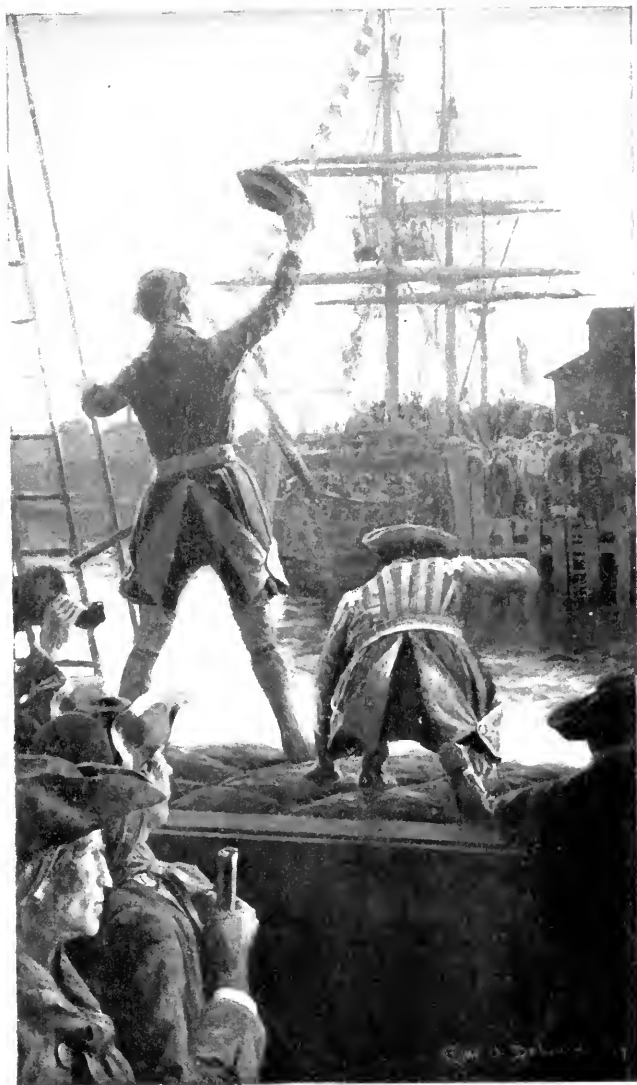




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FIFE AND DRUM AT
LOUISBOURG



FIFE AND DRUM AT LOUISBOURG

BY

J. MACDONALD OXLEY

Illustrated by

CLYDE O. DE LAND

TORONTO
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FROM DRAWINGS BY CLYDE O. DE LAND.

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FIFE AND DRUM AT LOUISBOURG.

CHAPTER I.

THE POMEROY TWINS.

“PRINCE” and “Pickle” were the pride and despair of the Pomeroy's. That is to say, Prince was the pride, and Pickle the despair; and yet how hotly good Mistress Pomeroy would have resented the suggestion that the one did not hold as big a place in her warm heart as the other!

What made their many differences of disposition and temperament all the more remarkable was, that they were twins, and bore so close a resemblance that when Pickle assumed a serious air, as he could admirably on occasion, he looked so

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much like Prince that the short-sighted pedagogue whose school they attended was unable to determine which was which, until he had peered through his glasses at the tips of their noses, Pickle's being adorned with a big brown freckle, while Prince's was speckless.

Lest such staid and sensible members of the Massachusetts Commonwealth as the Pomeroy's should be suspected of unduly aristocratic aspirations on the one hand, and of a lack of just concern for the rights of childhood on the other, it should be explained that they were not really responsible for the striking names their two boys bore.

The youngsters had practically named themselves, the quiet dignity of the one soon winning for him the flattering soubriquet of "Prince," while the mercurial mischievousness of the other brought upon him the no less appropriate nickname of "Pickle."

The baptismal register showed that their rightful appellations were respectively Brad-

ford and Sewall, they being thus named in honor of two of the worthy old Puritans through whom their father had come by his odd patronymic of Preserved Pomeroy; but in spite of diligent paternal effort they got to be so universally known as "Prince" and "Pickle" that even Mr. Pomeroy himself, in unguarded moments, fell into the use of those very convenient handles when he wished to lay hold of one or other of them.

Despite the Puritan rigor of discipline that prevailed, the Pomeroy household was a very hearty and happy one. It was the day when a multitude of olive-branches made good cause for righteous pride, and families that did not run into double figures were lightly esteemed.

Thus to the Pomeroy there came no less than seventeen children in all, of whom the great majority reached man's estate.

Prince and Pickle occurred about midway in this imposing quiverful, and were therein well treated by destiny, their experiences at home pleasantly illustrating the classic

proverb "In the midst you walk safest;" for they in large measure escaped the responsibilities of their elder brothers, while they yet had those younger than themselves over whom they could exercise authority.

It was a much more serious affair being a child in those "good old days" than it is in these degenerate times. Hardly one tithe of the comforts and conveniences now taken as a matter of course were known to our sturdy forefathers.

When Prince and Pickle, who made the mistake of choosing midwinter to be born in, were but a week old, they must needs be taken to the meeting-house to be baptized. So bitter was the cold in the sacred edifice, destitute of all means of heating, that the ice had to be broken in the christening bowl!

No wonder that Pickle, true to his nature, screamed in indignant protest when the icy drops fell upon his warm soft face, and that Prince shrank and shivered, although he cried not.

Nor was the Pomeroy residence much

warmer than the meeting-house, except within the cosey ingle-nook, or in the immediate vicinity of the great blazing wood fire; and when the children grew out of their mother's immediate care, and had to look after themselves, the advent of bedtime in winter was regarded with lively dread, not so much because of the darkness of the halls and bedrooms, as because it meant leaving the genial torrid zone below for the drear arctic regions above.

Lively and energetic as Master Pickle was while daylight lasted, or within the cheery radius of the fire's fierce rays during early evening, he sobered down wonderfully when the hands of the tall solemn clock in the corner drew near to bedtime; and if he could only at that hour have had the use of the famous cap which conferred invisibility, so that his stern-visaged, keen-eyed father might lose knowledge of his presence, he would have considered it an inestimable boon.

However merry his humor, or mad his pranks had been, he became as still and

silent as a mouse, — only the insuppressible twinkle of his eye, or the noiseless twitching of his lips, giving hint of his true character.

When with a relentless emphasis that always roused Pickle's ire, — for it seemed to him as if the stately timepiece took a malicious pleasure in announcing the hour as emphatically as possible, — the strokes, one-two-three, and so on up to eight, vibrated through the living-room, no matter how deeply absorbed in book or talk Mr. Pomeroy might be, he straightened up in his chair, swept the room with a searching glance that not even Pickle could evade, and sent out three words from between his firm-set lips, —

“Children — to bed.”

Against this command no protest was permitted. Pickle might give his mother an appealing look that found a sympathetic response in those sweet brown eyes, but not a word would be spoken by either, and, dragging himself along as though every bone ached and every sinew groaned, the young

rogue would follow his brother Prince, who had begun to move ere the old clock ceased striking.

The way the two changed their relative positions in the pursuit of amusement and the performance of duty respectively, was very noticeable.

In all matters of play Pickle was easily the leader. His active brain was ever devising fresh forms of diversion, and, as his power of invention quite outran his gift of expression or explanation, he had usually to make clear what he was driving at by first doing it himself; Prince, who was a most loyal brother, following his lead with beautiful docility.

But when it came to the studying of lessons, or the performance of tasks set by their parents, then Prince took the lead as by matter of right, and if Pickle ever acquitted himself creditably he had Prince in the main to thank for it.

Yet Prince was as far from being a prig as Pickle was from being a pattern. He had more ballast, more method, more com-

mon sense ; that was all. In every other respect he was just as much of a boy as his brother.

Their home stood on the west side of the Common in Boston Town, and was a solidly built, roomy structure (as it well needed to be) that betokened a fair share of the world's goods on the part of the owner and occupant.

Mr. Pomeroy would not have been counted a rich man in these days of multi-millionaires ; but such vast fortunes were unknown, indeed undreamt of then, and the comfortable competency he had amassed by diligence in business and economy in expenditure commanded the respect of the community.

He was a merchant in a rather large way of dealing, who owned wharf and warehouses, and outfitted vessels, and made ventures on his own account, which if they did not always quite realize his expectations, generally in the long run showed a fair balance on the right side.

Directly descended from the men of the

“Mayflower,” as he was proud to proclaim, he was saved from being a religious fanatic only by the sense of humor that ran like a vein of gold through the stern granite of his nature, supplemented by the sweet subduing influence of his wife, who, while in no wise falling short of him in faith, far surpassed him in gentle charity.

Even in those days when maidens were much limited in their freedom of choice, the gossips wondered how winsome Judith Leverett allowed herself to be won by so stiff and ungracious a wooer as Preserved Pomeroy; but the sequel showed the soundness of her judgment, for, although they made scant display of their mutual affection in public, Boston Town did not contain a couple that understood and loved one another better.

No mother in Massachusetts did her duty more faithfully by her children than Mistress Pomeroy. She was a little woman, — not more than five feet in height, and so slight that her stalwart husband could carry her in his arms with ease, — but

she bore herself with a sweet dignity that ever compelled respect. Her big brown eyes, usually beaming with love, could on occasion glow with fire, and not even her own children ever dared venture beyond the bounds of her patience.

Despite the multitude of her maternal cares, the benign beauty of her face and the blitheness of her spirit so bravely withstood the hand of time that at the age of twoscore and five she looked a full decade younger, much to the envy of Mistress Everett, her next-door neighbor and contemporary, who had never been troubled with children, and who yet appeared quite ten years older than the little mother of many.

Mistress Everett found it easier to forgive Mistress Pomeroy for her overflowing nursery than for her perennial vigor, and would have been much better pleased if those wavy brown locks had been more plentifully besprinkled with silver, and those ruddy cheeks more interlaced with wrinkles.

But Mistress Pomeroy never allowed such things to trouble her. Her bright, busy life had scant margin for bothering about other people's affairs, and she was for the most part serenely indifferent to outside criticism.

Of course the Pomeroy children went to school. There was not likely to be any lack of these important institutions in Boston; and if the young people failed to appreciate their privileges in this respect, it certainly was not their parents' fault.

Next to the church, in their estimation, stood the school, and they saw to it that their boys and girls attended regularly, whether they liked it or not.

Now Prince took to school-going quite kindly, but to Pickle it was a purgatory tempered by truancy.

Poor little Pickle! Full many a birching he suffered at the heavy hands of the notorious Master Lovall, whose name formed so curious a contrast to his character. Indeed, it was no other than Pickle

who had the audacity to attempt to bring the two into agreement by nicknaming the tigerish pedagogue "Hateall," — a designation that thenceforth stuck to him like a burr.

No one could master his lessons more quickly than Pickle when the humor took him, and under the direction of one who would have handled him gently yet firmly, as the skilful rider does a high-spirited thorough-bred, he might have led his class in scholarship.

But Master "Hateall" knew nothing of these finer ways, or, if he did, despised them as weak concessions to juvenile depravity. With him it was instant, unquestioning obedience, or merciless punishment.

Not content with using the heaviest of birchen rods, and compelling another scholar to act as whipping-post during the operation, Lovall was ingenious in devising novel modes of punishment designed to be no less humiliating than painful.

It was in connection with one of these that Prince distinguished himself, to the

great astonishment of his fellow-scholars, who thereafter held a heightened opinion of the quiet, reserved boy.

Pickle had been more than usually provoking. After playing truant the previous day, and being soundly birched therefor, instead of showing contrition for his misbehavior, he seemed possessed of a very demon of insubordination, and at last in angry despair Master Lovall had recourse to an expedient that he thought would surely prove effectual.

Sending out for a branch of a tree, he made a split in the large end, and then standing Pickle in the middle of the floor, he sprang the branch upon his freckled nose, which it pinched most painfully, while the leafy part rose above his head like an exaggerated aigrette.

So utterly ridiculous was the poor boy's situation that not even dread of the master restrained the roar of laughter that burst from all the boys, save one.

That one was Prince. At first his face flushed a deep crimson, and then it went pale

as paper, while a thrill of indignant wrath ran through his boyish frame.

The next moment he rose from his seat with firm-set lips and flashing eyes, and the boys held their breath in utter bewilderment as, marching straight up to Pickle, he plucked the branch from his nose, flung it out of the open door, and then, taking his place beside his brother, awaited the inevitable consequences with resolute mien!

CHAPTER II.

A TIMELY INTERVENTION.

FOR an instant both teacher and scholars seemed turned to stone. In all his life Master Lovall had never been so smitten with astonishment. As regarded conduct, Prince stood easily first in the school. Never had the birchen rod fallen upon his back, or the cruel taws stung his tender hands.

And that he, Bradford Pomeroy, the worthy son of a worthy father, should thus dare to set all discipline at defiance, and join hands with so flagrant a wrong-doer — it was wellnigh paralyzing.

No one was more amazed than Pickle himself. He had felt keenly his humiliation, and was so sobered by it as to come nearer the point of contrition than on any previous occasion.

But when Prince thus gallantly bearded the tiger in his own lair, so to speak, out of pure brotherly love and pride, Pickle lost all thought of himself in keen concern for his brother.

“Run away, Prince, run away!” he whispered, giving the other a stout push at the shoulder. “He will kill you dead for this.”

And indeed the aspect of the pedagogue, as, having in a measure recovered himself, he slowly rose from behind his desk and moved towards the boys, was appalling enough.

His deeply seamed countenance was gray and ghastly with wrath, his eyes glowed like those of a wild beast about to spring upon its prey, and his long bony fingers opened and closed spasmodically, bearing a horrid resemblance to talons.

So absolutely overcome by brutal fury was he that he had it in mind to clutch the boys by the throats, and bang their heads together until he had knocked sense into them, if he did not knock their senses out of them.

Spellbound the school watched his approach, the twins shrinking close to each other, but standing their ground like Roman sentinels.

Scarce a yard separated them from the maddened master, one more stride and he would have been upon them, when suddenly the open doorway was filled with the imposing figure of a tall, richly-dressed gentleman, and a strong cheery voice called out :

“Hey-day, Master Lovall ! I did but happen in to have a look at your flock. And how do the lambs comport themselves? Abounding in mischief, I warrant, and requiring a firm hand to restrain their friskiness. Do I not speak truly ?”

“Ay, that you do, your Excellency,” responded Master Lovall, contorting his features in a semblance of a smile, and bending his stiff back in a perfunctory bow, for it was no other than the Governor of Massachusetts who had thus inopportunately (from the pedagogue’s point of view) made his appearance. “I was but just upon the eve of administering a well-deserved reproof

when you did me the honor to visit my humble establishment.”

The Governor's handsome mouth bore a very significant smile, and his fine eyes gleamed in a way that showed how he was enjoying the situation; the fact of the matter being that, sauntering past the door of the school, he had caught a glimpse of the twins huddling together with terrified countenance, and, shrewdly suspecting the truth, — for Master Lovall's reputation was well known to him, — he, on the spur of the moment, resolved to interfere ere the savage punishment fell.

Having gone thus far, he thought he might as well see the affair out, and so, after looking around upon the boys with one of his irresistible smiles, he turned to the schoolmaster, and said in a tone of mingled courtesy and command that none knew better than he how to use:—

“I bespeak for your pupils a half holiday, good Master Lovall. I desire to confer with you upon a matter of some import that requires we should have privacy.”

If the boys dared they would have shouted for joy, and given three cheers for his Excellency. But the dread of their teacher was too strong upon them, and they sat silent, though smiling, on the hard wooden forms.

As for Master Lovall, the idea of the Governor having sought him out for a private conference so filled him with pride that for the moment all other feelings were submerged, and, lifting his head, he called out: —

“Scholars, at the gracious request of his Excellency you are dismissed for the day. Bradford and Sewall Pomeroy, I will have further speech with you on the morrow.”

Concealing their tumultuous joy under a decorous exterior with a degree of success that showed how the Puritan strain still held sway in them, the boys filed into the street, and not until they were safely out of hearing did they give vent to their feelings in Indian-like whoops, and ecstatic leaps.

But the Pomeroy twins did not share in

this demonstration. They were the last to leave the schoolroom, and they walked along together homewards without speaking, and in manifest depression of spirit.

The dark cloud of Master "Hateall's" vengeance hung heavily over them, and they both felt that they would rather have taken their punishment and got through with it than have it still before them like a grim spectre.

Prince's self-forgetful heroism had produced on Pickle an impression such as all forms of penalty had utterly failed in doing. He saw his persistent misconduct in a new light when it involved his brother, who would otherwise have never incurred the master's wrath. And this new point of view sobered him.

For the first time he felt really penitent, and would have been glad to take upon himself the whole punishment, if that were only possible.

Prince was the first to break the silence, and what he said surprised Pickle almost as much as what he had done in the school.

“I will not go back to Master Lovall’s,” he exclaimed in a tone of fixed determination. “He is a devil, not a man, and he would kill us if he dared.”

“But how can we help going back, Prince?” asked Pickle, a new hope arousing his heart, although he could not see how it might be realized.

“Why, Pickle, I shall tell it all to our mother, and to our father too, and beseech them not to send us back there, but to permit us to attend Master Hancock’s school, of which all speak so well,” responded Prince, the gloom vanishing from his face at the very prospect of a change so devoutly to be wished.

Despite some misgivings as to the success of his brother’s venture, Pickle likewise threw off the depression that had been weighing upon his spirit, and the two boys entered into their companions’ play as heartily as though the problem were already solved.

But, a little earlier than usual, Prince called Pickle aside, and suggested that they

hurry home so as to talk the matter over with their mother ere Mr. Pomeroy should return from business.

Pickle saw the force of this at once, and so, dropping out of a very interesting game of wicket, they sought Mrs. Pomeroy, and opened their hearts to her, Prince being the chief narrator, with Pickle as prompter.

The little mother's countenance as she listened — and she was one that knew how to listen to perfection — was a wonderful study.

Sorrow at her boy's misbehavior, sympathy for the birchings inflicted, indignation at the humiliating punishment imposed, pride at Prince's gallant action, wrath at the master's tigerish fury, and delight at the Governor's timely intervention swiftly succeeded one another on her mobile features, culminating in a hearty peal of laughter as the ludicrous aspect of it all came upon her with irresistible force.

But the tears filled her brown eyes, although her lips still twitched a little as, en-

folding the boys in her arms and making their curly locks mingle, she imprinted a kiss upon each head, saying tenderly:—

“You have indeed behaved grievously, Sewall, my son, and Master Lovall had good cause for anger, but it was not seemly that he should thus expose you to the jeering of your schoolmates, and I shall intercede with your father, and entreat him to place you with another master, if you will faithfully promise me to bear yourself in a more fitting manner.”

“Oh, you dear, dear mother!” cried Pickle, ecstatically, “I will indeed promise you; and I will keep my promise, won’t I, Prince?” turning to his brother.

“Surely you will, Pickle,” assented Prince.

“As for you, Bradford dear,” continued Mrs. Pomeroy, “I am prouder of you to-day than ever in my life before. You did a right noble thing to thus take your brother’s part, and I love you for it,” she added impulsively, lifting his face to hers, and kissing him full upon the broad white forehead.

Prince's countenance grew radiant as an angel's while his mother spoke. Though quiet and undemonstrative of manner, his affections went deep, and this warm praise from his beloved mother was sweeter to him than anything else in the world.

Just then Mr. Pomeroy's heavy deliberate step was heard at the door, and saying, "Keep your counsel, my sons, until I bid thee speak," Mrs. Pomeroy hastened to meet her husband.

Like a wise woman, she gave no hint of what was in her mind until her better-half had done justice to an excellent supper, and settled down in his big chair to digest it amid the comfort and peace of his own home, which he really loved more dearly than his counting-room. Then seizing a favorable opportunity, she rehearsed the whole matter, putting forward no plea for either of the boys, but allowing the simple facts to be their own argument.

To the first part of the narration, Mr. Pomeroy listened as though he were carved

out of stone, and had it finished there, dire indeed would have been the punishment meted out to poor Pickle.

But when it came to the springing of the branch upon Pickle's nose, an ominous flush showed on his grizzled cheeks, and his deep eyes glowed with an indignant flame.

Yet not a word passed his firmly set lips until Mrs. Pomeroy told of Prince's plucking away the offending branch, and throwing it out of the door.

Then did the father's pride burst through the barriers of stern suppression, and, throwing up his hands with a gesture of admiration, he exclaimed : —

“Right well done it was, forsooth! Verily but my son Bradford hath the true Pomeroy strain in him. He did right thus to protest against so infamous an indignity.”

The next instant, as if ashamed of saying so much, he checked himself, and sought to restore to his features the judicial severity which they had previously borne.

But clever little Mrs. Pomeroy, seeing her advantage, hastened to tell of the teacher's avenging approach, and of the well-timed appearance of the Governor, and as her husband listened with bated breath, and the whole scene was brought vividly before him, the sudden balking of Master Lovall's brutal purpose, and his perfunctory falling in with his Excellency's suggestion, so touched the good man's sense of humor that he threw himself back in his chair, and smiting his thigh hard with his hand, broke forth into a laugh that made the very rafters ring, and brought joy to the hearts of Prince and Pickle waiting anxiously in the adjoining room.

This was the astute mother's opportunity. After joining heartily in the laughter, she laid her hand upon her good man's broad shoulder, and in her most winning tone went on to say:—

“Do not you think, my husband, that it would be better our boys did not return to Master Lovall's school? They have both incurred his ire, and he will henceforth deal

harshly with them, whereas if they went to Master Hancock's I am very confident that Sewall would bear himself with far more credit, for Master Hancock knoweth how to be firm without being unduly severe."

The smile vanished from Mr. Pomeroy's features, and they puckered up with an expression of profound thought as his wife spoke.

He had fully intended to personally interview Master Lovall, and let him understand very clearly what he thought of his conduct, but that he should at the same time withdraw his boys had not entered his mind.

He cogitated for some moments while his wife wisely held her peace. Then he said:—

"Are Bradford and Sewall near by? Bid them come to me."

On the boys appearing, he first administered to Pickle a stern reproof for his misconduct, and then proceeded to ask a number of questions about Master Lovall's methods of discipline, going on to require further

details of the exciting episode in which the twins had figured, it being very evident that he found keen enjoyment in the affair, although he strove to disguise the fact.

Finally, he made some inquiries about Master Hancock's school, concerning which institution the boys had nothing but good to report, and wound up by ordering them off to bed, without having given any hint of what he would do in the matter.

CHAPTER III.

A CHANGE OF SCHOOLS.

THE boys awoke the next morning in a state of lively concern and uncertainty as to whether or not they would be commanded to return to Master Lovall's.

Sturdily as Prince had asserted his determination not to go back, there was no likelihood of his actually venturing to defy his father.

If he had no alternative but to return, why return he would, and endure the consequences with as much fortitude as he might muster.

Pickle, subdued in spirit as never before, had many wild and impracticable suggestions to offer, but no very definite opinion of his own as to how things would turn out.

He somehow felt several years younger than Prince, and was ready to follow wherever he might lead.

The morning meal was disposed of without Mr. Pomeroy giving any sign, and then came family prayers, in which there was generous measure of Bible reading and of petition.

When the family rose from their knees, it was full time for the boys to be off to school, and, moved by a common impulse, Mistress Pomeroy and her twin boys looked, the first inquiringly, the other two apprehensively, at the head of the house.

It would have taken a particularly penetrating glance to discover the well-concealed gleam of humor in those austere features, and the anxious boys could hardly be blamed for failing to detect it; but their keener-sighted mother did, and was thus enabled to anticipate what the decision would be.

“Bradford and Sewall, you may abide at home this day,” spoke Mr. Pomeroy at length. “You shall be further informed

by me to-night with reference to the future ;” and, having thus delivered himself, the worthy merchant strode away to business, leaving his wife and children free to indulge in mutual congratulations and rejoicings.

During the day Mr. Pomeroy took pains to inquire into the respective merits of Master Lovall’s and Master Hancock’s establishments, with the result of thoroughly satisfying himself that his boys would be far better off under the care of the latter pedagogue.

With him action always followed promptly upon decision, and accordingly, ere returning home that evening, he had made arrangements with Master Hancock to receive Bradford and Sewall into his school the following morning.

The delight of the twins at this being announced may be readily imagined. Pickle was prompt to promise the most angelic behavior on his part, while Prince in his quiet way pledged himself to strive for the highest honors in learning he could obtain,

Master Hancock having an admirable system of promoting sound scholarship by fair competition.

The next morning, habited in their second-best suits, for the proud little mother was anxious they should make a good appearance at the start, they accompanied their father to their new school.

Now Master John Hancock was a very interesting character. A member of one of the best families in the Commonwealth, he had received a thorough education in his youth, and then gone forth to a career of enterprise and adventure on sea and land, from which he returned in early middle life minus his left arm and his right leg, having sacrificed both these members, the first at sea, and the second on shore, while fighting under the British flag.

Like many another brave soldier, he now found himself with little, save a scanty pension and an honorable reputation, to live upon, and rather than be a charge on his friends he bethought himself of utilizing his excellent education, which, happily,

he had not suffered to lie dormant during his martial career.

His repute as a man of both brains and bravery, supplemented by family influence, secured him many scholars from the start, and ere long he was the proud proprietor of one of the most successful educational establishments of which Boston Town could boast.

His erect military bearing ensured the respect of young and old at sight, and beneath a somewhat stern exterior there was concealed one of the kindest hearts in the Commonwealth.

Having never taken to himself a wife, he lavished upon his boys the affection that other men gave to their families, and so fond was he of his work that he really grudged the coming of holiday time, because it left him without his young companions.

Such was the man to whom Prince and Pickle, with beating hearts and shy entreating eyes, made their best bow as Mr. Pomeroy, his deep voice not altogether innocent of a tone of paternal pride, said:—

“Master Hancock, these are my boys,

Bradford and Sewall. As you perceive, they are twin brothers. But although their outward appearance is so similar, they differ much in disposition. I trust, however, they will both comport themselves so as to give you little trouble and much pleasure to their parents."

During this elaborate speech, to which he listened with a fine blending of dignity and deference, Master Hancock was scrutinizing his new charges through his clear gray eyes, and before there was any need for him to speak his mind was pretty well made up concerning them.

"This one," he said to himself, "will need wise yet firm treatment, but we shall soon, I trust, come to understand one another. The other will never give me trouble, and, unless all signs prove false, will ere long be a leader in learning. Together they make an unusually interesting pair, and I am very glad that they have come to me."

Then Mr. Pomeroy, having concluded his introductory remarks, Master Hancock, with a gracious bow to the boys, placed the hand

that was left him upon Prince's shoulder, and said:—

“I can assure you, sir, that I am proud to receive your fine boys into my school, where, I trust, they may be very diligent and happy in their work.”

After a few more words, Mr. Pomeroy went on to business, leaving Prince and Pickle in the master's hands.

Master Hancock thoughtfully assigned them a corner whence they would command the large room in which the school was held.

“For the present, you can just look about you, and get your bearings,” he said. “In due time I will give you your lessons. I need hardly caution you against indulging in conversation. That I never permit during school hours.”

Their interest in the proceedings soon made them lose all sense of shyness, and since they must not speak, they nudged one another significantly, by way of expressing their satisfaction with the way things were done.

Master Hancock was a thorough disci-

plinarian, without being a martinet, and the order prevailing in his establishment rendered it a worthy precursor of those military schools that now flourish in many of the States.

When called up for recitation, the boys must stand "at attention," before him, their toes set truly to a black line in the floor, their shoulders squared, and their heads held well up.

No slouching or resting upon only one foot was permitted, and when the lesson was finished, they broke rank, and marched to their seats with the precision of soldiers returning from "sentry go."

Prince and Pickle were equally well pleased with what they saw.

The former enjoyed the perfect order that prevailed, and the bright quick way in which the recitations were conducted. He had no misgivings about being able to hold his own, once he settled down to work, and he was already eager to take his place in the classes, and to pit himself against his schoolmates.

Pickle, on the other hand, was delighted with the looks of the boys that were henceforth to be his companions. They seemed such sturdy, manly fellows that they were sure to prove capital play-mates, and he anticipated any amount of fun when he got well acquainted with them.

As for Master Hancock's pupils they had already heard of the Pomeroy's exploit, and regarding it with true boyish admiration, were ready to welcome Prince and Pickle warmly into their midst.

Such gallant fellows could not fail to prove congenial companions, and so the twins found the way to the hearts of their associates wide open.

When they returned from school, their mother was awaiting them, with a face full of eager solicitude. She was most anxious that they should have both created and received a good impression, for she knew well Mr. Pomeroy would sanction no more changes.

"Well, my dears," she said, after giving

each a warm kiss, "and how went it with you at Master Hancock's to-day?"

Pickle's response was to toss his cap in the air, and execute a flourish with his feet that rendered words unnecessary.

Prince, more considerate of his mother's eagerness, proceeded at once to tell how everything had gone, and how favorably he was impressed by all he had seen and heard.

"Indeed, mother," he concluded, "I cannot tell you how happy I am at being taken away from Master Lovall's and sent to Master Hancock's. It is just a splendid school, is n't it, Pickle?"

On being thus appealed to, Pickle ceased his gyrations, and, coming up to his mother, gave her a hearty hug as he panted out:—

"I should say it is a splendid school. I'm going to get on finely there—see if I'm not. Master Hancock knows how to keep noisy fellows like me in order, and without birching them too."

Mistress Pomeroy's comely countenance beamed with satisfaction. Her boys were

thoroughly pleased with their new master, and she did not doubt but that the master was equally pleased with his new pupils.

Now, there was one feature of Master Hancock's institution that appealed to Pickle with especial force.

The veteran soldier, in retiring from active service, carried with him unabated his love for martial exercises, and as soon as the number of his pupils permitted had organized them into a little company, which he himself instructed in military drill for an hour after school on three afternoons in the week.

For this purpose, he had had a number of dummy muskets made, and each boy was urged to provide himself with a dark blue cap and a bright scarlet tunic, crossed by white shoulder-straps, so that when the whole company turned out, they looked very well indeed.

Of course, this playing at soldiers was precisely to Pickle's mind, and he lost no time in volunteering for "active service" on Boston Common with the other boys.

Nor was Prince less interested, although he took the matter more composedly. He was just the right material for a first-class soldier, and Mr. Pomeroy having readily sanctioned the procuring of the uniforms, he donned his with quite as much delight as his impetuous brother.

It happened that soon after the twins joined the school, Master Hancock, being greatly pleased with the hearty interest shown by his boys in the drilling, determined to go a step further, and add a small fife and drum corps to the little force.

Like a wise man he kept his own counsel until the scheme was fully developed, and his mind was pretty well made up as to what boys should constitute the corps. Then he made his announcement as follows, —

“Scholars, attention!”

Whereupon every face was turned towards him with an expression of lively expectation, for the boys knew something of importance was forthcoming.

“I have been considering with much

care," he went on, "the formation of a fife and drum corps in connection with our little company."

Here a subdued yet unmistakable murmur of applause permeated the room, and he acknowledged it by permitting the shadow of a smile to play over his well-bronzed features.

"The idea has so commended itself to me that I have practically decided to at least make the experiment. It will for the most part rest with yourselves whether it prove a success or not. I should like to begin with four fifers and two drummers. Are there any of my scholars who are expert at either instrument?"

The boys looked at each other in silence inquiringly, but no one spoke. Evidently their musical education had been neglected.

Master Hancock seemed not a whit surprised.

"It is as I expected," he said smilingly. "We yet have everything to learn. I will, therefore, proceed to select the players according to the best of my judgment."

Every boy was now strung to concert pitch, so to speak. Out of the more than twoscore composing the school, each hoped that he might be chosen for either fife or drum, and the master's announcing of the fortunate ones was awaited with palpitating eagerness.

Looking around upon the scholars while the silence was so profound that they could hear their own hearts beat, he said in that clear, determined tone of his which was so conclusive: —

“For the fifes I shall select Bradford Pomeroy, Lemuel Higginson, John Endicott, and Gurdon Saltonstall; and for the drums, Daniel Welde and Sewall Pomeroy.”

As each boy's name was uttered, the bearer of it broke into a broad grin of delight, and was forthwith given congratulating punches by his nearest neighbors.

Upon the whole Master Hancock's choice commended itself to the school.

A few, it is true, were inclined to criticise the inclusion of both the Pomeroy's in the corps, but they found little support

because the wonderful similarity of the twins seemed to render it fitting they should not be separated.

Pickle was in the seventh heaven of joy. He would have been only too glad, of course, to play the fife, but to beat the drum was far more to his taste, and, hardly aware of what he was about, he began a tattoo upon the top of his desk with his finger-tips.

In his choice of the fifers Master Hancock had been guided by what he knew of the boys' ability at whistling, which he rightly reasoned would make the mastery of their shrill little instrument all the easier to acquire.

But in selecting the drummers he had pitched upon the two liveliest of his pupils, thinking it well that their superabundant energies should be expended upon the drum heads, where they would do good service.

And so the Hancock's School Fife and Drum Corps was duly organized, and it now remained for its happy members to learn how to play their instruments.

CHAPTER IV.

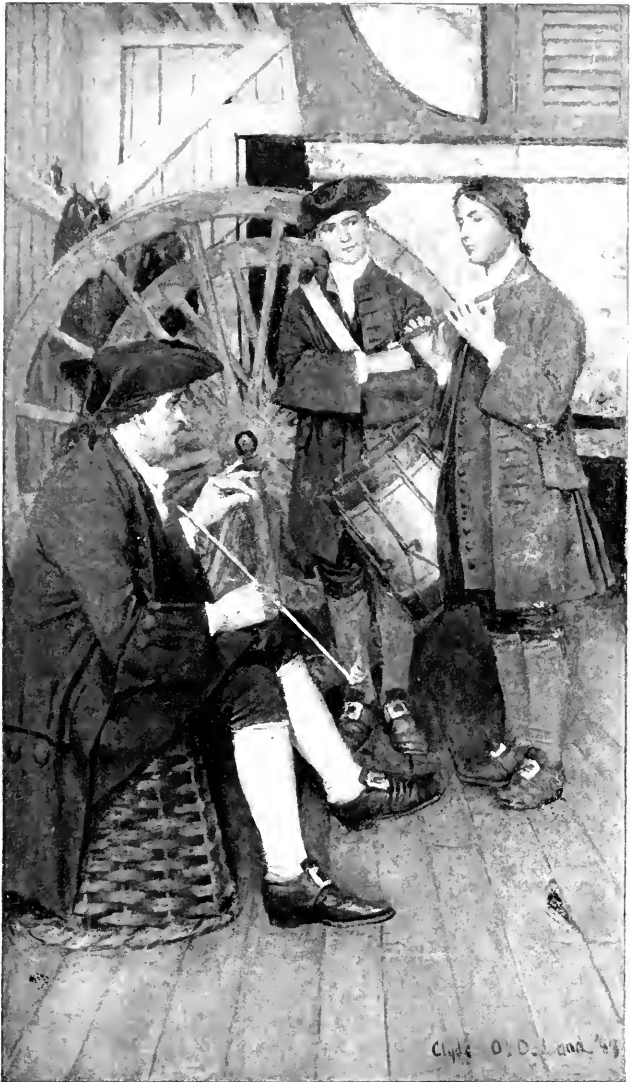
AT CLOSE QUARTERS.

PICKLE forthwith gave himself with characteristic ardor to learning how to drum, while Prince in a less demonstrative but no less determined way set about mastering the fife.

Fortunately, there lived near by their own home a veteran soldier, who, having served for many years as bandsman in one of his Majesty's regiments, was familiar with both fife and drum.

So to Band-Sergeant Hampden went the two boys, carrying their instruments, and respectfully petitioning for the benefit of a few lessons.

The retired Band-Sergeant was only too delighted to be their teacher. It warmed his old blood to revive his knowledge of martial music, and even if his fingers were





a trifle stiff, and his breath provokingly scant just when he needed them most, he managed to perform amazingly well, considering his age.

The Pomeroy's thought him a perfect marvel, and wondered if they could ever attain such skill. They would do their very best, at all events, and so they practised vigorously at every opportunity, until at last their father, although he took quite an indulgent view of the whole proceedings, was fain to banish them to an outhouse at the foot of the garden, where they could bang and blow away without disturbing anybody.

Now, be it known, that for some time past there had existed what would be called by diplomats very strained relations between the boys of Master Hancock's and Master Lovall's respective establishments.

For this condition of affairs Master Lovall himself was mainly responsible. His school had been nearly a decade in operation before Master Hancock entered the educational field, and the older peda-

gogue took very much to heart what he was pleased to consider the unwarrantable intrusion of his rival.

The success which presently attended the new-comer's enterprise naturally did not have a soothing influence upon the other's feelings.

On the contrary, it fanned them into active enmity, and Master Lovall lost no chance of jeering at Master Hancock's "new-fangled methods," and of expressing his contempt for the man himself.

The formation of the little military company gave him a fine opportunity, of which he did not fail to avail himself; and he so far forgot his own dignity as to let the venom that was in his heart drip from his tongue in the presence of his pupils.

As a matter of course, little as they loved their tyrannical taskmaster, a spirit of *esprit de corps* that did them credit moved them to espouse his cause with true boyish fervor, and they came to look upon those attending the Hancock School as their natural enemies.

At first this hostility was manifested simply by individual encounters of a more or less trifling character.

When a Lovall boy fell out with a Hancock boy while engaged in play, they always came to blows far sooner than if both the disputants belonged to the same school, and the struggle was certain to be much more severe.

Before long this antagonistic temper became so pronounced that the boys could not join in a simple game of wicket with any hope of its proceeding amiably to a conclusion; and a friendly match that was arranged for one Saturday afternoon resulted in a free fight, in which the bats were used on both sides with effect, as several broken heads testified.

This disturbance, while it put an end to the matches, and indeed to all friendly intercourse between the boys of the two schools, led to a series of attacks and reprisals made by bands from both establishments, that seized upon any of their "enemies" they encountered, and gave

them a good pummelling before releasing them.

Pickle, as a matter of course, entered heart and soul into this mimic war. It was royal fun for him, and as he was a very good hand at looking after himself, and particularly fleet of foot, he for some time escaped capture at the hands of the Lovall boys, although they often laid in wait for him.

But neither his adroitness nor his luck could avail altogether against the persistent efforts of the enemy, and so it came about that one evening when he and Prince were returning from Sergeant Hampden's after a very satisfactory practice, they fell into a snare cleverly laid for them.

There was a certain narrow, obscure street that afforded a short cut to their home, and when they came to this, Pickle turned into it, saying, —

“This will save us going around.”

“Stay, Pickle,” exclaimed Prince, catching his brother's arm to detain him, “would it not be better to go around?”

There may be some of the Lovall boys looking out for us."

"And what if there are, Prince?" replied Pickle, jerking himself free and going on. "We can take care of ourselves all right, and if they're too many for us, we can run away from them easily."

Prince shook his head dubiously, and did not move. He was by no means anxious to have a brush with the other boys when he was carrying his beloved fife. They would be sure to snatch it from him and possibly break it in pieces, for he knew they were all very jealous of the fife and drum corps.

"Oh, come on, Prince," cried Pickle, impetuously grasping his brother by the coat, and dragging him along. "There are none of the Lovalls about, and we'll be home in a few minutes anyway."

Persuaded against his better judgment Prince said:—

"Very well, then, but let us quicken our pace;" and so they hastened down the street.

They had reached the middle of it, and even Prince was beginning to think his apprehensions groundless, when out from a blind alley that branched off to their right there rushed upon them no less than six of their enemies, shouting triumphantly : —

“ Now we ’ve got you ! We ’ll give you a lesson ! You sha’n’t escape a good thrashing this time.”

The Pomeroy's had no time to deliberate as to whether they should show fight or flee, for the Lovalls took them captive at once, and proceeded to thump them soundly with their clenched fists.

Pickle had his drum swinging upon his back, while Prince's fife was bestowed in an inner pocket. Both, therefore, had their hands free, and, after the first surprise, they struck out right lustily, returning blow for blow, so far as they were able.

With such skill and strength did they defend themselves that, outnumbered though they were, they succeeded in shaking off their assailants for a moment, and took ad-

vantage of the brief respite to win a coigne of vantage in the shape of a flight of stone steps with iron railings at the side.

Gaining the topmost of these in a couple of panther-like leaps, they turned to face their antagonists, who were given pause by the sight of two pairs of well-shod feet ready for immediate action.

Snarling and jeering and calling names, the Lovalls surged about the steps, no one of the six aspiring to the honor of leading the charge, and there not being room for more than two abreast.

Both Prince and Pickle had now completely recovered their balance, which had been somewhat upset by the sudden attack, and began to feel the exhilaration of their exciting situation.

So far they certainly had the best of it, since although they were both of them pretty well thumped, they had paid their assailants back in their own coin handsomely, and honors were easy at all events.

“ We must n't let them get up the steps,

Prince," whispered Pickle, "even if we have to kick them off."

Pickle, rightly enough, regarded the use of the feet as unworthy of a fair fighter, but this was a peculiar emergency, which justified recourse to any means of defence.

Convinced that they could not carry the steps without some of their number getting harder knocks than they had counted upon at the start, the Lovall boys ceased active hostilities, while they considered some other plan of campaign.

To their shame be it told, that at this point the counsel of one of their number, a true bully and coward, who had done more shouting and less fighting than any of his companions, commanded attention.

"Pelt them with stones," he hissed angrily; "there are plenty in the street."

Abominable as the suggestion was, the others, enraged at the stout defence made by the Pomeroy's, after a moment's hesitation, due to a struggle with their better natures, proceeded to act upon it.

Three remaining to guard the foot of the

steps, the rest hastened to pick up stones, and then, extending their arms in readiness to throw, they called out:—

“Now, will you come down? or will you stay there to be pelted?”

The faces of both the besieged boys instantly became scarlet with indignation. Up to this point, in spite of the great discrepancy in numbers, they had thought the game fair enough.

If half a dozen Hancocks had chanced upon a couple of Lovalls, they would no doubt have acted in very much the same way as regards the mauling and thumping.

But to resort to stoning—that was unspeakably mean, and they could hardly find language to express their feelings.

“You dare not stone us,” cried Pickle, drawing himself up and facing them with flashing eyes, curling lips, and clenched fists. “That would be dastardly. Can’t you play fair? You’re three to one. What more do you want?”

Prince kept silence, but the utter contempt shown on his face should have

caused every hand that held a stone to let it drop at once.

Yet the response of the Lovalls was to hurl the stones, one of which struck Prince on the shoulder, while the others clattered harmlessly against the house.

Prince gave a shudder, and shrank back when the stone hit him; then coming forward again, he faced his assailants fearlessly, crying out in a clear steady voice:—

“You miserable cowards! You ought to be ashamed of yourselves! Is that what you call fair sport?”

At this, some of them did seem inclined to go no further, but the mean fellow who had suggested the stone throwing, thereupon began to taunt them with being chicken-hearted, and they were about to send a second volley at the defenceless Pomeroy's, when the upper end of the street was suddenly filled by a crowd of the Hancock boys returning from a game of wicket.

At sight of their school-fellows, Pickle instantly sent out a piercing cry of,—

“Help, Hancocks, help!”

One glance into the street was sufficient to make clear the situation to the newcomers, and the next moment they were charging down upon the Lovalls at the top of their speed, waving their bats and wickets above their heads as they shouted:—

“Down with the Lovalls! Give it to them! Give it to them!”

The Lovalls made no pretence of standing their ground. They were now outnumbered in their turn, and they fled incontinently.

As they had a good head start, the chances were all in their favor, and they did succeed in getting away unscathed, with one exception.

This was the bully who had instigated the stone throwing, and whose missile it was which had struck Prince.

He bore the appropriate if unflattering name of “Piggie” Tuthill, and was unquestionably the most disliked in the Lovall school.

He was so absorbed in selecting a suitable stone, which he fully intended aiming

at Pickle's face, that he did not take in the situation at once, and ere he could join in the rout, both Pickle and Prince were upon him, gripping him tight.

He was much bigger than either of them, and he fought fiercely to throw them off, even trying to use his teeth, and not scrupling to kick like the brute that he was.

But in spite of kicks and curses, the twins maintained their hold until their school-fellows came up, and forthwith proceeded to belabor Piggie with their bats so stoutly, that he ceased all resistance and yelled for mercy.

"What were they doing to you?" demanded the relief party, feeling in fine fettle for some mischief; "were they stoning you?"

"Yes, they were," responded Pickle. "And that's the fellow that put them up to it;" giving Piggie a smart dig in the ribs by way of emphasizing his accusation.

A shout of indignation arose at this, and hapless Piggie was like to be made a football of, when Prince interposed:—

“Don’t maul him, boys,” he said in that quiet firm way which always carried such influence with his companions. Then with a roguish twinkle of his eye he added:—

“He looks as if he’d be the better for a dip. What say to giving him one in the Frog Pond?”

The proposition was greeted with a howl of delight from the Hancock boys, and of dismay from Tuthill, who made a desperate effort to break away.

But all his struggles were futile, and one of the boys deftly gagged him with a handkerchief lest his furious cries should attract too much attention.

Hustling him along as fast as they could they made their way tumultuously to the Common, now almost deserted, as supper time was near.

Selecting the part of the pond where the water was deepest, they removed the gag from Piggie’s mouth, and then with a united effort tumbled him pell-mell into the water.

That the big fellow could not swim

never entered their heads, for, in spite of the tithingmen, one of whose duties it was to keep the boys from bathing in the river or harbor, they were all good swimmers themselves.

But, to their dismay, instead of rising to the surface, and striking out for the shore, as they fully expected him to do, Piggie made even a worse business of it than does the animal after which he was nicknamed.

He splashed about quite helplessly, and seemed in actual danger of drowning.

For a moment the boys were so appalled at their victim's peril that they watched him without making any move towards rescue.

Then Prince's clear head showed itself.

"He'll drown there if he is n't helped at once," he exclaimed. "Come, Pickle, help me get him out."

And without more ado he plunged into the pond, followed so closely by his brother that the two made but one big splash, while the other boys gave them a cheer of admiration and encouragement.

CHAPTER V.

IN WHICH AN EXTRAORDINARY ENTERPRISE
IS BROACHED.

THE Pomeroy's could both swim like mermen, but they found they had undertaken no easy task in going to Piggie Tuthill's rescue.

The big fellow was simply frantic with fright, and no sooner did they reach him than he seized hold of Pickle in so desperate a fashion that the poor boy became utterly helpless, and had he been alone, would certainly have been drowned along with the one he sought to save.

But Prince saw the whole danger, and, grasping Piggie by the collar, not only held him above the surface, but shoved him shoreward sufficiently for the boys, who were stretching out as far as possible, to get a grip of him and Pickle and pull them both ashore.

When it was all over, and Piggie, who as soon as he had regained his breath exhausted it again in threats of vengeance, had taken himself off, looking most absurd in his dripping, muddy condition, the Hancock boys began to realize that they had probably gone too far in their fun, and that awkward consequences might ensue.

Prince and Pickle went home in a very sober mood, and before they reached the house, had arrived at the conclusion to make a clean breast of the whole affair without waiting for their parents to hear of it through another channel.

Accordingly, taking the bull by the horns, so to speak, they went straight into the room where the rest of the family had already gathered for supper, and stood just inside the door, all dripping and dishevelled as they were.

“Why, my boys, what has happened?” exclaimed Mistress Pomeroy, the expression of concern that first showed upon her face being rapidly succeeded by one of amusement at the ludicrous plight of her

twin sons. "Where did you tumble into the water, and what made you do it?"

"We both jumped in ourselves," replied Prince, giving an anxious glance at his father, who was regarding him and Pickle with a look of stern inquiry.

Pickle, who always allowed Prince to take the lead in getting out of a scrape, although he was usually first in getting into it, nodded in confirmation of his brother's statement, and just at this point the laughter of the other children, no longer to be restrained, burst forth in a chorus that carried away Mistress Pomeroy.

But the head of the household relaxed not the sternness of his countenance, and hushed the merry clamor with a commanding, —

"Cease your foolishness, and you, Bradford, proceed to explain why you and Sewall present yourselves in this extraordinary state."

The merriment subsided at once, and Prince, taking his stand by his mother's chair, for he felt the need of the sympathy

he well knew she was giving him, began his tale, Pickle listening with as anxious attention, as if his very life depended upon the accuracy of the narration.

Mr. Pomeroy heard it in grim silence, and no one else, not even his wife, dared to speak.

Prince always related anything clearly. He had a logical, well-balanced mind, and a positive gift for narrative, and when, as in this case, he was practically pleading his own and his brother's case, he was inspired to do his very best.

So the whole story was graphically presented; the jealousy of Master Lovall, the hostility between the boys that grew from it, the Lovalls' envy of the Hancock Military Company in general, and of the fife and drum corps in particular, and then the waylaying in the lane, the sturdy defence, the attack with stones, and the timely appearance of the Hancock contingent.

“And whose notion was it that that boy whom you so improperly designate as ‘Piggie’ should be cast into the pond?”

demanded Mr. Pomeroy, not a line of his austere countenance relaxing in the slightest.

“It was mine, sir,” responded Prince, to the distinct surprise of his father, who had fully anticipated an acknowledgment from Pickle.

“Yours indeed, Bradford!” exclaimed Mr. Pomeroy, feeling perhaps more put out at his judgment being astray than at his son’s action. “And what put such a shameful idea into your head?”

“I’m sure I don’t know, sir,” Prince replied humbly. “It just came, and I said it out. I was very angry with Piggie — I mean Tuthill — for hitting me with the stone.”

“And who was the first to leap into the pond when Tuthill seemed to be in danger of drowning?” was Mr. Pomeroy’s next question.

“We both jumped in about the same time,” answered Prince, still maintaining his downcast demeanor.

“Oh, no, sir,” broke out Pickle, speak-

ing for the first time since entering the room. "Prince jumped in first, and I followed him so as to help him. Piggie is such a big clumsy fellow."

There were now some signs of softening in Mr. Pomeroy's features, which the keensighted little mother did not fail to note, and seizing the opportunity, she suggested in her gentle way:—

"Don't you think, dear, it would be wise for the boys to go to their room now, and put on dry clothes? They might suffer harm for staying so long in this dripping condition."

Mr. Pomeroy was silent for a moment, as if he might not have heard his wife's words. Then, bending his eyes sternly on the two boys, he said:—

"Get you gone, and change your clothes. I shall have something further to say to you later on."

It was not until bedtime drew near that he took up the matter again, and now it was evident that he felt disposed to a more lenient view of his sons' doings.

Yet he administered a pretty severe reproof, and concluded by announcing his intention of calling upon both Master Hancock and Master Lovall the following day, and requiring them to put an end to the foolish strife between their boys without delay.

It was not his way to utter idle threats. Whatever he committed himself to, that he never failed to carry out, if it were at all possible.

Accordingly, the next day he had interviews with both the masters, in the course of which he expressed himself very plainly as to the state of things which he pronounced most shameful, demanding that they take immediate steps to rectify matters.

Master Lovall, cherishing the grudge that he did against Mr. Pomeroy for having taken his boys away from the school, was at first disposed to adopt the high hand, and to ignore Mr. Pomeroy's demand.

But the latter presently brought him to his senses.

“Hark ye,” he said in his sternest tone. “Beware how you set yourself against me, lest I be the instrument of taking from you not only my own sons, but many others also.”

Now this was no empty threat, as Master Lovall well knew. Mr. Pomeroy had much influence in the community, and were he to address himself in earnest to the task of emptying the school, he would assuredly carry it out most effectually.

Putting a stiff curb upon his choler, therefore, Master Lovall, with as good a grace as he could muster, agreed to inquire into the matter, and to take steps to amend it.

Master Hancock received Mr. Pomeroy in an altogether different spirit. Listening attentively to the worthy merchant's recital, he expressed genuine surprise at affairs having reached such a pass, and assured him that he would without delay take effective measures to prevent any recurrence of the hostile encounter.

This he did as soon as Mr. Pomeroy left, by suspending the ordinary exercises, while

in his own direct, forceful way he told his boys what he had just heard, and without calling any of them to account for the past, laid upon them strict injunctions to guard against any continuance of the strife.

“If it comes to my knowledge that any of my scholars is to blame for any further collision, that boy will be expelled from the school. You are of course free to defend yourselves properly, should you be unwarrantably assailed, but you must not provoke an encounter on pain of expulsion.”

Now the boys knew perfectly well that the master meant every word he spoke, and as there was not one of them who was not fond of the school, and proud of belonging to it, they consequently obeyed him to the letter.

Master Lovall, on his part, threatened his boys with dire punishment if they got embroiled with the hated Hancock fellows; and so the feud came to a sudden end, although there was little change in the mutual feelings of the two schools.

About this time, the staid and sober

New England commonwealth began to be strongly stirred concerning an enterprise so quixotic upon the face of it that it was a marvel the hard-headed posterity of the Puritans did not laugh it to scorn at the very outset, even though it had no less a personage than the Governor himself for its sponsor.

To clearly understand the matter, an excursion into history becomes necessary, for which recourse shall be had to the brilliant pages of Parkman.

The Peace of Utrecht had left altogether unsettled the perilous questions of boundary between the rival powers in North America, and these grew more perilous every day.

Nevertheless the quarrel was not yet ripe; and though the French Governor, Vaudreuil, and perhaps also his successor Beauharnois, seemed willing to precipitate it, the courts of London and Versailles still hesitated to appeal to the sword.

Now, as before, it was a European, and not an American, quarrel that was to set the world on fire. The war of the Aus-

trian Succession broke out in 1744. When Frederick of Prussia seized Silesia and began that bloody conflict, it meant that packs of howling savages would again spread fire and carnage along the New England border.

The news of the declaration of war reached Louisbourg, the French stronghold in Cape Breton, some weeks before it was known in Boston, and the French Governor, Duquesnel, thought he saw a fine opportunity to strike a blow for the profit of France and his own great honor before the English had time to get ready.

Accordingly, he equipped a military expedition with all haste, and despatched it against Canseau, a small fishing hamlet on the Nova Scotia side of the strait of that name which separates Cape Breton from the mainland.

The attacking force comprised nearly a thousand soldiers and sailors, escorted by two armed vessels; and as the whole defences of Canseau consisted of an insignificant wooden redoubt built by the fishermen,

and the available garrison of less than a hundred Englishmen was utterly unprepared, the French had matters all their own way.

The English promptly surrendered on condition of being sent to Boston, the miserable hamlet with its absurd little wooden fort was burned to the ground, and the "gallant" invaders rejoiced over the smoking ruins.

Flushed by this first success, Governor Duquesnel now aspired to the taking of Annapolis, for this, if accomplished, meant the capture of all Acadia.

Duvivier was sent in command of the expedition, which comprised only a hundred regular troops, but some four hundred Micmac and Malacite Indians.

Annapolis at this time was in such a state of neglect that its sandy ramparts were crumbling into the moat, and the cows belonging to the garrison pastured peacefully over them.

The garrison consisted of about a hundred effective men under command of

Major Mascarene, to whom Governor Shirley of Massachusetts had added a small company of militia; but as most of these latter came without arms, and Mascarene had few or none to give them, their assistance was not very substantial.

It was in the month of August when Duvivier and his followers, white and red, appeared before Annapolis, and, making their camp behind the ridge of a hill that overlooked the fort, lost no time in marching boldly towards the ramparts.

But a timely discharge of cannon-shot wrought a sudden change of mind, and giving up all thoughts of an immediate assault, they waited until darkness, when they began a fusillade that kept the garrison on the alert all night.

Then followed three long weeks of desultory attack, during which there was no attempt made by the French to carry the place by storm; but the defenders were never allowed to be at ease except during a brief truce.

Duvivier was anxiously awaiting rein-

forcements from Louisbourg, whence two armed vessels, the "Ardent" and the "Caribou," were expected to follow. But the days dragged by without any sign of the vessels, and when at last two did appear they proved to be not the French frigates, but a couple of schooners sent from Boston by Governor Shirley to the aid of his beleaguered compatriots.

They had aboard them more than two-score Indian rangers, and the arrival of these doughty fighters so discouraged the besiegers that towards the end of September they suddenly broke camp and vanished.

As the unknown Habitant de Louisbourg quaintly and forcibly expressed it in his precious letter, "The expedition was a failure, though one might have bet everything on its success, so small was the force that the enemy had to resist us."

Now these attacks upon Canseau and Annapolis, although they resulted in no material advantage to the French, alarmed and exasperated the "Bastonnais," as the

invaders called the New Englanders, and engendered in some heated brains a project of wild audacity.

This was no less than the capture of Louisbourg, then reputed to be the strongest fortress, French or British, in North America, with the possible exception of Quebec.

Louisbourg was a standing menace to all the Northern British colonies, for it was such a haunt of privateers as to be called the American Dunkirk.

It commanded the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the gateway to Canada, and threatened to ruin the Bank fisheries, which were of vital importance to New England. The French Government had spent a quarter of a century and not less than thirty million livres upon its powerful defences.

Such was the stronghold which William Vaughan of Damariscotta advised Governor Shirley of Massachusetts to attack with a force of raw New England Militia!

CHAPTER VI.

A MOMENTOUS DECISION.

GOVERNOR SHIRLEY, who had filled his honorable position very creditably for nearly fifteen years, was a man of good ability and a sincere well-wisher to the province whose affairs he directed, but was gnawed by an insatiable hunger for distinction.

This caused him to lend a willing ear to Vaughan's wild suggestion, and he resolved to lay it before the Assembly without loss of time.

Accordingly, in the month of January, 1745, the General Court of Massachusetts — a convention of grave city merchants, and solemn rustics from the country villages — was astonished by a message from the Governor to the effect that he had a communication to make of so critical a charac-

ter that he wished the whole body to swear secrecy.

The request was novel, but being then on better terms with Shirley than the Colonial Assemblies usually were with their Governor, the representatives consented, and took the oath.

Then, to their profound amazement, Shirley invited them to undertake forthwith the capture of Louisbourg.

The idea of an attack upon that redoubtable fortress was not altogether new. Since the destruction of Canseau, and the futile attempt upon Annapolis, there had been proposals heard to petition England to make the venture, with the colonies giving their best aid.

But that Massachusetts, though already bankrupt, should try it alone (or with such doubtful help as the neighboring colonies might afford), without the approval of the British Government, and without experienced officers or trained soldiers, was certainly enough to set the sober-minded legislators a-thinking.

They asked for time to consider the proposition, and then to Governor Shirley's keen disappointment voted to have nothing to do with it.

In spite of the oath of secrecy, the matter got out, the strange news flew through the town, and soon spread all over the province.

Now one of the members of the Assembly was Mr. Preserved Pomeroy, and he had been inclined to look favorably upon the Governor's project, but was outvoted by his fellow legislators.

He was moved by more than one reason to desire the reduction of the French fortress. Being heartily interested in the Gulf fisheries, his vessels were endangered by the privateers which made that place their rendezvous; again, he was a fervently loyal subject of the crown, and cordially detested everything and everybody French; and finally his religious zeal, amounting almost to fanaticism, caused him to regard the believers in the Pope as little better than incarnate devils whom it was doing

good service to God to destroy off the face of the earth.

A few days after the rejection by the Assembly of Shirley's proposal, Mr. Pomeroy saw the Governor walking slowly down King Street with his head bowed down as if in deep dejection.

Turning into the merchant's counting-room, he drew himself up and abruptly asked him:—

“Pomeroy, do you feel like giving up the expedition to Louisbourg?”

“No, your Excellency, I do not,” responded Mr. Pomeroy, “but the vote went so greatly against it that I fear there is an end of it, although in truth I have been wishing that the Assembly might reconsider the matter.”

“You are the very man I want,” exclaimed the Governor excitedly, all his dejection vanishing as he put out his hand, and, grasping Mr. Pomeroy's, shook it warmly. “We'll draw up a petition for reconsideration right away, and get as many signatures to it as possible.”

They accordingly drew up the petition, which Mr. Pomeroy not only signed himself, but promised to get the merchants of Boston, Salem, Marblehead, and other seacoast towns to sign also.

In this he was completely successful, for all New England merchants looked on Louisbourg as their archenemy.

The petition was presented, and the matter came again before the Assembly, where Mr. Pomeroy supported the proposal with a vigor and rude eloquence that astonished his friends, who now saw him in a new light.

After a lengthy and somewhat heated debate, the plan was carried by a single vote, to the great joy of Governor Shirley and his supporters.

The die thus being cast, all alike set themselves to push on the work. Shirley invited the other colonies to co-operate, but with one consent they made excuse, except Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island, so that the whole burden of the enterprise fell upon the four New England provinces.

But self-interest, patriotism, and religious zeal inspired the New Englanders, and they were not to be daunted even by such sneers as that of Benjamin Franklin, who wrote to his brother in Boston: "Fortified towns are hard nuts to crack, and your teeth are not accustomed to it; but some seem to think that forts are as easy taken as snuff."

Throughout Massachusetts the enterprise was regarded in much the same light as the Crusades had been in Europe, and there was a certain pastor Moody, who preached a holy war against the Roman Catholics with no less fervor than did Peter the Hermit the recovery of the Holy Land from the infidel.

With Mr. Pomeroy, this was by far the strongest impulse. He fully believed that the taking of Louisbourg would be a glorious service to the cause of true religion, and it was a matter of keen regret that he could not shoulder a musket himself and take part in the siege.

This, however, was rendered impracticable by his state of health, he being a

sufferer from rheumatism to a degree that put a soldier's life out of the question.

Although he had of his own accord subscribed the sum of five hundred pounds towards the expenses of the expedition, — a very handsome amount indeed in those days, — he was not content. He was reluctant that his own family should not participate in the pious undertaking, and he cast about him for a solution of the problem.

His oldest son could not be spared from the business, where he would be needed more than ever. The second boy was of altogether too studious and shy a disposition to be of any use in so arduous an enterprise.

But why not the twins? They were now full sixteen years of age, and such fine sturdy fellows withal that they might readily be supposed quite two years older. They could easily be spared from school for a few months, and, moreover, they possessed the qualifications of being able to play the fife and drum and of having some knowledge of drill.

“Bradford and Sewall it shall be!” exclaimed their father, as the result of his deliberations; and forthwith he went to Governor Shirley and offered the services of his twin sons.

The Governor accepted them instantly. Two such boys could not fail to be of use in one capacity or another, and so without their knowing anything about it Prince and Pickle were enrolled for the Louisbourg expedition.

That they themselves would be only too delighted at this Mr. Pomeroy rightly enough had no doubt, but of what their mother would feel and say he had no doubt either, and the question of the best way of putting the matter before her gave the worthy man no small concern.

Therefore, although he could never at any time be considered vivacious, particularly in the bosom of his family, he was more than usually abstracted and silent when he came home after his interview with Governor Shirley, so that his wife, whose fond eyes were keen to note his

every mood, said to him with an anxious note in her voice : —

“What is troubling you, my dear ? Have you been suffering loss in business, or had some other mischance ?”

It was not just the fitting time to relieve his mind of what was upon it, so, calling up a smile of reassurance, he said, as he laid his big hand affectionately upon her plump shoulder : —

“Nothing of that kind, beloved, God be thanked, but there is something else in my thoughts of which I shall tell thee presently.”

When their children had retired for the night (and it was “early to bed, early to rise,” in those good old days) Mr. Pomeroy, putting down the portly volume of Puritan theology which he had been only pretending to read, for his brain teemed with other thoughts, said to his wife : —

“Draw your chair hither, beloved, now that we may converse without hindrance.”

Much marvelling what was to come, yet too discreet to show impatience, Mrs. Pomeroy placed a low stool beside her hus-

band's big arm-chair, and, seating herself so that she could rest her arm upon his knee, and look up into his face, awaited his communication with quickened pulse.

Looking elsewhere than into her comely countenance, he began by asking:—

“You have heard much about this expedition for the taking of Louisbourg which Governor Shirley is so busy organizing, have you not, Mary?”

“I have indeed, dear,” she answered with a thrill of concern, for she had all along been fearing lest her husband should feel called upon to join it in spite of his physical disability. “I confess it seems to me a wild adventure, but with the blessing of God upon it perchance it may succeed, as I pray it will.”

“Aye — aye, beloved,” said Mr. Pomeroy, nodding approvingly. “That is it. With the blessing of God — for with Him all things are possible — and surely His blessing will not be withheld when we are seeking His glory, and the good of His cause through the overthrow of Antichrist.”

As he spoke his rugged countenance lit up with the glow of religious fervor, and his hand clenched hard, as though it grasped the hilt of a sword.

Mrs. Pomeroy was silent, still wondering what would follow.

“I have contributed according to my ability towards the necessary expenses of the enterprise,” Mr. Pomeroy continued, “and I would gladly join it myself,” — here his wife gave a little shudder, and pressed more closely to his side, — “were it not that my poor body is manifestly unfit to withstand the inevitable hardships, and I must abide at home, although sorely against my will;” and he paused to heave a great sigh that came from the depth of his heart, while Mrs. Pomeroy hid her face in her hands that he might not see its radiance.

“Yet I cannot be content with simply giving of my means and my counsel towards this godly enterprise,” resumed Mr. Pomeroy, “and since it is not according to the will of Providence that I should accom-

pany it myself, I have been prayerfully considering who should take my place.”

The little mother's face grew grave again, for she began to divine what was coming, but she forbore to speak.

“Nathan,” he went on, looking straight before him, “cannot be spared from the counting-room, where he shall be needed more than ever in these troublous times, and Winthrop has not the proper strength of body, but,” and here a sharp pang of apprehension went to his listener's heart, “there are Bradford and Sewall — they are qualified in many ways, and they will suffer little by foregoing their school for a few months. Moreover, their knowledge of the fife and drum will be of service, and so I have this day offered them to the Governor, and he has been pleased to accept them with much warmth.”

Poor Mrs. Pomeroy! What could she do but protest and plead with trembling lips and streaming eyes?

The idea of her darling boys being exposed to all the hardships and perils

of warfare was at first little short of appalling. Strong, high-spirited, manly lads though they were, they still seemed to her altogether too young to enter the battle of life, and yet their father would commit them to real fighting, where there would be risk of wounds, and disease, and a thousand other hazards.

They talked far into the night, Mr. Pomeroy urging that the expedition against Louisbourg — that nest of infamous privateers and stronghold of Papistry — being ordained of God, could not fail of glorious success, even though the New England forces were in the sight of men strangely inadequate, and that Bradford and Sewall being in the care of Providence would suffer no harm.

“Aye, beloved,” Mr. Pomeroy went on, his voice rising with the inspiration of the idea; “and even though our boys should be called upon to give their lives to this enterprise, what nobler death could we desire for them? It would be a true sacrifice to the glory of God.”

In the end Mrs. Pomeroy came around to see the matter in this light also, although her mother's heart was sorely wrung, and she felt the need of much waiting upon God ere she could reach the point of complete acquiescence in the sacrifice entailed upon her.

And so, while Prince and Pickle slept on in profound unconsciousness of being the subject of their parents' long vigil, the very thing in all the world they most eagerly desired was being determined upon at the cost of many a bitter pang.

CHAPTER VII.

THE STARTING OF THE EXPEDITION.

IMMEDIATELY after prayers the following morning (and the whole family noticed the special fervor as well as the unwonted prolongation of Mr. Pomeroy's petitions) he said to the twins:—

“Bradford and Sewall, I wish to speak with you in private. Come with me;” and he led the way to his own room.

They followed in considerable trepidation, for, having no inkling of what he was about to communicate, they naturally enough felt apprehensive lest they were to be disciplined for some fresh bit of mischief, although they could not conceive just what it might be.

Their mother came with them, putting a soft hand upon the shoulder of each as they entered, and drawing them towards her, so that they stood on either side of

her when she sank into a chair. Mr. Pomeroy was in a strangely restless state for him. Instead of sitting down, he paced the room a couple of times in silence, while the boys watched him in wonder. The truth was that his heart was so divided betwixt parental love and patriotic and religious fervor that he scarce knew himself.

Presently he came to a stop before the little group, and, giving the boys a searching glance that was almost fierce in its intensity, asked abruptly:—

“What know ye about this holy enterprise for the taking of that stronghold of Antichrist, and den of sea-wolves, the fortress of Louisbourg?”

Very much surprised at the question, which was so different from what they had expected, the boys looked at one another and then at their mother in bewilderment.

But as their father stood regarding them fixedly, and evidently bent upon an answer, Prince plucked up resolution to respond:—

“It is everybody’s talk, sir, and many seem to be going to join it.”

“No doubt, no doubt,” said Mr. Pomeroy. “The Spirit of God is stirring in His people, and, despite the opposition of the evil-disposed and the unregenerate, He will not fail for zealous champions of His cause.” Here he paused for a moment, and then taking a step forward, laid a hand upon the shoulder of each boy, and, looking first into the face of Prince, and then that of Pickle, asked them in a tone of deep feeling: —

“Has it been borne in upon your minds that you would do well to take part in this enterprise, and so work for the glory of God according to your ability?”

Now, at last comprehending what this conference meant, the two boys were even more taken by surprise than at first.

Ever since the Louisbourg expedition began to be talked about it had enlisted their keenest interest. Of course, the religious aspect of the project did not concern them, but the patriotic one did.

They had been brought up to regard the French as the very essence of all that was hateful in humanity, and when the attack

on Louisbourg was mooted, nobody in Massachusetts was more eager than they for its successful execution.

Not only so, but they became endued with an intense desire to form part of the force.

Yet they had the remarkable good sense — or rather Prince had, and he imposed it upon Pickle — to keep this desire to themselves, except so far as it might come out in talk with their schoolmaster.

They took it for granted that their parents would not hear of their going, and they therefore had kept their own counsel at home.

Yet here was their father actually asking them if they wished to join the expedition, for that plainly enough was what his words meant.

The way in which they each responded was very characteristic.

Pickle, disengaging himself from his mother's embrace, clapped his hands joyfully as he exclaimed:—

“We have long been desiring to go,

father, but we feared to say anything about it, lest you should be opposed to it."

But Prince, turning so as to gaze into his mother's face, gave her a questioning look that wellnigh broke down the restraint she had so bravely imposed upon herself.

It asked so plainly that there was no need of words: "What do you think about it, mother?" and Mrs. Pomeroy was fain to hide her face upon his shoulder to conceal her emotion.

They talked long together that morning, so that Mr. Pomeroy was late beyond precedent at his counting-room, and the boys spoiled their record at school.

This was of small consequence, however, since henceforth there would be little more school-going on their part, for they had much to do in getting ready.

The first person they told was Master Hancock, and he seemed almost as much delighted as if it were some special honor conferred upon himself.

"Truly, but this is good news!" he exclaimed, his countenance lit up with joy

and pride. "What you have learned of drill and tactics in my poor school will not come amiss to you, and you shall play your fife and drum, no doubt, to put terror into the hearts of those pestilent Frenchmen, and to inspire courage in our own people. Have I your permission to announce this to the whole school?"

Of course this was just what the boys wanted, and so in quite a neat little speech Master Hancock told the news, expatiating upon the honor it was to have the school thus represented in the expedition, and closing with the fervent wish that the Pomeroy's might be able to render distinguished service, and return unscathed.

Now, with such wonderful energy did the New Englanders prosecute their preparations under the inspiration of the fiery preaching of Parson Moody, and others of like kidney in whom the old Puritan fanaticism was still rampant, that, despite many difficulties and set-backs of one kind and another, within seven weeks from the issuing of Governor Shirley's proclamation for

volunteers the preparations were all made, and the unique armament was afloat.

Seeing how strong was the fortress to be taken, the attacking force certainly seemed, according to human standards, absurdly inadequate, and explicable only on the ground of an absolute faith in divine co-operation.

Aside from the transports, which were simply fishing vessels pressed into the service, the New England fleet was made up as follows: For flagship, the "Massachusetts," a brig just launched, and fitted up for twenty-four guns; the "Cæsar" and the "Shirley," carrying twenty guns each; one of the kind known as a "snow," carrying sixteen guns; a privateer of twenty guns; and some half-dozen sloops mounting from six to eight guns apiece.

As was wisely enough remarked, one heavy French ship of war—and several of such were expected in the spring—would easily outmatch the whole colonial squadron. But the enthusiastic "crusaders" recked not of this. They felt assured of

victory, no matter what might be the odds against them.

One great deficiency was in the matter of cannon. There were only a few to be had, and these were of altogether too light calibre to be properly effective for the siege of a mighty fortress, the heaviest being no more than twenty-two pounders.

Here again, however, the wonderful faith in themselves of the adventurers was strikingly illustrated. They confidently looked to the French for the supply of the needed artillery.

Close to Louisbourg, but completely detached from it, stood the Grand or Royal Battery, known to be mounted with more than a score of heavy pieces. These it was calmly proposed to capture, and to turn against the town, which, as a shrewd critic sagely remarked, was very much "like selling the skin of the bear before catching him."

It was on the twenty-fourth of March, in the year 1745, when this remarkable expedition, which was sarcastically described

as having a lawyer for its promoter, a merchant for its general, and farmers, fishermen, and mechanics for its soldiers, set sail from Nantasket Roads, escorted by the provincial cruisers, and followed by prayers and benedictions, not to mention enthusiastic toasts drunk in bumpers of rum punch.

William Pepperell, a merchant of Kittery, had been chosen by Governor Shirley to command the land forces, and the choice was probably the best that could have been made, for he joined to an unusual popularity as little military incompetency as any one else who could have been selected.

The naval commander was Captain Edward Tyng, who had recently signalized himself by capturing a French privateer of much greater strength than his own vessel. He hoisted his flag upon the "Massachusetts," a fine new brig converted into a frigate of twenty-four guns for the occasion.

From the morning when it was settled that Prince and Pickle should join the

expedition this was the one absorbing interest of the Pomeroy household.

The other children felt themselves to shine in the reflected glory of their brothers' prominence, and wearied their companions with oft-repeated details of what was being done in the way of preparation, — the gay uniforms that were being got ready, the diligent practice upon fife and drum that was carried on, the bountifully stocked hampers that were to accompany the young warriors, and so on. They apparently could talk of nothing else.

With the parents, however, it was very different.

Mr. Pomeroy was at no time a man of many words. The more deeply he thought or felt upon any subject the less he could be got to say about it, and so his friends soon came to understand that his sons' venture was not a welcome topic of conversation with him.

As for sweet Mrs. Pomeroy, her self-control was a marvel to every one. Her eyes were blind to none of the perils of the

enterprise, even if her faith in its being divinely directed was as clear and strong as Parson Moody's.

She spent much time in her room, communing with God, and thereby was her strength sustained.

She found it in some sense a comfort to talk with her friends freely on the subject, and every night when Prince and Pickle had gone to bed she would slip away to their room, and spend a little while with them ere they fell asleep.

At the time of parting she was wonderfully composed. Indeed so splendidly did she restrain herself that only those who knew her best understood how her heart bled.

Pickle, carried away by the excitement of the occasion, seemed as jubilant as though he were going off on some delightful holiday jaunt; but Prince showed deep feeling, all the more unwonted on his part. He did not even attempt to hide the tears that brimmed his eyes as he embraced his mother again and again.

Mr. Pomeroy's last words to his boys were very characteristic. Putting a hand upon the head of each, he said with solemn emphasis:—

“The Lord bless you, and keep you, my sons. Our prayer shall be, ‘Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered; let them also that hate Him flee before Him.’”

The fife and drum corps to which Prince and Pickle belonged had been assigned to the “Mary and Martha,” a rather small and decidedly malodorous “snow” that had seen many years of service on the fishing banks.

Pickle, who had cherished hopes of getting on board the “Massachusetts,” or at least one of the armed sloops, felt keenly disappointed when he learned his fate.

“I'm sure the General might have sent us to a better vessel than this vile-smelling thing,” he grumbled, sniffing contemptuously. “He knows what a good home we've come from, and that we're not just common soldiers.”

Prince laughed quietly as he replied : —

“ If you call this hardship, Pickle, I wonder what you ’ll think of camping out before Louisbourg. I ’m very sure there ’ll be many a day when we ’ll wish ourselves back on board this vessel. You don’t know when we ’re well off.”

“ If the wretched old hulk did n’t stink so it would not be so bad,” retorted Pickle, wrinkling up his face as though to shut out the objectionable odors, “ but,” and here he assumed a more cheerful expression of countenance, “ I suppose we ’ve got to make the best of it. I wonder how our companions like it.”

There were nearly fourscore in all on board the transport, necessitating very close stowing, and the Pomeroy boys, who had anticipated finding much pleasure in the sea trip, soon realized that it could not be a comfortable one under any circumstances, and that, therefore, the shorter it might prove the better.

The sun shone most promisingly, and the wind blew from the right quarter as

the colonial fleet, in fairly good order, moved out of Nantasket Roads into the open sea.

Everybody was in good spirits, although all knew that many would never again set foot on New England soil. But each one hoped that he might survive the perils and mischances of the enterprise to share in the triumphant home-coming, which was as confidently counted upon as though it had been revealed from on high.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN PERILS OF WATERS.

AFTER the first novelty of being on shipboard was over, Prince and Pickle set themselves to making the acquaintance of their fellow-voyagers.

These were all a good deal older than they, but being for the most part drawn from the country districts, the boys soon found their disparity in years considerably compensated for by advantages in education and social culture.

In the hurry and confusion of embarking, the members of the fife and drum corps that was to be, no real organization having yet been completed, were scattered through different vessels, only the Pomeroy's being on board the "Mary and Martha."

This very fact gave them a sort of distinction. They were not just ordinary

volunteers like the rest. They had a duty to perform that demanded special skill, and this, combined with the singularity of their mutual resemblance, and the knowledge of how liberally their father had contributed towards the expenses of the expedition, won for them the interest of their ship-mates at the outset.

By the end of the day they knew nearly everybody on board, and had particularly won the regard of the captain, who thought them the finest pair of boys he had ever seen.

The first day's sailing was pure enjoyment to them. They had never been on the ocean before, although they had made many an excursion over the waters of Boston Bay, and the vast expanse of rippling blue flecked by whitecaps through which the fleet surged its way seemed a glorious spectacle.

"This is just splendid!" exclaimed Pickle, as he stood in the bows, and felt the vessel rise and fall beneath him like a galloping horse. "I believe I'll take to

the sea when this Louisbourg affair is all over. Father would let me have one of his ships when I learned how to navigate it, would n't he?"

"I should think he would, Pickle," responded Prince. "He's got to have a good captain for each of them, and when you've learned navigation he ought to be very glad to put you in command of the best vessel he owns."

Pickle's eyes gleamed with pleasure, and a gratified smile lit up his face.

"I like to hear you speak that way, Prince," he said, giving his brother's arm an affectionate squeeze. "I know I'm rather a rash, reckless fellow now, but I'm going to steady down in a little while, and then people will be able to depend upon me."

In view of their twinship it was remarkable how in his sober moods Pickle seemed to look up to Prince, as though he were really some years older, and how keenly he appreciated his brother's good opinion.

Auspicious as the weather had been

when the fleet sailed, an ominous change came on in the course of the afternoon. The sun was lost in a huge mass of sullen clouds that rapidly covered the face of the sky; the air, which had been warm and pleasant, grew uncomfortably chill; and the wind, at first so steady and moderate, set the vessels a-pitching and tossing in such a way as rapidly to bring all who were not seasoned sailors into the grip of that most unheroic of maladies, seasickness.

Prince and Pickle, having had some experience of salt water, did not succumb so soon as some of those who, having come from the countryside, were now getting their first taste of brine.

Indeed they kept their feet so long that they actually began to flatter themselves that they were superior to the buffetings of old Neptune.

“Those poor fellows,” said Prince in a sympathetic tone, pointing to a miserable group of sufferers sprawling on the deck in different attitudes of abject misery. “How wretched they seem! I’m glad we

have been on the water so much that we're well used to it."

"Yes, indeed," chorussed Pickle, whose sense of the ludicrous overbore his sympathies for the moment. "They don't make a very pretty picture, do they? If I felt like that I think I'd want to go and hide myself somewhere."

It was not very long after this, however, when, the wind increasing in strength, the motion of the snow became so violent as to make Master Pickle feel very queer inside himself.

"Those horrid smells!" he exclaimed indignantly, turning up his nose. "They're enough to make a pig sick. Why could n't they've put us on board a proper vessel?"

But it was not simply the ancient and fish-like odor of the "Mary and Martha," bad as that was, which gave Pickle such disturbing internal qualms. Had the snow smelt as sweet as a haymow, they would still have intruded themselves, for in spite of his premature boasting, he was fast falling under the spell of seasickness.

True to his word, when he realized what was the matter with him he made for his bunk, post haste, that he might there hide his discomfiture.

But he could not stay there long. The furious pitching of the vessel, which banged him mercilessly against the sides of his bunk, the dense confined air of the cabin, and worst of all the horrible combination of odors that thickened the atmosphere, foul bilge water contending for supremacy with memories of stale fish, — these were altogether more than he could endure, and accordingly he crawled back to the deck, where, seeking out a protected nook under the lee of the mainmast, he huddled down in it, confessing himself the most wretched being alive.

By nightfall the wind had risen into a fierce gale from the northeast, against which the fleet could do nothing, and all through the long hours of darkness, as one who was on board a transport has recorded, they “lay rolling in the seas, with sails furled, among prodigious waves.”

Nor was this the worst of it. With the gale came great showers of rain that presently turned into snow, driving everybody below deck save those who had to manage the vessels; and these latter were so blinded and bewildered that they scarce knew what they were doing.

Prince, although feeling pretty miserable himself, managed to look after Pickle a little.

When the snow-storm came on he helped him down into his bunk, and stayed beside him, affording him the comfort of his company, since he could do nothing else.

It was a night not soon to be forgotten. The snow rolled and pitched and tossed like a crazy thing, creaking and groaning in every rib and plank, while the masts strained in their sockets as though they must be torn out of them, or snap short off by the deck.

Only the sailors, and a few hardy fishermen who were among the volunteers, withstood the seasickness that prostrated the

rest, and they showed scant sympathy for the sufferers.

Pickle really felt as though he might be going to die. Having never been ill a day in his life before, the severity of his present symptoms filled him with fear.

“Oh, Prince!” he groaned, holding tightly his brother’s hand, “what will become of us? I wish to heaven we’d never started. What do we care about Louisbourg? It never did us any harm, and here we are in danger of losing our lives! What fools we’ve been! Oh, to be safe back at home again!”

In spite of his own suffering, Prince could not forbear smiling at Pickle’s exclamations, — they were so different from the tone of his talk until the sea had laid hold of him thus roughly.

“Tut, Pickle!” he said, patting his hand soothingly. “You’ll feel very differently soon. This seasickness does not last long. By to-morrow morning you’ll be all right, and the storm will be over then, see if it is n’t.”

But when at last the eagerly awaited morning came, it brought no improvement in the weather, and Prince, creeping carefully up on deck, was alarmed to find the "Mary and Martha" alone upon that wild waste of waters.

The storm had scattered the fleet like so much chaff, and no other vessel was in sight.

"Where are they all?" he asked, addressing the captain, who stood at the tiller, where indeed he had been through the night, bending all his skill and strength to the task of keeping his endangered vessel afloat.

"The Lord knoweth," he responded solemnly, shaking his head as though to imply that his own inability to account for them augured ill for their safety.

"But they have not been wrecked, have they?" cried Prince, believing such a storm as was prevailing capable of doing any amount of destruction.

Captain Flagg again shook his head solemnly. He trusted that no such terrible

calamity had befallen the rest of the fleet, yet, if it indeed were the case, he could not fail to take a melancholy satisfaction in his vessel being the sole survivor.

But although the "Mary and Martha" had thus far gallantly withstood the storm without loss of tackle or springing of leak, it was still far too soon to rejoice over safe deliverance.

In wrestling with the gale, the snow had been forced farther westward than was comforting to her navigator, and the return of daylight revealed on their left the cruel coast-line of Maine with its jagged cliffs, at whose feet the billows broke ceaselessly.

Prince saw the danger at once. The vessel must somehow beat out to seaward, or inevitably be dashed upon a lee shore with small chance of a single one of her company surviving the catastrophe.

"Is there any haven into which we can run?" he asked anxiously of the captain, while with his own eyes he strove to discern some break in that appalling front of sombre rocks and snowy foam.

Captain Flagg gave his grizzled head a mournful negative shake. He was at no time a cheerful man. Gloom sat on his rugged countenance when all around made merry, and now that he and his vessel were in imminent peril, he was gloomier than ever.

“There be no haven about here,” he replied; “nothing but rocks and ledges, and reefs that are just hungry for ships, and we’re going to have a hard time getting away from them if the wind don’t soon change.”

Filled with new apprehensions, Prince went down to see how Pickle was getting on. He found the poor boy still in the throes of sickness, and utterly unable to stand upon his feet.

“Where are we, Prince?” he asked languidly, his wan face and spiritless eyes making him seem an altogether different person from his old lively self. “Will we quickly reach land? I am so sick I’m sure I will die if we do not soon get out of this horrid vessel.”

“We’re a good way yet from where

we're to land, Pickle," responded Prince, as cheerfully as though he knew nothing of the new peril that threatened them. "Do you want something to eat?"

"To eat!" cried Pickle, with a grimace of disgust at the very idea of such a thing. "To eat! *I* don't want to eat anything, and I never will again."

Prince smiled at his rash declaration. He had no appetite himself, but he did not doubt he would be eager enough for food when once he got his sea-legs.

"Well, you stay there until you feel better," he said, "and before the day's over you'll be glad enough to munch a biscuit, see if you're not. I'm going back on deck to see how we're getting on."

There was no improvement in the prospect when Prince returned to the deck. Indeed, if anything the situation had grown more alarming.

The "Mary and Martha" was under triple-reefed sails, and these threatened to tear away from their grummets at any moment. The gale showed no sign of slackening, and

the sea ran higher than ever. Nothing could be seen, save the wind-whipped waves on the right and the implacable rocks on the left. The snow was as solitary as though she were the only vessel afloat on the Atlantic.

Still retaining his post at the tiller, which he had not left save for a brief spell or two since the storm began, Captain Joshua Flagg, with stern-set features and eyes of profound sadness, brought all his knowledge of seamanship to bear upon the problem he now had to solve, and upon whose solution depended the lives of all on board the "Mary and Martha."

CHAPTER IX.

SAFELY INTO PORT.

IT was Captain Flagg's plan to make for the Bay of Fundy, where the "Mary and Martha" might find a safe haven until the gale passed.

He would have preferred standing out to sea, for he had perfect faith in the ability of his vessel and himself to cope with the assaults of the elements, but his heart was touched by the sufferings of his passengers, and, moreover, the frequent snow-squalls that blotted out everything a hundred yards from the vessel, were, for aught he could tell, the precursors of a regular snow-storm that might render his clumsy craft altogether unmanageable.

So he fought his way along the coast, again and again escaping the ever-ready rocks as by a miracle, until at last he

gained the mouth of the Bay, and, by a daring slant in the very teeth of the gale, succeeded in making port at the southernmost end of the Province of Acadia, where the prosperous town of Yarmouth now stands.

The change from the incessant violence of the storm-tossed ocean to the calm of the peaceful harbor was indescribably grateful to all on board the transport. Even the "old salts" who composed the crew were glad of release from the tremendous strain they had been bearing.

As for the militiamen, a few hours of quiet made new beings of them. They came out of the cabins like bees out of a hive, and disposed themselves on deck, eagerly sniffing the keen, pure air that was so welcome after the fetid atmosphere they had been breathing.

Pickle was one of the first to show up, and his joyful exclamation as he gazed about him, and saw the pleasant land almost encircling the vessel, was:—

"Hurrah! we've got there all right

after all!" Then realizing on a second glance that the place hardly answered to the description of Louisbourg, a puzzled expression came over his face, and he continued: "But this does n't look like Louisbourg. Where are the French, and the great fortress that we were told so much about?"

Prince laughed heartily. He had fully expected his brother to make just such a mistake.

"We're a long way from Louisbourg yet, Pickle," he answered. "This is only the south end of Acadia, and Captain Flagg has put in here for shelter. As soon as the wind changes we'll be starting again."

"Oh, dear!" groaned Pickle, putting his hand to his stomach as if the very idea of another bout with Neptune made him sick, "and I suppose we'll have the same dreadful time over again!"

"I hope not," responded Prince, cheerfully. "There ought to be some fine weather after the storm, and, anyway, you won't be bothered much more by sea-

sickness; you'll feel all right when we start out again."

They remained a couple of days in port, waiting for the "dirty weather" to wear itself out, and were rewarded by an unmistakable clear-up that put everybody in good spirits, even old Captain Flagg's habitually sombre countenance brightening perceptibly.

Favored with a warm west wind that propelled her so steadily as to banish all thought of seasickness, the "Mary and Martha" slipped along the Acadian coast, those on board her keeping a sharp lookout for the other transports, but scanning the blue and white waves in vain.

Canseau harbor had been agreed upon as the rendezvous, and in due time the snow reached there, being the very last of the whole fleet to arrive, and by her belated appearance affording immense relief to the naval commander, who was already fearing that she would never be seen again.

It had not taken long for Canseau to again change ownership. The scanty gar-

rison left by Duvivier made no pretence at resistance when they saw the colonial war vessels and transports crowding into the pretty harbor. They surrendered forthwith, and at the first opportunity were shipped off to Boston, there to await the issue of the enterprise.

The Pomeroy's were hugely delighted at landing. Pleasant as the trip along the Acadian coast had been, they were both heartily sick of the strong-smelling snow, and glad to exchange her cramped accommodations for the freedom of the camp.

"Ah, ha! this is what suits me!" Pickle exclaimed, when they had got their belongings arranged to their satisfaction in the tent, which they shared with four others of the corps. "We're soldiers in earnest now. No more nasty seasickness for us."

"Perhaps you'll not find the tent so comfortable as you imagine," said Prince, smiling at his brother's enthusiasm. "We've got to make our beds on the hard ground as best we can, you know."

"Oh! that's all right," responded Pickle.

“We can make them soft enough with hay or pine boughs.”

It was on Friday, the fifth of April, when the Pomeroy's landed, and ere Sunday came they had settled down to camp life as naturally as if they had experienced it before.

True to his words, Pickle foraged around until he lighted upon a small barn filled with hay, from which he and his tent-mates helped themselves freely, and thus made rude mattresses, that greatly added to their comfort when sleeping.

As soon as the camp was arranged, the drilling began. A veteran soldier would have found much to laugh at in the spectacle of several thousand homespun volunteers doing their best to master the intricacies of “right wheel,” “attention,” and “stand at ease.”

They were so ludicrously awkward, and yet so deeply in earnest! They evidently saw nothing funny about it. It was all downright hard work, which made them look as solemn as judges on the bench.

Prince and Pickle had to do as much as any one, if not indeed somewhat more than many, because in addition to learning the martial evolutions they had to practise diligently upon their instruments.

On the first Sunday there was a great concourse to hear Parson Moody, who, to adopt Shakespeare's words, had not shown the steep and thorny way to others while he himself the primrose path of dalliance trod, but, gladly giving up all the comforts of his own home-life, although he had already reached the allotted age of man, had packed his big Bible in the midst of a small bundle of clothes, and taken his place in the expedition.

His very apt text was, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power," and it was generally admitted that he quite excelled himself in both the length and the quality of his discourse.

Prince and Pickle, like dutiful boys, attended the service, and at first gave good heed to the preacher's thunderous exposition; for of the old man it is recorded that

he had lungs of brass, and nerves of hammered iron.

But as he went on, and on, booming away past ninthly, tenthly, eleventhly, giving no sign of ever coming to lastly, Pickle grew weary, and his eyes turned longingly towards the adjacent pasture in which several squads were busy drilling, probably on the principle that the better the day, the better the deed.

Presently, after fidgiting about for some time, he could stand it no longer, and he whispered to Prince:—

“We’ve had enough of this. He’s going to preach all day. Let us slip out to the drill-ground.”

Prince shook his head decidedly. He had too much respect for the ordinances of the church to do what Pickle proposed, and the latter, with a grunt of dissatisfaction, settled down again.

But not for long. After enduring two more heads of the indefatigable parson’s strenuous deliverance, he plucked Prince’s arm, and, whispering to him, “Come along!

"I can't stand any more of this," he crept away, bending low, so as to avoid the preacher's observation if possible.

Prince stayed where he was, and Pickle, owing to Mr. Moody's attention being fixed elsewhere, got to the outskirts of the congregation ere he was noticed.

Then there came a sudden stop in the sounding harangue, and every eye was turned in the direction indicated by the parson's outstretched forefinger, as, rising upon tiptoe, he levelled it at Pickle, and shouted: —

"Come back, you graceless young sinner! Come back here, and listen to that which is profitable for thy soul, instead of sneaking off to join thyself to those godless fellows drilling over yonder."

In spite of the distance separating them, Parson Moody's irate recall reached Pickle like a trumpet-blast, and he stopped at once, his crimson cheeks betraying his confusion.

His first impulse was to humbly return to his place. Then, as the full sense of the old man's harsh words came to him, his

own anger rose at being thus publicly called such hard names, and, straightening up, he looked back defiantly at the minister, as he responded : —

“ I have listened to you long enough already, sir, and I am tired of it, so I am going to the drill-ground.”

Never had this tyrant of the pulpit been so bearded before. In his own parish he was a sort of pope, and his fiery appeals in support of the expedition had given him an importance really beyond his merits. He would fain have been the spiritual dictator of the enterprise, if Pepperell would only permit it.

A thrill of amazement, not unmixed with admiration, ran through the congregation. They, too, were weary of the loud-sounding, long-continued sermon, and only lacked courage to do as Pickle had done.

Parson Moody was fairly aghast. He had not looked for anything save instant submission.

“ What imp of Satan are you ? ” he shouted, losing all thought of his sermon

in the fierceness of his wrath, "that thou darest thus to speak to a minister of God? Truly, if I could but lay hold upon thee, I would chastise thee as thou deservest."

"But you cannot lay hold upon me, and I bid you good-day," retorted Pickle, his audacious spirit now thoroughly roused, and, turning on his heel, he hastened off, leaving the preacher to finish his discourse as best he could without him.

Prince felt dreadfully ashamed of his brother. He was naturally respectful to his seniors and superiors, and so daring a defiance of authority seemed to him very dreadful.

But throughout the camp generally Pickle's action was secretly if not openly approved, for they all thought Parson Moody inclined to take too much upon himself, and to treat them as children bound to unquestioning obedience, rather than as men having minds of their own.

Of course the parson took the first opportunity of seeking out Pickle, and admonishing him sternly for his misconduct.

Following Prince's counsel, Pickle heard him in silence, and the good old man, believing him to be repentant, let the matter drop.

Each day the affairs of the expedition got into better shape, and, as soon as they could be spared, some of the armed vessels were sent to cruise off Louisbourg.

When Pickle heard that they were to be detailed for this duty, he became possessed with the idea of going on board one of them.

"Let us ask Captain Tyng if we cannot go," he said to Prince. "It will be ever so much more interesting than this everlasting drill," for he had already grown weary of the daily routine.

"I'm afraid it won't be any use," replied Prince with a dubious shake of his head, "and anyway, I thought you had had enough of the sea, and wanted to stay on land."

"Oh, as to that," responded Pickle, with as light a laugh as if he had never known the miseries of seasickness, "I'm not going

to be bothered in that way again, and it's worth seeing, if they won't let us on board; I'm going to try, at all events."

"Very well, then, I'll go with you," said Prince, entering into the humor of the thing; and so off they went in search of the commander of the fleet.

They found him on board his own vessel, the frigate "Massachusetts," and Pickle promptly preferred his request somewhat after this fashion:—

"Please, Sir Captain, may my brother and I go with one of the vessels that are being sent to cruise off Louisbourg?"

Captain Tyng fortunately was in a very good humor at the moment, and, being rather tickled by the question, and favorably impressed by the appearance of the twins, he regarded them with a smile of kindly amusement as he asked:—

"And who may 'my brother and me' be? I don't remember having seen you before."

Pickle made quite a handsome bow.

"Please, Sir Captain, we are Prince and

Pickle, — I mean, Bradford and Sewall Pomeroy, — and we are in the fife and drum corps.”

“ Oh, ho ! ” laughed the commander, “ so you are the Pomeroy twins — the sons of worthy Master Preserved Pomeroy who gave so fine a subscription to the expenses of the expedition. I might have known it at first glance, for you are as like as two peas. Which one of you was it, may I ask, that stood up so bravely against Parson Moody ? But, wait a moment, let me see if I cannot guess that myself. I think it must have been you,” and he laid his hand upon Pickle’s shoulder.

Pickle blushed, and hung his head, whereupon Captain Tyng gave a pleased laugh, exclaiming : —

“ Ah ! I thought so ; you ’ve got more of the Old Nick in you than your brother, unless I ’m much mistaken. And so,” he continued, “ you ’d like to go with one of the cruisers. Well, I dare say it can be arranged. Come to me this afternoon, and I ’ll let you know how it will be.”

“Oh, thank you, sir,” chorussed the twins gratefully, for they knew it was as good as settled, and they went ashore again in high glee.

CHAPTER X.

ACTIVE SERVICE AFLOAT.

IN the afternoon the Pomeroy's returned to the "Massachusetts," and to their huge delight were informed by Commander Tyng that he had arranged for them to go on board the "Boston Packet," a smart-sailing sloop of sixteen guns.

"It may be only a little picnic for you, my boys," he said pleasantly, "or you may have some sharp fighting to do, and perhaps help in making up a prize crew. I cannot say. But whether it turn out fun or fighting, I'm much mistaken if you're not quite ready for either."

"That we are, sir," responded the twins in one breath.

"And we are very much obliged to you, sir," added Prince.

"Yes, indeed," cried Pickle; and so the business was settled.

Bundling up their clothes, and not forgetting the fife and drum, they betook themselves without loss of time to the sloop, where they were well received by her captain, who seemed quite glad to have them added to his company.

The "Boston Packet" had done good service as a privateer, and was as well equipped for her work as any vessel in the colonial fleet, save the flag-ship.

The boys examined her with great interest.

The guns and swivels, of which there were eight each, the cannon-balls in neat piles beside them, the stacks of muskets, boarding-pikes, and cutlasses, and all the other munitions of war, delighted them.

"I just hope we'll have a good fight with a French ship," exclaimed Pickle, who had listened with breathless, palpitating attention to many an exciting story of privateering adventure told by Boston sailors. "Would n't I like to have a hand in capturing her?"

"But suppose she captured us instead?"

suggested Prince, who was far more ready to consider both sides of a question than his impetuous brother. "You know the French ships are a great deal bigger than ours, and carry heavier guns and more men, so that if we encountered one we might get the worst of it."

"No, sir," shouted Pickle, bringing his right hand down upon the breech of a gun with a sounding slap, "they could n't do it, even though they were stronger than we. One Englishman is good for three Frenchmen at any time and anywhere."

Prince laughed in his quiet, amiable way. He enjoyed Pickle's explosive vigor. It was so different from his own more restrained ways.

"We'll see, we'll see," he answered with a sage nod of his curly head. "We're pretty sure to find some French vessels before long, they all say."

At daybreak the following morning, the "Boston Packet," in company with two other armed sloops, the "Tartar," and the "Cæsar," set sail from Canseau harbor.

It was a short voyage to the cruising ground off Louisbourg, and every eye on board the sloops kept a sharp lookout for strange sails.

The fine bright day and smart breeze from the west put everybody in good spirits, and many and eager were the conjectures, not to mention the wagers, as to which vessel should be the first to make a capture.

Over the crisping waves the "Boston Packet" bowled merrily, and the Pomeroy's, standing together in the bow, felt as happy as larks.

"This is something like a ship!" cried Pickle joyously, — "no horrid smells, everything as neat as mother's best parlor, and we're going along twice as fast as that wretched old 'Mary and Martha' ever could."

"Right you are, Pickle," responded Prince, his fine face lit up with exultation. "I never enjoyed anything more than this. It is simply splendid."

The colonial vessels soon separated, so that they might cruise over as large an area

as possible, and the "Boston Packet" was presently alone.

Early in the afternoon, the lookout at the crosstrees thrilled those on deck by the eagerly awaited shout of "Sail-ho!"

"Where away?" asked the captain.

"On the weather bow," was the response, and at once the sloop's course was altered accordingly.

Then began an exciting chase that threatened to last until darkness should put an end to it. The French vessel, which, so far as could be made out, was a sloop about the same size as the cruiser, showed unexpected capacity for speed.

Not being able to continue on to Louisbourg, as that course would have carried her right into the hands of the enemy, she went off on a long tack northward, evidently purposing to find refuge in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Crowding on all the canvas she could carry, and using every possible device to enhance her speed, the "Boston Packet" tore through the water with a big bone in

her mouth for an hour or more without materially lessening the distance between herself and the object of her chase.

“We don’t seem to be gaining much, Pickle, do we?” said Prince, as with his eye he measured the space of whitecapped sea that divided the two vessels. “At this rate it will be dark before we come up to her, and she’ll be sure to get away from us in the night.”

“Oh, we’ll catch her soon. Just see how we’re creeping up on her,” responded Pickle, whose eagerness caused him to exaggerate the actual gain. “She’ll be within range of our bow chaser in a little while, and then we’ll knock her mast down with it.”

The excitement on board the cruiser was intense. Some of the men were praying earnestly for the French vessel to be delivered into their hands, and others were cursing their own vessel for not being faster, while all saw to it that their muskets and cutlasses were ready for immediate action.

The Pomeroy's had been provided with a

cutlass and a pistol apiece, through the kindness of Commander Tyng, and were no less proud of their weapons than they were anxious to have a chance of trying them upon the enemy.

By the middle of the afternoon the "Boston Packet" had got within a mile of the French sloop, and the hopes of the New Englanders rose high.

Another hour, at the most, ought to bring the two vessels together, and then the fun would begin; that is, if the Frenchmen did not tamely submit to capture, but showed fight, as many on board the cruiser quite hoped they would, so as to have a good excuse for cracking their heads.

Little by little the distance lessened, and when it had been reduced to only half a mile, the swivel gun at the bow was carefully trained upon the chase, and a round shot sent after her.

It ricocheted harmlessly over the waves on her port side, and the captain swore at the gunner for his lack of skill.

"Try it yourself, then," growled the

gunner sulkily, backing away from the gun.

“Very well, I will then,” responded the captain, and sighting the cannon carefully, he waited until the sloop was poised upon a wave-top ere pulling the lanyard.

Hardly had the report rung out and the smoke cleared away than Pickle gave a cry of delight that was immediately echoed by the rest of the crew.

Whether it was a bit of good luck, or a real exhibition of skill, mattered little so far as the result was concerned, for the ball struck the mast of the French sloop just a little below the crosstrees, and broke it off, bringing the big sail helplessly down to the deck in flapping folds, and rendering further flight out of the question.

Cheering tumultuously, the New Englanders dashed on, the man at the wheel being so carried away by the excitement of the moment that he was steering the cruiser right into the sloop, and there would infallibly have been a disastrous collision had not the captain, seeing the dan-

ger, rushed to the stern, and, giving the steersman a cuff that sent him sprawling, seized the wheel just in time to swing the vessel around, and bring her alongside, instead of bow on to the disabled craft.

Among the first to leap upon the French ship's deck were Prince and Pickle.

Waving their cutlasses they shouted:—

“Surrender, or we'll cut you to pieces!” and they certainly looked sufficiently in earnest to make their threat well worth heeding.

But alas for their hopes of a lively scrimmage in which sundry French pates should be broken while they themselves were of course to come off scatheless!—the shrewd “Mounseers” surrendered without a blow, although in numbers they were not so very much inferior to their captors.

But they had no cannon, and only a scant supply of muskets and cutlasses, so that they were hardly to be blamed for their prompt submission.

The sloop was found to be loaded with supplies of food and munitions of war for





Louisbourg sent from Quebec, and the colonials, therefore, had good reason to congratulate themselves warmly, since her entire cargo would prove an exceedingly valuable addition to their own somewhat scant resources.

When the captain of the "Boston Packet" was making up a crew to take charge of his prize, and sail her to Canseau, the Pomeroy's eagerly volunteered, and he made no objection to their going.

"I can spare you two about as well as anybody on board," he said, with a smile that implied they were not of much consequence in his eyes, "and I may need all of my able-bodied men badly, before the cruise is over, for there are sure to be more Frenchmen to be picked up."

The twins were not blind to his opinion of them, and they both resented it, but only a heightened color showed their feeling, and, having thanked him for acceding to their request, they went off to get ready to change vessels.

The prize crew was composed of six be-

sides themselves, four being experienced sailors, and the other two landsmen who had got their sea-legs by this time.

The mast and rigging having been temporarily repaired, so as to enable the sails to be again hoisted, the sloop which bore the rather inappropriate name of "La Gloire" parted company with the "Boston Packet," steering a straight course for Canseau, while the latter continued on her cruise.

Prince and Pickle were far from being favorably impressed by the appearance of the Frenchmen.

"They look like a lot of pirates, don't they?" Pickle remarked in as low a tone, as if he feared being overheard and understood. "I'm glad we've got our pistols and cutlasses, and that the others all have muskets."

"I expect it is only because they are foreigners that they seem so evil-looking," said Prince, who was not one to be carried away by first impressions, and who, after studying the faces of the prisoners, was beginning to form a better

opinion of them. "We must seem just as strange to them, and doubtless they take us to be the greatest rascals in the world."

"Do you say so, Prince?" Pickle cried, his face flushing with indignation, and his fists clenching unconsciously. "Why, what right have they to think that? We've never done anything so bad as they have."

"That all depends upon how you look at it," responded Prince smilingly. "I don't think our ships have ever lost a chance of capturing one of theirs, and we've done them all the harm we could in lots of ways."

Here their talk was interrupted by an order from Seth Perkins, who had been placed in command of the sloop, to lay hold of the main-sheet, and thenceforth they were kept pretty busy assisting in working the vessel.

When night drew near Captain Perkins decided that it would be best to shut the French sailors, who numbered fifteen, up in the fore-castle, while he and his men took possession of the cabin. He accordingly

drove them down below, and placed the two landsmen on guard over them with instructions to shoot the first one that attempted to get up on deck.

The rest of his crew he divided into two watches, which should take turn in sailing the sloop.

Prince was put on the first watch and Pickle on the second. They would have preferred being together, but thought it better to say nothing and to do just as they were bidden.

By nightfall Captain Perkins had settled everything to his satisfaction, and the captured sloop glided smoothly towards Canseau, the wavelets lapping her bow with a soft persistence as soothing as a lullaby.

“We ought to make port by daybreak,” said the captain to Prince, who was standing beside him, keenly enjoying the placid beauty of the night and the gentle motion of the vessel. “The folks will be main glad to see us with so fine a prize, I reckon. I’m wondering if the other cruisers will do as well.”

"I hope they won't," answered Prince frankly, "for we would n't have so much to boast of then."

Captain Perkins chuckled, and clapped him on the back.

"Ye're just right, my boy," he said; "we don't want to divide the glory when there's only enough to go around comfortably, do we?"

At midnight came the change of watch, Eli Thayer relieving Captain Perkins, and Pickle going on duty instead of Prince.

"Be sure and keep your eyes open," said Prince, as he went below, to his brother, who was yawning fearfully.

Pickle at first felt as if he would have given anything to finish out his sleep, but the cool night air soon freshened him up, and he was as alert as anybody.

Then, having little to do save keep the sails full, the watch gathered at the stern, and chatted together.

After listening to their talk for some time, Pickle went forward, and had been in the bow about a quarter of an hour, en-

joying the smooth, steady motion of the vessel, when a slight noise from the direction of the fore-castle attracted his attention.

Creeping quietly back, he was startled to see the hatch silently slid off, and the head and shoulders of one of the French sailors show up.

He instantly understood the situation. In some way the prisoners had got the hatch unfastened, and were now about to make an attempt to recover possession of the vessel !

CHAPTER XI.

PURSUED AND PURSUING.

RECKING nothing of the consequences, Pickle shouted at the top of his voice : —

“ Help! help! they ’re getting out! ” and threw himself upon the Frenchman.

The latter was a powerful man, — the biggest in fact in their company, — and Pickle was no match for him whatever.

But the impetuosity of the boy’s attack gave him an advantage at the start, and he forced the burly “ Mounseer ” back against the hatchway, thus not only checking his advance, but effectually blocking those behind him.

The next moment, however, he was grasped by a pair of sinewy arms, and flung to one side as though he were a child, his forehead, as he fell, coming in contact with

the end of a belaying-pin so violently as to render him insensible.

But the brief delay gained by his prompt and courageous action saved the vessel from recapture, for all the other members of the watch, save the man at the wheel, instantly rushed forward, and after a sharp, severe struggle the prisoners were driven back into the forecastle, and the hatch secured beyond any possibility of being again unfastened from below.

Not until this had been accomplished was Pickle thought of, and when they found him lying at the foot of the mast, senseless and bleeding, they were so alarmed that they aroused both Prince and the captain, who had slept soundly through all the disturbance.

The poor boy had suffered a nasty blow, but happily Captain Perkins possessed some skill in rude surgery, and in a few moments brought him back to consciousness, and bound up his wound in the proper manner.

“Did they get out?” was Pickle’s first

question on recovering his senses. "I did my best to stop them, but that big Frenchman was too strong for me."

"No, my brave boy, thanks to you, they did not get out," replied the captain, patting him affectionately. "You were just in time. In another moment they'd have swarmed upon deck, and perhaps pitched us all overboard."

"I'm so glad!" exclaimed Pickle, with a huge sigh of relief; and then putting his hand to his head, he groaned: "Oh, how my head pains me! How did I hurt it so?"

"You struck against a belaying-pin when the Frenchman threw you down," Prince answered him. "But you'll be all right soon. Lie down now, and be comfortable; I'll take the watch in your place."

Pickle was presently sleeping easily, and so Prince went on deck for the remainder of the night.

By daybreak the sloop stood off Louisbourg, and, the breeze freshening with the

morn, was making good speed towards Canseau, when out from the French stronghold came a larger vessel, canvased from peak to deck, that at the first glance was recognized as a French frigate.

Immediately upon taking possession of the sloop the colonials had hoisted the British ensign at the masthead, and this being sighted on board the frigate, the latter of course at once began pursuit.

Here now was a most unexpected and unwelcome reversal of the situation. The chasers of yesterday had become the chased of to-day, and they did not like it a bit, particularly as in the crippled condition of their vessel they could not get out of her the speed of which she was capable.

The frigate did not make directly for the sloop, but laid a course that would carry her between the latter and Canseau harbor, thus cutting off all chance of her escape.

Captain Perkins, who had been instantly aroused, noted this with a grim smile.

“Mounseer’s no fool,” he said. “He

knows he's got us in a tight place, and he's in no particular hurry. He thinks he'll just play with us like he was a cat after catching a mouse."

All the crew of the sloop, save Pickle, who still slept on, were now on deck and watching the advance of the frigate.

"How grandly she looks!" exclaimed Prince, who could not withhold praise even from the enemy when it was well deserved. "See how her sails fill out, and how trim and clean they are, and look what a lot of guns she must have! If there are many more like her at Louisbourg our own ships would not stand much chance against them."

In spite of their utmost endeavor to improve the speed of the sloop, the frigate gained steadily, and in doleful tones the colonials exchanged conjectures as to how they would be dealt with by their captors, and whether they might be soon exchanged for prisoners, taken by their own people.

Prince, by way of temporary diversion,

had climbed to the crosstrees, and was standing there, sweeping the horizon with his glance, when suddenly he uttered a cry of joy, and, pointing toward the mainland, now clearly in view, cried out: —

“ Hurrah! the warships are coming out! I see them — one — two — three of them — Thank God, we’re saved! The Frenchmen shall not get us after all!”

All eyes were instantly turned in the direction of the land, and sure enough, just emerging from the entrance of the Strait of Canseau, there could be made out four vessels under full sail.

The revulsion of feeling on board the sloop can hardly be described. From the depths of despair to the heights of rejoicing the colonials were raised in an instant.

They had nothing to fear from the frigate now. Already, no doubt, the timely succor was perceived on board her, and the one concern of her commander would be to save his own ship; and in the first flush of their joy they grasped one another’s

hands, and smote each other on the back, and even broke into a clumsy kind of dance.

Favored by the breeze, which was just in the right quarter for them, the colonial war vessels hurried after the frigate, and the latter, sullenly relinquishing all hope of making a capture, sheered off so as to get the full benefit of the wind, and thus make good her escape.

The quick change from imperilled fugitives to exultant spectators was very much appreciated by the crew of the sloop, and Captain Perkins promptly altered his course so that he might follow the chase of the frigate as long as possible.

At first the colonial ships came up very fast, and, getting within range of the enemy, opened fire upon her from their bow chasers, to which the French replied with their stern guns.

But on both sides the aim was poor, and the balls ricocheted harmlessly over the waves.

This running engagement, however, was

maintained for an hour or more without any damage being done, and by this time the morning breeze had risen to so strong a wind that Captain Perkins thought it expedient to go right about, and lay his course for Canseau, leaving the capture of the frigate an unsettled question.

Pickle had been aroused from sleep by the report of the cannon, and had come up on deck looking rather ghastly.

“What’s happening?” he asked, his big brown eyes full of eager inquiry. “Are we trying to take another prize?”

“We’ve just narrowly escaped being taken ourselves,” answered Prince, putting his arm lovingly about him, for he seemed very pale and weak. “That big French frigate was coming right after us, when in the nick of time three of our war vessels popped out of Canseau, and the Frenchman suddenly changed his mind. See how he’s doing his best to get away; he’s no idea of fighting.”

“I wish he would stop and fight it out,” exclaimed Pickle, regretfully. “What a

fine sight it would be for us! We could see the whole thing."

"Ah! he knows better," responded Prince; "our vessels would be sure to get the best of him."

The remainder of the run was made without further incident, and a little before mid-day the sloop sailed proudly in amongst the colonial fleet, flaunting from her mast every bit of bunting that could be found on board, while her exultant crew fired off their muskets and pistols in rapid succession by way of a *feu de joie*.

They were delighted to find that theirs was the first prize brought in, and Pickle was warmly praised for his prompt and plucky action when the Frenchmen were making so good an attempt to recover possession of the sloop.

The vessel and prisoners were handed over to Commander Pepperell, who expressed great satisfaction at their capture, and then the prize crew went back to their former places in the camp, feeling all the more proud of their success because they

were the first of those who had gone out cruising to return with full hands.

Before sundown, the war vessels came in,—after chasing the French frigate a long way without being able to overtake her,—and by the end of the week the other cruisers showed up, having managed to take four more prizes between them, all sloops deeply laden with supplies for Louisbourg.

This first taste of success greatly inspired the New Englanders. They held praise services around the camp-fires at night, and Parson Moody gave an extra keen edge to the big axe he had brought for the express purpose of hewing in pieces the altars of Antichrist in the French stronghold.

On the following Monday the colonial camp was thrown into commotion by the announcement of the appearance of several large ships in the offing.

Could these be the dreaded French men-of-war, and were they coming to attack the fleet at anchor, which, on account of the

superiority in the weight and range of their guns they might bombard from a distance beyond the reach of the New England cannon?

The crews rushed to quarters, and the volunteers on land loaded their muskets, although neither force knew exactly how they were to meet the threatened peril.

Prince took up his fife, and Pickle his drum. If there was to be fighting, their friends would need all the inspiration martial music could afford, and they would do their best to supply it.

But happily the preparation proved all unnecessary, for the new-comers were the British ships "Superbe," "Eltham," "Launceston," and "Mermaid," the former carrying sixty guns, and the others being fine frigates of forty guns each.

They presented an imposing appearance, as they sailed up the harbor, with colors flying from every mast, and their bulwarks lined with sailors cheering lustily, and Parson Moody was moved to announce a general praise service to be held as soon as

the thrice-welcome Englishmen had been received with fitting honors.

This most important addition to the colonial forces was due to the forethought of Governor Shirley. He had realized the need of such support from the outset, and had sent an express boat to Antigua, where there was a small British squadron, entreating its co-operation.

But Commodore Peter Warren, who was in command, could not venture to accede to the request without the approval of the Admiralty authorities, and he accordingly felt bound, although very regretfully, to decline.

As it happened, however, he had written to the Duke of Newcastle, some time before, stating that Acadia and the fisheries were in great danger, and that ships-of-war were needed for their protection, upon which the Duke had replied, ordering him to sail for Boston, and concert measures with Governor Shirley, "for the annoyance of the enemy, and his Majesty's service in North America."

This letter reached him only a few days after he had sent his refusal of Shirley's request, and now thinking himself sufficiently authorized to give the desired aid, he gladly made all sail for Boston.

Before reaching there, he met a schooner from which he learned that the expedition against Louisbourg had already sailed, so at once he changed his course, and made directly for Canseau, where he presently arrived, to the great rejoicing of the colonials, who were henceforth no longer exercised as to danger from French ships-of-war.

After three long weeks of waiting for the ice to leave Gabarus Bay, there at last came the eagerly expected announcement that the Bay was clear, and on the evening of April 29 the transports sailed out of Canseau harbor, and laid a course for Louisbourg, whither the British men-of-war and their own cruisers had already preceded them to blockade the harbor.

CHAPTER XII.

THE LANDING AT LOUISBOURG.

ACCORDING to the programme laid down by Governor Shirley, the colonial fleet was to reach Louisbourg by nine o'clock the same evening, so as to effect the taking of it "while the enemy were asleep;" but an impertinent calm that had not been allowed for kept the vessels nearly stationary all night, and it was not until the following morning that they came in sight of the object of their attack.

The Pomeroy boys, in order to get the best possible glimpse of the French fortress, climbed to the crosstrees at break of dawn, and stood on either side of the mast, recking naught of their precarious hold in their eagerness.

When at last Louisbourg did come into view they were both silent for a space, and

then Pickle gave an exclamation of disappointment:—

“Why, Prince!” he cried, “can that really be the place? It does not look like a very great fortress, does it?”

In truth, Louisbourg did not present a very imposing spectacle in the bright morning light, for the buildings, with few exceptions, were small, and the ramparts that belted them, massive though they actually were, rose to no conspicuous height.

The disappointment of Pickle, who had in mind a great body of battlemented walls with crenellated towers rising here and there above them after the fashion of the mediæval fortresses he had read of in his history, was, therefore, very natural, and Prince shared it to the full.

“It is certainly very different from what I looked for,” he said, “but it may be very strong for all that.”

In this he spoke more truly than he knew, for Louisbourg, despite its unimpressive appearance, had, both by natural and

human device, defences of tremendous strength.

It stood upon a tongue of land, which lay between the harbor and the open sea, and was prolonged eastward by reefs and shoals that served to partly bar the entrance to the port, leaving a navigable passage not more than half a mile in width.

The passage was commanded by a powerful battery called the "Island Battery," because it occupied a rocky islet at the west side of the channel, and was also secured by another detached work, called the "Grand" or "Royal Battery," that stood on the shore of the harbor, opposite the entrance, and more than a mile from the town.

It was from this very battery that the sanguine colonials calmly proposed to supply their deficiency in heavy artillery, as they knew it to be mounted with nearly twoscore forty-two pounders, which would form a most material addition to their imperfect equipment.

Owing to these two batteries a hostile

squadron trying to force its way into the harbor would be exposed to a flank fire from the one, and a front fire from the other, and consequently have a rather hard time of it.

But the strongest line of defence of the fortress was drawn across the base of the tongue of land from the harbor to the sea, a distance of about twelve hundred yards.

The fosse was eighty feet wide, and over thirty feet deep, and the rampart of earth faced with masonry was about sixty feet thick, while the glacis sloped down to a vast marsh that in itself formed one of the best defences of the place.

Without counting its outworks, the fortress showed embrasures for one hundred and forty-eight cannon, but the number actually mounted was much less, probably falling short of a hundred, — not, of course, counting the threescore heavy pieces at the Grand and Island Batteries.

Against this formidable armament the New Englanders had the audacity to bring some thirty-four cannon and mortars of

much inferior weight, to be used in bombarding the stronghold should they chance to fail of carrying it by surprise "while the enemy were asleep."

One other item of their outfit should not be omitted. Although their own largest pieces were only twenty-two pounders, they brought with them a goodly store of forty-two pound balls. For what purpose forsooth? Why, to be used in the cannon of that calibre which they were to capture from their enemies, and turn against them to their utter undoing. Verily, self-confidence could no further go!

The appearance of the colonial fleet was by no means unexpected at Louisbourg. Through spies and informers the garrison there had learned of the New England enterprise in good time to have put themselves on guard against it, but, as it happened, there was much internal dissension in the French fortress. A serious revolt had broken out amongst the regular troops the preceding Christmas, which, although quieted, had caused the officers to lose

confidence in their men, and then again, the Governor, Chevalier Duchambon, successor of Duquesnel, who had died in the autumn, was not the man for such a crisis as now had to be faced.

The timely warnings, therefore, went for nothing. According to the Habitant de Louisbourg, whose graphic and sprightly letter gives so clear an account of the French side of the siege, they lost precious moments in useless deliberation, and resolutions no sooner made than broken. Nothing to the purpose was done, so that they were as much taken by surprise as if their assailants had pounced upon them unawares.

At daybreak on the thirtieth of April, then, the whole of the colonial transports came in sight, standing toward Flat Point, which projected into Gabarus Bay, three miles west of the town.

The "Mary and Martha," to the great satisfaction of the Pomeroy's, had worked herself into the front line of the transports, and they were accordingly able to survey

the whole proceedings from their lofty eyrie on the crosstrees.

Pickle quivered so with excitement that he seemed in danger of losing his hold and tumbling to the deck, but Prince, although the tense expression of his face showed how he was stirred, kept as still as a statue, and had sufficient command of himself to warn his brother : —

“Take care, Pickle. Don't be so restless lest you lose your footing, and fall. It would be a sorry thing for you to miss all the fighting in that way.”

Pickle laughed, and took a tighter hold of the rigging.

“That would indeed be a poor business for me. But see!” he cried, pointing toward the land, “the French are coming to oppose our landing !”

Sure enough, a body of troops could be seen hurrying over the low hills that lay between Louisbourg and the bay. It was a detachment of some eighty men, under command of one Morpain, sent out by the Governor, and they were to be joined by

forty more already on the watch near the expected point of disembarkation.

At the same time cannon were fired and alarm bells rung at Louisbourg to summon the militia of the neighborhood.

As soon as they saw the boats being made ready, the Pomeroy's descended from the mast, and, taking their drum and fife, and their weapons, eagerly awaited their turn to get into a boat.

"I would greatly like to be in the first boat to reach the shore," said Prince, his handsome face beaming as though they were starting on some pleasant picnic. "I know that father would be glad to hear of it."

So well regarded were the twins by their associates, that no one sought to thwart their plan to get into the first boat to leave the "Mary and Martha," and accordingly, to their unspeakable delight they presently found themselves in the bow of one that was moving toward Flat Point.

"We're right in the front!" cried Pickle gleefully, giving his brother an ecstatic

nudge. "Come, let us give them a tune."

"That we will," assented Prince, and, pulling out his fife, he struck up an inspiring lilt learned from the old Band Sergeant, to which Pickle rattled out a stirring accompaniment.

The martial strain rang high and clear above the confused murmur of voices and the deepening rumble of oars, as boat after boat, packed with stalwart, eager men, joined the procession, and the men greeted it with a rousing cheer that brought the flush of pride to the faces of the performers.

With rowers straining upon their stout ash blades, the heavily-laden boats surged shoreward, and had already accomplished more than half the distance when, to the surprise of their occupants, the signal of recall was displayed by the flagship "Shirley."

"What can that mean?" cried Pickle, pausing in his playing, and glaring back at the flag as though he fain would blast it with his fiery glance. "Surely the com-

mander is not afraid of those few Frenchmen! Why, they would not stand up to us for a minute!"

"Of course not," assented Prince, his tone showing not a whit less indignation, "but we must go back notwithstanding;" and so the boats returned, to the manifest exultation of the French soldiers, who evidently were satisfied that their appearance had caused the retreat.

But in this they were sadly mistaken, and their rejoicings altogether premature.

Commander Pepperell was no less wise than brave. He realized that the rocks and surf were more to be dreaded than the enemy, and that, therefore, the landing must needs be managed with great care.

It was quite clear to him that the Frenchmen would reach Flat Point first, and be able to dispose themselves on the rocky shore so as to pour a galling fire upon the boats without any risk to themselves.

He therefore recalled the boats in order that others might join them, and then the whole party might proceed to another land-

ing-place two miles farther up Gabarus Bay, called Freshwater Cove.

When the Pomeroy's understood this, their good spirits returned, and they took up drum and fife with fresh vigor.

As soon as Morpain and his party awoke to the true meaning of the Commander's strategy, they set off along shore to frustrate it.

Then ensued a most exciting race. Every oar in the boats was double-banked, and those who were not rowing shouted encouragement to those who were.

The heavy boats tore through the water in a smother of foam, going remarkably fast for such clumsy craft, while Prince and Pickle in the foremost one played with all their skill and strength, and from the crowded decks of the transports came cheer after cheer rolling over the ruffled surface of the bay.

At first the issue hung in doubt, for the Frenchmen scrambled over the rocks very rapidly, but presently the boats, having much less distance to cover, gained the ad-

vantage and reached the landing-place full five minutes ahead.

They were very precious minutes, and the intrepid invaders made the most of them.

The beach being gravelly, the boats ran right onto it without injury, and the moment their boat grounded, Prince and Pickle sprang out, although the water was ankle-deep, and, dashing ashore, swung their hats above their heads, as they shouted joyously:—

“Hurrah! hurrah! We’re first ashore! Come on, New Englanders!”

Laughing at the exultant conceit of the two boys, the men tumbled pell-mell out of the boats, and hastened to meet the French soldiers, who were now near at hand.

Their muskets were ready primed, and while the enemy were still a good way off they poured into them a volley with deadly effect, following it up by a furious charge that gave the French no time to rally.

So well aimed was the volley, and so

impetuous the charge, that — although the numbers on both sides were about equal — the enemy, after a scattered and badly directed volley, broke and fled, leaving six of their number dead upon the field, and six more prisoners in the hands of the invaders.

Great was the gladness of the colonials! Their own loss being insignificant (it consisted of but two men slightly wounded) they could, therefore, rejoice without stint, and as boat after boat bumped on the beach, its occupants were greeted with hearty cries of: —

“Come along! Make yourselves at home! There’s plenty of room. Mounseer won’t say you nay.”

Ere nightfall, two thousand men had landed safely, and the remaining two thousand came ashore at their leisure on the following day.

Flushed with their first success, and delighted at being once more released from the crowded transports, the colonials at once set about preparing their encamp-

ment, working to such good purpose that by the end of a couple of days they were quite settled down, and ready to begin the siege of Louisbourg in good earnest.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOW PRINCE HOISTED THE COLORS.

WHEN the little brush with the enemy at the landing-place, in which they had had no chance to take part, was over, Prince and Pickle, naturally enough, followed to the scene of conflict, reaching it just as the French fled, leaving their dead to the mercy of the invaders.

The six soldiers who had fallen lay close together, and as the boys looked at them, their feelings were strongly moved.

It was their first meeting with death in that form, and the lust of battle having abated within them, they were free to feel the horror of war as thus presented.

“The poor fellows!” said Prince in a tone of profound pity. “It is all over with them. See, that one was shot in the head, and this one in the heart. Our men know

how to aim better than they do, or some of us would have been killed too. How dreadful this fighting is! Just think, Pickle, how sorry they would be at home if we had been killed, and yet we've got to run the risk of it every time we go out to battle."

"That's so," responded Pickle, his countenance bearing an expression of unwonted soberness. "Somebody's sure to be killed every time, and we must take our chances with the others. I wonder shall we both get safe back to Boston. Perhaps one of us will be losing an arm or a leg, like Master Hancock."

Prince smiled at this suggestion. The idea of such boys as they were being thus crippled had something of the ludicrous about it that he was quick to perceive.

"I hope not," he returned. "But if I had to choose between losing an arm or a leg and losing my life, I wouldn't take long in making up my mind."

"Will we be always playing our fife and drum, or will we be allowed to take part in

the fighting, do you think?" inquired Pickle, with that quick change of thought so characteristic of him and speaking somewhat anxiously, for he did not relish the idea of being a mere spectator of the coming struggle.

"Never fear but we shall have plenty of chance to distinguish ourselves," replied Prince with a reassuring smile. "There'll be need of help from everybody before that great fortress is taken. I wonder what our commander will do first."

Colonel Pepperell lost little time in showing his hand. He had not come to capture Louisbourg by the slow process of investment and blockade. His programme was to take it by storm as promptly as possible.

Accordingly, on the morning of May 2d, he ordered Captain Vaughan to lead four hundred men to the top of the hills near the town, where they gave three cheers in right hearty fashion by way of a salute, decidedly to the discomposure of the French, although they were of opinion that the unwelcome visitors seemed a disorderly crowd.

But Vaughan's movement was no mere morning parade. It had a definite object, which he forthwith proceeded to execute.

Marching his men rapidly behind the hills in rear of the Grand Battery to the northeast arm of the harbor, he came upon the extensive magazines of naval stores that he knew to be there.

No pretence of defending them was made by the French, valuable though they were, and the colonials took possession without having to strike a blow.

As the fife and drum corps formed part of Vaughan's detachment, the Pomeroy boys, to their great delight, shared in this bloodless enterprise, and when they saw the great piles of pitch, rosin, tar, and other material, they wondered what their own people would do with them.

"What a quantity there is of it!" Pickle exclaimed admiringly. "If we have to carry it all over to our camp it will keep us busy for some time, won't it?"

"Yes, indeed," said Prince, "and that's not just the kind of work I'm anxious for."

But there was no need for apprehension on his part. However glad the colonials might have been to possess themselves of so rich a supply of useful stores, to remove them to their own camp was utterly impracticable, and so Captain Vaughan gave the order : —

“Set fire to the stuff. It will have to burn. We can do nothing else with it.”

His words did not need to be repeated. The torch was quickly applied by willing hands, and presently vast volumes of smoke rising from the magazines told the garrison at Louisbourg of their loss.

Emboldened by the non-resistance of the French, Captain Vaughan determined to do some reconnoitring ere he returned. He accordingly sent the bulk of his party back, and with a small company, not exceeding a score, remained overnight in the neighborhood of the burning store-houses.

No sooner did the Pomeroy's hear of his purpose than they went to him with the

request that they might be permitted to remain.

“Why, you young game-cocks!” laughed the captain, giving Pickle a smack on the shoulder. “You must be very hot for fighting. Don’t you know that we may have a regiment of Mounseers down on us at any moment?”

“Well, we’re not afraid,” answered Pickle, looking at Prince, who nodded assent to the statement, “and we’d rather stay with you than go back to camp.”

“All right then, you shall,” responded Captain Vaughan, in his hearty way. “You seem to know how to take care of yourselves, and we might want your music before we get through.”

Very few of the little party got any sleep that night, there being constant apprehension of attack under cover of darkness; but they might just as well have snoozed soundly, for they were entirely undisturbed.

In the morning, after a breakfast of biscuits and water, they set out to reconnoi-

tre, and presently came opposite the Grand Battery.

Captain Vaughan regarded this fortification with deep interest. Inside its mighty ramparts stood the heavy cannon for which the New Englanders had so thoughtfully provided the supply of forty-two-pound balls.

Unless the battery was taken, the balls would be useless. Not only so, but until it was taken not much progress could be made in the siege.

“I wish I had not sent my men back,” he soliloquized regretfully. “If I had them here, I think I would have a try at the fort this very morning.”

Just then Pickle, who had been ranging about like a hound running free, came up breathless, and with a countenance expressing that he had something important to tell.

“Look! look!” he panted out, pointing to the Grand Battery, while the others gathered around him eager to learn his news. “There’s nobody in the fort.

They've run away. See, there's no flag on the mast, and no smoke coming out of the chimneys!"

Unable at first to credit such good news, Captain Vaughan, hastening to a higher point of observation, scrutinized the fort intently, and as he did, the doubt on his face disappeared.

"I believe you're right, my boy!" he exclaimed, grasping Pickle's hand and shaking it vigorously. "There certainly seems no sign of life about the place. But it may be only one of their rascally tricks, and we must not allow them to take us in a trap. Let me see now what would be best to do."

It happened that one of his party was a Cape Cod Indian, and as the captain looked around for some solution of the problem before him, his eye fell upon the red-skin.

Instantly an idea flashed into his mind that he at once proceeded to carry out.

Calling up the Indian, he offered him a good reward if he would pretend to be

drunk, and in that condition make his way to the battery.

The Indian promptly agreed, and set off across the uneven ground, reeling and staggering to perfection, while the New Englanders, lying prone, watched him with throbbing pulses.

Nearer and nearer to the battlements the Indian wended his tortuous way, and still not a head showed above them, and no challenge came from them.

At last he reached one of the embrasures, and then, throwing off his pretence of drunkenness, clambered up with the lithe agility of his race, and vanished.

A moment later he appeared on the top of the rampart waving his arms, and giving forth loud whoops of triumph.

The little band of colonials replied with cheers, and then broke into a run for the fort, Captain Vaughan in the lead.

The movement soon resolved itself into a go-as-you-please race, in which the captain and the Pomeroy's not being handicapped with heavy muskets, had a decided advan-

tage over the men that enabled them to reach the goal first, the boys being careful to keep slightly behind their superior officer, although they might easily have outstripped him.

They found the Indian the sole occupant of the place, and as soon as they could recover their wind, sent up cheer after cheer at this most unexpected and therefore all the more welcome achievement.

Captain Vaughan could hardly contain himself for joy. Having been the first to suggest to Governor Shirley the reduction of Louisbourg, it seemed to him nothing short of providential that the taking of the Grand Battery upon which the success of the whole enterprise mainly depended should have fallen to him.

“Let us thank God, my friends, for this signal instance of the favor with which He regards our undertaking,” he said, reverently removing his hat; and then lifting up his voice, which was strong and clear, he began to sing one of the Psalms, the others joining in as they had ability.

While they were thus engaged, Prince touched Pickle on the shoulder, and whispered in his ear:—

“Come with me. I have an idea.”

The boy’s comely face was illuminated by some daring conception, his eyes shone, and there was a significant pursing of his lips, which could not be mistaken.

“What is it, Prince?” his brother asked eagerly. “What are you going to do?”

“Come along, and I will show you,” was all Prince would say, as he hurried towards the tall flagstaff that stood in the centre of the fort.

On reaching it, Prince was much chagrined to find that the French when evacuating the battery had not only hauled down their flag, but removed the halyards also, leaving the staff perfectly bare.

“Chut! That’s too bad!” he exclaimed in a tone of keen disappointment. “They’ve taken away the line. How can I manage now?”

Pickle, still in the dark as to the other’s purpose, could offer no suggestion, but after

a moment's earnest thought, Prince suddenly snapped his fingers exultantly, crying:—

“I've got it! I've got it!” and proceeded to hastily take off his scarlet tunic.

“What are you going to do?” demanded Pickle impatiently, for he still failed to catch on to his brother's design.

“I'm going to fasten my red coat to the top of that staff,” replied Prince, pointing upward.

Pickle gave a whistle of astonishment and incredulity.

“How can you manage that?” he asked. “There are no lines to haul it up with.”

“I'm just about to show you,” responded Prince, who had found a good piece of string in one of his pockets. “Put your arms tight around the staff, and let me up on your shoulders.”

Pickle did as he was told, and Prince, gripping the collar of the tunic with his teeth, climbed on his shoulders, and thence proceeded to shin up the flagstaff.

He was an expert climber, but being en-

cumbered by the coat, found it harder work than he expected.

Yet he kept on gallantly, winning upward foot by foot, while Pickle, thrilling with admiration, encouraged him by cries of, "Well done, Prince! you're getting on splendidly; you'll soon be at the top!"

Nor was Pickle alone in cheering him on. The attention of the rest of the party was by this time drawn to the boys, and they surrounded the staff with shouts of applause, Captain Vaughan exclaiming:—

"By thunder! but that boy's a hero!"

Although every muscle was strained to the utmost, and every sinew ached acutely, Prince toiled upward until he need go no farther, for he had reached the ball at the top.

Here he rested a minute, and then with trembling fingers tied the tunic to the staff so that it would spread out in the breeze after the manner of a flag.

"Hip, hip, hurrah!" shouted Captain Vaughan, lustily supported by the others, and just at that moment the roar of cannon

sounded from the town batteries, and a volley of deadly iron missiles hurtled through the still morning air, having the daring boy on the flagstaff for their target.

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW CAPTAIN VAUGHAN HELD THE GRAND BATTERY.

PRINCE'S escape was nothing short of marvellous. The French gunners showed good marksmanship, and their round shot flew to right and left of the flagstaff, one passing so close that the wind of it almost knocked Prince off like a squirrel struck by a schoolboy's stone.

But happily he was untouched, and slid safely to the ground, to be half smothered by the congratulations of his companions.

"I shall take great pleasure in reporting this to General Pepperell, my boy," said Captain Vaughan, as he shook him warmly by the hand. "You have done a very brave thing, and one that reflects credit upon us all."

Prince blushed, and could find nothing to say in reply except a word of thanks,

but his heart bounded at the idea of the commander being informed, for he knew what pleasure that would give his father and mother when it came to their ears.

Pickle was simply exuberant. Not a trace of jealousy chilled his pride at his twin brother's exploit. Indeed he could hardly have felt happier had he performed it himself.

And now, having with such surprising ease taken possession of the Grand Battery, the question was to hold it, for, as Captain Vaughan shrewdly surmised, when the French recovered from the temporary panic caused by the burning of the storehouses, the dense smoke of which had drifted across the fort and sadly scared the garrison, they would most probably attempt its recovery.

Once more, therefore, requisitioning the services of the Cape Cod Indian, he despatched him to Commander Pepperell with the following note : —

“ May it please your Honor to be informed that by the grace of God, and the

courage of thirteen men, I entered the Royal Battery about nine o'clock, and am waiting for a reinforcement and a flag."

The next consideration was food, the New Englanders' knapsacks being quite empty, and so, while half the party stood on guard, the remainder set about foraging.

This was fine fun for the Pomeroy's. They darted hither and thither like bees a-search for nectar, rummaging every closet and cupboard they discovered with the keenness of Parisian detectives.

Pickle was the first to find. In a dark corner of one of the casements he lighted upon a well-concealed larder in which the cook of the garrison evidently had kept his choicest supplies for the officer's table. In the hurry and confusion of leaving the fort this had been overlooked, and there it was now, well stocked with game, biscuits, butter, preserved fruits, wine, and other luxuries.

"Whopee!" shouted the fortunate finder, grabbing a biscuit in each hand, for he was feeling ravenous. "I've found the French-

men's pantry! Prince! Prince! Come here! Come here! Now we can have a feast."

Prince, who had been exploring in another direction, hurried up, and soon had his hands full of biscuits, and was munching busily.

"Let us tell Captain Vaughan," he said. "I don't think the others have found anything yet."

Pickle nodded assent, his mouth being too full for utterance, and, taking up a big handful of biscuits apiece, they hastened to report their welcome discovery, and to distribute the biscuits.

Great was the rejoicing of the little party. They were all suffering the pangs of hunger, and the prospect of a substantial meal made them jubilant.

A couple of them knew how to cook, and without loss of time a big fire was blazing in the kitchen, and the appetizing savor of roasting meat made the colonials' mouths water.

What a breakfast that was! Everybody in the highest spirits, as hungry as bears

after their winter's sleep, and having before them the best fare they had tasted since leaving Boston.

They ate, and they talked, and they joked, and laughed as if they had not a care in the world. No doubt troubled their minds as to the early and complete success of the great enterprise in which they were engaged. Louisbourg was as good as taken already.

They had thus been enjoying themselves for the space of an hour, when Captain Vaughan, who from time to time took a glance through an embrasure that opened toward the town, put an end to their revelry by calling out:—

“Prepare to meet the enemy! There are boats approaching!”

Instantly the feast was forgotten, and every one looked to his arms.

Half-way across the harbor four boats filled with men were to be seen.

“We must not let them land,” said Captain Vaughan. “If they once set foot on shore it will be all over with us. Come,

my men, we will go down to the beach, and meet them there.”

Not one of the little band hesitated for an instant to thus expose himself, although behind the ramparts he would have been perfectly safe.

With muskets ready primed they marched down towards the water, and awaited the advance of the boats, Prince and Pickle playing fife and drum as steadily as though they were simply on parade.

As soon as the New Englanders appeared before the ramparts, not only the town batteries facing in that direction opened fire upon them, but the Island battery also, and their exposed situation became one of great peril.

The heavy iron balls came whistling through the air with malign murdering intent, and crashed against the massive ramparts, cracking and splintering the masonry, or plunged into the shingly beach, spattering with stony hail the heroic band of colonials.

Yet not a man budged or flinched.

Although they knew not when the asked-for reinforcements might arrive, they were resolved to hold their ground until their last bullet was fired, when they would resort to the bayonets if they still survived.

Regretting keenly that they had no firearms of their own so that they might contribute to the volleys with which the oncoming boats were being plied, Prince and Pickle tooted their lively music, doing good service in sustaining the spirits of their companions.

Exposed as they were to the cannon fire from the town and Island batteries, and to the musketry in the boats, the immunity of the New Englanders from being even wounded was so extraordinary as to go far towards justifying their faith in being specially favored of Providence.

The cannon-balls hurtled over their heads, and the bullets whizzed to right and left of them, but not a man was struck.

“Pah!” exclaimed Captain Vaughan contemptuously, as he reloaded a musket he had taken from one of his men, who was

too slow in his use of it. "Those Mounseers could n't hit a barn door at twenty paces!"

But if they could not aim well, they could show much courage in advancing, despite the galling fire that was being directed upon them, and Captain Vaughan, realizing that with his handful of men he could not much longer prevent their landing, called Prince and Pickle to him.

"Go to the other side of the fort," he said, in a tone that showed his keen anxiety, "and see if there is any sign of reinforcements. We cannot hold our ground here many minutes more, for our powder is fast giving out."

The boys darted off, and, just as they climbed through the embrasure, a big round shot crashed against the rampart, causing a shower of stone splinters, some of which struck them sufficiently hard to hurt.

"Jerusalem, but that was a narrow escape!" cried Pickle, putting his hand to his cheek, where a bit of stone had cut it slightly. "Just a little nearer, and it would have done for us, eh, Prince?"

“Yes, indeed,” responded Prince, with an indrawing of his breath that showed how startled he had been. “Even if it was only a chance shot, it was quite good enough for us.”

Hurrying across the square, they mounted the farther wall, and gazed eagerly in the direction of their own camp.

Simultaneously they gave a shout of joy, for, coming over the hills, not more than half a mile away, was a strong body of their own men.

“Run to meet them, and tell them to hurry up,” said Prince, “and I’ll go back to Captain Vaughan and let him know they’re coming.”

It was a happy thought, and Pickle instantly clambered down the wall, and set off at the top of his speed, while Prince hastened back to cheer Captain Vaughan with the good news.

Reaching the reinforcing party, all out of breath, Pickle at first had difficulty in making himself understood, but the moment Lieutenant-Colonel Bradstreet

caught his meaning, he waved his sword aloft, and shouting, "Forward, men, double quick, charge!" he set the example by sprinting over the uneven ground at a pace quite astonishing for one of his years.

Making no attempt to preserve order, the New Englanders raced each other to the battery, climbed through the embrasures, scampered across the inner square, and tumbling pell-mell out onto the beach in front, spent their last vestige of breath in cheers that gladdened the hearts of the brave little band still keeping off the boats.

They were not a moment too soon. Captain Vaughan's men had fired their last charge. Not a pinch of powder nor ounce of lead was left to them, and of course in a hand-to-hand struggle with the French they would have been quickly overcome by sheer force of numbers.

At sight of the reinforcements, the boats stopped, turned about, and then sullenly withdrew, after receiving a volley from the

new-comers that materially increased the loss they had already sustained.

Captain Vaughan and Lieutenant-Colonel Bradstreet wrung one another's hands warmly.

"God be praised for your timely coming!" exclaimed the former fervently. "Our powder and our strength were alike spent, and I was on the eve of ordering my men back into the battery, when Master Pomeroy brought the glad word of your being near."

"You have good right to be a proud man this day, Captain Vaughan," responded Bradstreet, "and the noble fellows that are with you. With the Grand Battery in our hands, we will speedily reduce this proud stronghold. Did you observe whether they spiked the cannon before vacating the fort?"

"Yes, they saw to that," answered Vaughan, "but they did it so hastily that I believe there will be little difficulty in drilling out the touchholes again, and as they neither knocked off the trunnions, nor

set fire to the carriages, we will be able to make good use of their guns against themselves in a short while."

"Verily, that is good news!" said Bradstreet, clapping his hands jubilantly. "Come, now, and let us see what they have left for us."

A thorough examination of the fort was accordingly made, which showed that, although the French had thrown all their loose powder into the well, so that it was utterly useless, they had left behind, in good condition, a large number of cannon cartridges, nearly three hundred big bombshells, and other ordnance stores that were invaluable to the colonials.

As for the cannon, they numbered thirty in all, twenty-eight of them being forty-two pounders, which Captain Vaughan declared, and as the sequel showed, rightly enough, the balls brought from Boston would fit to a nicety.

A score of skilled hands at once set to work to drill out the spiked touchholes, and by the following morning several of

the cannon were ready for use, whereupon Brigadier Waldo lost no time in directing them against the town.

How effective was his fire, may be judged from the following touching entry in the record kept by the Habitant of Louisbourg: "The enemy saluted us with our own cannon, and made a terrific fire, smashing everything within range."

With this the attack upon the French fortress really began, and its New England assailants entertained little doubt as to a speedy and successful issue.

CHAPTER XV.

TENTING ON THE COLD CAMP GROUND.

ON the night after their landing, the New Englanders had scant accommodation. They slept as best they could in the woods. Some had blankets, others had none. There was a childlike and easy-going dependence upon Providence about these men, the like of which the world has rarely seen.

In the morning they set to work encamping with such soldierly belongings as they had, and these were not many, nor of much account.

About two miles from Louisbourg a brook ran into the sea, on either side of which the ground, though rough, was high and dry, and here most of the regiments made their quarters, — Willard's, Moulton's, and

Moore's on the east side, and Burr's and Pepperell's on the west.

Some of them on the east saw fit to extend themselves towards the town as far as the edge of the intervening marsh, but were soon forced back to a safer position by the cannon-balls of the fortress coming bowling amongst them. This marsh was a flat green sponge of mud and moss that stretched clear to the glacia of Louisbourg.

There were not nearly enough tents to go around, and many had to resort to the use of old sails stretched over poles, while others still built rude huts of stone and sod, with roofs of spruce boughs overlapping like a thatch; for at that early season the bark would not peel from the trees.

On the low rough hills near Louisbourg may yet be seen numerous stone-girt depressions of the surface, which are doubtless the sites of these primitive dwellings.

It was with a hut of this kind that Prince and Pickle had perforce to be content. Liberally as their father had outfitted

them, he never thought of supplying a tent, naturally supposing that this would be done by the Government; and while they were away with Captain Vaughan burning the storehouses, and capturing the Grand Battery, every bit of canvas was appropriated by others.

Fortunately, however, they were provided with good blankets, but in spite of all their efforts to improve it, the hut was at best a cold, damp abode, and they spent as little time in it as they possibly could.

Pickle found great fault with his quarters.

“This is shameful bad management!” he grumbled. “There should have been tents for everybody. I’ll just write a letter to father, and have him send us one by the first transport.”

“That’s a good idea!” exclaimed Prince. “Do so, by all means. We know not how long we may be here. In the meantime, let us make the best of our hut, which certainly is a good deal better than nothing.”

Pickle accordingly wrote the following letter, the reading of which called forth

many exclamations of sympathy in the Boston home, and filled the little mother's eyes with tears as she thought of her brave, handsome boys, who had always enjoyed such comfort, having no better bed under them than the hard damp ground, and no tighter roof over them than a frail thatching of spruce boughs.

MY DEAR FATHER:—

I write you this letter, which the Transport will take when she sails, to tell you how it is going with Prince and me. We have been very busy since we landed, for there is a tremendous deal of work to be done. Captain Vaughan let us go with him when he went away around behind the hills to where there were some storehouses full of pitch, tar, and other things which we could not take back to our camp with us, and so we set them on fire, and oh! what a splendid big blaze they made, and what an immense amount of smoke! The wind blew the smoke right into the Grand Battery, and it frightened the Frenchmen so that they all cleared out, leaving the fort empty. Just fancy, father, soldiers being scared by smoke! So the next morning a few of us went to have a peep at the battery, and seeing nobody about, made bold to enter it,

and take possession, and as we had no flag, Prince climbed up the flagstaff with his red coat in his teeth, and fastened it at the top for a flag, and when the French saw him they fired cannon-balls at him, but could not hit him, although one ball went so close by him that the wind of it nearly knocked him off the mast. I did feel so proud of him when he was up there tying his coat to the top of the mast, and Captain Vaughan said he was a hero, so you see your boys are doing some good here.

After that the Mounseers, as some of our people call them, rowed across the harbor in boats to try and get their fort back again, but we went down to the beach, and fired volleys at them so that they did not dare land, and so we kept them off, although the batteries were sending cannon-balls at us, until Colonel Bradstreet came to our help with a whole lot of men, and, when the French saw that, they rowed back again faster than they had come.

Prince and I had no chance to fire because we have no muskets of our own, but we played hard on our fife and drum, and that did the men good.

We wish you would send us two good muskets, and plenty of powder and ball for them, and do please send us a tent, for we have to sleep in a horrid little hut we made ourselves out of sods

and stone, and it is dreadfully damp, and the ground is so hard that it makes us sore to be upon it, although we have such good blankets.

Thus the letter, which was an amazing feat for Pickle, who detested everything of the kind, ran on, winding up with messages of love from both the boys to all the dear ones at home.

Mr. Pomeroy was very proud of that letter. Reserved man though he was, he could not refrain from showing it to his friends, and he took an early opportunity of reading it to Governor Shirley, whose fine eyes glistened as he said:—

“Those are indeed boys to rejoice a father’s heart. God grant they may return to you safe and sound when our enterprise is crowned with the success that now seems not far distant.”

The tent and the muskets were duly despatched together, with such a hamper of good things as only a loving mother could prepare, but the communication with the camp was slow, and they were many days in reaching their destination, during

which the boys had to endure much hardship.

The way the New Englanders worked, in spite of the discomforts of their situation, was no less astonishing than admirable.

All their guns, stores, and munitions had to be landed on a rough, surf-beaten beach, which made the task so difficult that many boats were smashed in the operation. To land the guns big flat boats brought from Boston were used.

The water was bitterly cold, being only just free from ice, yet the men waded through the icy surf to their waist, carrying loads of gunpowder and the like upon their heads for hour after hour without a murmur or sign of shirking such arduous, painful work.

Then they slept on the ground without change of clothes during the chill and foggy nights, doubtless laying the foundation of much future rheumatism, sciatica, and similar ailments.

As an early historian of the siege wrote: "When the hardships they were exposed to

come to be considered, the behavior of these men will hardly gain credit. They went ashore wet, had no dry clothes to cover them, were exposed in this condition to cold foggy nights, and yet cheerfully underwent these difficulties for the sake of executing a project they had voluntarily undertaken."

But the hardy and vigorous New England spirit, the sympathy of numbers, and it may perhaps be permitted to add, the good New England rum so generously dispensed as an antidote against chills, bore them bravely through it all, and in a remarkably short space of time everybody was settled ashore.

Yet this was only the first stage, and still harder work awaited the sturdy colonials. They had to get within striking distance of the doomed fortress, and to accomplish this their cannon must needs be dragged across the marsh to Green Hill, a spur of the line of rough heights that half encircled the town and harbor.

Here the first battery was to be planted, and from this point other guns were to be

drawn onward to more advanced positions, — a distance in all exceeding two miles, and deemed by the French insurmountable.

But they reckoned without New England ingenuity and persistence.

To be sure the fate of the first cannon that came to the marsh did seem to justify the French faith in the impassability of the bog they relied upon to protect them from the audacious invaders.

No sooner did it reach the soft place than it began to sink slowly but steadily in the mud and moss, first the carriage and then the piece itself, until the whole thing completely disappeared, to the great dismay of the colonials.

Among the disconcerted spectators was a Lieutenant-Colonel Meserve from New Hampshire. He was by trade a ship-builder, but in exchanging the broadaxe for the sword had not forgotten the devices of his craft. He had many a time got big timbers over soft places, and there were present scores of others who had worked at cutting and handling masts for the king's navy.

Now these cannon, he reasoned, were not a whit more unwieldy or difficult to manage than an unhewn mast for a line-of-battle ship, and they could be handled just as well with a little ingenuity.

Under Meserve's direction, therefore, stout timber sledges sixteen feet long by five feet wide were made. On each of these a cannon was placed, and then, a team of no less than two hundred men having been harnessed to the sledge with rope-traces and breast-straps, it was dragged through the mire to the firmer ground beyond.

It was a dreadfully hard, dirty job, for the men sank to their knees at every step, and the way had often to be changed, as the mossy surface was soon churned into a hopeless slough.

Moreover, the work could be done only at night or in thick fog, the route being completely exposed to the cannon of the town, and time and again the iron balls plumped perilously near the bespattered toilers.

But neither the mire discouraged nor the

cannon-balls daunted the resolute New Englanders as they slaved away at their unlovely task, cheering one another with jokes and songs, and prophecies of speedy conquest.

Well might Commander Pepperell write to the Duke of Newcastle in ardent language of the cheerfulness of his men under almost incredible hardships. Shoes and clothing failed until many were in tatters, and many more barefooted, yet they labored on with such spirit that within four days a battery of six guns had been planted on Green Hill, which was only a mile from the King's Bastion of Louisbourg.

In another week they had dragged four twenty-two pounders, and ten coehorns — miscalled "cowhorns" by a rural officer — six hundred yards farther, and established them within easy range of the citadel.

Prince and Pickle were not allowed to take much part in either the landing through the surf or the crossing of the marsh, although they would have been glad enough to help to the full measure of their strength.

But the work was not completed without their having an experience which created a good deal of excitement at the moment.

The fourth day of the passage of the bog was an exceedingly dull and depressing one.

A dense fog enveloped the devoted and dirty toilers at the guns, which, while it hid them from the ever watchful eyes of the enemy, chilled them to the marrow, and, being already wearied by their tremendous exertions, they showed signs of lagging in their work.

Brigadier Waldo, who was directing the operation, could not find it in his heart to drive them by hard words, so he bethought himself of cheering them with music.

"Take your fife and drum," he said to the Pomeroy, "jump on board that sledge, and play the liveliest tune you know, until the men get it across the marsh."

Delighted at the idea, they obeyed with alacrity, and presently were the occupants of what was certainly the oddest band-wagon on record.

CHAPTER XVI.

FROM PERIL TO PERIL.

HEARTENED by the boys' inspiring music, the two hundred men floundered through the tenacious mire, tugging after them the heavily laden sledge that seemed so reluctant to respond to their strenuous efforts, and had accomplished three-fourths of the distance, when something happened which gave them all a thorough good scare.

Despite the thick fog, the French had from time to time been cannonading the muddy toilers and moilers, but their aim was so bad that the human targets paid little heed to their attentions.

The sledge from which Prince and Pickle were discoursing martial music had come to a stop in a particularly soft and slushy part of the bog, and the men were resting

preparatory to a fresh effort, when a deep boom was heard in the direction of the town, and the next moment a forty-two pounder cannon-ball came ricochetting across the marsh, sending up showers of mud at each rebound.

Pickle caught sight of the great war missile as it emerged from the obscurity of the fog, and instantly shouted : —

“Look out ! there comes a cannon-ball !”

But the sentence of warning was not finished ere the solid sphere struck the sledge amidships, smashing it into kindling-wood, and hurling both boys headlong into the marsh !

A simultaneous cry of consternation went up from the men. So complete was the destruction of the sledge and the overthrow of the boys that they felt sure the latter must be killed, and they floundered frantically through the mire to where they lay half buried and senseless.

Willing hands eagerly lifted the bespattered forms, and with all possible speed they were borne to the firm ground.

Pickle's face was bleeding freely, a big splinter having struck him across the temple, and Prince seemed to have been hurt somewhere in the body.

Water being brought, the mire was washed off, and earnest efforts made to revive them, but anxious minutes passed before first Prince and then Pickle regained consciousness.

"Are you badly hurt? How do you feel? Where are you injured?" and similar questions poured in upon the twins as soon as they came to themselves.

"It's all in my head," answered Pickle, putting his hand to the wound which had been staunched in a rude fashion, and giving a pathetic groan.

"And it's all in my stomach," murmured Prince, squirming as if taken with a cramp.

In point of fact, they had had a really wonderful escape from serious injury, for although Pickle's gashed forehead would require attention, and Prince had got pretty badly winded, a couple of days' quiet would set them both all right again.

The men were highly relieved on this becoming clear. The twins were universal favorites, and it is not too much to say that many of the New Englanders would rather have the wounds come to themselves than to the Pomeroy's. Had they known anything about "mascots" in those days, Prince and Pickle would certainly have been regarded as such.

Returning to the camp in their bedraggled condition, the boys had to answer many kind and sympathizing inquiries, even Commander Pepperell coming to their hut in person to assure himself that their injuries were not of a serious nature.

Continuing their arduous and perilous work with unabated vigor, the colonials next planted a battery, chiefly of coehorns, on a hillock four hundred yards from the West Gate, where it greatly annoyed the French, and the following night drew nearer still, placing an advanced battery of fascines just opposite the same gate, and within two hundred and fifty yards of it.

This West Gate was the principal en-

trance to Louisbourg, and opened upon a tract of high firm ground between the marsh and the harbor, an arm of which extended westward into what was called the Barachois, a salt pond formed by a projecting spit of sand.

On the side of the Barachois farthest from the town was a hillock where stood the house of a habitant named Martissan, and not satisfied with the advantages already gained, the New Englanders dragged five of the forty-two pounders taken from the enemy over rough and rocky ground swept by the fire of the French artillery to the top of this hillock, where a fifth battery, called the Northwest, was planted that proved most destructive to the fortress.

The supreme independence to established rules of strategy and warfare which their assailants displayed in these daring operations astonished and bewildered the beleaguered French no less than the ardor and energy they put into the work.

The raw New Englanders made no attempt to protect their approach. Scorning

the slower processes of entrenchments or zigzags, they took the shortest course to the point they wished to reach, trusting their lives to the cover afforded by the darkness of night or the obscurity of fog.

That they had to pay the price of their recklessness was a matter of course. In the advanced battery, which Commander Pepperell placed in charge of Captain Sherburn, Captain Pierce was presently killed by a cannon-ball, Thomas Ashe by a bomb, and others fell to French bullets.

There were no patent elevating and disappearing carriages for the guns in those days, and in order to load them the men had to go out in front, under cover of a constant fire of musketry, which the enemy briskly returned not without effect, for their aim was all too good. A reckless New Englander, who in a spirit of bravado mounted the rampart, and stood there for a moment, paid for his folly by falling dead with five bullets in his body.

Not content with exchanging bullets and cannon-balls, the antagonists jeered at each

other in bad French or broken English, while the "Mounseers" drank ironical healths to the colonials, and gave them bantering invitations to breakfast.

As soon as the Pomeroy boys got over their injuries, they entered heartily into the lively adventurous life of the camp.

Commander Pepperell ruled his men with a gentle hand, which was indeed well, for had he been a martinet, they would doubtless have shown their free New England spirit either by frank disobedience or by withdrawing from the enterprise.

The statement that not one New Englander was disciplined during the siege, therefore, testified as much to the mild and conciliating character of the general as to the orderly conduct of the soldiers.

There was no pretence of restraint required when the men were off duty, and the caustic Dr. Douglas compared the state of things on and about the camp to "a Cambridge Commencement," which college festival was then distinguished by much rough jesting and boisterous horse-play,

indulged in by the disorderly crowds, both white and black, bond and free, who swarmed among the booths on Cambridge Common.

While the cannon bellowed, and the muskets cracked in front, fun and frolic reigned at the camp, where the men ran races, held wrestling matches, pitched quoits, fired at marks, although there was really not a pinch of powder to be wasted, and chased the French cannon-balls that rolled into their midst, carrying them off to the batteries to be returned to their senders.

Nor were these their only amusements. "Some of our men went a-fishing about two miles off," wrote Lieutenant Benjamin Cleaves in his diary, "caught six trouts;" and again, "Our men went to catch lobsters: caught thirty."

Prince and Pickle soon joined the adventurous fishermen. Not being required for service, and growing tired of the confinement of the camp and its rude sports, they were ready to listen to John Sparhawk,

who, in spite of the rumors of prowling Indians alert to scalp and slay, had been amusing himself exploring the neighborhood, when he said one evening:—

“Let us go a-fishing to-morrow. I know where there is a good trout stream.”

“How far away?” inquired Prince, whose natural caution restrained him from the immediate assent that Pickle gave by clapping his hands gleefully and exclaiming:—

“Of course we’ll go. It will be fine sport, and we are sick of staying about the camp.”

“It is not more than a couple of miles off,” answered Sparhawk.

“In which direction?” inquired Prince, while Pickle regarded him with an impatient look.

“Over that way,” replied Sparhawk, pointing inland.

“But what about the Indians?” persisted Prince. “They say that there are some of those red devils prowling around.”

“Who’s afraid of them?” cried Pickle, swelling out his chest and looking his

fiercest. "They would not dare touch us if we kept together."

Sparhawk smiled at the boy's bravado. He had also heard about Indians being seen in the neighborhood, and had determined to go well armed on this fishing excursion.

"I don't think we have anything to fear from them," he said quietly. "We will all take our muskets, and have them ready for instant use if need be."

"Very well, then, we'll go with you," said Prince, "and as we have not got muskets we will take our swords and pistols."

Bright and early next morning the fishing party set off. There were three others besides Sparhawk and the Pomeroy's, and they took with them sufficient food for the day.

Sparhawk led the way over the rough stony hills, the rattle of the musketry and the roar of the cannon growing fainter and fainter as they proceeded inland.

They were all in the best of spirits. It was their first holiday since landing, and

the day being bright, and the air balmy, they felt very much like a lot of schoolboys enjoying their first spring outing.

Pickle was particularly frisky. The tedious process of investing the French fortress, and battering down its walls and bastions, was growing very monotonous to him. He had hoped for more brilliant and exciting operations, for dare-devil attempts at escapades on their part, and furious sorties by the French. Were he only in General Pepperell's place for a day he would take Louisbourg by storm, instead of waiting for its ramparts to be reduced to ruins.

"How much longer, I wonder, are we going to fool over the business?" he said to Sparhawk in a tone that showed he failed to entertain a proper amount of respect for the commander's judgment. "We might have taken the place long ago if we had gone the right way about it."

"You had better ask General Pepperell to let you have his place for a while," responded Sparhawk dryly, whereat Pickle's

eyes flashed and his cheeks reddened, and a sharp retort was on his lips, when Sparhawk, pointing into the ravine below them, called out :—

“There’s my stream! Does n’t it look promising?”

It certainly did seem a good place for trout, being characterized by pools and shallows with dancing ripples between, and, eager to try their luck, the little party raced down to its banks.

Their fishing tackle was of the most primitive kind, — spruce poles for rods, and worms for bait, — but the Cape Breton trout had not yet been educated to require any more elaborate equipment for their capture.

Soon all six were hard at work whipping the stream, and presently a joyful exclamation from Prince told that he had got the first fish.

Sparhawk landed another a moment later, and presently all the others save Pickle followed suit.

His ill luck provoked him. He could

not understand it, and at last, without saying a word, he went off up stream in the hope of having better success in that direction.

Not finding at first just the kind of sport he sought, he kept on until he was completely out of sight and hearing of the rest of the party, who were too deeply engrossed in their own fishing to observe his absence.

At last he came to a pool that promised well, and was busy getting his rod in readiness when, suddenly, without the slightest warning, and as silently as shadows, there sprang upon him two stalwart Indians, who, throwing him to the ground, gagged and bound him ere he could utter a cry for help, or make an effort to escape!

CHAPTER XVII.

A PRISONER OF WAR.

HAVING rendered their captive utterly helpless, the Indians now picked him up on their shoulders, and set off at a rapid pace for a clump of woods in the opposite direction to the New England camp.

Pickle, realizing the futility of any struggle on his part, kept perfectly still, but his brain was busy with conjectures as to his fate, and keen regret at having separated himself from his friends.

“I suppose they ’ll make me a prisoner of war,” he dolefully soliloquized, “and keep me in a dungeon until the siege is over, or I can be exchanged for one of their own people that we have taken prisoner. These Indians surely won’t scalp me ;” and his heart almost stopped beating at the





thought. "That would n't do them much good, and it would be the end of me. At all events, whatever they do, they'll not find me showing the white feather; I will take good care that they cannot boast of having frightened the life out of me."

Fortifying himself by the resolution, he lay passive in the Indians' hands during a racking journey of nearly two miles across broken ground, which at last, to his immense relief, ended at a sort of glade in the woods where a number of other Indians were gathered.

The appearance of the captive was greeted with many grunts of approval, and the two Indians showed manifest pride in their exploit, although, considering how great were the odds in their favor, their carrying off Pickle was not in the least heroic.

He was placed against a tree trunk in full view of the company, and his gag having been removed, an aged Indian, evidently the chief of the party, began to question him in a curious mixture of French and Malacite.

But Pickle, knowing nothing of either language, was as much at a loss to understand him as though he were speaking Hebrew, and although he gave him the closest attention, and strove hard to make out something from the old man's expression and gestures, his efforts were vain, and shaking his head, he replied : —

“ I cannot understand a word you say ; I don't know what language you are speaking. Cannot some of your people speak English ? ”

The chief at first became more energetic in his words and motions, as though he were sure he could make himself understood if he tried hard enough ; but when Pickle persisted in shaking his head, and saying unintelligible things in his turn, the old man grew angry. He seemed to think that the boy was making game of him, and, shaking his tomahawk threateningly, he reiterated his demands for information.

At the first flourish of the murderous little weapon, Pickle involuntarily flinched. Then, straightening himself up, and setting

his face firmly, he looked steadfastly at the chief as he responded: —

“I am not pretending. I do not understand a word you say, and perhaps I would not tell you what you want to know, even if I did understand you, but there is no use in threatening me with that tomahawk.”

Impressed by the boy's remarkable fortitude, which indeed he could not help admiring, the chief lowered his tomahawk, and stepping aside a little way, called to him several others to consult with them.

Pickle knew perfectly well that they were deliberating as to his fate, and that for him the issues of life and death were in the hands of those savages, yet his countenance betrayed no fear nor anxiety.

Seeming as composed as though he were in his own camp, instead of at the mercy of a savage enemy, he looked about him with well-simulated interest in his surroundings.

Not even when a young Indian, who had not yet taken his first scalp, came over to him, and, grasping his thick curly hair,

passed his knife around his head, making the motion of scalping, while his black eyes gleamed with cruel avidity, did Pickle blanch, although an icy chill shot down his spine, and for the moment he ceased to breathe.

The consultation lasted some time; it being evident that there was a decided difference of opinion among the members of the group, and Pickle's thought went back to the home in Boston which perhaps would never welcome him again.

"If my mother could see me now, how dreadfully frightened she would be!" he murmured, and for a moment his eyes brimmed and the resolute look left his face.

But the next instant he pulled himself together, and strengthened his heart with the thought that if his father could see him he would have no reason to be ashamed of his son.

At length, after a noisy and heated discussion of the matter, the Indians evidently reached the conclusion to spare their captive's scalp for the present.

The veteran chief came up to him, knife in hand, not to bathe it in his blood, but to cut his bonds, saying something in a guttural tone which no doubt meant:—

“If you dare make any attempt to escape you will be instantly killed.”

Relieved at the respite, and glad to have his hands free once more, Pickle danced about and swung his arms, exclaiming:

“I’m ever so much obliged to you, and I give you my word not to try to escape.”

The Indians regarded him with amazement. Stoical as they knew how to be in a similar plight, they could not understand the boy’s apparent light-heartedness when his life hung by a hair, so to speak.

It not only compelled their respect for his courage, but somehow impressed them with the notion that he was no ordinary person, and that the French would be particularly glad to get him as a prisoner.

Putting him in the centre of their party, therefore, they set off for Louisbourg, following the route farthest away from the positions already occupied by the colonial forces.

Confident now that all danger of death at the hands of the red-men was over, and that from the French he would receive no worse treatment than was usually accorded prisoners of war, Pickle went along with a comparatively light heart, the relief from the intense strain of the preceding hour being so great that he positively broke out into whistling, thereby deepening the wonder of his captors, who had never met his like before.

“ I suppose the Mounseers will be asking me all sorts of questions, and wanting me to tell them how big our army is, and how soon we expect to take the town. But they’ll have to ask me in English, for I don’t understand any more of their lingo than I do of the Indians,” he soliloquized as he tramped along.

It was well on in the afternoon when they reached one of the gates of Louisbourg and were promptly admitted.

After some delay and preliminary questioning on the part of an officer at the gate, Pickle was taken before the commander of

the fortress, General Duchambon, who occupied one of the few stone houses the town contained, the majority being of wood.

On being ushered into the presence of the great man, Pickle, by an inspiration of audacity that surprised himself whenever he recalled it, went right up to him, and, making a low bow, put out his hand, saying in the politest tone possible:—

“I have the honor to bid you good-day, sir. I am Sewall Pomeroy of Boston, at your service, sir.”

The sensation produced by this superb bit of bravado may be readily imagined. It fairly took the Frenchmen's breath away, and they gazed at Pickle as though he were some supernatural being that had suddenly appeared in their midst.

The commander was the first to recover his self-possession, and, extending his hand across the table, at which he sat, he responded with a fairly gracious smile, and in excellent English:—

“I beg to return your salutation, and to

thank you for furnishing me with your name. I trust you will be no less ready to give me further information."

Pickle at once drew himself up, and closed his lips in a determined way that did not promise very well for the fulfilment of the speaker's expectations.

"May I ask what is your rank?" was the next question.

"I belong to the fife and drum corps, and I play the drum, while my brother plays the fife," responded Pickle in a tone of manifest pride.

"Indeed!" exclaimed the commander with quickened interest. "Possibly then it was your brother and yourself who played so bravely in front of the Grand Battery when our boats were seeking to retake it."

"It was, sir," answered Pickle, acknowledging the compliment with a bow, while a murmur of admiration arose from the officers in the room.

"And how many more such gallant soldiers has General Pepperell under his

command?" asked Duchambon, concealing his wily purpose beneath an air of gracious appreciation.

"More than sufficient to capture Louisbourg," replied Pickle, who was not to be betrayed into giving precise information.

Then ensued an hour's ordeal of examination, in which not only Duchambon, but his staff, exhausted their ingenuity in striving to extract from Pickle particulars as to the strength, condition, and equipment of the New England army.

But neither threats, taunts, nor clever traps availed.

The Puritan strain in him prevented him from falsifying the true state of affairs as another less scrupulous might have done, while he was prepared to suffer anything rather than confess the really miserable plight of his own people, many hundreds of whom were prostrated with sickness due to their wretched quarters, and yet more were ragged and barefooted.

At last, despairing of accomplishing his purpose, Duchambon angrily ordered Pickle

to be removed, and confined in a dark cell until he should become more tractable.

This direction being given in French, Pickle did not apprehend its significance until he found himself in a damp, doleful dungeon into which no ray of light entered.

“Surely you’re not going to leave me here!” he cried indignantly to the guard. “I’m a prisoner of war, and you have no right to treat me like this.”

But the French soldiers paid no heed to his passionate protests, which in truth they hardly understood, and after providing him with a bundle of straw for a couch, went away, taking care to securely bar the heavy door.

Thus left alone in the appalling darkness, Pickle’s resolution, hitherto so nobly maintained, at last broke down, and, prostrating himself upon the straw, he gave way to the bitterest self-reproach.

“What an idiot I was to leave the others!” he groaned. “Those rascally Indians would never have dared to attack us all. They must have been just skulking

around, watching for the chance of some of us doing what I was fool enough to do. How anxious Prince must be! Poor fellow! he can't have the slightest notion what's become of me, and maybe he'll think I've been killed and scalped by some of the red devils. Well, thank Heaven, it's not so bad as that with me yet, but God only knows what these Mounseers will do if they cannot get out of me what they want to know."

After a while the needs of his body began to assert themselves, to the exclusion of his other troubles. He was both hungry and thirsty, neither bite nor sup having passed his lips since he left camp in the morning, and it was now about sundown.

"Surely they are not going to let me starve here," he cried, rising to his feet, and feeling his way to the door, which, having found, he proceeded to beat against, first with his fists, and then, when they got sore, with his feet.

But he might as well have been smiting the solid rock so far as eliciting any response

was concerned. His cell was in the depths of the King's Bastion, and no noise that he could make had any chance of reaching the guards, who were far above him.

Wearied of these fruitless efforts, he crept back to his straw pallet, and sought to bury his misery in the oblivion of sleep.

For some time he succeeded no better in this than he had in his attempt to attract attention, but at last, through sheer exhaustion of both body and mind, he fell into a troubled slumber, from which, some hours later, he was suddenly awakened by the door being flung open and the glare of a torch filling the cell, its ruddy rays making the damp walls glisten, and revealing more fully the utter dreariness of the place.

Startled and dazed, Pickle sprang up, exclaiming:—

“What's the matter? What do you want?”

A sinister looking soldier had entered, and without vouchsafing any reply in words, he motioned to Pickle to go before him.

Much marvelling at this proceeding, for

he calculated it must be about midnight, Pickle obeyed, and when the door clanged to behind him, there sprang up in his heart the hope that he was not again to be immured in that hideous dungeon.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE LOVE OF A BROTHER.

THE guard having gone ahead after closing the cell door, Pickle followed him up a long flight of steps, and through several corridors and chambers, until they came to one that was evidently the commander's dining-room.

In the centre stood a large table, more elegantly appointed as to linen, silverware, and glass than any Pickle had ever seen before, and, what impressed him even more in his starving condition, there was good store of meat, bread, and other viands daintily displayed, flanked by flagons of wine.

His mouth watered and his stomach cried out at the sight.

“Are they going to let me sit at that table?” he asked himself, as the savor of the good things filled his expanded nostrils.

“I feel as if I could eat until morning. I was never so ravenous in all my life.”

Made reckless by his pangs, he advanced towards the table with the intention of taking a piece of bread, but the guard roughly interposed, and, growling something unintelligible, pushed him into a corner, where he evidently meant to keep him until further orders.

Pickle was not familiar with the legend of Tantalus, or he would assuredly have compared himself to that mythical personage. It certainly was a cruel situation in which to place the boy. Yet, for full half an hour he had to stand there, eying the sorely needed food that he could not touch.

Then a door at the end of the room opened, and a young officer appearing, gave the guard an order, which he obeyed by grasping Pickle's arm and shoving him forward.

The next moment Pickle was again in the presence of the French commander, and the same officers that had examined him previously.

“I have sent for you, my young man,” said Duchambon, in a courteous yet cold determined tone, “with the expectation that having had time to reflect you have reached a wiser frame of mind, and are now prepared to answer the questions we would ask of you.”

Pickle bowed, and then, lifting his head, fixed his clear honest eyes steadily upon the commander’s countenance, as he responded in a firm yet thoroughly respectful tone :

“I shall answer any questions, sir, that I think General Pepperell would not mind my answering, but more than that I will not do.”

Duchambon’s dark eyes flashed, and he twisted his heavy moustache angrily. He had hoped to weaken his prisoner’s resolution by tempting him with the sight of food when he knew he must be faint with hunger, and this unbroken resolution to reveal nothing irritated him exceedingly.

He turned to the officer sitting beside him, a grizzled veteran, who had hitherto kept silence, although his piercing eyes had

been fixed upon Pickle from the time of his entrance into the room.

As they both spoke in French, Pickle could make out nothing of the earnest consultation which took place, yet somehow he divined that the older man was interceding on his behalf.

Presently Duchambon spoke to the other officers who were present, and they all took part in a discussion which lasted some ten minutes, poor Pickle vainly endeavoring to catch something of its purport from the expressions and gestures of the speakers.

At last they evidently reached a conclusion approved by all, and particularly by the veteran, whose grim smile seemed to say, "They had to come round to my way in the end," and whose glance, as it returned to Pickle, somehow sent a thrill of hope to his heart.

Duchambon, the cloud of irritation not altogether vanished from his countenance, then bent his eyes upon Pickle, who bore their gaze unflinchingly.

“Despite your refusal to answer our questions,” he said, “we have decided not to take the severe measures with you that your obstinacy merits. Not only so, but in our leniency we will allow you the freedom of the fortress if you will give your word of honor to make no attempt to escape, or to hold communication with your own people.”

Pickle’s heart gave a great throb of joy. This was far better treatment than he had dared to hope for, and he was quite ready to go on parole for the little while that the siege would yet be prolonged.

He had no idea why his captors were showing him such leniency. It never occurred to him that it was because of the heroic stand he had taken, and the confidence in his own honor thereby created.

“I will gladly give you my word of honor not to try to escape, nor to send any word to my friends, sir,” he responded with his best bow.

“Very well, then, you may consider yourself at liberty to go where you please

within the limits of the town," said the commander; "and now, as I presume you would be the better for some food, you may return to the dining-room and appease your appetite."

With another bow Pickle withdrew, and the next minute was hard at work upon the meat and bread so bountifully provided.

Never before had a meal seemed so delicious. He ate until he could eat no more, and then, rising from the table with a vast sigh of content and a perceptibly tighter belt, he exclaimed:—

"There now! that will do me for the present, and I cannot begin to express my thanks."

A soldier now appeared, and signing to him to follow, led him to a small room plainly but sufficiently furnished, which seemed a chamber in Paradise compared with the horrid dungeon.

Indicating that this was Pickle's bedroom he withdrew, leaving the boy alone to take the rest he so greatly needed, and which a few minutes later he was soundly enjoying.

But how had it gone with Prince all this time?

He was the first to notice his brother's disappearance, and, looking this way and that, he exclaimed in a tone of surprise:

"What's become of Pickle? He was in sight but a moment ago."

His tone changed to one of anxiety when, after mounting the highest mound in the neighborhood, and surveying the country in every direction, he could discern no sign of the boy whatever.

"How extraordinary!" he cried. "He seems to have vanished utterly. What could have become of him?"

By this time all the rods had been dropped, and the whole party gathered about Prince with deeply concerned countenances.

The rumors of prowling Indians at once came to their minds, and they looked at one another significantly, each feeling reluctant to be the first to express their apprehension of what might have happened.

"We must scour the country in search

of him," Prince said, starting off in the expectation that the others would follow.

But to his surprise and indignation they held back.

"Come along!" he cried. "There's not a moment to lose."

Still they did not respond, and Sparhawk, who as organizer of the fishing party was in some sort its leader, said:—

"It's no use, Prince. We have n't the slightest notion in which direction to go, and for aught we know there may be a number of Indians skulking about, just watching for the chance to get at us. We had better hurry back to camp."

"And leave Pickle to their hands!" screamed Prince. "Indeed I won't if I have to hunt for him alone."

"See here now, Prince," answered Sparhawk, whose reasoning was sound enough. "what's the use of your talking that way? You can't do anything but be captured yourself, and we're not a strong enough party to face a band of Indians. They'll doubtless take your brother to Louisbourg,

and hand him over to the Mounseers, who 'll keep him to exchange him for some of our prisoners. That's the way it's always done in war."

Seeing that he stood alone, and realizing the impossibility of his accomplishing anything single-handed, Prince let his head drop upon his breast, and gave himself up to the most harrowing thoughts in spite of the well-meant efforts of the others to cheer him.

His distress was all the more poignant because he somehow felt himself to have been at fault in losing sight of Pickle, under the circumstances.

The sense of responsibility for his reckless brother, which was as deep as though he were five years his senior, came crushingly upon him, and he asked himself how he could ever return to the home in Boston without Pickle.

Sparhawk's growing nervousness could now no longer be restrained, and, grasping Prince's arm, he said in a half-entreating, half-commanding tone:—

“We must start back instanter. Every minute we stay increases our danger. Don't worry about your brother. They'll take him to Louisbourg all right.”

Reluctantly Prince obeyed. He was loath to leave the spot where he had last seen his brother, and yet what was to be gained by lingering? So he turned his face campward with a heart heavy as lead, and the tears striving hard to force their way out upon his cheeks.

They reached the camp without interference, and Prince, at once seeking out General Pepperell, told him of his brother's disappearance.

“Ah, I'm afraid that's the work of those skulking red devils,” said the commander, looking very grave, and laying his hand sympathetically upon Prince's shoulder. “God grant that they have taken your brother to Louisbourg, where he will be treated as a prisoner of war. You may rely upon my doing all I can to ascertain if that be so, and to effect an exchange for him at the earliest opportunity.”

Having expressed his gratitude for the promise, Prince withdrew with a somewhat lightened heart, resolved to take the most hopeful view of his brother's fate.

The attack upon the French fortress was now being continued with increasing vigor, and so sanguine of success were its besiegers that on the seventh of May a summons to surrender was sent Duchambon, who haughtily replied that he would answer it with his cannon.

Whereat the New Englanders were greatly provoked, as the following startling entry in the minutes of the council of war shows: "Advised unanimously that the Town of Louisbourg be attacked by Storm this Night."

Seeing that as yet no breach had been made in the walls, nor indeed the beginning of one, that nine out of ten men had no bayonets, that many were barefoot, and that the scaling-ladders brought from Boston were quite ten feet too short, while, on the other hand, the French, with much justification, were so confident in the strength of their

fortifications that they boasted their women alone could defend them, — in view of all this it was fortunate that the rank and file of the colonial force had cooler heads than their superior officers, and made their views so clearly understood that another council was held on the same day, at which it was, after much discussion, “Advised that inasmuch as there appears a great Dissatisfaction in many of the officers and soldiers at the designed attack of the Town by Storm this night, the said attack be deferred for the present.”

No sooner, however, was this wild design thus shelved than another, hardly less reckless, found general favor, — to wit, the taking of the Island Battery, which closed the entrance of the harbor to the British Squadron on the watch outside, but kept it open to ships from France, should any such be able to run the gauntlet of the blockade.

Nobody knew precisely how to find the two landing-places of this formidable battery, which were narrow gaps between rocks almost constantly lashed by surf; but

the sanguine, self-confident Vaughan could see no difficulties, and sent word to General Pepperell that if he could give him the command, and leave him to manage the attack in his own way, he would engage to send the French flag to headquarters within forty-eight hours.

In spite of this cocksureness, the attempt was delayed on account of the weather, and through other causes, until the twenty-sixth of the month, and then it was not Vaughan who had command, but Captain Brooke of New Hampshire, chosen by the men themselves in the free and easy way that characterized the whole astonishing enterprise.

The start was made from the Grand Battery in whale-boats propelled by paddles, as being less noisy than oars. Four hundred men comprised the party, and they set off at midnight, hoping to take the French garrison by surprise.

Prince, who could scarce eat or sleep through worry about Pickle, was among the volunteers for this desperate venture.

He went because in the excitement of it he would for a time forget the anxiety that bore so heavily upon him.

The night was still and dark, and the boats moved through the water with no sound save the soft swish of the paddles inaudible a short distance away.

Every heart beat high with hope. The capture of the Island Battery meant the opening of the harbor to the British ships, and with them once safely inside, the surrender of the stronghold could not be long delayed.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE ATTACK ON THE ISLAND BATTERY.

AS already mentioned, there were only two places on the island where boats could land. On the west end was a narrow beach practicable for not more than three boats at a time, and commanded by the western face of the battery, while at the northeast, through the midst of sharp and slippery rocks, ran a narrow passage accessible only in the smoothest weather.

The battery held a garrison of two hundred men, part of whom were Swiss, and rare good fighters, so that although the New Englanders had the advantage as to numbers, every other circumstance was in favor of the enemy.

Not only so, but while the flotilla moved slowly to the attack, the wind, hitherto asleep, unexpectedly awakened, and began to blow freshly.

“We shall have trouble in landing,” said Captain Brooke, shaking his head gravely. “I had hoped the wind would hold off until daybreak.”

Instead of doing this it grew steadily stronger, and by the time the boats were off the Island, the surf was breaking savagely upon its jagged rocks and seeming to say:—

“Avaunt, you rash New Englanders! You shall not set foot here if I can prevent you.”

Prince was in one of the hindmost boats, which would have to wait its turn to reach the landing-place, and had perforce to put a curb upon his eagerness to be in the thick of the excitement.

Now this Island Battery was a strong work walled in on all sides, and mounting no less than thirty cannon, seven swivels, and two mortars. The only hope, therefore, of the assailants lay in taking the garrison by surprise, and scaling the walls ere they could rally to their defence.

Only the western landing-place was prac-

ticable, the rising of the wind having rendered it impossible to do anything at the other, and so the crowd of boats gathered before this bit of beach, waiting their turn to reach it.

Keeping remarkably quiet, — for they were very prone to noise, — the leading boats pushed their way ashore, and the men sprang out until about a hundred and fifty had landed.

Still the battery stood wrapped in silence, and the prospect for the carrying out of the audacious enterprise seemed excellent, when, moved by a spirit of senseless bravado, those already on shore burst into three cheers ere Captain Brooke could restrain them.

“For God’s sake, men, keep silence!” he cried, in passionate protest against this act of supreme folly.

But it was too late. Captain D’Aillebout, the French commandant, had been on the watch, pacing the battery platform. Yet owing to the ceaseless noise of the surf, and the darkness of the night, he had

caught neither sound nor sight of the assailants.

The moment this insane round of cheer broke on his ears, however, he understood the situation, and ere the witless shouters recovered their breath, the battery "blazed with cannon, swivels, and small arms," as one of the survivors of the assault relates.

Through the gloom the group of boats lying off the landing, waiting their turn to go in, was just sufficiently visible to guide the gunners, and at once they became the target for volleys of grape-shot, langrage-shot, and musket balls which did deadly work upon them.

Many of the boats were shattered and sunk by the fire, and the rest, including the one in which Prince had a place, realizing the futility of the enterprise, sheered sullenly off out of range, leaving the others to the mercy of the enemy.

Thus the affair was soon reduced to an exchange of shots between the garrison and the New Englanders on shore, who, having to stand on the open ground with-

out the walls (for their gallant attempts at scaling them came to naught, although they succeeded in putting twelve scaling-ladders in position) presented an easy mark to the French musketeers safely hidden behind the ramparts.

Yet so stubborn was their spirit, and desperate their courage, that they actually maintained this unequal and costly conflict until daybreak, and then, seeing themselves wholly at the mercy of the French, surrendered to the number of one hundred and twenty in all.

The English loss in killed, drowned, and captured reached nearly two hundred, or about one-half the attacking party, and this disastrous termination to a venture of which so much had been expected plunged the colonial camp into profound gloom.

It was the New Englanders' first reverse, and they felt the blow all the more. For a time their faith in the divine nature of their undertaking was shaken.

"Surely," they argued, "if we be doing God's work in thus seeking to beat down a

stronghold of Antichrist, His providence should have protected us."

And it needed all the fiery eloquence of Parson Moody, and a fresh flourishing of the shining axe wherewith he proposed to hew down the altars of Popery, to revive their zeal, and stimulate them to further effort.

On the other hand, the French went wild with joy. This was their first success, and they certainly made the most of it.

When day dawned, Louisbourg rang with shouts of triumph, and the ramparts were crowded with men, women, and children hurling taunts at their foiled foe.

In the reports of the affair made to the home authorities Duchambon, determined to get all the credit possible, stated that the battery was attacked by one thousand men, supported by eight hundred more, who were afraid to show themselves, and further, that there were thirty-five boats in the flotilla, all of which were destroyed or sunk. But Bigot, with more regard for the truth, puts the number of the assailants at five

hundred, of whom, however, he claims that all perished save the one hundred and nineteen who were captured.

Into the midst of their rejoicings now came news of a disaster that went far to send them back to despondency.

One fine morning a fierce cannonade was heard at sea, and presently a large French ship of war was seen hotly engaged with several vessels of the British blockading squadron.

The fight was watched with intense interest by the New Englanders, but was not visible from Louisbourg.

The French ship made a gallant resistance, but, being beset on all sides, struck her colors after a loss of eighty men.

She proved to be the ship of the line "Vigilant," a splendid vessel, carrying sixty-four guns and nearly six hundred men, and commanded by no less a personage than the Marquis de la Maisonfort.

She had come from France heavily laden with munitions and stores for Louisbourg, and on approaching the land had encoun-

tered one of the colonial cruisers. Being no match for her towering opponent, the latter, keeping up a running fight, cleverly led her toward the British fleet, and thereby entitled herself to a good share of the credit of the capture.

Nothing could have been more timely for the New Englanders than the addition to their supplies thus unwillingly made by the enemy, for the stock of provisions and ammunition had sunk perilously low, and the expected replenishing from Boston had been unaccountably delayed.

When word reached Louisbourg of this, the songs of triumph were exchanged for groans of grief, and the Habitant de Louisbourg put this sad entry in his diary: "We were victims devoted to appease the wrath of Heaven, which turned our own arms into weapons for our enemies."

Roused by Parson Moody's burning words, the New Englanders now addressed themselves to the reduction of the Island Battery in another way, for all thought of taking it by storm was abandoned.

On the eastern side of the harbor's mouth, a short half-mile distant from the Island, a rocky point projected into the sea, known as Lighthouse Point, which had not been occupied by the French, probably because the shore was so jagged and inhospitable that they took it for granted no landing could be effected there. This point the colonials next made the centre of operations.

With infinite pains and labor, cannon and mortar were carried in boats to the nearest landing-place, hauled up a steep cliff, and dragged a mile and a quarter to the chosen spot, where they were planted successfully, and soon opened fire upon the battery with destructive effect.

While all this was happening, Pickle had been making himself at home in Louisbourg.

Duchambon, feeling quite confident that one who showed such fidelity to his own party in the face of danger could be trusted to keep his parole no less faithfully, allowed him entire liberty, and he roamed about the place freely, exciting much inter-

est among the women and children who thought the good-looking young "Bastonnais" very different from the dreadful creatures they had been led to imagine their besiegers were.

Pickle's heart was moved to sincere pity by the discomforts the unfortunate inhabitants of the beleaguered town had to endure.

So heavy and unsparing was the New England bombardment that hardly one of the houses could be safely dwelt in, and the families were compelled to find refuge in the damp dark casements, where the children soon sickened, and the anxious mothers could not properly care for them.

Gladly would Pickle have lightened their misery had it been in his power. It was not against them the colonial forces were waging war, yet they had to suffer just as if they were responsible.

When he heard of the failure of the attempt upon the Island Battery, he was filled with concern.

"I wonder if Prince was in one of the boats," he said to himself, looking across the

harbor to where the battery stood, so grim and apparently impregnable. "I must ask some of those who were taken prisoners."

Accordingly, when the prisoners were brought over to Louisbourg, he was ready to meet them at the gate.

At first the officer at the gate refused to allow him to have speech with them, but on his appealing to Duchambon, permission was granted.

By a strange coincidence, the first one he recognized in the ill-starred company was the same Sparhawk with whom he had gone on that trout-fishing expedition.

"Why, Sparhawk, is that you?" he exclaimed, running up to him eagerly. "You are just the one to tell me what I want to know."

Sparhawk, who had been walking along with bowed head and dejected mien, for he felt keenly his being a prisoner, on hearing the familiar voice, looked up with a wondering expression, as though to say:—

"Can I believe my ears? Is that really Pickle Pomeroy's voice?"

Pickle, divining the state of the case, caught him by the arm, crying in his ear:

“Yes, it is I. It is Pickle, as sound as a drum, and with my scalp still on. But tell me, was my brother with you when you tried to take the Island Battery?”

Had Sparhawk possessed any skill in devising an evasive answer, he would certainly have exercised it then.

But he was a plain blunt fellow, who could conceal nothing, and when Pickle fixed his eyes eagerly upon his face, he was fain to blurt out:—

“Yes, he was in one of the boats, and the Lord only knows what became of him.”

Pickle shrank away from him, and put his hands up to his face to hide the tears that filled his eyes.

Poor Prince! Had he indeed fallen a victim to a French bullet, or been drowned in the pitiless surf when a cannon-ball splintered the boat beneath him?

Never before that moment did Pickle realize how he loved his brother.

“How can I go back home without

him!" he cried to himself. "Oh, why did we ever come here! It will surely break mother's heart when she knows that she will never see Prince again."

Thus were the twin brothers mourning because they each feared the other dead, and looking forward with anxiety and apprehension to the time when the knowledge of what they supposed had happened would reach the home in Boston.

CHAPTER XX.

A VOLUNTARY PRISONER.

AS each day passed Prince's concern with regard to the fate of his brother grew more intense, until at last it became unendurable, and there formed in his mind a resolution so rash and strange as to seem more like a conception of Pickle's than of his own.

This was nothing more or less than to allow himself to be taken prisoner by the French in order that he might thus gain an entrance into Louisbourg, and learn if Pickle had escaped the tomahawk and scalping knife of the Indians, and was still alive, although a prisoner.

How to carry out this plan without losing his life was a problem that puzzled him greatly. It is true there were from time to time sorties on the part of the French,

and counter attacks by the New Englanders, in which prisoners were taken on both sides.

Thus, when Gorham's regiment first took part at Lighthouse Point, Duchambon thought the movement so threatening that he sent a hundred men under the Sieur de Beaubaisson to drive the invaders away.

Beaubaisson landed at a place called Lorembec, and advanced to surprise the English detachment, but was discovered by an outpost of forty men, who promptly attacked and routed his party.

Being then joined by a number of Indians, he ventured several other skirmishes with English scouting-parties, until at last he was severely wounded himself, and, finding the enemy too strong for him, made his way back to Louisbourg by boat, leaving many of his men behind as prisoners.

Again the Sieur de la Vallière, with a considerable party of men, tried to burn Pepperell's storehouses near Flat Point Cove, but the only result was the capture of a dozen of his party, and the wounding of nearly all the others.

On the other hand the New Englanders had their losses also. A score of them were waylaid and surrounded near Petit Lorembec by twice as many Indians and French. They defended themselves gallantly, in spite of the disadvantages of their position, but the most of them were shot down, and the rest surrendered on promise of their lives being spared.

But, alas! their trust in the magnanimity of their antagonists was sadly betrayed. The red-men, with the tacit approval of the French, shot and speared many of them in cold blood, while others they fiendishly tortured, until not a single member of the party was left alive.

This abominable outrage aroused the deepest indignation and wrath in the New England camp. The French prisoners had been well treated by them, and there was no palliation whatever for such an atrocity.

Reprisals in kind were loudly clamored for, but the wise Commodore Warren bethought himself of a better way.

Among the prisoners on board his ship

was the Marquis de la Maisonfort, late captain of the captured "Vigilant." This nobleman was requested to write a letter to Duchambon, telling with what consideration he and his fellow-prisoners were being treated, and suggesting that the same treatment should be shown to the English prisoners.

Captain Macdonald of the marines carried this letter to the French commander under a flag of truce, and elicited the reply that the Indians alone were responsible for the cruelties in question, and that he would forbid such conduct in the future.

Now Prince was perfectly informed as to the danger he ran in carrying out his plan, but this did not shake his resolution.

"It's a great risk, I know," he said to himself, the gravity of his countenance showing how fully he realized it; "yet I shall take it. I cannot bear this uncertainty any longer. If I can only find out that Pickle is still alive and well, I shall not mind anything else. They can't keep us prisoners long anyway, for

the town is sure to be taken inside of a month."

He kept his purpose to himself, as he knew quite well that whoever heard of it would do his best to dissuade him from it.

The first point to be settled was the time for action. To go in broad daylight would expose him to the suspicion of acting either as a spy or a deserter, while at night he might be shot or bayoneted by the sentinels before he had a chance to give explanations.

After weighing the matter thoroughly, as was his wont in affairs of importance, he decided to make his venture at night.

"There won't be any Indians about then," he rightly reasoned, for he knew enough of the savages to understand that they always kept close to their camp-fires during the hours of darkness, "and when I reach the French guards I'll manage to make myself understood somehow."

It was approaching midnight when he set off, his heart throbbing furiously, and

his mouth parched with the intense excitement that possessed him.

He had first to evade the sentinels posted about his own camp, for, since rumors had been flying around to the effect that a large force of French and Indians under Marin were returning from the unsuccessful attack upon Annapolis to assist their friends in Louisbourg, there had been a great change for the better in the discipline of the colonial camp.

Under the pressure of fear of Marin's force, whose strength had been greatly exaggerated, military order was promptly established, the tents were fenced with palisades, and watched by sentinels and scouting parties.

Now Prince knew that if he encountered any of these they would certainly stop him, and probably order him back to his hut. He therefore exercised as much strategy and caution in getting out of his own camp as though he were getting into the camp of the enemy.

He took with him his pistol and cutlass,

for although he had no idea of offering fight if challenged by the French sentinels, he thought it best to be able to show his teeth in the case of an emergency.

Slipping noiselessly along through the lines of tents and huts in which so many hundreds of his fellow-soldiers were enjoying their well-earned rest, he reached the outskirts of the camp without being observed by any one.

It was a moonless night, but the stars shone out clearly, and there was sufficient light to render any one visible a score of yards distant. As the sentinels were posted about one hundred yards apart, and walked their beats so as to meet every few minutes, it was necessary for Prince to choose that time for passing through them.

Hiding in the shadow of the palisades, he listened to the men on guard tramping steadily to and fro, and mitigating the monotony of their employment by humming snatches of Puritan hymns.

“They have nothing in particular to worry them,” he thought with a sigh of

envy. "Oh, how I wish I knew how it is with Pickle! Surely he cannot be dead! That seems too dreadful."

Waiting until the two nearest sentinels had reached the far end of their beat, Prince pressed forward, bending low, and moving with almost as little noise as though he were an Indian.

He would have succeeded in getting through the line without the guards having any suspicion of his proximity had not an unseen stone caught his foot, and flung him headlong, his cutlass clattering noisily as he fell.

Instantly there was a shout of "Who goes there?" and the clicking of a musket being got ready to fire.

Prince's first thought was to lie perfectly still, trusting that he would not be found in the darkness, and could slip away as soon as the alarm was subsided.

But his keen ear caught the footfalls of other sentinels hurrying up, and he realized that his only chance was to make a dash out into the country.

Gathering himself together, therefore, he darted off over the uneven ground, risking a cropper at every stride, yet somehow managing to keep afoot.

The excited shouts of the sentries followed him, and so did the bullets they hastily fired in the direction of the sound of his steps ; but he heeded not the shouts, and the bullets happily went wide of him, so that he got away unscathed, though very much out of breath.

“ Thank Heaven — that’s over ! ” he panted, when he felt it safe to halt. “ I was terribly afraid they’d hit me, but they could n’t see me plain enough. I wonder shall I have to stand fire in the same way before I get into Louisbourg.”

He had a good space of rough country to cross before coming to the outer range of the fortifications of Louisbourg, and the difficulty of seeing his way made it necessary for him to proceed slowly.

Even then he stumbled several times, bruising his shins badly, and narrowly escaping a sprained ankle, which would

have put him in a very awkward plight.

Having reached the glacis at that part of the defences which fronted the King's Bastion, he lay still for a while, listening to the sentinels pacing the inner ramparts and exchanging their calls.

After a good rest, for the passage across the rough ground had been very tiring, he cautiously began the ascent of the glacis.

In this he had little difficulty, the face being of heavy stone-work, which afforded excellent hold for his hands and feet. But he was in constant danger of being discovered and fired upon by the sentries, whose forms as they moved to and fro were quite visible to him.

"It's a wonder they don't see me when I can see them so plainly," he muttered, feeling profoundly thankful, however, that such was the case.

Indeed, had the French soldiers been a little more on the *qui vive* they could hardly have failed to descry the dark form of the boy outlined upon the gray face of

the glacia. But the night was absolutely still, save for the muffled boom of the surf on the other side of the town. No hint of danger kept them on the alert, and they sleepily did their "sentry-go," each one longing for the hour of his relief, when he should be able to tumble into the bed for which he now hankered.

The glacia sloped up many feet, and ended in a narrow platform beyond which was the fosse, — a broad deep ditch that lay between the outer and inner line of fortification.

Into this ditch Prince had to descend, and to accomplish it noiselessly was a problem that puzzled him, the drop being full fifteen feet.

He thought of letting himself be seen by the sentries on the ramparts, and shouting out his surrender in the hopes of some of them knowing enough English to understand what he said.

But, on reflection, the risk of being shot first and questioned afterwards seemed too great, and he deemed it best to try the ditch.

Crawling along the platform on his stomach, — for he did not dare stand erect, as then the sleepest of the sentinels could hardly have failed to discover him, — he sought an angle of the wall where the shadows were darkest, and began the descent.

The masonry having a rough finish on the inside wall, afforded him a precarious hold, which he managed to maintain until he was nearly half-way down, and then, his feet slipping from a rounded projection, he fell the remainder of the distance.

Fortunately the ditch held nothing harder than half-dried mud, into which Prince dropped with a soft thud, that was, nevertheless, loud enough to arouse the suspicions of the sentry on duty nearest the spot.

“*Qui va là?*” he demanded, pointing his musket in the direction of the sound.

Prince lay as still as a log, while other sentries hurried up, and joined with the first in peering eagerly into the darkness of the moat.

They chattered together excitedly for a moment, and then, at the suggestion of one of their number, levelled their guns and fired a volley into the corner where Prince grovelled in the mud.

The bullets flattened upon the stones a few inches above him, sending a shiver down his spine, but happily all went too high to touch him.

Yet he dare not risk the second volley, for which the soldiers were already reloading, and, rising to his feet, he showed himself to the sentries, crying out: —

“Don't fire again! I am your prisoner; come and take me!”

So startled were the Frenchmen by his sudden approach that in their confusion they were about to give the poor defenceless fellow another volley, when the officer of the guard came running up to learn the cause of the uproar, and they paused to answer him.

On Prince being pointed out to him, he bent over the parapet, calling out in French:

“Who are you? What do you there?”

Prince, guided by the tone rather than by the language, of which he understood not a word, moved a little nearer, and holding up his hands to show that they held no weapon replied:—

“I am your prisoner; I want to be taken inside.”

It chanced that this officer had himself at one time been a prisoner in English hands, and had acquired some knowledge of the tongue. He accordingly understood what Prince said, and, though very much puzzled as to what it all meant, commanded his men to lower their muskets, and detailed two of them to go down into the moat, and conduct Prince to the guardroom, where he could be duly examined.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE FALL OF THE FORTRESS.

ON Prince being brought before the officer of the guard, the latter, after one searching glance at him, exclaimed:—

“*Parbleau!* but you are the young Bastonnais that the Indians brought in a few days ago, and you have been trying to make your escape, eh? It may be that you do not understand the obligations of parole.”

The last sentence was uttered in a sharp, sneering tone, and although Prince could not fully catch the purport of the officer's words, or grasp the reason for the sneer, he understood enough to be assured of Pickle's being still alive.

“No, no, I am not he!” he cried, catching the officer's arm, and looking up into his face with an expression of passionate

eagerness. "But I am his brother, and is he safe? and is he here? God be thanked! I feared that he might have been killed."

Evidently much impressed by Prince's excited utterance, the officer drew him more into the light, and scrutinized him closely.

Despite his bedraggled condition, his likeness to Pickle certainly showed out amazingly, and after many a shrug and puzzled grimace, the officer, deciding to leave the conundrum for solution in the morning, bade Prince lie down, and rest for the present.

Wearied by the exertions and excitement of the night, Prince was only too glad to obey, but he found it impossible to close his eyes.

The idea that his beloved brother had escaped the scalping-knives of the red-men, and was no doubt sleeping soundly not far away, thrilled him with joy, and with impatience to greet him.

"Won't he be surprised to see me!" he chuckled, "and what a fool he'll think

me for doing this! He'll have a chance to scold *me* now for being reckless. But I could not stand the dreadful anxiety about him, and now that I know he's safe and sound, I don't care how long we're prisoners here."

In the morning, Prince was allowed to make a sort of toilet ere being taken before Duchambon. No sooner did the commander's eye fall upon him than he started and exclaimed:—

"The young Bastonnais! What has he been doing? Not attempting to escape?" For Pickle had so impressed him by his perfect frankness and honesty that it was quite a shock to him to find him guilty of dishonorable conduct.

But the officer smiled and shook his head.

"So I thought, sir, when I saw him first. He says, however, that it is not he, but his brother. Will you send, sir, for the other?"

A soldier was accordingly at once despatched to bring Pickle.

Pickle saw Prince the minute he entered the door, and with a cry strangely compounded of gladness and sympathy of, "Prince! Are you too a prisoner?" he darted across the room, and flung his arms about his brother's neck, giving him a hug worthy of a bear.

The grave Duchambon could not forbear breaking into laughter, and his example was followed by his subordinates, for, utterly oblivious of their presence, the twins, holding one another's hands as if they feared being parted, peppered each other with questions that neither took time to properly answer.

At last the commander interposed. He too had some questions to ask, and having secured Prince's attention, he interrogated him as to how he had got within the walls, and what his object was in doing it. There was such transparent honesty in his replies that not one who heard him felt inclined to doubt their absolute truth, and when his story was told, the French officers had gained a higher conception of the courage

and devotion of their antagonists whose very boys were capable of such heroism.

“I will put you on parole as I have done your brother,” said Duchambon, when the examination was over, “and I trust you will have no cause to complain of our treatment of you while you are our prisoners.”

Prince thanked him warmly, and the boys being thus practically left to themselves, Pickle took his brother off to show him the town.

It was in truth a pitiable sight. Of all the snug, comfortable homes the walls had enclosed, only a single one stood untouched by shot or shell, and for some time previous nobody had dared to rest elsewhere than in the stifling casemates.

While Gridley's bombs on Lighthouse Point were dropping shells into the Island Battery with such precision that the frightened French soldiers could sometimes be seen bolting for the water to escape the explosions, the colonial batteries on the land side were pushing their work of destruction with relentless activity, until

walls and bastions crumbled under their fire.

The French had labored with laudable energy under cover of night to repair the mischief. The shattered West Gate they closed with a wall of stone and earth twenty feet thick, and they made an earthen epaulement to protect what was left of the formidable circular battery — all but three of whose sixteen guns had been dismantled. They stopped the throat of the King's Bastion with a barricade of stone, and built a cavalier, or raised battery, on the King's Bastion, — where, however, the English fire soon ruined it.

Against that near and peculiarly dangerous neighbor the advanced battery, or, as they called it, the *Batterie de Francoeur*, they planted three heavy cannons to take it in flank, which, according to Duchambon's report to the Minister for the Colonies, "produced a marvellous effect, dismantling one of the cannon of the Bastonnais, and damaging all their embrasures, but," he adds, — and it is easy to imagine the

sigh that accompanied the sentence, — “ this did not prevent them from keeping up a constant fire, and they repaired by night the mischief we did them by day.”

Ah ! yes, those tireless, dauntless, determined Bastonnais, who defied all tradition, and paid no more attention to the set rules of military tactics than did birds to the fences in the fields, truly they were provoking beyond all patience, and it seemed quite too bad that they should get on so well in their preposterous enterprise.

For the net was ever being drawn closer about the beleaguered fortress, and each day increased the chances of its downfall.

Commodore Warren, growing impatient at the slow movement of the siege, and learning from those captured on board the “ Vigilant ” that she was the forerunner of a squadron from Brest, which, even if it could not defeat him, might elude his blockade, and, taking advantage of the frequent fog, slip into Louisbourg in spite of him, thus making its capture impossible, called a council of captains on board his flag-ship

and laid before them a plan for taking the place without further delay.

This was to the effect that all the King's ships and the provincial cruisers should enter the harbor, after taking on board sixteen hundred of the New England men, and attack the town from the water side, while the remainder of the army should assault it by land.

But on this being proposed to General Pepperell he demurred, for it practically meant to pass over the command to Warren, as only some two thousand of the New Englanders were fit for service at the time, and of these, as he informed the commodore, "six hundred are gone in quest of two bodies of French and Indians, who, we are informed, are gathering, one to the eastward, and the other to the westward."

His reply irritated Warren not a little, and he responded tartly, "I am very sorry that no one plan of mine, though approved by all my captains, has been so fortunate as to meet your approbation, or have any weight with you;" and to show that his

suggestions were entitled to more weight he gave an extract from a letter written to him by Governor Shirley, in which that amiable flatterer hinted his regret at Warren not being able to take command of the whole expedition, "which, I doubt not," he said, "would be a most happy event for his Majesty's service."

Despite this sharp thrust, however, Pepperell kept his temper admirably, and after some further consultation came to an understanding with Warren for a joint attack by land and water.

The Island Battery was by this time hopelessly crippled, and the town batteries that commanded the interior of the harbor were nearly destroyed. It was, therefore, arranged that Commodore Warren, whose squadron had been increased by recent arrivals to eleven ships, not counting the provincial cruisers, should enter the harbor with the first fair wind, cannonade the town, and attack it by boats, while General Pepperell, with all his forces, stormed it from the land side.

When ready to sail in, Warren was to hoist a Dutch flag under his pennant at his main topgallant masthead as a signal, and Pepperell was to answer by sending up three columns of smoke, at the same time marching towards the walls with drums beating and colors flying.

While of course the precise details of these plans were unknown to the French, they could not fail to surmise that a concerted attack was being arranged, and right before their eyes the besiegers carried a large quantity of fascines to the foot of the glacis in readiness to fill up the ditch, and the scouts came in with the alarming report that more than a thousand scaling ladders were lying behind the ridge of the nearest hill.

Shrewdly guessing the state of affairs, Prince and Pickle found it hard to conceal their exultation, and were glad when they could be alone and unobserved.

“I do hope they will make the attack soon,” said Pickle, “for I am desperately sick of this place. The Mounseers are in

a great muddle. Some of them want to fight it out, and some want to surrender, and they can't settle which to do."

What Pickle said was true enough. Divided counsels prevailed in Louisbourg. Duchambon's resolution to continue the defence was still unshaken, but the townspeople were heartsick and despairing. Toil, loss of sleep, and the bad air of the casemates to which they had been driven for refuge, had sapped the strength of the garrison.

"We could have borne all this," wrote Bigot the Intendant, "but the scarcity of powder, the loss of the 'Vigilant,' the presence of the squadron, and the absence of any news from Marin, who had been ordered to join us with his Canadians and Indians, spread terror among the troops and inhabitants. The townspeople said they did not want to be put to the sword, and were not strong enough to resist a general assault."

Accordingly, on the fifteenth of June, they brought a petition to Duchambon, begging him to capitulate.

When the Pomeroy's heard of this, they hugged one another in an ecstasy of delight.

"They're giving in!" cried Pickle. "They won't hold out much longer now, and we'll soon be back with our friends. Oh, won't that be glorious!"

"Yes, indeed," responded Prince more soberly, "and after all our narrow escapes we'll get safe home again in triumph. I wonder how Commander Duchambon will answer the petition."

Duchambon's first impulse was to give a flat refusal. It seemed altogether too galling that a great French fortress like Louisbourg, garrisoned by veteran soldiers, should surrender to an untrained, undisciplined horde of colonial militiamen.

But on consultation with his officers he found that he stood practically alone. They had lost all hope of succor from across the ocean, and they were satisfied that any further prolongation of the defence on their part was impracticable.

So at last the gallant commander was fain to yield, and Captain Sherburn, who

had charge of the advanced battery, tells in his diary how "we had got all our platforms laid, embrasures mended, guns in order, shot in place, cartridges ready, dined, gunners quartered, matches lighted to return their last favor, when we heard their drums beat a parley, and soon appeared a flag of truce, which I received midway between our battery and their walls."

The first proposals made by the French were of such a nature that General Pepperell refused to listen to them, and sent back the officer who bore them with counter-proposals, including the condition that no officer, soldier, or inhabitant of Louisbourg should bear arms against the King of England for the space of a year.

Duchambon, in return, stipulated that his troops should march out of the fortress with their arms and colors.

To this both the English commanders consented, Warren shrewdly observing to Pepperell, "the uncertainty of our affairs, that depend so much on wind and weather, makes it necessary not to stickle at trifles."

So the articles of capitulation were duly signed, and on the seventeenth day of June the war ships sailed peacefully into the harbor, while Pepperell, with a part of his ragged army, entered the south gate of the town.

Here the Pomeroy boys met them. In some way or other they had managed to obtain possession of a fife and drum, and thus were able to greet their compatriots with a familiar strain as they pressed forward into the surrendered stronghold.

CHAPTER XXII.

HOME AGAIN IN TRIUMPH.

INTO the rejoicings that followed the fall of Louisbourg, Prince and Pickle entered with immense vim. Neither General Pepperell nor Commander Warren took more pride than they in the success of this wonderful enterprise, unparalleled in the whole history of war. They had done their best from start to finish of the siege, and they knew that they would be nothing less than heroes when they returned home and recounted their experiences.

“How proud father will be of us!” Pickle chuckled. “He’ll be glad he let us change from old Hateall’s to Master Hancock’s school, won’t he?”

“And how glad mother will be to have us back safe and sound!” responded Prince.

“She’ll think a great deal more of that than she will of anything else,” he added, rightly reading the little mother’s heart.

“And Master Hancock will feel proud, also, that two of his boys should have taken part in this expedition when he was not able to go himself,” continued Pickle.

And so they exulted together in the joyous prospect that was before them.

After the first excitement of the entry of the New Englanders into the town had passed, the boys undertook to act as guides for some of their friends, and show them over the place.

Accordingly they visited the various batteries and bastions, and the more the conquerors saw of the strength of the defences, the more amazed they were at their own success.

“Verily the Lord was with us, else we should never have been able to pull down the mighty from their seats!” was the pious exclamation of Sparhawk as he gazed at the massive walls and lofty ramparts.

While passing the church, their ears

caught sounds of smashing within, and Pickle exclaimed : —

“Halloo! I wonder what’s happening inside. Let us go in and see.”

So they all entered, and lo! there was the redoubtable Parson Moody, bareheaded and coatless, hewing away at the altars of popery, as he had pledged himself to do ere he left Boston.

The perspiration poured down his fiery face, his long white hair was all dishevelled, and his breath had evidently grown scant, but he toiled away with his flashing axe, wrecking the altars, and splitting in pieces the images with the zest born of passionate detestation.

Much amused, the visitors watched the old man for some time, and then withdrew to continue their explorations.

By way of celebrating the victory, General Pepperell gave a dinner to the commodore and his officers, to which he was good enough to invite the twins, in whom he had all along taken a special interest.

To Parson Moody, as being the general’s

chaplain, and the oldest man in the army, belonged the privilege of asking the blessing at the board; and those who knew by experience the length of the venerable pastor's grace, were much concerned as to how it would be endured by their guests on this occasion. At the same time not one of them dared rasp his irritable temper by any suggestion of brevity, and hence they came to the feast full of apprehension lest there should be an invocation of a good half-hour in length, terminated by an open revolt on the part of the hungry Britons.

Great, however, was their surprise and relief when the worthy divine, wearied perhaps by his exertions in the church, contented himself with these pregnant words:—

“ Good Lord, we have so much to thank Thee for that time will be too short, and we must leave it to eternity; ” and then with a brief request for a blessing upon their food and fellowship, he resumed his seat, leaving them free to fall to before the soup had ceased to steam.

The colonial troops had fully expected that on taking possession of Louisbourg they would have license to plunder at their own will, but to their intense disgust they were straitly enjoined against doing anything of the kind.

Not only so, but instead of being at once permitted to occupy the houses, which, shattered by shot and shell as they were, offered far better protection from the cold persistent rain that now poured down in floods than the flimsy tents and sodden huts of turf they had dwelt in so long, they had to wait until the Louisbourg folk could be embarked for France.

All this did not tend to good temper on the part of the New Englanders, and Prince and Pickle were very glad when General Pepperell sent for them, and told them they might join a detachment of troops he was allowing to return home, some of them being invalided, and others having families in distress and danger on the exposed northern frontier.

The vessels carrying these home-goers

were to be convoyed by two of the provincial cruisers, and Pickle, who would never lose anything for lack of trying, as soon as he learned which ships would go, made his way to the captain of the best of them, and begged that he and his brother might be allowed on board.

Captain Russell was much amused at this naïve request.

“Upon what ground, my young friend, do you base your claim for such consideration?” he inquired with a grave countenance, in which, however, Pickle did not fail to detect a telltale twinkle of the eye.

“Simply this, sir,” responded Pickle promptly. “We came here in a stinking old scow, and, having borne ourselves with some credit, it seems only fair that we should go back in a decent vessel.”

Captain Russell broke into a laugh. He was not ignorant of the exploits of the Pomeroy twins, and was quite willing to have them as passengers. He simply wanted to parley with Master Pickle a little before granting his request.

“And so you think you’ve entitled yourselves to a passage home with me?” he said smilingly. “Well, we’ll consider the matter, and let you know before we start.”

Convinced that he had gained his point, Pickle hastened off to Prince with radiant face, and, sure enough, the next morning word came from the captain for the boys to hurry on board with all their belongings, as the convoy would start at mid-day.

They were not at all sorry to bid good-bye to Louisbourg. Aside from the novelty and excitement of military life, their experience had not been such as to make the extension of it in any wise to be desired.

Scanty rations rudely cooked, a cold damp hut, or a flimsy tent, every second man about you sick, and all more or less ragged, — these were not the conditions that rendered camp life attractive, and the boys now began to look forward joyfully to the abundant toothsome fare, the warm snug beds, the cleanliness and comfort of their

own beloved home on the edge of Boston Common.

“I don’t think we’ll be in a hurry to go away again,” remarked Prince thoughtfully, as, leaning over the bulwarks, they watched the Cape Breton shore grow faint in the distance. “We’ve had a pretty exciting time of it, and we’ll enjoy a good long rest, won’t we?”

“That we will!” responded Pickle heartily, bringing his hand down upon the rail with an emphatic slap, “and what a comfort it will be to get something fit to eat after the wretched stuff we’ve been having!”

Pickle had a keen appreciation of the pleasures of the table, and promised himself a fine blowout when he once more got within range of his mother’s well-stored pantry.

The passage home was a very pleasant one. No storms arose to disturb the comfort of the voyagers, but a steady northwester blew their ships prosperously southward at a rate which, if not quite fast

enough for the impatient Pickle, was nevertheless very satisfactory.

They arrived off Boston harbor toward sunset of a beautiful midsummer day, and the wind just lasted long enough to bring the cruisers to their mooring-places, while the transports straggled slowly in the rear.

Advance messengers had already borne to the New England capital the glad news of the fall of Louisbourg, and the coming of the convoy was awaited with the keenest interest.

A joyous noisy crowd thronged the wharves, ready to give the returning conquerors a royal reception; and as the cruiser swung slowly and carefully toward her berth, Pickle, standing upon the bulwarks with his left hand grasping the main shrouds, swung his cap vigorously with the other while he shouted exultantly: —

“Hurrah! there’s father! I can see him plainly, and Nathan and Winthrop are just beside him.”

Sure enough, the tall form of Master Preserved Pomeroy distinguished itself from

the mass of humanity that packed the wharf head, and although only a brother's eyes might have recognized them, his two elder sons pressed close to his broad shoulders.

Prince took his place beside Pickle, and soon they could see that their father's eager glance had found them, and that he was pointing them out to those who stood beside him.

Ah! what a proud glad moment that was for the worthy man who had sacrificed so much that the daring enterprise might not fail!

Little recked he now of what it had cost him in hard-earned gold or keen anxiety, for right grandly had his twin sons acquitted themselves, and brought back the name of Pomeroy brilliant with new lustre.

The moment the ship touched the wharf, Prince and Pickle sprang off together, and were enfolded in the arms of their father, who, as he hugged them tightly, uplifted his rugged radiant face, exclaiming through quivering lips: —

“Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people.”

As soon as order could be obtained, the officer in command of the detachment of returned soldiers ordered them to fall in, that they might march to Governor Shirley's residence for the purpose of saluting him.

Accordingly the wharf was with some difficulty cleared, and the line of march having been formed four abreast, with Prince and Pickle, who happened to be the only members of the fife and drum corps on board, at their head, away they went through lanes of cheering, shouting people.

Staid, sober Boston city completely lost her head that day, but was in no wise ashamed of it.

The offices, workshops, schools, and homes were alike deserted by men, women, and children, who poured out into the streets to welcome their victorious countrymen.

As the procession skirted the Common,

it passed the Pomeroy house, and there at the door, surrounded by her younger children, stood sweet Mistress Pomeroy, the tears of joy running down her rosy cheeks, as she saw her darling boys marching proudly in the van, and playing with all the more vigor as they came in sight of home.

Prince looked eagerly toward her, and nodded his head vigorously without losing a note; but Pickle could not thus restrain himself.

After a brief ineffectual struggle with his own impulses, he, to the horror of the commanding officer, just as they came in front of where Mistress Pomeroy stood, suddenly ceased his rataplan, dived headlong through the crowd, gave his mother a swift embrace and a sounding kiss, and then darted back to his place, resuming his drumming as if it had not been interrupted.

The spectators of this incident laughed and cheered heartily, those who knew Pickle exclaiming:—

“Was n’t that just like him!” And Mistress Pemoroy, blushing with pride and

pleasure, retired within to give thanks to God for having brought her boys back to her.

At the Province House they found Governor Shirley awaiting them on the doorsteps, and when with hearty cheers they had halted before him, he took off his hat, and in his own gracious winning way proceeded to address them.

On behalf of the King and Commonwealth he thanked them for their prompt patriotism, their patient endurance of hardship, and their unflinching bravery. He assured them that a full account of what they had suffered and achieved would be transmitted to the home government, and that their name and fame would never be forgotten, but would have a prominent place in the history of the British people.

He concluded by inviting all of them, officers and soldiers alike, to partake of the refreshments already prepared for them, and the soldiers cheered him again and again as he stood smiling upon them.

Truly no man in all New England had

more reason to be glad of heart than he. The daring enterprise which, if not the child of his own brain, would at all events never have been more than a wild dream but for his enthusiastic adoption and zealous advocacy, had realized his highest hopes, and that at so small a cost in blood and treasure as to leave him free to rejoice unstintedly.

He was the most admired and beloved representative of the King throughout the American colonies, and he confidently anticipated due recognition at royal hands for the good service he had rendered the English throne.

But if he was happy and proud in his own way, even more so were the Pomeroy's. The glory won by Prince and Pickle cast its radiance on them all, from the parents down to the youngest child, and they found the importance with which it invested them for the time being very gratifying.

As for the two boys, they enjoyed the situation immensely. To be recognized heroes among their companions, to have

Master Hancock paying them deference, quite as if they were no less important personages than himself, and most notable of all to be specially invited by Governor Shirley to relate to him their experiences of the siege — what more could boyish hearts desire? Right well repaid did they deem themselves for having played on fife and drum at the immortal capture of Louisbourg.

THE END.

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