of uncertainty as to what it all meant, contented herself with the thought, that if she had dreamed of these things she could unmistakably have explained their purport; but as it was, and as she had merely witnessed them with her physical eye, she felt that she possessed no clue to their meaning. She, therefore, felt quite cast down in consequence.

Now it should be known that, in addition to her marvellous faculty of dreaming of things, Mrs. Shopchoppy also enjoyed a singular power of so settling her mind upon any one, or given, subject, that she could indulge in a nap, and straightway go to dreaming upon that subject, and thereby explain away all doubts.

Wondering, then, within herself as to the true solution of the problem that had thus been presented to her in the manner of the two Englishmen, and feeling her complete inability to offer any correct explanation thereof, and her wide-awake sleepiness—so to speak—in the matter, Mrs. Sopchoppy, not to be foiled in her intentions to find out all about it, came to the best resolution that, under the circumstances, she could have determined upon. Which was, in effect, to go up stairs to her room, and commence dreaming.

Having reached this conclusion, then, behold Mrs. Sopchoppy rising from her chair, and preparing herself to set about her work.

The guests having been questioned Mrs. Sopchoppy discovered—the foreigner being spokesman—that they did not require any beds, and that all that they needed, *parbleu!* was more wine, as it was his—the foreigner's—intention to make a night of it with his comrades; that he was a Frenchman and his comrades were Englishmen, but that on occasions of this kind his comrades became French-

men and forgot that they were Englishmen; that, again, he and his comrades were going to London, and that he had much money wherewith to pay for their entertainment; that, also again, he was a good fellow; that his comrades were also good fellows; that every body was a good fellow; that he—the foreigner—was, especially, a good fellow, and, *sapristie!*, a gentleman; that there lived, *pardieu!*, no man who could gainsay that; and that, finally, as he and his comrades intended to leave the Inn at daybreak the next morning, he would pay, now, for the wine that they had drunk, and would drink, and for the shelter that had been afforded to them under Mrs. Sopchoppy's hospitable roof. Saying which he pulled out a heavy wallet that contained an immense number of the same kind of golden pieces that he had thrown about the floor, when he had requested that his comrades would pick them up, and place them in their pockets.

When the wine and ale that had been called for were placed before them, Mrs Sopchoppy received some of the broad coins in her chubby hand as payment for the night's entertainment, and then, with a curtsey to her guests, moved towards the door She did not leave the room, however, without a testimonial of regard from the little Frenchman which assumed the shape of an affectionate embrace, and a declaration that, as the old one reminded him of his mother, he would kiss the old one, and that, as he adored his mother, he adored the old one who resembled her.

And then Mrs. Sopchoppy went up stairs to enter upon the great dream of her life, leaving the foreigner and his comrades drinking together whilst the foreigner roared out some verses of his bacchanalian song.

Mrs. Sopchoppy's first act, on gaining her room, was to array herself in her nightcap; her second act was to draw up her rocking-chair before the fire; and her third act was to sit down and, folding her arms comfortably across her bosom, to lean back in the chair and close her eyes.

And then the dream came to her.

[Although Mrs. Sopchoppy is the authority for whatever shall be hereinafter related in the matter of her singular dream, I do not propose to present that dream couched in the language of that excellent lady herself. Possibly, by so doing, a mysterious affair in itself might be made more mysterious than before; possibly that mysterious affair might become positively incomprehensible. And, therefore, the reader will understand, that whilst Mrs. S. dreamed the dream, she does not, in these pages, describe its remarkable events in her own language, but has left it to the present historian so to do. Which he proposes to do as follows].

Mrs. Sopchoppy—sitting, as before-mentioned, in her chair before the fire with her head thrown back and her eyes closed—heard, for a matter of a quarter of an hour, or more, the murmur of voices in the little parlor below stairs, varied by an occasional burst of melody from the little foreigner. Mrs. Sopchoppy, leaning back in her chair with her feet extended towards the fire-place, felt, for a quarter of an hour, or more, the fire diffusing a gentle heat over her person, commencing at her feet; and then the murmur of voices, and the bacchanal strains, and the memory of all earthly things, passed from her, and Mrs. Sopchoppy slept.

And in that slumber that came to her then, the landlady became aware of the following dream:

She dreamed that the voices that had been droning in a vague sort of

monotone through her brain suddenly ceased. She dreamed that the silence that followed that cessation was broken by a dull, heavy sound below stairs, as of the falling of a weighty body. And then, as if an inward voice had called upon her to go forth from her room and to solve the mystery of that sound, she dreamed that she rose from her chair and went quietly to the door and listened. A murmur of voices, and the sound of shuffling feet, came to her ear, f om the parlor, as she stood upon the landing, and brought with them the sense of something mysterious transpiring among her guests of Christmas Eve. Creeping softly down the stairway that led to the lower fl oor, behold Mrs. Sopchoppy, now, as her dream impelled her to solve her doubts. Standing cautiously in the shadow of the open parlor door, behold Mrs. Sopchoppy peering into the room through the crack of the door, and staring, in her dream, with sudden horror at what she beholds. The murmur of voices still proceeds from the parlor, but the bacchanal song is hushed. The two Englishmen, who are sober, are there, but where is the Frenchman who is drunk? And what is that upon the floor between the two Englishmen—that above which they are bending and which they are examining—that which fixes unreal eyes upon Mrs. Sopchoppy standing by the door, and holding her breath in dreadful amazement? Whatever it is, it is motionless; whatever it is, it is lifeless.

Is it the little foreigner, and if it is, what means that dark belt of blue around the neck, and wherefore that contorted, blackened face?

Hush! the two Englishmen, who who are sober, are speaking; and, in a dreamful way, their words come to Mrs. Sopchoppy.

One says:

"Where did you say, Ben, we could take him to?"

The other answers:

"We can take him to that ravine about a quarter of a mile back on the Dover road. You remember the place?"

One says:

"Yes, that's a good place—but what about the old woman? Is she asleep, do you think?"

The other answers:

"Asleep! yes. She's the greatest dreamer in the whole land, and if she a'int asleep, we can fix her quick enough."

One says:

"Never mind the old woman. If she's asleep, good; but let us get out of this. One such piece of work as this is bad enough for to-night. This is a holy night Ben. Let the old woman rest for us!"

The other answers:

"Pshaw! never mind the night, whether it's holy or not! It's a dark night, and a good night to bury this carrion in,—so come along!"

One says:

"Have you got all the gold?"

The other answers:

"All—down to his finger-ring,—so come along, I tell you!"

And then they stooped and lifted the burden from the floor, and the stronger man of the two slung it across his shoulder, as though it had been a bag of potatoes, and together they moved towards the door.

Shrinking behind the door, Mrs. Sopchoppy sees them cross the threshold and stand, for a moment, in the dark passage. They are looking up the stairs, and are, apparently, listening. Will they hear anything from the uper part of the house to urge them to visit the landlady, as one of them had threatened to do? No; for the house is silent.

Then, in her dream, Mrs. Sopchoppy sees them walk to the door

leading to the lawn in front of the Inn, and hears them turn the key gently in the lock. Which done, she sees the door open, and perceives their dark forms drawn in shadowy outline against the snow that covers the ground, and hears their feet crunching the same as they recede from the house.

Here Mrs. Sopchoppy's dream takes the shape of following the men into the darkness, and of shivering with the terrible cold that strikes her thinly clad frame, and creeping cautiously behind the men as they walk through the snow in the direction of the yard.

Arrived in the yard the men stop and look about them. They, and the burden that one of them bears, begin to gleam with ghastly whiteness as the snow falls upon them, and to lose their identity in the prevailing hue that surrounds them. They approach the door of the stables and seem to be in search of something. In a little while one of them—the one that does not carry the burden—stoops and picks up something, from the ground, which he places upon his shoulder. To Mrs. Sopchoppy this something takes, in the uncertain light, the shape of a spade.

Swiftly as move the men towards the Dover road, as swiftly, in her dream, does the landlady follow them. Silently as speed the men towards the ravine whereof one of them had spoken, as silently does the landlady follow them. There is no caution displayed by the men as they hasten on, but there is much exhibited, in her dream, by the landlady who hastens after them. There is only an earnest desire, on the part of the men, to dispossess themselves of their hideous load, and, to do this, it is necessary for them to move rapidly; there is only a desire, on the part of the landlady, that the men in front of her should not detect her, and, to do this, she must follow as rapidly, perhaps, but with proper caution.

And so (in her dream) the solemn procession proceeds, until the men have gained the ravine, and descended into it, and are no longer seen by her.

What happened in the ravine, after the men disappeared from Mrs. Sopchoppy's sight, is not a part of Mrs. Sopchoppy's dream. Because, being frightened, Mrs. Sopchoppy hesitated to follow them further than the edge, and remained standing, uncertain what to do, where she had checked her steps when she had first become aware that the men were no longer visible. It *is* a part of the landlady's dream, though, that, standing thus, she became nearly frozen, and was on the point of returning to the Inn, when she heard the sound of voices approaching her, and saw the forms of the two men advancing in her direction. Mrs. Sopchoppy's first impulse was to fly at this approach; her second was to crouch in the darkness until the men had passed her. Bending down until, what with her ghostly garments and her ghostly night-cap, she seemed more like an irruption of snow than a human being, the landlady saw the two men move, as swiftly as they had come, towards the road and in the direction that led towards Canterbury. As they passed her, one said:

"The snow will cover the traces of the spade. By the time that snow melts we will be in London."

And the other answered:

"Yes; and when the great storm comes that will tear up that old oak perhaps that carrion's bones will be discovered."

And then one and the other laughed harshly, as their forms receded from the landlady's vision, and Mrs. Sopchoppy rose to follow them.

And so, in her dream, the solemn procession proceeds once more until the men have gained the road that winds around the Inn; and, thence, goes on to Canterbury. Not so solemn, though, as before, for the reason that the heavy burden is wanting on the shoulder of the stronger of the two men, and the spade is absent from the hand of the other.

In a little while they stand, once more, in front of the Inn. Through the open door, which the men had left open and which the landlady had forgotten to close, the fitful light from the parlor falls out into the night, and betrays the presence of the two men standing together and looking up at the windows of the house. In a little while the light fall upon a space of snow that is vacant, and Mrs. Sopchoppy becomes aware that the two whereof her dream is rife are hastening away on the highroad, and leaving the Inn behind them.

Then, in a ghostly vision of terror and doubt, Mrs. Sopchoppy staggers to the open door, and enters the passage, and closes and locks the door behind her.

And beyond that, all is a horrid mingling of mysterious events; and so Mrs. Sopchoppy's dream closes.

When the dawn of Christmas day broke upon the Friendly Greeting Inn, Mrs. Sopchoppy awoke to find herself sitting before the fire, as she had sat all night. She awoke to find the fire smouldering, and to feel a strange stiffness and chilliness about the legs and arms, and also, what was more wonderful still, a mysterious sense of being wet in the region of the head, and moist in the neighbourhood of the back, and damp, in and around the feet. Removing first the nightcap, and then the shoes and stockings, Mrs. Sopchoppy proceeded to divest herself, in order, of the other various concomitants of the night's dreaming, and then, placing them upon a chair before the fire, gazed absently at them as the steam arose from them in a dense volume of vapor. She was thinking over the events of the night's dream, and was seeking in a vague way, to connect the snowy condition of the Earth outside with the moisture of her clothing. Mrs. Sopchoppy had had many strange dreams in her time; but she had no recollection of ever having had a dream that carried with it so many singular coincidences as this dream.

What with thinking over it, and pondering about it. the landlady once more fell asleep—this time in bed, however,—and dreamed it all over again.

She was aroused by the noise of the awaking household, and awoke to think, and ponder, once more over the mystery. When she went down stairs, and entered the parlor, she found the empty bottles, and the glasses, and the pitcher that had contained the ale standing upon the table just as she had seen them in her dream; and then she went to the front door, and opened it, and looked out.

The snow was still falling, and its surface was unbroken by the print of footstep. There was no evidence before her eye that any foot had crossed the threshold of the Friendly Greeting Inn that night. And yet that such had been the case could not be gainsayed—for had not Mrs. Sopchoppy seen it in her dream, and were not the guests wanting in the little parlor?

The landlady moved about the house in an irresolute and uncertain way until breakfest; but when that meal was despatched her irresolution had vanished. For she had come to the determination to proceed to Dover immediately, and inform the authorities of her dream, and of her suspicions that all was

not right. Therefore, when she had satisfied her appetite she set out in the wagon for the town.

The authorities were soon made aware of the purpose of her visit and, although they were at first disposed to treat her views as chimerical in the extreme, they finally consented to send out a constabulary force to the Friendly Greeting to see what they could make out of Mrs. Sopchoppy's dream. Researches, instituted in the spot, pointed out by the landlady as that to which the men had borne their burden of the night before,—as witnessed in her dream—disclosed a startling corroboration of the skill that the landlady possessed. The body of the Frenchman was found buried near the foot of the old oak that grew in the ravine, and the appearances all went to prove that he had been strangled.

And then, with great hue and cry, his companions of the night before were pursued, and were overtaken just as they were entering the city of Canterbury.

In ending this recital of Mrs. Sopchoppy's Christmas Eve dream, what more is necessary to be added in order to satisfy the reader? Is it not enough to know that Mrs. Shopchoppy's accomplishment was so singularly vindicated, or should I add, that, when the trial came on, what with the gold that was found in the pockets of the two Englishmen, the trinkets marked with the Frenchman's name upon them, and the landlady's dream (which was taken in evidence) the murderers of Mrs. Sopchoppy's dream suffered for their crime?

But whilst the historian does not confess to the necessity that exists that these particulars should be mentioned, he cannot refrain from remarking that, even now, around the Dover firesides, Mrs. Sopchoppy and her wonderful vision are discussed, and that there are not wanting those among these gossips who stoutly aver and maintain that Mrs. Sopchoppy did not dream what has been herein described, (as she insists that she did) but that she saw it all, my dear, from first to last, with her own eyes.

THE SWORD OF HARRY LEE.

An aged man, all bowed with years,
Sits by his hearthstone old,
Beside him sits, in reverent awe,
A youth all proud and bold.
He listens with rapt eagerness
To the old man's every word,—
One aged hand enclasps the boy's,
The other grasps a sword.

"My son," the gray-haired patriot said,
"A precious legacy
I give into your keeping now—
The sword of Harry Lee.
I wore it through the fearful storm
That darkened o'er our sky,
When brave men dared for liberty
To stand, or nobly die.

"We prized our holy liberty,
We hated tyranny,
We vowed we'd die as brave men die,
If we could not be free;
We swore eternal vengance on
Our foes from o'er the sea,
And night and day we stoutly rode
With 'Light Horse Harry Lee.'

"Ah! how we loved our noble chief,
A hero grand was he;
No craven thought e'er filled the heart
Of noble Harry Lee.
And where the fight was thickest, boy,
We'd see his bright sword flash,
And with his shout the skies would ring,
As on the foe he'd dash.

"One day—it all comes back again,
Though I am old and gray—
The battle had raged long and fierce,
For we would not give way;
Our noble leader gave the word,
And on the foe we flew,
Resolved to chase them from the field,
That base-born, hireling crew.

"Our chieftain, at the 'Legion's' head,
Rode on exultingly,
When a red coat vile his musket raised
To murder Harry Lee—
I dashed before the hero bold,
Right in the deadly strife,
And clove the base dog to the earth,
And saved brave Harry's life.

"And when the fearful fight was o'er,
The Major for me sent,
And I was led by Captain Carnes,
That night, into his tent.
He grasped my hand right heartily,
The flush was on his cheek,
And tears stood in his manly eyes,
His voice was hoarse and weak.

"He said he owed his life to me—
Again I hear each word—
And then he took, from 'round my waist,
My tried and trusty sword;
He said that I must give it him,
For he would honored feel,
To carry with him in the fight
A brave man's trusty steel.

"He gave me his own trusty blade,
That oft had led the free,
And told me I must wear it for
The sake of Harry Lee.
Ah boy! that was a happy night,
For proud he well might be
Who ever heard such words of praise,
From gallant Harry Lee.

"I wore this blade all through the war,
And when the storm was o'er
I kept it bright and free from rust,
As in the days of yore;
And when the clouds came down again
Upon our sky so bright,
I buckled on the dear old sword,
And wore it through the fight.

"And when the soft sweet southern breeze
From tropic regions far,
Came laden with the clang of arms,
And thrilling notes of war,
I took the old sword from its place,
With tears of honest pride,
And buckled it right firmly by
Your gallant father's side.

"He bore it manfully and well
In regions far away;
It flashed o'er Palo Alto's plains,
And sunny Monterey.
It never was laid down in shame,
God grant I ne'er may see
One base foul stain upon the sword
Of dear old Harry Lee.

"Now, boy, I draw this sword again,
Alas that it must be
That I must count as foes the sons
Of those who fought with me.
My limbs are old and feeble now,
And silvery is my hair,
I cannot wield this sword, and so
I give it to your care.

"To-day I saw your noble Chief, *
And ah! I seemed to see
Erect again, before me stand
The form of Harry Lee.
That same bright eye—that noble form—
That bearing proud and free—
Ah yes! he's like his noble sire,
This son of Harry Lee.

"I'm thankful, boy, he'll lead you on,
To the wild battle field,
For his father's heart within him beats,
And never will he yield.
Stand by your General to the last,
Obey his every word,
And yield your life before you dare
To yield his father's sword.

"Now go, and do your duty, boy,
You bear no craven's name,
And as you dread your grandsire's curse,
Ne'er sully it with shame.
And I, as long as life shall last
Within this bosom free,
Will ask God's blessing on you, and
The son of Harry Lee.

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* General R. E. Lee.

THE BATTLE EVENING.

It was the afternoon of the ever memorable 8th of June, 1862. On the previous evening our army, footsore and weary from its long march from the Potomac, up the Valley, had reached Port Republic. In our front lay the army of General Sheilds, ready to fall upon us, as soon as we should cross the Shenandoah River, while Fremont was pressing heavily upon our rear.

On the morning of the 8th, General Ewell was sent to meet Fremont and drive him back, while General Jackson, with the rest of the army, remained at the river to hold Shields in check.

I remained in this part of the army.

During the day the enemy kept up a steady fire across the river, to which we responded with a will.

All day long the sound of musketry and cannon in our rear, told us that the brave old Ewell had met Fremont, and was hotly engaged with him. We were certain

success, for we felt sure that it was impossible to whip "Old Jack," but we waited anxiously for news from Ewell. The day wore away, and just about sunset, we heard that Fremont was being driven back, and oh! how the heavens rang with cheers that went up for Ewell and his gallant band.

The sun was almost down, when it was told along the lines that a strange preacher had arrived in camp, and would preach that evening. General Jackson desired all who could be spared, to come to hear him. A sufficient force was left to man the batteries, and the rest of us assembled, a short distance in the rear of them.

The place selected for the services, was a few hundred yards from the river, and commanded a fine view of the surrounding country. Between two tall trees a caisson had been placed, and near it, with his arms folded, and his eyes bent upon the ground, General Jackson stood leaning against a tree—the members of his staff were near him. Quite a large crowd of soldiers had assembled, and maintained the most respectful silence.

The sun was now fairly down, and the twilight was coming on, and gave to the scene a strange and solemn aspect. Far in the distance could be heard the deep thunder of the battle at Cross Keys, while from the opposite side of the river the enemy kept up a steady cannonade. I thought it was a fitting act, that while our comrades were, on this lovely Sabbath evening, bravely breasting the battle's storm, almost in our very sight, we should meet to ask God's blessing upon our cause.

As I reached the group, the preacher stepped forward and mounted a caisson. He was a strange looking man, and in the deepening twilight, seemed to be invested with a kind of rude grandeur. He was very tall and thin; his features were gaunt and strongly marked; his eyes were set deeply in his head, and seemed to me to shine with an unnatural brilliancy; his hair, as white as the driven snow, fell upon his shoulders and was tossed carelessly to and fro by the evening breeze, as it played around his uncovered head. For a moment he stood upon the caisson and glanced around him. Involuntarily I bowed my head. I had never seen such an awe inspiring man. For the first time in my life, I could appreciate the feelings of those dwellers in the dark ages, when they stood under the folds of the crosslit banner, and listened to the fiery eloquence of Peter the Hermit. This man had not yet spoken a word, but I felt that he would preach a powerful sermon.

He raised his hands, after a silence of a moment, and said,

"Let us pray!"

His prayer was short but very impressive, and accorded well with his appearance, and the scene around him. His voice was as full and as rich as the tones of a bell. Its softest accents could be heard with perfect ease by all who were gathered around him, and at times he would thrill them with tones that resembled the blasts of a clarion.

When the prayer was finished, a psalm was sung. It was the one hundredth psalm—that glorious "old hundred," which seems to gather fresh beauty with its increasing years. Man after man caught up the strain, until in one rich, full chorus, it swelled along the valley like a song of victory.

The enemy must have heard us, for they slackened their fire, and crowded along the bank of the river, gazing eagerly at us, as if endeavoring to ascertain the meaning of the strange sound.

That psalm thrilled my very soul,

and I felt that God alone was King of kings, and Lord of battles, and that He was with us.

During the singing of the psalm, the strange preacher had been sitting on the box of the caisson, with his face buried in his hands, and when it was over, he rose and began his sermon. I remember it yet. It made such an impression upon me, that I do not think it will ever be effaced from my memory. If I had heard it under different circumstances, I might and doubtless would, have forgotten it, but as it was, it became indelibly impressed upon me.

This was the sermon, but oh! how it lacks the voice and looks of the speaker.

"*I will remove far off from you the Northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate.* * * * * *Fear not, be glad and rejoice, for the Lord will do great things.*"—JOEL II: 20, 21.

Soldiers and countrymen! Upon the eve of battle, while your comrades are struggling against the might of the oppressor, with the sound of battle ringing in my ears, I have come here to speak to you in the name of the Lord Jehovah. As His Embassador, I bid you in His name, "fear not, be glad and rejoice, for the Lord will do great things." He "will remove far off from you the Northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate." This is His promise to you, and "God is not man that He should repent, nor the son of man that He should change." In Him then, let your trust be placed, and on the morrow go forth with strong arms and stout hearts, for He will give you the victory.

You have taken up arms in a good and holy cause. You have gathered yourselves together in defence of your homes, your wives and your little ones—in defence of all that Heaven blesses, or man holds dear. For them you have endured hardships the most trying, and dangers the most appalling. You have borne the toils of the camp, the fatigues of the march, the perils of the fight, and yet another fierce and desperate struggle awaits you. Meet it you must, and I feel sure that you will do so, with the same unshaken firmness that has marked your past career. As God's messenger, I promise you in His name, that, if you will go forth relying upon Him, and believing that He is with you to nerve your arms, He will hurl back the proud foemen, and crown your efforts with success.

Oh my countrymen! what a solemn scene is this before us. But a few short months ago, our land slept in peace. We listened in idle wonder to the tales of war and bloodshed that came to us from the far off old world. As brothers, we loved and trusted all those who called themselves members of the great political family of which we were so proud. This peaceful valley smiled and blossomed as an Eden. On all sides teeming fields and happy homes met our view. Love, happiness, and innocence prevailed among us, and we fondly hoped that such blessings might be eternal.

Now! God of Heaven! how the scene is changed. The dark cloud of war overspreads our sky—the foot of the invader pollutes our soil—our homes lie desolate—our harvest fields are wildernesses—and our own beautiful valley is a frightful desert. The cry of the orphan, and the wail of the widow, the groans of martyrs for conscience sake, the prayers, the sobs of helpless innocence and feeble age, assailed by brutal lust, and ruthless hate, daily and hourly go up to heaven demanding vengance, from the spots where once only prayers of thanksgiving and hymns

of joy ascended. Everywhere red battle has stamped his iron heel, and even now, as you listen to me, the deep mouthed thunder of friendly and hostile guns, tells you that your own brethren have met the foe in fierce and deadly conflict. Oh God! in thy mercy, let them not be driven back.

My friends I have journeyed a long distance to be with you. I have come to you from the banks of the distant Ohio. I have left my home in ruins, and have laid a wife and two boys in martyr's graves. They died by the hands of the foe, and I have come here to avenge them. All along my way I have seen that which might wring the stoutest heart among you. I could tell you of blackened homesteads—of fair and gentle women outraged by the demons of the North—of the prayers, struggles, and entreaties, which, alas, were all in vain—of old men butchered in cold blood—of children slaughtered before their mothers' eyes—of all that makes life hateful and earth a hell. I have seen the lonely cot upon the mountain blaze at the still, midnight hour. I have seen the defenceless cottagers fly amid the snows of winter, with scarcely a rag to shield them from the cold. I have seen the little children sink down, and die upon the bleak mountain side, and I have seen the mute agony of their mothers as they have bent over the little lifeless forms, and raised their burning eyes to Heaven in silent appeals for vengance. Were it necessary, I could freeze your blood, and change you from men into demons, by the recital of what I have seen and suffered.

God, in His wisdom, alone can tell how long these things shall continue. He alone can tell how long the cause of right and innocence shall suffer, and might and wrong prevail. None of us who are here this evening, may live to see the day of retribution, but it will come—it will come. Aye, it is coming now. Far off in the distant future, I hear the distant muttering of the coming storm, and already I see its forked lightnings flashing angrily around the Northern sky. The Lord Jehovah is not a God who permits His laws to be violated with impunity. Our enemies have outraged all of His laws; they have defied and insulted Him openly, and I shudder when I think what a doom will be theirs.

God has promised to "remove far off from you the Northern army, and to drive him into a land barren and desolate." They left their homes in prosperity and peace, and have made our land a desert. When they return, they will find their Eden changed into a hell. Wan famine shall stalk through their land—crime shall flourish—each woman shall cheat her husband and her mother, and confidence and trust be gone forever. Blood shall flow like water in their homes—the streets of their cities shall grow green with the grass of Spring—Commerce shall forsake them—beggary reign where once wealth shone—brother shall rise against brother, father against son, and son against father, husband against wife, mother against daughter, and daughter against mother, and the hand of each shall be red with the blood of the other. Love shall change into hate—sin take the place of virtue—happiness give place to misery—the land shall waste away in utter ruin, for the curse of the Almighty God of Heaven, whom it has insulted and defied, shall be upon it—"Alas! who shall live when God doeth this!"

My countrymen, you have a part to play in this great retribution. God has been with you throughout this struggle, and He "will never

leave you, nor forsake you." "Be strong in the Lord," then, and fear no power that our enemies can bring against you. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper." Remember that God is with you, and in the dark hour of battle, when the iron hail is sweeping around you, and comrades are falling on every side, when the hot breath of the cannon burns your cheek, and the bright sun of Heaven is darkened by sulphurous pall that enshrouds your hosts, remember God is fighting for you, and when He is with you, you cannot be conquered.

The solemn night has fallen over all—the far off roar of battle is hushed, and the wearied army of the South rests upon its arms, ready to renew the conflict with the morning's sun. Beyond the Shenandoah the dark lines of the hostile hosts are no longer visible, and silence reigns over the scene. To-morrow yonder field shall be red with blood, and strewn with the mangled forms of the wounded, the dead and the dying. I shall go forth with you, and oh! may that God who watches over all the world, and in whose sight the blood of his people is precious, grant that, if it be His will, we may all meet again when the victory has been won, and the Northern army driven back in confusion and disaster.

"Let us pray."

It was quite dark when the sermon was ended, and a deep silence reigned over the scene. It was a wild, rude, disconnected discourse, and the time, place and surroundings made it more impressive than it would have been elsewhere. As the words lie here upon the paper, they seem cold and lifeless, but then, as they fell in fiery accents from the lips of that strange old man, they thrilled me with the most intense emotion. When he finished preaching, he raised his hands, and began to pray. The prayer was in keeping with the sermon, and had a kind of rude grandeur about it, but it did not impress me as powerfully as the sermon had done. After the prayer, a hymn was sung to a quick martial air, and as the men caught it up and joined in it one by one, it rose high and clear above the darkness of the night—then came the blessing.

When the services were over, the strange preacher stepped down from the caisson, and joined General Jackson. The men gradually dispersed in silence. All of us felt that God was with us, and that we would conquer on the morrow.

In a short time news came that General Ewell had defeated Fremont. During the night his troops were withdrawn from Cross Keys, and reunited with our own column. The next morning we crossed the river, and after a stubborn and desperate fight, drove the army of General Shields from the field in a complete rout. It was one of the hardest fights of the war, for the enemy behaved with unusual gallantry.

After the battle was ended, I walked over the field. In one portion of it, where the fight had raged hottest and the dead lay thickest, I saw the form of an old man. I sprang to his side, and to my surprise and horror, beheld the lifeless features of the old man who had preached on the previous evening. He was lying with his face to the enemy, a rifle still clenched in his hands, and with an ugly wound in his forehead. He had died upon the field of victory, and the sorrows of his life were over.

His death affected me deeply, and I called up some of the men who were near, and we made him a grave, and buried him where he

had fallen.

While we were thus engaged, General Jackson rode up, and when he beheld the lifeless form of the old man lying on the ground, an expression of pain overshadowed his noble features. His heart, though as bold as a lion's, was as tender as a girl's. He remained by us, until we had finished the grave, and when we had laid the old man in it, he got down off his horse, and kneeling by the grave, prayed a short prayer. He said he could not bear to see the old man buried without some sort of religious ceremony.

When we had filled up the grave, he thanked us warmly for our kindness, and mounting his horse, raised his cap and rode away. We gave him three cheers as he went. We were amply repaid for our trouble. We would have done any thing to have earned such thanks from him.

I never learned the name of the old man, but I have not forgotten *him*. I can see him now, just as plainly as I saw him on that memorable evening.

I have tried to preserve his words by writing them, but I fear I have not done justice to the subject.

BLANCHE.

Oh! she is tender and true,
Young Blanche whom I adore!
And lovers who come to woo
She numbers by the score!
Oh, she is tender and true;
But her mother is stern and cold,
And she greets with courtly smile,
The suitors who come with gold!
But she passes me haughtily by,
With a bend of her queenly head,
With a careless nod and a look askance—
Or at best but a patronizing glance,
As though she wished me dead.
For she knows that I can bring
No presents to lay at the feet
Of my own dear Blanche, my sweet!
And she half believes, I know,
From whisperers here and there,
From gossips who come and go,
That I look with a lover's eyes
On Blanche's auburn hair.
Well, perhaps 'tis not over-wise
To fight with her mother's will;
But if Blanche be tender and true,
I will love my own Blanche still,
Though her mother be stern and cold,
And laugh at the suitors who come to woo
And scatter their presents and gold.

LITTLE ANGEL'S CHRISTMAS.

The place was Richmond, and the time was Christmas Eve.

The lights flared dismally in the almost deserted streets, and fell upon the forms of those who were out hastening rapidly to their homes. There were no crowds, as of old, blocking the thoroughfare, and examining with curious eyes treasures that the shops contained. There were no loving fathers and mothers out, followed, as of old, by the servant bearing great baskets of toys and sugar plums—toys and sugar plums that might gladden the hearts and eyes of the little ones who, in their dreams, saw the vision of Christingle who came not, and of Christmas gifts that should be found wanting in the accustomed stocking by the fire-place, when, with rapturous eyes and cautious feet, they should leave their warm beds in the early morning and stand sadly before the mantel-piece, and wonder why the good little man, with his round rosy face, had not come down the chimney, and left his tokens of remembrance for the good little boys and girls, as he had done on many a happy Christmas before. Not that the will was wanting with these loving vicars of Christingle,—not that they did not look wistfully into the fire on this sad Christmas Eve, and speak in low tones of the disappointment that the morrow would bring with it to Johnny cuddled up

with Charley in the wide old-fashioned bed, and Lizzie, staring with great black eyes from the crib in the corner, waiting and winking, and watching for the supreme moment when the rattle in the chimney, and the sudden fall of snow upon the cheerful fire, would announce to her the arrival of the Christmas Guest, laden with dolls and all manner of pretty toys which had been gathered from the four quarters of the globe; but the good Angel was not to visit the firesides on this Christmas Eve, and there were no great ships cleaving the ocean from the shores of the old world, freighted with the playthings for the little people (what few ships there were being forced to extreme caution in entering port by means of the watchful cruisers that hovered about and whereof the shotted guns were trained upon every suspicious sail); and therefore, was it, that fathers and mothers gazed dejectedly into the fire, and that the faces of the little sleepers were not to lighten with the dawn of the Hallowed Day.

On this evening my duty, as chronicler, carries me and my reader to an humble fireside. Through the quiet streets, and with the cold wind blowing in our faces as we turn the corners, we hasten on and do not stop to peer into the windows of the comfortable homes whereof the lights from the parlors flare out cheeryly into the street, but check our steps at the door of a modest little house that is frowned at by a great house over the way, and is crushed between two other great houses on either side of it.

And then we look into the parlor window and mark the picture. Now, if my reader (standing by my side) be a small person, he, or she, must stand upon tip-toes to look in; but if my reader be a tall person, he, or she, may lean comfortably upon the ledge of the window, and may thus become aware of the persons who are, at this moment, sitting before the fire in the parlor of the little room.

These persons are three in number—that is to say, that at the first glance these persons are three in number. But if my reader (still standing on tip-toes, if short, or leaning with arms folded on the window, if tall,) will indulge in a second, and closer look, he, or she, may perhaps discover that the number of persons in the parlor of the unpretending little house is greater, by one, than three: that, indeed, in point of fact, there are four persons there. For, in this second glance, might be discovered that which has, possibly, hitherto escaped observation—the figure of a little girl with a bright curly head who is playing on the rug at the feet of one of the other three. Having thus described the smallest (but not least important) of the party of four, let us examine more closely the others.

One is an old man, upon whose head Time has settled with no light weight. But the honest face is rosy with all that, and—but for a certain shade that is upon it now—seems contented enough. He is looking into the fire which flickers upon him, and lights his face with a pleasant glow. By his side sits one who might be his wife. Her hands are folded upon her lap, and she, too, is looking with wistful eyes into the fire. Her age is uncertain—she might be fifty, she might be sixty, years old; but she is old enough, as ages go, to be the mother of the fourth figure, who has not yet been described, and the grandmother of the little girl who plays upon the rug. This fourth figure is, also, the figure of a woman. But no white hair covers her fair, young forehead, as in the case of the older woman; for her

hair is something of the color of that of the little girl—a little darker it may be—and it glows, and burns, under the influence of the bright flame that falls upon it. Her head is leaning upon her hand, and she is looking down at the little girl. There is a pensive, motherly look in her eyes, and her cheek is pale and sad, as though some great sorrow rested upon her heart.

There comes no sound to us (my reader and I) standing at the window, and looking in. There comes no sound of cheerful talk, and pleasant laughter, if we except the prattle of the little girl.

Verily does this Christmas Eve hang heavily upon the hearts and tongues of those who sit before the fire in the parlor! Verily is there with them, to-night, a Presence whereof is there no token to give us warning of its nature!

Shall we (my reader and I) go down the street, and leave the mystery unsolved, or shall we enter the house boldly and join (on the plea of the good fellowship of the hallowed time) the little party gathered in the parlor?

Hush! Another form has appeared upon the scene! Not in the room where sit the others, but by our side. The form of a man who has walked rapidly towards the house, and is now standing in front of it, and is looking with curious eyes (we may judge, for we cannot see them) at the house. He cannot see us as he stands thus, for a moment; but we are aware of his presence. He cannot see us for the reason that we are there in the spirit only. And so, without the fear of detection, we may observe his motions.

It is impossible to say whether this new comer be an old man or a young man; for the collar of his great-coat is so pulled up, and the brim of his slouch hat is so pulled down, that little or nothing of his face is visible. But there is another reason that prevents our having a fair view of his face; and this is, that he wears heavy whiskers that curl all over his face, and which join his overhanging moustache, so that we cannot help thinking that, possibly, his eyes and his nose may be visible, whilst the rest of his countenance is hidden in the hairy covering of his face. Under his arm the stranger carries a package.

After having looked at the house for a little while, the bundled-up stranger moves towards the door. He is not going to ring the bell, surely? Yes; he has rung the bell, and is standing, leaning against the doorway, and waiting for an answer to his summons. Looking through the window of the parlor, hastily, we can see that the old man has risen from his chair to go to the door; and then we (my reader and I) creep up to where the stranger is standing, and observe what is to follow.

When the door opens (which it does in a moment, and discovers the old man holding on to the handle and peering out into the night) the stranger touches his hat with a rough salutation, and says with a labored attempt at politeness:

"Good evening, my friend."

"Good evening," responds the old man, looking wonderingly at the visitor.

"You don't know what brings me here, I reckon, do you?" continues the stranger.

"No, sir," the old man answers. There is a sad tone in his voice which, taken into consideration with the shade upon his face recalls the memory of that nameless Presence that sits with those in the parlor. The stranger stands away from the door a little when he speaks again.

"If I were to tell you," he goes

on in his abrupt way, "that I am a soldier, what would you say?"

"I'd say 'heaven protect you!'" the old man murmurs.

"If I were to say that I know no one in Richmond, and that I am lonely on this night, of all nights in the year, what would you say to that?"

"I would say that this is a wrong time to be lonely in, and that you are to be pitied."

"If I were to tell you that I started out to-night to find some good, pleasant, place to spend the evening in--some quiet fireside that would remind me of my own home in Texas—what answer would you give to that?"

The old man held out his hand as the stranger spoke these words, and seized the stranger's in his.

"If you are a soldier and are away from home," he answered, "and if you come to my house to sit at my fire-side on this night, I will not refuse you that poor satisfaction. It is a sad fire-side, though, my friend, and perhaps you might go elsewhere and be better suited." Again was there perceptible that sadness in the old man's voice. Again was the voice tremulous with some suppressed feeling.

The stranger lifted his hand to his brow as the old man spoke and pushed his hat a little backward. This motion decides the question of his age, for it reveals a youthful, open forehead. Then he says in a voice that is somewhat broken in its tone:

"I was not mistaken, then, in you, John Merryweather. I have heard of you before. A comrade-in-arms has spoken to me of you."

"A comrade? murmured the old man.

"Yes; a comrade."

"That comrade—what was his name?" the old man asked eagerly.

The stranger pauses for a moment, and looks down. And then, in a low voice, he answers:

"His name was Colin Merryweather. He was your son, I believe, Mr. Merryweather?"

"Yes; my poor boy who was lost to us at Fredericksburg."

With hands clasped the old man and the stranger look at each other. The gusty wind blows the grey hair about the eyes of the old man, and tosses the long beard of the stranger to the right and to the left: and there seems to be something sad in this meeting between the two.

"You knew my son then?" the old man asks after a little while.

"We were always together," the stranger replies.

"Then you know why this Christmas falls heavily upon us?"

"Yes; if what you believe be true, I can understand why your fireside is cheerless to-night."

"Come in, and let us talk about Colin."

And then the stranger stands in the hall, and the old man closes the door after him. We (my reader and I) follow them into the house, and accompany them to the parlor.

And then we stand aside, and mark what follows.

Mr. Merryweather holds the stranger by the hand, and speaks to the older woman, and says,

"Sarah here is one who comes to us on this Christmas Eve, who knew our son." And then he turns to the younger, and adds: "Speak to him, Mary, of your husband."

The old man sits down when he has said this, and buries his face in his hands; but the two women rise suddenly, and stand beside their chairs and look wistfully at the stranger. This seems to discompose the stranger, for he places his hat upon the floor at his feet, and then picks it up again, and changes the bundle that he holds from one hand to the other. The look that the women fix upon him causes

him to look around him vacantly for an instant, and then to stammer:

"Allow me to introduce myself. John Downey of the —th Texas.

"You knew Colin?" says the older woman eagerly as he says this.

"You knew Colin?" repeats the younger.

"Wait!" answers John Downy of the —th. He walks to the window of the parlor, and looks into the street. There can not be much outside to interest him; but he stands there full five minutes before he turns and walks back towards the middle of the room.

"Now!" he says, sitting down before the fire, and placing his package on another chair near him, and folding his arms across his broad chest.

The two women are still standing by their chairs as he turns towards them, but when he sits down they follow his example.

And then they stare at him fixedly.

John Downey of the —th seems to have become bolder since his return from the window; for he looks around him briskly, first at one and then at the other, and his eyes seem to twinkle in the uncertain light of the fire.

The brief silence that elapses is broken by the younger of the women, who says:

"Were you with Colin—when—when; and then she holds her handkerchief to her eyes.

"No—not with him. Our regiment was in another part of the field. Wife!" he says inquiringly, fixing his eyes upon the woman who has just spoken.

"His wife once; but wife no longer," she answers through her tears.

"Ah?"

Turning to the older woman, he says to her:

"Mother?"

"Once his mother, sir," she replies. Then his gaze wanders to the upturned face of the little girl upon the rug who is looking at him wonderingly, and she seems frightened by his great brown beard. "Child?" he says to the younger woman.

"Yes."

He bends down and lifts the little girl to his lap, and kisses her. The little girl is shy of his presence, and seems disposed to cry at first; but he puts his hand in the pocket of his great-coat, and draws thence a stick of candy which he gives to her. This pacifies her, and she sits comfortably in John Downey's lap.

Brushing the yellow curls from the little girl's eyes, he looks at her fixedly. Something of the twinkle leaves his eyes as he looks at her, and a filmy moisture comes into them.

"I have one about her size," he explains. "How do you call this child of yours?" he asks the mother.

"Her name is Angela; but we call her little Angel for short," murmurs the younger woman.

John Downey of the —th stoops and kisses the child again, and, as he does so, he too, murmurs "Little Angel!"

In the silence that falls, then, upon those who are seated around the cheerful fire, comes the sudden sound of weeping from those two—mother and wife—who recal, in the stranger's presence, the son and husband who is lost to them. In the lack of words that has made itself felt among those thus met on this Christmas Eve, the old man—the father—sits with hidden face, and thinks of him who shall nevermore support his grey age, and failing steps. In the lapse of time that is voiceless, save with the echoes of grief, John Downey of the —th mingles the brown beard of his face with the curly hair of the child whom he holds in his lap, and is

silent.

John Downey is the first to speak when the conversation is again renewed.

"Mr. Merryweather," he says abruptly, "are you not, perhaps, wrong in giving way, in this manner, to your grief? Are you positive that your son is lost to you?"

"Of my own knowledge, no," the old man replies, lifting his head the better to answer. "But if I accept the opinion of others who were there when he fell wounded to death, and was captured, I can not but believe that he has perished in captivity."

"Pshaw!" says John Downey of the —th, as abruptly as before, and then adds hastily, "I beg pardon, Mr. Merryweather, but, was thinking of a circumstance that occurred to a friend of mine—of a similar nature to this—and concerning which every body said that the particulars most certainly proved that he had fallen a victim to a wound that he had received in battle. And, therefore, Mr. Merryweather, and ladies, I said 'pshaw!'"

The old man does not answer, but he leans his head upon his hand. The women, too, look sadly into the fire, and wipe the traces of tears from their swollen eyes.

John Downey's eyes wander from the old man to the two women, and then back to the old man, in an uncertain way, and his hand plays with little Angel's curls.

"This friend of mine," he goes on to say in an explanatory voice, "was captured in the fight to which I refer, and it was supposed that he had died whilst a prisoner in the enemy's hands. But did he die? No! not a bit of it!"

"How was that known?" the old man asks in an under tone.

"How was it known? why simply enough! It was known because he came back again, and proved, by his return, that those who had been weeping for him, and grieving at his supposed death, had been shedding their tears, and uttering their sighs, in vain!"

John Downey of the —th looks around him again with twinkling eyes, and seems to defy denial of the truth of this story. But as the old man does not seem disposed to speak, and as the women are still gazing into the fire, he continues speaking:

"Shot through the arm, and fainting from loss of blood, he was left upon the field by his comrades for dead, or mortally wounded."

"So was it with our poor Colin!" the old man murmurs.

"Ah?" answers John Downey. And then goes on:

"When the enemy had carried that position—and precious little use it was to them—they commenced to remove the prisoners to the rear. My friend went with them. In a little while after, they came running back themselves, pell-mell, and our brave boys after them. But they did not forget to hurry their prisoners on with them. Oh, no! And so you see Mr. Merryweather, they took my friend along with them."

"Yes," says the old man abstractedly.

"Now, ladies," says John Downey of the —th turning to the two women, and fixing their attention upon him by elevating his forefinger slightly, "mark what followed. My friend was fortunate enough to meet, in the enemy's hospital, a surgeon whom he had known before the war. This surgeon attended to him faithfully, and in two week's time he was about and doing. Which proves, ladies, that he did not die—don't you see?"

"He was more fortunate than our Colin," the older woman replies dejectedly.

"Certainly—to be sure! oh, yes! undoubtedly!" responds John Dow-

ney briskly. The old man looks at him inquiringly, and John Downey of the —th discovering this becomes suddenly interested in little Angel sitting upon his lap. But he is not silent long, for, perceiving that the old man is not disposed to question him, he continues on the subject of his friend.

"This friend of mine, then, having recovered, began to bestir himself in an effort to escape. On account of his wound he was not closely watched; and one dark night he managed to evade the sentinels and went forth from the hospital, a free man."

"What became of him?" asks the old man with sudden interest.

"Listen, and I will tell you," answers John Downey. "This friend of mine, after many devices, and much hardship, succeeded in crossing the enemy's lines into our own. He did not stop on the way to parley, but turned his steps towards the home of his childhood. When he reached there, he hesitated, at first, about entering the house in which his father and his mother were mourning for him as dead." When John Downey of the —th gets this far in his recital, he pauses to stoop and kiss the little face that is looking up into his. And then he goes on speaking; but his voice is a trifle lower in its tone:

"He went to his father's house, Mr. Merryweather, much as I have come to yours to-night, and remained undecided, for a little while, at the door. He had heard from friends that they believed, at home, that he had died in his captivity, and he feared to announce himself abruptly to them. Joy you know kills, sometimes, as well as grief."

"Better die from joy such as that than live to believe him dead," the old man answers.

John Downey looks into the fire for a moment and passes his hand across his brow. Then he resumes his narrative of what befell his friend:

"You can guess, Mr. Merryweather, what course my friend pursued when this fear, of the effects of a sudden surprise on those at home, came to him?"

"No—what did your friend do?"

"He went away from the house, and procured a disguise, and presented himself before his family; and so well were his features concealed that none recognized him. He wished to break the intelligence of his safety to them as gently as possible. Was that not proper, Mr. Merryweather?"

"Certainly. If your friend believed that it was better to do so, it was proper for him to have done so. Would that my poor boy could come back to me as your friend went back to those who loved him!"

"When my friend commenced to speak to those who believed him, at that moment, dead in a foreign land, he was on the point of declaring himself; but he thought better of it, and maintained his disguise until the proper moment for removing that disguise had come. When this moment came he rose from his chair and removed first"——John Downey pauses, and says abruptly, "Don't you find it rather warm in this room, Mr. Merryweather? I do."

"It is a little warm," the old man makes answer; "take off your great-coat."

"Thank you," says John Downey of the —th, removing his coat as the old man has desired, and then proceeds with his story.

"When my friend had taken off his coat—as I do mine now—his father, who was sitting before him looking at him, rose suddenly from his chair."

The old man has risen from his chair, and is looking with eager eyes as John Downey speaks these

words. There is something in the manly chest, clad in the honest Confederate gray, that meets his sight, that brings to mind the stalwart frame of him whom he mourns; and he holds his white hair from his eyes the better to look at him. But as he does so, no token of resemblance rests in the long flowing beard and hair, and the overhanging moustache of the stranger at his fireside. And so he listens mutely, whilst John Downey commences to speak again:

"His father rose from his chair, and, for a moment, my friend thought that he had recognized him; but as no token of recognition came from him in words, my friend saw that it was necessary to pursue some other course. He was disguised, you know, Mr. Merryweather and it was for this reason that his father failed to recognize him."

"What did he do next?" the old man asks with trembling eagerness.

"His next action, Mr. Merryweather, was to walk up to where his father was standing—as I walk to you now—and to place his hand upon his father's shoulder, and to look into his eyes and say to him 'is it possible father, that you do not know me; have I succeeded so well in changing my voice, and appearance, that you do not recognize your son?"

As John Downey of the —th speaks these words, his hand is resting upon Mr. Merryweather's shoulder, and his eyes, with a merry twinkle in them, are looking into those of the old man. As he speaks the women have risen, too, and are standing behind him listening anxiously.

"Wait," says the old man looking up into the merry eyes.

"There was something of Colin's voice there," murmurs the older woman.

"Is it papa come home again?" lisps little Angel. And the younger woman is silent.

But at that moment comes a sudden change over the faces of all those present. A sudden change that brings with it smiles and blinding tears combined as John Downey of the —th falls back, suddenly, a step or two, from the old man, and bursts into a loud ringing peal of laughter.

"I knew it!" he says, throwing first his wig into one corner of the room and then his false beard into another. "I knew that they wouldn't know me! Why do you stand there, father, like a rock? Mother, Mary, don't you know me? Don't you know Colin that was dead, and has come to life again?"

In the great joy that follows this announcement, words are wanting to give expression to the feelings of this happy family. In the sudden revulsion from doubt and morbid grief to the clearing up of the Mystery that had haunted the house of John Merryweather for long, sad days, there is no language, save thankful tears and hysteric laughter, to stand as witness to the banishment of that dread Presence that had sat at the old man's fireside. But, as the hours pass on, and as the town clock rings out the hours in the cold, still night, the fire in the parlor leaps more cheerfully to welcome the wanderer home.

And now shall we (my reader and I) leave them? or shall we wait a little longer to see the restored son Colin Merryweather—John Downey, now, no more—the centre of those who sit around him on that happy Christmas Eve, and telling the story over and over again, how (like the friend of his history) his life was spared in the day at Fredericksburg, and how (again like the friend in his history) God had given

him strength and skill to leave the captivity in which he was held? How, in that evasion of the toils of the spoiler, he had not forgotten little Angel, who sat upon his knee, but that he had brought from the land of the spoiler (in the package on the chair) those toys and sugar plums that would cause her blue eyes to sparkle when the next day's dawn should break upon them? And shall we still linger to see how, when this story was completed, in the shadowy hour that preceded the Holy Day, the old man—the father—knelt, and uttered prayerful thanks that the shadow had been lifted from their sorrowing hearts, and that the prop of his failing age was still left to his country, and to him?

LANGLEY HALL.

The skies are bright o'er Langley Hall,
Where sweet Autumnal breezes blow;
The passion-flower clasps the wall,
And basks in Autumn's fervid glow;
Through every space the yellow grain
Up-springs to meet the am'rous sun,
And girded is the broad domain
By forest-borders arched and dun—
Save where the restless sea-bird calls
Unto its mate from morn to dark;
And where the golden glory falls
On sails of some outgoing bark.
Lo! where the tempest hurls its spray
The grim defiant fortress stands,
A jovial warder, gaunt and grey,
Who greets his guests with mailed hands.
And she who walks these peaceful ways,
Sweet almoner of springing flowers,
That mutely syllable her praise,
In fragrance through the rosy hours—
Young heiress of this fair estate—
She little thinks how dear to me—
To her sweet presence consecrate,——
Is this white palace by the sea.

BURNT AT THE STAKE.

A TALE OF 1692.

It was a dark day for the town of Salem, in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, when Richard Sanford become Judge of the special court for the trial of the witches. He was a stern, cold, cruel man, with hardly a spark of human feeling in his breast, and with a firm, hard countenance which made the little children shrink from him in terror, and the old women of the town tremble with fright, whenever he came near them.

Judge Sanford was a man of thirty-one or two years of age, and of his life but little was known. He had passed the earlier portion of it in England, and had fled to the Colony to escape the persecution which awaited him in his own country. After his arrival in the Colony he had settled in the town of Plymouth, and had taken quite a prominent part in the affairs of the settlement. He rose rapidly from place to place, distinguished for his ability, but chiefly for that mad fanaticism, which the Puritans dignified by the name of "*religious zeal.*" When the excitement about the Salem witches arose, a special court was appointed for the trial of suspected parties, and the Governor of the Colony appointed Richard Sanford, Judge.

He came to Salem with the avowed determination of ridding the place of the evil, and he performed his duty faithfully. All that cruelty, superstition and intollerance could do to exterminate the witches, was done by him. His coming was the beginning of sorrows such as the town had never known before. Cruelty, the chief characteristic of the Puritan, reigned supreme. The most shameful and ridiculous stories were accepted as true, and the most innocent circumstances, and most playful remarks were tortured into proofs of guilt. To be anything but the most violent fanatic, was to be a witch.

The limits of this sketch forbid our entering into a full description of the state of affairs in Salem,

and so we must pass on.

One bright morning in June, in the year 1692, Richard Sanford, might have been seen passing, thoughtfully and slowly, through the streets of Salem, as if bent upon the execution of some plan, upon which he was then deliberating. His step was firm, and his keen glance surveyed every thing around him, as if seeking new victims for his court. He passed through the public streets into a long and picturesque lane, and paused before the door of a neat and tasteful cottage, and knocked; the door was opened by an old man with a calm, severe face, in which every Puritanic characteristic was intensified to the greatest possible degree. "I salute thee, Richard Sanford, thou chosen vessel of the Lord," said the old man in a stern, cold voice, "and am rejoiced to bid thee welcome to my poor house."

"Give the glory to God, my brother," said the Judge, in the broad, nasal tone, then so popular with the Puritans, "I am but an humble instrument in his hands. Is the maiden, Maude Howard, within?"

"Nay," said the old man, "she has gone out to walk. Her father was a profane, ungodly Cavalier, but I trust that the maiden may yet be one of the elect. But come in."

"Nay, not so," said the Judge; "I will continue my walk, and mayhap I may meet the maiden, and return with her."

He left the house, and passed towards the woods that bordered the edge of the town.

Earlier in the morning a merry young girl, whose proud aristocratic features at once betokened that she came from a different race—that grand old Cavalier stock so hateful to the Puritan—hurried down the street, and out into the woods that surrounded the town. It was Maude Howard on her way to meet her lover. Maude Howard was twenty years old: she was tall and queenly, and by far the most beautiful girl in Salem. She was the daughter of an English gentleman, who, having lost his wife and property, left his child, at his death, to the care of a distant relative, named John Gough, who resided in Salem, in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay.

Maude was sent over to America by the first ship that sailed, after her father's death. She was received by her guardian, and treated kindly, but with that quiet sternness which so strikingly characterized the domestic relations of the Puritans. She had been in Salem only two years, and she pined for the genial and hearty life of merry England.

Before leaving her native country, Maude had given her heart to a young officer of the royal army, the gallant Captain Henry Harcourt. He was absent in Ireland with King William, when she left England. When he returned and found that Maude had gone to America, he sold out his commission, and sailed from England. When he reached Salem it had been more than two years since he had parted from Maude. John Gough refused to allow him to visit her, and the lovers were forced to resort to stolen interviews in the woods.

Maude had yielded to her lover's importunities, and had consented to fly with him from the Colony. This morning she was going to meet him to make arrangements for their flight. They lingered in the woods, loth to separate, and almost dreading to part, lest this interview should be their last.

"And so you will go with me, Maude," said the young man tenderly caressing her head, which rested upon his shoulder.

"My heart bids me go with you,

Henry," she said in a low tone, "but something tells me that such happiness as you offer, is not in store for either of us."

"Cheer up, darling—you must not yield to your fears. They are groundless, and ———"

At this moment a distant footfall was heard, crushing the leaves, and the young man hastily telling Maude to meet him at the same spot, the next morning, prepared for flight, hastened away.

Assuming an air of carelessness, Maude strolled on through the woods, and in a few moments met with Judge Sanford, who was advancing to meet her. She started in alarm, and would have turned aside, but it was too late. She felt nothing but aversion and contempt for him, and she feared him as much as she detested him. For some time past, he had visited Gough's house quite regularly, and had paid her the most marked attention. She had tried to avoid him, but he would not be avoided. She could not avoid him now, so she walked on calmly, and with dignity.

"Good morning, Miss Howard," said the Judge, as he came up with her," you must be an ardent lover of nature, to venture alone into the woods in these unsettled times. Evil spirits love to haunt these groves, and you know not what harm may befall you here."

"I fear not them, sir," said the young woman calmly. "Heaven will protect me from all evil."

"That is a proper feeling, young lady," said her grim companion; "but it is well not to be too rash. Enough of this. I have been to your guardian's house, and not finding you there, have sought you here. I have something to say to you, which concerns both of us."

"Indeed, sir," said Maude, coldly.

"Cold and pitiless, as I may seem in the discharge of my duty," said the Judge, not heeding her, "I am but a man, and I have a heart,—a heart which, till sorrow fell like a blight upon it, was all freshness and poetry. That heart is yours, Maude Howard. From the moment that I saw you, I loved you It seemed as if the joy of my youth was coming back to me. I cannot be silent longer—I must tell you that I love you.

"It is unfortunate that you should love me. We are unsuited to each other. We could not be happy together. I do not love you ——," said Maude.

"Hear me, Maude," cried the Judge, interrupting her. "I am no humble lover. I am known and honored by all. This Colony holds no man whose power is greater than mine. I offer you riches, honor, station."

"It is vain to plead," said Maude, with dignity. "I do not love you. We had better be strangers"

"Your heart is not your own to give," said Sanford bitterly. "Beware, Maude Howard—I have you in my power. Once for all, I ask you to be my wife. Refuse me at your peril."

"Do your worst, sir," said Maude haughtily, the spirit of the old Cavalier line tinging her cheeks and flashing from her eyes. "Since you threaten me, I defy you."

She swept by him, proudly, and hurrying on was soon out of sight. Sanford watched her with a bitter, quiet smile, and passing on to the spot where the lovers had stood, examined the foot prints in the soft earth. After inspecting them for a moment, he rose, muttering sternly:

"It is as I suspected. It was the English stranger. Now, Maude Howard, we shall see whose power is greater—yours or mine."

He walked slowly back to the town.

A few hours later a file of sol-

diers halted in front of the residence of John Gough. The officer in command entered the house, and summoning Maude Howard, informed her that he was ordered to arrest her upon the charge of witchcraft, and that she must go with him. At the same time a similar party proceeded to the inn, and arrested, upon a similar charge, the young stranger, named Henry Harcourt, who was stopping there.

The court room at Salem was a large, wide apartment, hung with a heavy, dark arras, and with a raised platform at the back of the room, with a table and chair for the Judge. In front of this table was a huge and unwieldy frame work, the very sight of which made the gazer tremble. It was that terrible instrument of torture, the rack. Near it was another table, covered with instruments of torture, and articles used for the purpose of detecting witches.

Richard Sanford was seated in the Judge's chair. There was a firm, determined expression upon his face, and a malignant light in his eyes.

A man stood by the table we have described, heating in the flame of a lamp, a long steel blade. This instrument was a probe, used there for the purpose of detecting witches, and the man who held it, was Faint Not Hopeful, the Witch Doctor of Salem.

Four attendants stood by the rack, and between these men and the Judge, Henry Harcourt stood with folded arms, gazing indignantly at him.

"Prisoner," said the Judge, sternly, "the evidence against you is positive. You were seen in the woods conversing with one Maude Howard, who is known to be a witch, a most malicious witch. When I approached, you fled. This proves, beyond a doubt, that you are the accomplice of the woman. The sentence of the court is that you be taken from here, and burned at the stake until you are dead."

"I am a soldier," said Harcourt calmly, "and I know how to die; but I deny your right to inflict this punishment upon a loyal subject of their Majesties King William and Queen Mary."

"We, also, are their subjects," said Sanford, coldly, "and we are only doing our duty, to them, when we endeavor to rid this province of witchcraft. Your best plan will be to confess your guilt, and throw yourself upon the mercy of the court."

"I have told you that I am innocent of the absurd charge that you have brought against me," said the young man, proudly. "To confess that I am guilty, would be simply to utter a lie. This I will never do."

"Bind him to the rack," exclaimed the Judge.

The four attendants seized the young man, and placing him upon the bed of the rack, bound the cords to his wrists and ankles, and then, taking their places at the levers, stood ready to turn them. The Witch Doctor approached the rack, and stood watching the prisoner.

"Your doom is certain," said the Judge, sternly, "but you can save yourself much suffering. You shall acknowledge your guilt. Confess it, and you shall be released. Persist in your obstinacy, and you must suffer torture."

"You have my answer," said the young man, firmly—"I am innocent."

At a sign from Sanford the levers were turned,

"Cowards," shrieked the young man in agony.

"Confess," said the Judge.

"Never."

Another turn of the levers, and

another shriek from the sufferer. The torture was growing more intense.

"Confess."

This time there was no answer.

One of the attendants bent over the sufferer.

"He has fainted," he said, rising and turning to the Judge.

"His limbs are nearly torn asunder."

Sanford ordered the men to release him and revive him. While this was being done, an officer entered, leading Maude Howard.—Sanford rested his head upon his hand, and seemed to be collecting all of his firmness for some powerful effort. Soon he raised his head, and gazed at her coldly. As he did so, Henry Harcourt regained his consciousness, and seeing Maude, uttered her name feebly. With a sharp cry, she sprang to his side.

"Great Heaven!" she cried, "has this inhuman monster seized you, too, dear Henry?"

"I had hoped that I was alone in my misfortune—oh God! that you should be here," exclaimed the young man, faintly.

"Your voice is faint, and your face as hueless as death," said Maude, drawing closer to him.—"What have they done to you?"

"The rack—they have torn me nearly asunder," he gasped.

"This is infamous," cried the young girl indignantly. "Are you human?" she added, addressing Sanford, "are you a man or a demon?"

"Peace woman," said Sanford, sternly.

Turning from her, he commanded that all should retire from the room, and wait without until he summoned them to return. He wished to examine the witch alone.

When the chamber was cleared, and Maude remained standing alone by the table, he rose hastily and approached her.

"Maude Howard," he cried, hoarsely, "you are in my power. Your lover has been condemned to die. He has already suffered the most terrible torture, and to-morrow he will be publicly executed."

"No! no! Richard Sanford, spare him. He is innocent. I call on Heaven to witness his innocence."

"He has been condemned and must suffer," said Sanford coldly.

"But you can save your life. I have offered you my hand—it is not too late to accept it. I can, and will save you upon this condition."

"I can die," replied the young girl calmly.

"Woman," cried the Judge, almost frantically, stretching out to her his hands, which trembled violently, "Woman, I love you. In the name of Heaven do not subject yourself to the terrible torture that awaits you. Every pang that you will suffer wil be felt by me. Maude, I entreat you, let me save you."

"You love me!" she cried scornfully. "Heaven forgive you for the lie you utter. You know that I am innocent of the crime with which you charge me, and yet you will not save me except upon conditions to which I prefer death."

Great drops of sweat beaded the pallid brow of the Judge. He threw himself upon his knees, and raising his clasped hands, cried frantically,

"Maude do not drive me mad. I cannot bear to consign you to the terrible doom that awaits you. On my knees I implore you to accept my hand. You must not, you shall not die!"

"Then save me—save both of us"—said Maude quickly.

"I have named my conditions" said the judge, rising and calming himself by a powerful effort,—"Do you accept them?

"No," was the firm reply.—"Death with the man I love is more welcome than life with one that I abhor."

"You are lost," said the Judge coldly. He resumed his seat and rang a small bell on his table. An officer entered, and he ordered him to open the doors and admit the other prisoner and the attendants. In a few moments all had resumed their places. The Judge was silent for a moment. Then he began slowly:

"I have examined the maiden. Her guilt is plain."

Turning to the Witch Doctor, he ordered him to examine the young girl's person, and if any marks were found upon it to plunge his probe into them. In spite of her resolution to be firm, Maude shuddered. Harcourt, who had been resting heavily in the arms of his supporters, rose with difficulty as he heard this cruel order, and exclaimed feebly,

"Stay! She is innocent. Do with me as you will, but spare her."

"I shall not feel it, dear Henry, said the young girl," going to him and taking his hand, "I will bear it bravely,—not a groan or a sigh shall escape my lips."

The Witch Doctor approached, and taking her by the arm said to her rudely,

"I must search for the devil's mark, young woman."

He led her away, and in a few moments had stripped her to her waist. She did not shrink, as she stood there among those cruel men, with her fair and beautiful form exposed to their rude gaze. Harcourt hid his face in his hands and wept like a child, and the Judge cast his eyes upon the floor, and his stern face grew as pale as marble, in the effort to control himself.

The Witch Doctor held his probe in the flame of the lamp, and as he did so, ran his eyes searchingly over the young girl's form. She bore the scrutiny without flinching. The spirit of the whole Cavalier race was in her blood then, and nerving her with firmness. Suddenly the Witch Doctor uttered an exclamation of delight, as his keen eye detected a small red spot upon her breast. Instantly the heated probe glittered before her eyes, and then it was plunged into her bosom.

It was more than her woman's nature, heroic as it was, could endure. With a piercing shriek she staggered and was falling to the ground, when Harcourt sprang forward and received her in his arms, and kneeling by her, endeavored to staunch the blood that was flowing from the wound. The Judge had risen to his feet. He trembled violently, and his eyes were bloodshot, as he gazed wildly upon the scene.

"Look up Maude," said her lover tenderly. "They shall not harm you again. They shall kill me, but shall not harm you."

"I did not mean to be so weak, dearest," she whispered faintly; "but the pain was so terrible. I tried to spare you this suffering, but I could not repress the cry."

"Oh Maude! could I die to save you," he murmured tearfully.

"We shall die together, Henry," she said gently, all the while striving to keep back the groans that her agony sought to wring from her. "We shall not be parted. There is a land where sorrow never comes. There we shall be happy and at rest."

All this while the Judge had been standing, watching them, like one in a dream. Now, he spoke slowly, and in a hollow voice pronounced the doom of each. Maude was to suffer death, by fire, at sun-set, that evening, and her lover was to meet the same fate at sunrise, the next morning.

They were separated and led away, and long after all the attendants had left the court room, the

Judge still sat there. It was late when he returned to his lodgings, and during the long afternoon and night, he paced his chamber, lost in the deepest gloom. A stern, guilty expression always rested upon his countenance afterwards, and when he died, long years after the execution of Maude Howard, he suffered the most fearful pangs of remorse.

At sunset a crowd collected in the public square of Salem. In the centre of the place was a large stake surrounded by a pile of faggots, and to this stake Maude Howard was chained.

Just as the sun began to sink into the west, lighting up the strange scene with a soft and subdued radiance, circling the head of the innocent victim of cruelty and superstition with a halo of light, the executioner fired the pile—the flames flared up wildly, and had almost hidden the form of the young girl from view, when a violent commotion was seen in the crowd. A man burst through the throng, and rushing towards the stake, sprang upon the pile, and falling upon his knees, clasped the young girl around the waist, and resting his head upon her breast, cried,

"Maude, Maude, we will die together."

It was Henry Harcourt.

The sun went down and the darkness came on—the flames hissed and leaped up around the devoted pair. Not a cry nor a groan escaped them. Locked in each other's arms they yielded to the rage of the devouring element.—When the moon arose, only a heap of smouldering embers, and a mass of blackened bones remained where the stake and the victims had been.

Oh, God! in whose sight the blood of the martyrs is precious, it is Thy just retribution that is scourging the land, whose enormities have so long cried to Thee for vengance.

IN THE SNOW.

How it ever happened that they should have married each other, would have astonished any one not accustomed to the *marriages of convenience* of English society. Thank Heaven, in this country, as a general thing, people marry as they choose, because they like each other. But this last, though, doubtless, by far the best plan, is scarcely practicable in a country which possesses a titled nobility. Like the marriages of kings and queens, it is of too much importance to too many persons to be the result of chance, whim, or even affection.

Marriages usually take people by surprise. Elderly single ladies, waspish young ladies, and gossiping married ladies almost invariably concur in the opinion that it is the strangest, most unprecedented procedure. "So unsuited to each other, you know." But though it may be laid down as a rule, that the opinion which a woman *expresses* about a marriage, is wrong and not really her opinion, still in this case—as there are exceptions to all rules—every body said, and every body thought that when Madeleine, youngest daughter of Lord Blanton, became Lady Madeleine Guilford, it was the strangest match, and that they were totally unsuited to each other; and, for a wonder, every body was right.

Three months before the bridal day, Lord Guilford had left his castle in a wild and inaccessible glen in Scotland, where he had voluntarily shut himself up with his books and his tenants, since he was twenty-three years old; and now his hair was turning grey, and there were deep wrinkles on his broad forehead. He had come on a

short visit to Lord Blanton, not for friendship's sake, but to examine an old illuminated missal in Lord B.'s library, which could not be procured elsewhere.

Madeleine was a school girl, yet under the charge of a governess. Gossipping old ladies did not even think of her, and for once they had to open their eyes in real astonishment, when, the day before Lord Guilford's return to his home, it was announced that Madeleine would be married to his lordship on that day two months.

In vain the neighbors tried to make something romantic of it; the facts were obstinate, and would not be romantic. Lord Guilford had some good points, but he was undeniably old and eccentric. Madeleine gave some promise, but she was now merely a shy schoolgirl of seventeen. "A matter of convenience," they said, and some abused the lover, and some the father.

However, in two months, Lord Guilford returned, and the marriage of convenience was consummated with great splendour, and the poor little sobbing bride accompanied her strange and silent husband to his castle in the wild, bleak glen of Scotland. The honeymoon was what might have been expected; indeed it was no honeymoon at all. He soon grew accustomed to his wife, and she soon learned to stand in awe of him. With him every feeling seemed to be worn out, and nothing human seemed capable of awakening more than a passing notice. With her no feeling had ever been awakened, and as time passed he experienced a dreary sort of relief that there was no probability that they should ever have any children; while poor Madeleine shivered outside the pale of human love as she sat by her husband's fireside, gazing at him while he bends over his black letter volumes, with every thought and interest a thousand miles and a thousand years away from her.

Gradually Madeleine knew there was a secret, and one day when she had been sick, her nurse, an old woman who had been born and lived all her life in the castle, told her that more than twenty years ago, Lord Guilford had been gay and worldly, (in fact some people said a very dissipated) man. However, he was very handsome and very wealthy, and people forgave all that. One hunting season he had staid at home all the summer, and hunted a great deal, but it seemed with poor success. One day an old man, who seemed bowed with grief, came to the castle and had a long talk in private with the father of the present Lord Guilford, and the next day the old man, who was a tenant of the estate, disappeared together with his only child, a daughter. Then came black looks in the castle, and high words between father and son —sullen, angry, dangerous looks and words. Then the young man went away, and in a few months his father died, and Lord Parke Guilford returned to the castle and shut himself up and received no company. A year afterwards, on a stormy December night, a woman entered his library. No one knew how she got there. She was poorly clad and her clothes were dripping with rain, and her eyes were bright with fever. The man-servant who was in the room, said that when Lord Guilford saw this woman he dropped like one dead. When he came to he took her in his arms and carried her to his own chamber, and, ordering all the servants away, he sent for this old nurse who, with his assistance, undressed the girl and laid her in his own bed. She was very ill, and seemed "flighty." He had

told the nurse to prepare a delicate supper and bring it up. also some wine, and, when she had executed his commands, he ordered her away, and no one entered the room again for two days.

All night Lord Guilford remained with the dying woman, and they heard low whispering in the room. A little after midnight all was still, and for two days no sound was heard in that chamber. At length the servants gathered around the door and knocked and called, timidly at first, then loudly —in vain, all was still. Then they broke open the door and found him sitting by the bed holding the hand of the dead woman. He woke from a sort of dream to a terrible anger at their intrusion, and drove them all from the room. Afterward he called the old nurse and told her to prepare the body for burial, and send for the old sexton and have a vault opened in the castle chapel, and to send word to the Clergyman to come and perform the burial service. "I laid her out," said the nurse, "in the night dress which she wore when she died. She was young and beautiful, more beautiful than"—she glanced at Madeleine, then recollecting herself, said—"than almost any woman I ever saw.' She was buried that evening, and I have never seen Lord Guilford smile since."

That was the story that maddened the young wife, and she went to the chapel, and saw the splendid tomb, ornamented with all the skill of sculpture and blazonry of heraldry. "To the memory of Jean, wife of Parke, Lord Guilford." This maddened her still more, for in her heart she believed the inscription was a lie.

She went straight to the library. As her eyes fell on her husband, his noble figure was bent over a book—he seemed bowed by a nameless —— what? Guilt, she thought. Then she told him in bitter, stinging words, all she had heard, what she believed, her anger, her indignation. Her young child's voice was sharp, and every word seemed to sting him. Then she demanded a separation, instant and forever.

"Do not let us make ourselves ridiculous, child," he said coldly. Then he added, almost fiercely, "And not for your sake, nor for mine, shall the name of that angel woman ever come before a court of law. But you can return to your father's house, and I will provide for you amply. Go—start to-morrow. Every thing shall be arranged for you." Until this moment, he had been unnaturally calm; but now, his voice became hoarse and raised, and his eyes blazed with a white fury. Go—and never let me see your cursed face again. For that woman's sake I hate you."

She left him when she heard those words, vowing that she never would see him again. The next day she returned to her father's. Seven months afterwards, her first child was born. A formal letter from Lord Blanton, acquainted Lord Guilford with the fact. It was answered by a call from his Lordship's lawyer, who, in the name of the child's father, settled a property upon it. The poor child only lived six weeks, and before its mother left her chamber, the heir of the Guilfords was laid at rest in the tomb of the Blantons. A letter, still more formal than the other, from Lord Blanton, announced the child's death, and this was answered by a visit from the clergyman of the church near Lord Guilford, bringing word from his Lordship, that the body of the child must be removed to the vaults of Guilford Castle, which was accordingly done.

To be a wife and a mother, developes a woman's character, and

Madeleine *was* a woman now. For the short time that her child had been left to her, she had loved it, as a woman loves who has nothing else on earth to care for or to care for her, but after some months, she commenced to go out into the gay society of London, and gradually became engulfed in the whirlpool of fashion. She was quite pretty, but no one would have called her beautiful. She was rather small and delicate looking, with soft, gray eyes and brown hair. She became quite a *belle* in society, and seemed to enjoy very much those pleasures which she had never tasted before. But in her gayest moments there was an undertone touchingly mournful. At last she met some one to love her, and she was not so sad. He was a young man, that is, young in years, but old in the ways of the world, and handsome, with a slight *roue* look in his haughty face. He loved her as such men love, and she loved him without knowing it—purely, for she was pure.

Did the time pass heavily in Guilford Castle, after its mistress was gone? No! It was as if the cat upon the hearth had sought another home, as if one of the pictures in the never-used grand parlor had disappeared from its frame—it was gone. They all knew it but no one cared.

At length Lord Guilford's studies came to a halt. There was a volume which he must have, and there was but one in the world, and that one was in the Library at Gottingen. So he made up his mind, had his valise packed, and started for Gottingen. When he got there, he examined the volume—it was all he expected. It was more, but the information could not be complete until he had examined another volume, and this was to be found only in Paris. So he started for Paris.

In this route, one must go through Switzerland, and one must cross the Alps. This was a great undertaking for Napoleon with his army. But for a single individual, in good weather, it was neither very hazardous, nor a very long journey. Having travelled for some time he reached an inn, high on the side of the mountain. Its owner was its only inhabitant. As it was late in the evening, he concluded to stay there through the night. The next day, when he awoke, he could not help noticing the unusual brightness of the morning. It was a lovely spring day, and the air was as balmy as June. A splendid day for travelling, he thought, but the innkeeper and the postillion shook their heads. After breakfast, he ordered the cabriolet, and said he would proceed immediately on the journey, but when the driver went to hitch the horses, he found that one of them had gotten loose and strayed off; so with the innkeeper for a guide, he started off in search of him. They were gone some time—the sun was high in the heavens—it was midday, and the air was like summer. Lord Guilford sat alone in the kitchen of the old inn, which room served for parlor, dining room, and chamber—for the house had but one room. He had been waiting impatiently for the return of the postillion, but now some abstruse calculation filled his mind, and he looked abstractedly into the ashes of the fire, which, on account of the heat, had been suffered to go out. Gradually, in the midst of his thoughts, he became aware of a sound, a low distant rumbling, ever growing nearer, but he heard it without thinking of it. It came very near—presently a crunching sound as of a heavy vehicle striking a rock, and then a crash, as if the vehicle had broken to pieces. It roused him—he looked up and listened. Everything was perfectly still, and the

sun shone brightly on the snow of the calm distant peaks. He looked from the window. There were no signs of the return of the postillion. With a muttered curse he settled himself to his thoughts again. He had scarcely been seated a second, when some one entered the room hastily.

"For the love of God, help me," cried a woman's voice. There was a faint undertone in it, which was familiar to him. He looked up. Her face and form were still more familiar to him, but he could not quite remember who it was. Two years had wrought changes in her, but two years have no such power when one is over forty, and she knew him in a moment.

"Lord Guilford," she exclaimed. Surprise lent to her voice something of childish sharpness, and the old undertone of fear. He knew her now.

"Madeleine," he exclaimed, fiercely.

She turned quickly to leave him, but he caught her arm, and held her tightly, almost roughly.

"Stay! you are in distress. One must help even his enemies, and there is no one but me near to help you. What is the matter?"

He had scarcely uttered the words, when high above them there was a mighty crash, as if a mountain peak had fallen. It seemed hundreds of miles away, and yet horribly near. Both started and listened, and Madeleine, unconsciously drew nearer to Lord Guilford; for in any danger a woman involuntarily seeks protection from a man, no matter how much, under ordinary circumstances, she may fear or dislike him. It is the natural confidence of the weak in the strong, of the fearful in the fearless. It is a woman's animal instinct to shrink from danger; it is a man's animal instinct to shield her from it.

They listened intently. Crash after crash succeeded each other, as of some immense falling body leaping from crag to crag, and, accompanying it, was a soft, confused sound, as of dripping spray, and a distant murmur like echoed thunder. The sound did not approach slowly. Terrified as they were, it seemed only a few seconds, when a rush of air, terribly cold, seemed to shake the house, strong as it was, to its very foundation; and a second after, one corner of the house was half crushed in, and they were enveloped in total darkness: and then they heard the sound still descending, but so muffled, so distant, that they felt the jar rather than heard the sound.

Madeleine clung to him in the darkness.

"What is it?" she whispered, hoarsely.

"The avalanche," he replied in a tone as low as hers. Then they stood still, as if waiting for something. One moment of such waiting seems an age, and when Lord Guilford groped to the mantelpiece and lighted a candle, and they looked at each other, it seemed hours—years—since they had seen each other's faces. Curiously and eagerly they looked at each other, glad, in spite of themselves, that at least one human presence was spared to them in the awful solitude. And for the first time, since their marriage, that sense that they were one, that neither "height nor depth, nor any other creature," could annul that fact, and far more distinctly than when they really heard it from the robed Priest, came to both the remembrance of those words, "whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder." After all, a man's wife, or woman's husband, though neither loved, respected, nor esteemed, is nearer than any other human being can be.

Madeleine started, and exclaimed.

"My mother."

"Where is she?"

"In the carriage."

"And where is that?"

"When it turned over it was a long way from here—as far as from the gate to the house at Guilford Castle."

"She is lost then. A hundred men could not dig the snow from here in time to save her. She is probably dead now."

Madeleine threw herself in a chair, covered her face with her hands, and was silent. Lord Guilford looked around the room carefully. It was a small room; the walls, roof and floor were of brick and stone, built very thick and strong. It was furnished with a few chairs, two beds, a table, and a mat before the fireplace—all common and rough. There was a cupboard, which contained a little crockery ware and a few wooden platters. There was a pile of wood in one corner, by which lay an axe and a hatchet, and in another corner rested a ladder and some ropes. On one side was a sort of closet. He opened the door and found that it contained stores of eatables, and that it, in its turn, opened into a small stable built on to the house, which held two goats.

The shed had been crushed, but lay in such a manner as still to protect the goats. Having completed his survey, he returned to the kitchen, and taking out his pocket book, wrote in it, "Parke, Lord Guilford, and Lady Madeleine Guilford, buried under an avalanche, May 4th, 18—, 25 minutes past 12 o'clock, midday." He read this aloud, but Madeleine made no remark.

"There is no time to lose," he said, "I must try to dig up to the air. If we remain here we shall suffocate."

Still Madeleine was silent. She seemed to have resigned herself to her doom.

Failing to find a spade, Lord Guilford took the shovel from the fireplace, and then looking around, seemed to be trying to decide from what point to attempt the ascent. There were but two possible points, the chimney and the broken corner of the building. He decided upon the latter, and removing some rubbish and bricks, soon made a hole in the wall, larger than himself. He succeeded for a few moments in clearing a space upwards, of about two feet, throwing the snow down into the room, as he cut it, for there was no other place to throw it. Presently he worked more slowly. The snow was hard, and the shovel would not break it, and he was numb with cold, and dared not make a fire lest it should exhaust the little oxygen remaining in the air, and on which their lives depended. He descended into the hut, and stood by the fireplace.

"We must die Madeleine. The snow is too hard to cut, and all the air will soon be gone."

She looked at him for a moment, as if struggling to comprehend him. She shivered and glanced around.

"It is cold," she said.

His heart was human. He had loved a woman, and he felt pity for this woman, who, after all, was his wife. He went to her and took her hand. It was very cold.

"My God! she is freezing to death," he cried in tones of impotent agony. "Madeleine, Madeleine, you must walk," he said, shaking her violently, and striving to make her walk.

"Don't! I am tired. Let me alone," she said, sullenly.

Cold as it was, he took his coat off, and wrapt it around her and then walked up and down the floor dragging her with him. Presently

the movement seemed to give her new life, and she walked without his assistance. Lord Guilford stumbled over something. It was a hatchet. He seized it eagerly.

"Can you walk now?" he inquired of Madeleine. She seemed somewhat aroused to her danger, and said she could. Hastily snatching a blanket from one of the beds, he took his coat, put it on, and then the blanket around her.

Again he commenced the weary task of cutting his way to light and life. The snow yielded to the hatchet, and fell into the room, where Madeleine threw it aside, and as he advanced he used the ladder. On, he went, making a space just large enough for himself, for he feared to fill up the hut with snow. Every now and then he would call down.

"Madeleine, are you walking?" and she would answer "yes." Then went on the sharp chop, chop—scratch, scratch, of the hatchet against the hard snow. He worked on, cold, half suffocated. What will not a man do to save his life? At length the snow above him seemed lighter—he looked down—below him was the narrow pass some twenty feet deep. He had been hours in cutting it. The air was so dense he could scarcely breathe. He worked more feebly. He heard Madeleine cry, gaspingly;

"My God! Parke——I am dying—I cannot breathe—save me—air—air—"

He made no reply, he clenched his teeth, and with a violent effort, worked more quickly. At length the light came in through a tiny fissure, not so large as his hand. Still it was air, it was life. It took but a few moments to make the fissure as large as the rest of the channel. He instantly descended into the hut. Madeleine was revived by the air, and was still walking. He took a loaf of bread from the closet, and divided it with her. They both devoured their shares eagerly. He then explained to her that he must cut another channel up from the chimney before they could make any fire. When this channel had been cut, they built a fire, and he looked at his watch. They had been buried beneath the avalanche for sixteen hours. Madeleine found bread and meat in the closet, and set it on the table, with knives and plates. Then they sat down and ate their meal in silence. They gave no thanks. They were drawn into a forced contact by circumstances. They were, to a certain degree, dependant on each other, but neither of them could forget, or quite forgive the past. Therefore they sat in silence, looking down into their plates. When it was over, they sat down by the fire. After a while Lord Guilford looked at his watch. It was six o'clock in the morning. Day was breaking, but they were tired, and must sleep.

"Madeleine, are you sleepy?" he asked.

"No," she replied, coldly.

"Are you tired?"

"No."

"I am both sleepy and tired. I will lie down to sleep, if you will promise me to keep the fire burning, and to wake me, if you wish to sleep. We are surrounded by so much danger, that one of us must watch all the time. Will you promise?"

"Yes," she replied, and without another word he laid down, and was soon asleep.

"Madeleine gazed at him while he slept. It was this same, stern, fixed, prematurely old face, that had startled the sleep from her pillow so many, many nights. It was not a hard face, or a bad face, but sorrow and suffering seemed to have stamped themselves over and over again on every feature. That face

had frozen her young feelings in their spring. She could not forgive it, but at length she did it justice. She had thought that there was guilt in it. Her judgment had been the crude judgment of a child. She was older now, and knew that there was no guilt, no remorse, in all that settled sorrow. To ignoble minds, it hardens, and shuts out mercy to be compelled to do justice; but it softens noble minds, and they are inclined to go even farther than is necessary in their change of opinion. Madeleine's mind was noble, and as she watched her sleeping husband, her feelings softened inexpressibly towards him. She, too, had suffered. She could pity him now. Then she remembered her child, and that this was the first time, since its birth, that she had seen his father's face. Oh!, mysterious tie of wifehood, and of motherhood! tie which no time, no changes, no wrong can efface. "He is my child's father."

Madeleine crept closer to the sleeping man; she knelt by him for a long time.

"For my baby's sake," she said, in a tone of inexpressible tenderness, and bent over and kissed him. She went back to the fire, put on more wood, and sat down and watched. She thought of her lover. She had loved him, but she was pure, and when he told her of his love, her scorn, her purity, had driven him from her presence.—Then her thoughts went back to the old days at Guilford, sad and tiresome days, and she thought of the blazoned tomb, and the beautiful dead woman who was lying there, still and cold, with clasped white hands. Indeed, she seemed to think of almost every thing as she watched, for he slept many hours. It was near sun-down when he woke. He turned to where she sat by the fire, and thought he had never seen any thing more beautiful than her gentle face, with its soft brown hair.

"Madeleine."

She arose and went to him.

"My Lord."

She had always called him "My Lord," but there was something different in its cadence. She seemed changed. Her manner had the expression of a woman who feels that she is in the presence of the father of her child.

"You must be tired now, lie down, I will watch." He rose and walked unsteadily to the fire. She was indeed almost exhausted, and she lay down, without speaking, and was soon in her turn fast asleep.

It was his turn now to gaze at this child's face, which had become a woman's face; to reflect, to repent, to do justice, and he too thought remorsefully of the little baby that he had never seen, whose life and whose death had not awakened a single feeling. He felt now that he had wronged his child and its mother.

Two days passed. Their manner towards each other grew kinder, and sometimes some trifling attention would bring a strange thrill to their hearts. Out of doors it was a warm spell. The snow was melting there, too. The third day Lord Guilford woke with a high fever. He was too weak to rise. Oh! the days that followed. Lord Guilford ill, no one to care for him, but this frail creature, utterly cut off from all human assistance.—How unceasingly, how tenderly, she nursed him. But a time came when nursing would do no good, and she sat by him, and leaned over him in agony.

"Oh Parke! Parke! do not die," she cried, gathering his head in her frail arms, and pressing it to her bosom.

"Why not?" he asked, faintly smiling.

"Because—because, I love you."

"Wife!"

"Husband!"

And in those two words love and forgiveness were complete.

"Let us pray for God's help," she said, and with clasped hands they prayed.

There are times when God seems to answer prayer directly. It was so in this case; even while they prayed they heard the sound of human voices. A company of the mountain peasants, accompanied by two old monks, who lived in a monastery on this wild peak, knowing there were persons in this inn had set out to try to save them, if they should be yet alive. The snow, which had melted away a great deal, was soon cleared from the house, and the strangers entered the room. The monks had, as all monks in these regions have, some knowledge of medicine, and they prescribed for and assisted Lord Guilford. They removed him, together with his wife, to the monastery, and in a few weeks he recovered. The first day that he could sit up his Lordship wrote in his pocket-book—"Parke, Lord Guilford, and his wife, Lady Madeleine Guilford, rescued from death May 15th, 18—, three o'clock in the evening."

The bodies of Lady Blanton and her servants, and of the innkeeper and postilion, were found after a long while.

Guilford Castle is brighter now, for Lady Madeleine is a wife indeed. At last, at last, "they two are one." God led them "by a path they knew not," "into his perfect day."

BOHEMIANA.

Richmond is a world within itself. It is no longer the Richmond of old, it is the Confederacy—the world. Here we have all kinds and classes of people—representatives of nearly every race under Heaven. The Bohemian goes about town a great deal, and keeps his eyes and ears open. He sees much that he had hoped never to witness in the South, and much to make him ashamed of his nativity. He does not profess to be wiser than the rest of the world, but he does claim to be more observant than most men.

The Bohemian knows many persons, who are not all that they should be, and who, in his estimation, are very far from being either good citizens, or patriots.

One of these is Mr. Grindem. Mr. Gideon Grindem, of the great house of Grindem and Squeeze, is, or was before the war, a merchant. When our troubles came on he was a wealthy man, and had almost made up his mind to retire from business. But when he saw the Southern ports blockaded and found such a scanty supply of goods in the market, he determined to remain in business, and add "a little more," as he said, to his fortune. He immediately bought up all the goods he could find money to pay for, and filled his large warehouse with them, and then closed the doors. When asked why he did not continue business, Mr. Gideon Grindem would reply that he was afraid to risk anything until he could see his way more clearly. The doors of the great house remained closed for many months, and at last, when the goods commanded prices, which then seemed almost fabulous, they were opened. When the year closed the great house of Grindem and Squeeze had cleared a quarter of a million of dollars.

After the blockade business became fashionable the great house of Grindem and Squeeze entered the auction business. Then Mr. Gideon Grindem was in his glory.

The Bohemian often visits these auctions, and there he sees the large and domineering figure of Mr. Gideon Grindem strutting up and down the room listening with ill-concealed eagerness to the bidding. Very often when the Bohemian thinks the goods are going enormously high, and while he is ruefully thinking that it will be a long time before he can indulge in the luxury of new clothes, he hears the loud sharp tones of Mr. Grindem to the salesman—"take them down, sir; we can't afford to sell at this rate—it is ruinous—ruinous." Immediately the goods go up. A sly peep into the books of the great house of Grindem and Squeeze, would reveal the fact that the goods sold at these "*ruinous*" rates bring the house nearly a hundred thousand dollars profit.

The next Sunday the Bohemian, who goes to church quite regularly, sees Mr. Gideon Grindem march up the aisle, enter his pew and exhibit to the congregation the most beautiful piety. When the collection is taken up, he puts in a dollar note, always taking care that it shall be one that he thinks he will find difficult to get rid of in his business. When he is asked for a donation to any charitable object, he gives a five dollar note, of the old issue. Sometimes Mr. Grindem is called on to lead in prayer, and he always prays the most eloquent and appropriate prayers—for it is very proper that the great house of Grindem and Squeeze should sometimes condescend to pray.

Mr. Grindem is very patriotic—he thinks it a shame that the currency should depreciate so much—but he never forgets to advance his prices, as gold increases in value. He has great sympathy for the soldier, so much that he does not hesitate to charge him a month's pay for a single pair of woollen gloves.

Mr. Grindem looked over his books a few days ago, and found that he was worth a million of dollars. As he grows wealthier, the characteristics that have been mentioned here grow more striking. He thinks he is a most excellent citizen, a model patriot, and a consistent member of the Church.

It is the opinion of the Bohemian that Mr. Gideon Grindem of the great house of Grindem and Squeeze is a fine specimen of that class of *patriots (?)* known to the world as extortioners, and he reads in the good book that an extortioner is no better than a murderer or a thief.

Sometimes, when the night is fair, the Bohemian walks abroad and sees what he may see. In those walks come pleasant memories—sad in the recollections of days gone by, and of gala nights when the familiar form accompanied him, and the familiar voice sounded in his ear: but as he walks the streets on these nights his mind goes out to hill and to valley, and to desolate plain, where are the old companions of his happier, pleasanter walks; some wrapped in the coarse blanket, and with the great glare of camp fires falling upon them; some watchful and waking, staring ceaselessly through the night, and marking the gleam of the hostile bayonet; some sleeping the soldier's sleep, in their country's earth, or beneath the clods of the foeman's soil.

The lights flare out as cheerfully as of yore; the great streets are as busy with people moving to and fro as before that time when the desolation fell upon us; the houses are there and the public places are there; but the forms of those whose absence we deplore are absent in the picture.

And so it is that, on these nights that attend the departure of the Old Year, the Bohemian looks around him with a sad remembrance of other times, and feels

like talking familiarly with those who read his words, but know him not.

And thus, oh reader, would he speak briefly to you:

In the great travail through which our country is passing to-day—in the agony that attends this birth of a new nation—in the thought of the labor and sacrifices that we are called upon to make, we must not stand with listless hands, and give no heed to the fateful struggles that are going on around us. There are those—and the knowledge of them is not confined to the Bohemian alone—who are worshipping, as of old worshipped the apostate Isrelites, the golden image that they have raised up to be the object of their adoration. In this worship comes something more than the ordinary lust for gold. In its train follows a multitude of evils whereof the blind devotees of Mammon have no thought or knowledge. With it come all doubt and uncertainty, and weak-minded fears for the future. Gathering about, cluster the evil spirits of decay and disintegration; and the man who to-day amasses gold in the hour of his country's peril, doubts the success of the cause upon which we have staked our earthly hopes; and he who doubts (not honestly, but cunningly, and with an eye to ultimate gain) is a traitor to the cause.

When the story of a bloody, desperate struggle is brought to us, allied with the pitiful recital of how our men were borne backward in the savage fight by the divisions, against battallions, of the enemy, the Bohemian marks how, for each drop of Confederate blood, uselessly shed in the attempt to storm a position, the percentage rises in the price of the gold dollar. He sees, then, arise the bird of ill-omen darkening, with its gloomy wings, the weak hopes of the workers in gold, and he sees, too, how, beneath the shadow that rests upon the land, quivering with the mournful record of an unsuccessful conflict, the busy priests of the accursed Plutus walk among the people and gather from them the metallic currency, whereof can no revolution, or turn of war, change the value.

And, when the Bohemian sees these things, he turns his gaze to the homestead—oftimes humble and poverty-stricken—of the soldier. There he sees Want, it may be, but not Doubt. Around the lonely fireside sit those who have sent their all to the hopeful struggle. In the quiet of the night, and when the wild winds are boisterous about the gables, the father, and mother, and wife—it may be—of him who has gone to the wars sit, and talk of him who is absent. Has a battle been fought? If so, and if the object of their prayerful converse have borne part in it, the voices are silent around the fireside. But, has a battle been fought, and have they heard from the absent one? Then does the proud look of the father's face grow prouder, and then is the happy smile upon the faces of mother and wife deepened as they read of the charge, and the rout, and how the day was won.

There is no repining here at what time may bring with it. No fear, save that nameless fear that owes its birth to the peril that surrounds him of whom they speak. His country is their country, the cause for which he perils life and limb is their cause; and so, in and out of season, amid the exultation of victory, or the clamors that arise from the workers in gold when the suppression of disaster falls upon the land, they speak cheerfully of the glorious ending that will come to the efforts that our people are making to-day.

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