NOTICES

OF

MIRIAM COFFIN, OR THE WHALE-FISHERMEN.

"THESE volumes will prove highly interesting, not only to our own community, but to all who have perchance become connected or acquainted with us. It is an historical novel, imbodying a multitude of facts with a sufficiency of the garnish of romance to render it irresistibly attractive. For its sketches of actual life it will be universally prized; and for its vivid imaginative embellishments it will be equally admired."—*Nantucket Inquirer.*

"We have not, for many a day, experienced more gratification than we derived from the perusal of this work. The author has been most felicitous in the selection of his subject, and has imparted an interest to the tale, which indicates, unequivocally, a master hand. Few would have thought of selecting the barren sands of isolated Nantucket on which to build a novel; and few —very few, could have accomplished the task in a manner to please. The author has manifested a degree of boldness, taste, and judgment which we cannot too highly commend. He has given a charm to his portraits which carries us delightedly on to the close. It always affords us much pleasure to greet our native aspirants in the ranks of literature; and our pleasure is immeasurably enhanced when we find them embellishing themes of national interest, and perpetuating manners and times fast fading away before the march of modern refinement."—*New-York Gazette.*

"An original American novel is not so common a publication but that we always take one up with more interest than is created by the reprint of some new fiction from the British book market; and Miriam Coffin is a work which, in more respects than one, will repay perusal. It contains some admirable scenes, and abounds in graphic descriptions of manners,—the manners of a race which, though immortalized in the magnificent periods of Burke, fifty years since, are still but little known to their own countrymen. The scene of the story, to be in keeping with the roving characters that move upon it, shifts to every part of the world. We congratulate the Nantucket whale-men upon having, at last, found an annalist to record their daring adventures with a pen that seems guided by the soul of a sailor."—*New-York American.*

"It is a tale of Nantucket—that *terra incognita* to nine-tenths even of its neighbours. The Nantucketers are a strange people —a compound of the Quaker and the sailor,—a mixture of con-

tradictions, such as we know not where else may be found. The author has the materials for making, not only an original work, but an American book; and he has made the most of his incidents."—*New-York Times.*

"It is based upon the early history of Nantucket, and gives a good idea of the manners and customs of the primitive fathers of the island. It may be termed a Romance of the Whale-fishery, abounding with interest. It presents scenery of so varied a character, that the most indifferent reader cannot fail to light upon passages which would rivet his attention. The work is the production of an American—the subject is American—and facts are recorded, dressed in fiction, to awaken curiosity."—*New-York Mercantile Advertiser.*

"It is the production of an American, and will compare with some of the best novels of the day. It is strikingly original in character, correct in description; startling in some of its incidents, in others thrilling; and withal, an attractive and interesting picture of the manners and customs of the early Nantucket adventurers."—*New-York Sun.*

"This pleasing novel describes the whale-fishermen and inhabitants of *Nantucket*—that important little island, the nursery of our boldest and most skilful seamen, which no traveller ever visits, no steamboat or railroad invades: an island essential to the comfort of almost every family on the continent, and connected with the naval fame of the nation; and yet as little regarded by one and all of us, as we may suppose ancient Britain to have been by the Romans—'*pene toto divisos orbe.*' The peculiar manners and humours of the residents of this secluded isle are graphically depicted, and some of the spirit-stirring scenes of their ocean-adventurers are painted with power and effect. We hope to meet the author again. He has merit and modesty, talents and acquirements."—*New-York Commercial Advertiser.*

"The work in its character is entirely original; the incidents and descriptions novel. The belle in the drawing-room may pore over its pages with satisfaction; the sailor-boy thumb it with delight; and the historian may turn to it for a graphic and curious delineation of the manners, habits, and customs of that important race—the Fishermen."—*New-York Journal of Commerce.*

"It is a semi-nautical romance, founded on interesting facts which are yet within the recollection of some of the oldest inhabitants of Nantucket. We have long since been convinced that it requires no stinted portion of literary *tact* to succeed in embroidering the light, gay flowers of fiction on the strong, heavy, old-fashioned arras of matter-of-fact history; and yet we acknowledge that many such desperate attempts have been rewarded with glorious success. The work before us is a new and, as we think, successful specimen of this same species of writing."—*New-York Mirror.*

"It is a work of uncommon interest."—*Boston Daily News.*

"The author has a faultless and lively, if not brilliant and forcible, style; and we cannot be mistaken in the conclusion that his attainments are far from inconsiderable."—*The New-Yorker.*

"It is a tale of Nantucket, and its action is occupied by the adventures of the bold and hardy race of men who inhabit that singular and interesting island; who almost literally live upon the great deep, and only come ashore often enough to dry their pea-jackets. This book will produce a sensation; for it will be found to possess an uncommon degree of interest. It is a most readable book—good—very good in its design and execution. Some of its sea-scenes have not been excelled."—*New-York Courier and Enquirer.*

"The story is well sustained, and abounds with incidents of a most stirring description. The characters are drawn with much force and distinctness; that of the heroine, whose name is the title of the book, is admirable."—*New-York Parlour Journal.*

"This is an exceedingly interesting work: it may, in a word, be called the Romance of Whale-fishing, and as such we recommend it to our readers. The danger and excitement of the sport of pursuing and capturing the mighty monsters of the deep are truly and vividly depicted."—*The Albion.*

"It is a novel of Nantucket, and seems likely to invest that region, hitherto supposed so unpropitious to the Muses, with interesting associations of imagination, and perhaps of fact 'stranger than fiction.' The whale-fishermen appear to be taking their place in the romantic literature of the day, and in the present instance under the most favourable auspices."—*Boston Evening Gazette.*

"This is a delightful historical novel. No work which has issued from the American press is more strongly marked with originality. It is original in matter, manner, and spirit, and entirely of a national complexion. The writer wields a graphic pen, and never suffers the interest of the reader to tire. He appears to be perfectly at home, whether on sea or on land; and entire master of all which he touches, whether the primitive manners and customs of the inhabitants, the working of a ship, or the killing of a whale."—*Pennsylvania Inquirer and Courier.*

"We do not believe there is a reader in the land who, having taken up 'Miriam Coffin,' will lay it aside without a careful perusal. It savours of all the freshness of youth; it breathes a newness, an originality, which charms while it leads the mind forward with feelings of the most lively interest to the *dénouement.* It is no thrice-told tale; but a tale never before told. It does not consist of facts with which we are familiar; but of incidents which are new, interwoven with no ordinary degree of skill; and if the author directed his labours with a view to that effect, he has been eminently successful. The writer has availed himself of a rich

storehouse of materials, and brought to light much that before was hidden, connected with the colonial history of the island of Nantucket, in which the scene opens. If we follow him sometimes over the boundless waters, we are still accompanied by the '*Tucketers*,' who have explored every sea in search of the treasures of the deep. The author appears to be perfectly at home in whatever relates to the dominions of Neptune; and it is evident that, at some period of his life,

'His march was on the mountain wave,
His home was on the deep.'"

Philadelphia National Banner.

"The author of this work is an American, and the scene is principally laid upon our own ground. The exciting adventures and hair-breadth escapes of the whale-fisher are powerfully delineated, while the simple habits and primitive customs of Nantucket are portrayed by the hand of a close observer. The admirer of 'Ocean into tempest toss'd must be struck with the description of the 'good ship Grampus' driving madly before the fury of a tropical storm; the keen sportsman must relish the boat-race, and the capture of the whale by our hardy countrymen; while those of gentler mood will certainly be amazed by the quaint manners of the ladies and the chivalrous devotion of the whalers. The work is highly original in character, and cannot fail to be read with interest."—*New-York Daily Advertiser.*

"It is but a few days since this popular work was announced, and we are happy to learn that the edition is nearly all sold, and that a second will immediately be put to press. The introduction speaks of the causes which led to the construction of the tale, and of the neglect of our own government in cherishing the right arm of our naval strength, so far as relates to a most hardy and fearless race of seamen, namely, the whale-fishermen. The work itself is a faithful and accurate delineation of the manners and habits of a people who, forming an important part of our own people, are nevertheless but little known and appreciated by us; and hence, perhaps, the slight attention given to their hazardous trade by government. Yet Burke, in the British House of Commons, a half-century ago, pronounced the highest possible eulogium upon Nantucket skill and enterprise; and declared that our whalers were the best in the world, and worthy of imitation by other nations.

"This tale may be called a nautical romance. Its scenes are given with a master-hand, and by one who is a close observer of human nature. The author is equally at home on land or on the sea; and he gives some sea-sketches that have not been exceeded by any American writer. The work is altogether creditable to American literature, and will give the writer an enviable stand among our best authors. The ground is new to the novelist, and has not before been attempted."—*New-York Ladies' Companion.*

"MIRIAM COFFIN, an American novel of uncommon interest."
—*Boston Republican.*

New York, April 1830.

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MIRIAM COFFIN,

OR

THE WHALE-FISHERMEN.

A TALE.

While we follow them amid the tumbling mountains of ice, and behold them penetrating into the deepest frozen recesses of Hudson's Bay and Davis's Straits—while we are looking for them between the Arctic Circle, we hear that they have pierced into the opposite region of Polar cold—that they are at the antipodes, and engaged under the frozen Serpent of the South. Falkland Island, which seemed too remote and romantic an object for the grasp of national ambition, is but a stage and resting-place in the progress of their victorious industry. Nor is the Equinoctial heat more discouraging to them than the accumulated winter of both the Poles. We know, that while some of them draw the line and strike the harpoon on the coast of Africa, others run the longitude, and pursue their gigantic game along the coast of Brazil. No sea but what is vexed by their fisheries—no climate that is not witness to their unceasing toils!

Edmund Burke.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

SECOND EDITION.

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY HARPER & BROTHERS,

NO. 82 CLIFF-STREET,

AND SOLD BY THE PRINCIPAL BOOKSELLERS THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES.

1835.

TO ADMIRAL

SIR ISAAC COFFIN, BART.,

THIS TALE,

FOUNDED on facts, and illustrating some of the scenes with which he was conversant in his earlier days, together with occurrences with which he is familiar from tradition and association,

IS

RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY

DEDICATED,

BY HIS FRIEND

THE AUTHOR.

INTRODUCTION.

"In regard to prefaces, ladies consider them so much space for a love-story lost; though the Italians call them *La salsa del libro*—the spice of the book."

Curiosities of Literature.

The editor of the following tale feels it incumbent upon him to explain, in the outset, to the worthy Admiral to whom it is dedicated, as well as to the gentle reader who may deign to look into these legendary pages, how far he has been accessory in the production of this work.

During a tour to the eastward, several years ago, among the clusters of small islands which lie off the southern shore of Massachusetts, and which have proved the great nurseries of seamen devoted to the whale-fishery, it was our good fortune to sojourn for a season upon Nantucket. The principal object of our journey, at that time, being to obtain authentic information in relation to the actual state of that important trade, we embraced every opportunity of conversing with those who pretended to knowledge respecting it; and, in our necessary intercourse with all classes, it frequently happened that common sailors, who had spent their lives in whaling vessels, furnished the best sources of information—especially as we found many owners and captains who regarded us with shyness, whenever we broached the subject of the mystery of the trade "whereby they did live" and had procured their gains. Among other things, we were anxious to discover by what means it had been brought to the present perfection in its management, and had maintained its prosperity under the absolute neglect of the General Government, whose province and whose constitutional

duty it is to give facility to all our branches of commercial trade and navigation.

We were not surprised, however, at the discovery, upon our arrival at Nantucket, that its people had occasionally suffered from this neglect. We found that they had already presented a memorial to Congress, setting forth the great hazards, and complaining of the unprotected situation of their trade, which they had for half a century prosecuted in the Pacific Ocean,—where their ships were not only subject to dangers in navigation, from the uncertainty of the surveys and the inaccuracy with which many islands had been laid down on the charts, but were constantly liable to vexatious detention and exactions from the authorities upon the South American coast. The petitioners expressed their desire that Government would take the matter in hand, and fit out a small naval expedition, which should be directed to cruise in the neighbourhood of their whaling-grounds; and otherwise be employed occasionally in making accurate surveys of new places, that were already or might thereafter be discovered; as well as to ascertain the capabilities of the islands for affording those natural and necessary supplies which all whale-ships are in want of in the course of their long voyages among numberless isles, where nature has been all-bountiful in the over-abundance of her productions, but where the tenant of the soil is, in the same proportion, rude and inhospitable.

The short memorial of the Nantucket people, whose prosperity at home is so closely linked with the success of the whale-fishery in remote seas, represents:—"That the intercourse maintained between different ports of the nation and the islands and countries of the Pacific Ocean has become a matter of public interest, and deserving the protecting care of the National Legislature. The fur business, and the trade carried on between the Pacific islands and coasts of China, have afforded rich returns, and increased the wealth of our common country. Besides this employment of national industry and enterprise, they would represent, that there are engaged in the whale-fishery, from various parts of the country, upwards of forty thousand tons of shipping, requiring a capital of three millions of dollars, and the services of more than three thousand seamen. Whether viewed as a nursery of bold and hardy seamen, or as an employ-

ment of capital in one of the most productive modes, or as furnishing an article of indispensable necessity to human comfort, it seems to your petitioners to be an object especially deserving the public care. The increased extent of the voyages now pursued by the trading and whaling ships, into seas but little explored, and to parts of the world before unknown, has increased the cares, the dangers, and the losses of our merchants and mariners. Within a few years, their cruises have extended from the coasts of Peru and Chili to the North-west Coast, New-Zealand, and the isles of Japan. This increase of risk has been attended by an increase of loss. Several vessels have been wrecked on islands and reefs not laid down on any chart; and the matter acquires a painful interest from the fact that many ships have gone into those seas, and no soul has survived to tell their fate. Your petitioners consider it a matter of earnest importance that those seas should be explored; that they should be surveyed in an accurate and authentic manner, and the position of new islands, and reefs, and shoals definitely ascertained. The advancement of science, and not their private interest only, but the general interest of the nation, seem to them imperiously to demand it.

They therefore pray that an expedition may be fitted out, under the sanction of the Government, to explore and survey the islands and coasts of the Pacific seas."

The public functionary who presided over the Department of the Navy at this period, and to whom this and other memorials, and the whole subject of the proposed expedition, were referred, by a committee of the House of Representatives, with a view to get his opinion thereupon, made a report to the committee of the House, which was alike creditable to his American feeling and his just perceptions of the merits of the case.

"I entertain," said that enlightened officer, "the opinion that such an expedition is expedient. My reasons are briefly these:—

"That we have an immense and increasing commerce in that region, which needs the protecting kindness of the Government, and may be greatly extended by such an expedition. Of the extent and nature of this commerce it is

not easy to write briefly; nor is it necessary. It is better known to none than to some of the members of the Naval Committee in the House of Representatives. The estimate of its value has been much augmented, in the view of the Department, by the reports which have been made, *under its orders*, by our naval officers, who have commanded vessels of war in the Pacific, and which are now on file.

"The commercial operations carried on in that quarter are difficult and hazardous. They are correctly represented in the memorial of the inhabitants of Nantucket, to which I would refer, as well as to some of the many other memorials which have been addressed to Congress on this subject. It would seem wise in the Government to render these commercial operations less hazardous and less destructive of life and property, if it can be done by a moderate expenditure of money.

"The commerce in the Pacific Ocean affords one of the best nurseries of our seamen. An expedition such as that proposed would be calculated to increase that class of citizens—an increase in which the Government and nation are deeply interested.

"We now navigate the ocean, and acquire our knowledge of the globe, its divisions and properties, almost entirely from the contributions of others. By sending an expedition into that immense region, so little known to the civilized world, we shall add something to the common stock of geographical and scientific knowledge, which is not merely useful to commerce, but connects itself with almost all the concerns of society; and, while we make our contribution to this common stock, we shall not fail to derive the best advantages to ourselves, and be richly paid, even in a calculation of expenditure and profit."

Among the documents to which the Naval Committee resorted for information was one now on file in the Navy Department, which in warm language advocates the cause of the neglected whale-fishermen. Its authenticity, and its general truth and force of reasoning, are alike unquestionable.

We therefore make free in the insertion of some of its paragraphs, as follows:—

"The opening of the ports in South America has already changed our course of trade in the Pacific greatly for the better, and will more and more benefit us, if we take care of our rights in those seas, and send a sufficient force to protect our commerce, which, no doubt, it will be the policy of our Government to pursue.

"To look after the merchant there—to offer him every possible facility—to open new channels for his enterprise, and to keep a respectable naval force to protect him—is only paying a debt we owe to the commerce of the country: for millions have flowed into the national treasury from this trade, before one cent was appropriated for its protection.

"The naval commanders we have sent into the Pacific have done all that wise, active, and experienced men could do. They have not only taught the natives that we are a powerful people, and could defend ourselves in that distant country, as well as other nations, but these new states and empires which have arisen in South America have been shown that we could punish wrongs and enforce rights, and had the good of mankind, as well as our own prosperity, at heart. *Power, judiciously exhibited, is the great peace-maker of the world;* and a people whose institutions are not yet thoroughly established, as those in South America, want looking after with a steady eye. In attending to these duties, it is impossible for our naval commanders to explore those seas for the purpose of discovering new places. Their duty is to watch the old; and this is a sufficient task for any force we can send there.

"The whale-ships, having a specific object in view, and generally under strict orders, cannot waste an hour in the business of discovery; nor can they, consistently with their duties, stop a day to explore and examine what they may accidentally discover. The North-west Coast trader has also a specific object, and a more direct path than the whaler.

"It seems well understood, at this time, that it is for our interest and for our honour to be well acquainted with the capacities of the globe; to see what resources can be drawn from that great common of nations—the *ocean*. The enlightened statesman, therefore, surveys all parts of it, with the view of opening new channels for commerce and trade; and he does not refuse to advance them by a pres-

ent expense, when coupled with the certainty of a future and greater good.

"And what place is left for us to explore but this southern polar region? This has never been thoroughly done by any nation. It is almost an unknown region yet, and opens a wide field for enterprise for us at a most moderate expense. There are more than a million and a half of square miles entirely unknown; and a coast of more than three hundred degrees of longitude, in which the Antarctic Circle has never been approached.* There are immense regions within the comparatively temperate latitudes but partially known, and which deserve further attention; and, for aught we know, countries corresponding to Lapland, Norway, part of Sweden, and the northern parts of Siberia, in Asia, may still exist in the southern hemisphere.

"No one who has reflected on the vast resources of the earth, 'which is our inheritance,' can doubt that such a large portion of it contains many things which may be turned to good account by the enterprise and good management of our people—and these are the true profits of commerce. The great mass of the intelligence of the country is for it, and is calling on the National Legislature for aid in the undertaking.

"The states whose legislative bodies have sanctioned it are represented on the floor of Congress by one hundred and twenty-nine members, to say nothing of the memorials from large cities and other places; and the aggregate of citizens of these states near six millions.

"It may be asked, if the navy and merchantmen are not to take this upon themselves, how is it to be effected? The answer is obvious to those who have reflected. Send out an

* This assertion subsequently proved to be an error. It was not, we presume, known to the intelligent writer, when he made this report, that the 74th degree of southern latitude, as well as the icy barrier about the Antarctic Circle, had been passed by an English navigator by the name of Weddell. The journal of his voyage was published in London in 1827; and its author declares that, in the latitude of 73° south "not a particle of ice of any description was to be seen;" and further, that he "sailed to the latitude of 74° 15" south, and there left a clear and navigable sea." Capt. Cook, in his celebrated voyage of 1773–4, had been able to penetrate only as far as the 71st degree south, and was prevented from proceeding farther by solid fields of ice, reaching, as he thought, to the pole itself.

exploring expedition, fitted and prepared for the purpose; not one that is to carry the majesty and grandeur of the nation, at a great expense, but one, the expenses of which shall be inconsiderable, yet, at the same time, shall have the protection, aid, honour, and sanction of the nation, to give life, energy, and character to individual enterprise. We have been an industrious, a commercial, and an enterprising people, and have taken advantage of the knowledge of others, as well as of their trade: for although our entrance and clearance, without looking at our immense coasting-trade, amounted to eight thousand seven hundred and sixty-six vessels, yet not one of these was sailed a mile by a chart made by us, except we may suppose that the chart of George's Banks may have been used by a few of the navigators of these vessels. We are dependent on other nations for all our nautical instruments, as well as charts; and, if we except Bowditch's, we have not a nautical table or book in our navy, or among our merchantmen, the product of our own science and skill; and we are now among the three first commercial nations of the world, and have more shipping and commerce than all the nations of Europe had together when Columbus discovered this continent, but a little more than three centuries since; and our navy, young as it is, has more effective force in it than the combined navies of the world could have amounted to at that period. Out of the discovery of this continent, and a passage to the Indies, grew up the naval powers of Europe. On the acquisition of the New World, Spain enlarged her marine; France and England theirs, to hold sway with Spain; and that of the Netherlands sprang from the extent of their trade, connected with the wise policy of enlarging and protecting it.

"Our commercial and national importance cannot be supported without a navy, nor our navy without commerce, and a nursery for our seamen. The citizens of Maine, of New-York, of Georgia, of Ohio, and of the great valley of the Mississippi, are deeply interested in the existence of our gallant navy, and in the extension of our commerce, as they are interested in the perpetuity of our institutions and the liberty of our country. Indeed, liberty and commerce have been *twin sisters* in all past ages, countries, and times; they have stood side by side, moved hand in hand. Wherever the soil has been congenial to the one, there has flourished

the other also: in a word, they have lived, they have flourished, or they have died together.

"Commerce has constantly increased with the knowledge of man; yet it has been undergoing perpetual revolutions. These changes and revolutions have often mocked the vigilance of the wary, and the calculations of the sagacious; but there is now a fundamental principle on which commerce is based, which will lead the intelligent merchant, and the wise government, to foresee and prepare for most of these changes; and that principle consists in an intimate knowledge of all seas, climates, islands, continents, of every river and mountain, and every plain of the globe, and all their productions, and of the nature, habits, and character of all races of men: and this information should be corrected and revised with every season.

"The commercial nations of the world have done much, and much remains to be accomplished. We stand a solitary instance among those who are considered commercial, as never having put forth a particle of strength, or expended a dollar of our money, to add to the accumulated stock of commercial and geographical knowledge, except in partially exploring our own territory.

"When our naval commanders and hardy tars have achieved a victory on the deep, they have to seek our harbours, and conduct their prizes into port, by tables and charts furnished, perhaps, by the very people whom they have vanquished.

"Is it honourable for the United States to use, for ever, the knowledge furnished us by others, to teach us how to shun a rock, escape a shoal, or find a harbour; and add nothing to the great mass of information that previous ages and other nations have brought to our hands?"

In obedience to the public will, which had pretty generally been expressed in favour of the proposed expedition, a small sloop of war was prepared in 1828, by direction of the President of the United States, which was to be accompanied by one or two smaller vessels, as relief-ships, in case of accident occurring. The language of the President, in his annual message, communicated to Congress at the beginning of the session of 1828–9, is as follows:—

'A resolution of the House of Representatives, request-

ing that one of our small public vessels should be sent to the Pacific Ocean and South Sea, to examine the coasts, islands, harbours, shoals, and reefs in those seas, and to ascertain their true situation and description, has been put in a train of execution. The vessel is nearly ready to depart: the successful accomplishment of the expedition may be greatly facilitated by suitable legislative provisions; and particularly by an appropriation to defray its necessary expense. The addition of a second, and perhaps of a third vessel, with a slight aggravation of the cost, would contribute much to the safety of the citizens embarked in this undertaking, the results of which may be of the deepest interest to our country."

An accomplished navigator was selected from among our Nantucket commanders to pilot the ships, and officers were named of approved courage and skill: several scientific gentlemen of high character, forming a small but efficient corps of naturalists, were anxious to seek greater reputation for their country and themselves by accompanying the expedition; and a small amount, in aid of the project, was appropriated by the House of Representatives,—when, to the surprise of everybody, this wise and humane measure was arrested in the Senate, by the blighting interference of reckless, and, as they have since proved, faithless partisans, whose sole object appeared to be to thwart any and all measures of the executive. The steps already taken to send forth this little expedition had been approved by all classes; and it had thus far gained a decided popularity with every real lover of his country. It was hailed in every quarter as the precursor of a new and brilliant career for our gallant little navy, in discovery; and regarded as the harbinger of great commercial advantage to the nation. England and France had sent out various well-appointed expeditions on similar voyages of discovery while we were talking about ours; and eventually, as may be already apprehended, the American expedition terminated in—*talk!*

A new administration now came into power, and the praiseworthy designs of the previous cabinet, in respect to the Southern Expedition, confirmed as they were by the popular branch of the National Legislature, were unceremoniously laid aside;—and for no other reason that has

ever yet transpired, but that which the envy of little minds alone could suggest. The new incumbents, it is said, declared among themselves that all the honour of the measure would be reflected upon the originators, who had then gone out of office; and that not a particle of its glory would fall upon themselves. It was a damning sin to do good,—provided that good had been recommended by rival predecessors. It was thus (posterity will scarcely credit it) that a great national object was defeated, and the interests of an important branch of our commercial industry—to say nothing of the humane benefits which would undoubtedly have been conferred upon mankind—were sacrificed to the pitiful considerations of political jealousy.

In this result, however, we may be taught a useful lesson. We may learn from the premises how little practical philanthropy there is in the measures of mere politicians, and how selfish are all the movements of men who struggle in the political arena. But, as we do not pretend to fathom the gulf of cabinet trickery, we will dismiss all further reflections upon political profligacy, and come back to the information which we intended to give the reader at starting, touching our agency in the production of the following Tale.

In a secluded quarter of the island of Nantucket, known by the name of Siasconset, there lived, a few years since, a singular being, whose mode of life, for several previous years, had been a mystery to everybody. To this individual, however, we had been directed for information on a point embraced in our investigations, respecting the state of the whale-fishery as connected with Nantucket. He had been represented by the people of the town as possessing a remarkably retentive memory,—particularly in what related to the early history of the island; and also that he was possessed of large stores of accurate statistical and historical information, which he had been many years in collecting and arranging; and furthermore it was reported, that in his person one might discover a walking genealogical tree, whose leaves and branches, so to speak, would unfold the birth, parentage, and education of every resident of the island, from the days of the first settlers downwards to the time present.

There are now some three or fourscore houses at Sias-

conset, of one story and a half in height, erected on the margin of a high sand-bluff overlooking the sea. Some of these are very old, and built after a peculiar fashion which prevailed all over the island during the early part of the last century. It was then a small village, inhabited by poor fishermen, and the huts we speak of were their domicils. Latterly, however, these huts have been turned into summer residences for the wealthier townspeople; and right pleasant lounging places do they make, for those who have leisure to enjoy them. If any of our readers should feel curious to see the style of building that prevailed one hundred years ago in the town which has since assumed the name of Nantucket, let him now pay a visit to Siasconset, and enter its dwellings, and regard attentively its pepper-box outhouses. He will there see how of old every inch of room was economized, and how sleeping-chambers were scaled by perpendicular step-ladders, like those used to descend to the pent-up cabin of a fishing-smack, or to clamber up the sides of a merchantman; and how the best and most spacious room in the house is finished like the cabin of a ship, with projecting beams, whose corners are beaded and ornamented with rude carving, while the walls are wainscoted with unpainted panel-work, and the oaken floors have grown alike brown by time, and smooth by a century's use. There is but one house in the whole village which makes modern pretension to fashionable exterior. It is the only innovation upon the unity—the ancient "*keeping*" of the place; and its projector deserves banishment under the wise provisions of the time-honoured "*Laws of 'Sconset*," for presuming to make any change in the architecture of the settlement.

It was our fortune to make a pilgrimage to Siasconset at that season of the year when its houses were tenantless,—its deserted avenues choked up with sombre and lifeless thistles and decayed long grass,—and all as still as the grave. Threading with uncertainty its narrow and silent lanes, in search of the habitation of the veteran, we came at length to a hut before whose door stood a car of fish, which had been recently caught and wheeled up from the shore. The chimney-top, too, gave evidence of civilization and of the whereabout of humanity. A stream of blue smoke issued forth, and briskly curled up in the clear atmosphere. The sight of the fish, jumping and floundering about in the little

car, and the lively jet of smoke overhead, was as welcome to us, at the moment, as a house of "entertainment for man and beast" would be to a traveller in the desert, or to a virtuoso, without corn in his scrip, exploring the mysteries and antiquities of a city of the dead. We tapped lightly on the closed door of the hut, and repeated the signal more than once: but no answer from the indweller bade us welcome to the hospitalities of 'Sconset.

"This is strange!" thought we,—"very strange in a land proverbially celebrated for the open door and the open hand!"

A thirst after knowledge, and a stomach yearning fearfully for a morsel from the frying-pan or the fish-pot, gave us the courage of desperation; and thereupon we lifted the latch of the door,—for lock, or bolt, or other fastening, there was none,—and entered boldly into the main apartment of the house. There we stood for some minutes, silently contemplating the furniture and appointments of the place. It was clear that the hand of woman had not been there for many a day, though it was evident, from the arrangement of pots, and kettles, and platters, and frying-pans, that attempts had been made, if not with female neatness, at any rate with manly clumsiness and good-will, to preserve a degree of cleanliness that was creditable to the owner of the mansion. Over the rude mantel hung an old-fashioned turnip-shaped silver watch, ticking loudly, and striving on in its daily race with the sun; and against the still ruder partition, which separated the larger room from a closet or sleeping apartment, hung a heavy fowling-piece of most capacious bore; while underneath depended a well worn shot-bag, and a powder-flask of semi-transparent form. Around the room, somewhat in confusion, the implements of piscatory warfare were visible. Scap-nets and fishing-lines, of various sizes and lengths, wet from recent use, were spread over the backs of chairs to dry, and indicated that their owner had but lately come from an excursion upon the sea.

There was no help for us but to sit down and quietly await the approach of the master, and the issue of our adventure. On coming to this very natural conclusion, we drew the only chair which was disengaged towards the ingulfing fireplace, and essayed to correct the chilled atmosphere of the room, by feeding the decaying fire with billets

from a small heap of prepared wood piled in the corner, which, from certain appearances, had been gathered along the beach, and had once formed a part of some unfortunate vessel wrecked upon the shoals of the island.

There we sat, punching the fire with the tongs, and watching the sparks "prone to fly upwards," and wondering where all this would end. A dreamy sort of abstraction came over our faculties; and in this secluded spot we almost began to fancy that we were alone in the world. We felt some of those sensations creeping upon us which one might suppose the *last man* would feel, who had seen all generations pass into the grave,—leaving him the sole tenant of the earth. The crooked legs and claw-feet of the little old-fashioned cherry table multiplied a thousand fold in number and in crookedness, till we almost fancied it a huge creeping thing, with the legs and arms and claws of a dragon.

Presently an agonized groan escaped from the chest of some sufferer near at hand, and invaded the deep silence of the place,—which before had been rendered doubly painful by the distant monotonous roar of the surf, rolling and tumbling in upon the beach. We dropped the tongs in affright; and mechanically springing upon our feet, we were in the act of rushing forth from the cabin, to avoid the perturbed ghost which our imagination had conjured up to haunt the place withal.

"Who's there?" said a loud voice that appeared to come from the cockloft.

The charm was at once broken by the utterance of these words in the vernacular tongue, and our nervous sensations gave way before the idea of the utter ridiculousness of running away under such circumstances. We had always longed for solitude,—for "a lodge in some vast wilderness,"—but that charm, too, was broken; and we believed, in our very souls, that we had had enough of the eternal silence, which is too often hankered after by the "mind diseased."

"Henceforth," said we, mentally, "give us the hum and the bustle of the world, and the sprightly chat of intimacy. Solitude!—thus do we blow thee to the winds!"

We answered the hail from aloft, nothing loath; and begged the host to come down, as we had walked full seven miles to see and converse with him upon matters with which he was reputed to be familiar. The burley form of the

man now darkened the aperture above, and he descended the step-ladder, with his back towards us, holding on for safety, and letting himself down with both hands, by two knotted cords,—such as are thrown over at the gangway of a man-of-war, to aid the descent into the tiny cutter alongside. As he stood confronting us, we could not fail to observe that he must have seen many winters and some hardships. His face was much weather-beaten, and his head, bald in some spots, was here and there covered with long and thin tufts of whity-grayish locks, standing up and streaming out in admirable confusion. Deep boots, resembling fire-buckets, together with drab small-clothes, encased his legs; while his upper garments were covered over with a huge shaggy wrapper, which sailors call a monkey-jacket. He looked at us keenly for a moment; but finding his craft fairly boarded, and in possession of the enemy, he deigned to offer us a seat, and to utter an excuse for his absence, by telling us that he had sought rest in his chamber after the fatigues of his late excursion. Moreover, he explained the cause of his fearful groaning, by giving a graphic portrait of the fiend-like nightmare which the falling of the tongs had scared away from his breast. We did not, upon the whole, find our companion as morose as we had been led to believe, by the description given to us of his habits. At any rate, he gradually became familiar, and undertook to find out for us, Heaven knows by what intricate process, a collateral descent from the "*great Trustum Coffin;*" and perhaps to this circumstance, more than to any other, are we indebted for the favours, both of speech and manuscript, which he afterward bountifully showered upon us.

"Odds-fish!" exclaimed he of the monkey-jacket, breaking in upon a long historical descent, in the mazes of which he had involved himself while answering a casual question of ours—"odds-fish! thou must have fasted sufficiently well by this late hour; and I will defer giving the remainder of the information which thou hast demanded, until our frugal meal is prepared and discussed. I have but few luxuries, friend—what didst call thy name?"

"Thompson, sir," said we at a venture, feeling for the present a desire to preserve our incognito.

"Thompson, is it?—I thought thou saidst but now it was Jenkins."

"Thompson, sir—a relative of the Jenkinses by the mother's side."

"Ah—well—I have but few luxuries, friend Thompson, to offer thee in this mine humble abode; but if, peradventure, thou art fond of fish, and bringest a good appetite, I will prepare thee such a dish as the townspeople can scarcely make without a resort to 'Sconset." Whereupon our companion selected a large fish from his car, and in a trice disrobed it of its scales and disembowelled the intestines; while, in order to gain some little credit for skill in culinary handiwork, and furthermore to convince him that we knew how to accommodate ourself to circumstances (or that, in the words of a Jonathan in the east, "while in Turkey we could do as the *Turkeys* did"), we seized upon a bucket, and filled it with the purest of water at the village-pump;—and then we kindled up the fire anew, and made all things ready for the accommodation of the dinner-pot.

In due time, but not a minute too soon, a savoury dish of chowder came upon the table; and such is the force of a good appetite, we did think that in all our life before we had never swallowed provender half so delicious. But let that pass: the reader whose mouth waters must go to 'Sconset for his chowder, if he would, like unto us, enjoy a superlative luxury compounded of simples.

As the clam-shell dipper, which had come and gone full oft between our pewter platters and the chowder-pan, rested from its labours, the host pushed back his chair. Whereupon, lighting his pipe, and coming to an anchor in his easy-chair in the corner, he cast his eyes up towards the well-smoked roof in a sort of thinking revery, and at last broke silence as follows:—

"As I was telling thee, friend Tompkins, the island that now bears the name of Nantucket, whose barren plains thou hast crossed in coming hither, was once a well-wooded and well-watered garden-spot. It was owing to the improvidence, or perhaps I might better say to the lack of foresight, of our ancestors, that every tree of native growth, save one or two little clumps of oak, hath disappeared from the face of our land. It is melancholy to think on't—for I love the sight of trees. The soil, however, friend Timpkins, as thou mayst have observed, is not altogether as steril as the world in general imagine. But the cry of the '*sand-heap*'

hath gone out against us:—and herein I would say something to thee about evil speaking; but of that hereafter, if we have time.

"To make a long story short, friend Timpson," continued the narrator, "I will give thee merely the outline of our history, which, as time and opportunity serve, thou mayst fill up at leisure. Nay—do not interrupt me—I will answer thee more at large upon any point thou mayst propose when my sketch is finished. Being a stranger here, it may profit thee to know, that for a long time after the cession of the colony of New-York to Lord Stirling, the island of Nantucket, as well as all other islands on the northern coast, were claimed as dependencies of that distant colony. It came to pass, however, that by peaceable negotiation Massachusetts obtained dominion over the islands upon her shore, and Block Island fell to the lot of the Providence Plantations; while Long Island, with which nature had defended the shore of Connecticut, continued the appendage of New-York.

"Touching the manner in which Nantucket was settled by the whites, I have authority for declaring that it was brought about by accident, as it were, and under peculiar circumstances. We, who are natives of the island, trace our descent to the Seceders, or rather to the Non-Conformists, who dwelt in the eastern part of Massachusetts. They were principally of the Baptist persuasion; and, in ancient times, they were persecuted and hunted down by their Puritanic brethren, for opinion's sake. By one of those strange inconsistencies incident to human nature, the Puritans upon the main, who had themselves been the objects of persecution in England, began the same infamous and brutal career of intolerance in America, by establishing a code of revolting laws, which would have put a Herod to the blush. I thank God, my friend, that *I* am not descended from that vile fanatical race. Let others boast, if they will, of their Puritanic blood,—*mine* knows not the contamination!"

Here my companion rose from his chair, and opened a tobacco-closet in the chimney-side, from whence he produced a well-thumbed volume, and read as follows:—

"'No Quaker, or dissenter from the worship of the established dominion, shall be allowed to give a vote for the election of magistrates, or any officer.

"'No food or lodging shall be afforded a Quaker, Adamite, or other heretic.

"'If any person turns Quaker, he shall be banished, and not suffered to return but on pain of death.

"'No Roman Catholic priest shall abide in the dominion; he shall be banished, and suffer death on his return.'

"Such, my friend," continued our host, "were the laws of the Cameronians; and to their existence may be attributed the settlement of Nantucket, as thou wilt presently see. About the year 1659-60, while these and other fiend-like enactments were in force in the eastern section of the present United States, one Thomas Macy, a Baptist, who had come from England some twenty years previous, in search after a peaceful habitation in our Western wilds, and who had settled among the Puritans at Salisbury in the Massachusetts, committed a crying sin against the laws of the wrathful Cromwellites, or Blueskins. And what think'st thou it was? He had dared to shelter some forlorn and houseless Quakers in his barn one tempestuous night; and for that offence was he doomed by the Puritanic Roundheads to undergo the signal punishment of stripes at the whipping-post! Before the day of its infliction arrived, he procured an open boat, or yawl, and with two companions, Edward Starbuck and a youth by the name of Isaac Coleman, he launched forth upon an unknown sea,—declaring that he would pull his bark to the ends of the earth, sooner than dwell longer among beings so uncharitable and intolerant.

"Macy and his friends arrived at Nantucket, where before the white man had never dwelt. At that time two hostile tribes of Indians inhabited opposite ends of the island, numbering altogether some three thousand souls. The new comers were received with kindness by the natives; and they obtained a great but honest influence over their councils. Thus commenced the settlement of Nantucket by the whites; and in the following year one Thomas Mayhew, having obtained a grant of the island from Lord Stirling, conveyed it, in fee, to ten proprietors, each of whom chose an associate from among his brother 'heretics;' and the whole company of twenty, with their persecuted families, immediately thereafter took possession as proprietors in common."

Our companion hereupon pulled forth a slip of paper from a long-worn pocket-book, from which we took the liberty of

transcribing the names of the original settlers of the island. Although some of the names are now extinct, we would preserve the remainder, if possible, to their posterity. Their industry, single-mindedness, and perseverance are worthy of the admiration and the imitation of their descendants.

The first ten.	*Their associates.*
Thomas Mayhew,	John Smith,
Thomas Macy,	Edward Starbuck,
Tristram Coffin,	Nath'l Starbuck (son of Edw'd),
Thomas Barnard,	Robert Barnard,
Peter Coffin (son of Tristram),	James Coffin (brother of Peter),
Christian Hussey,	Robert Pike,
Stephen Greenleaf,	Tristram Coffin, jr.,
John Swain,	Thomas Coleman,
William Pile,	Nathaniel Bolton,
Richard Swain.	Thomas Losk.

Finishing the transcript of these venerable names, we handed back to our companion the original list. He took the paper between his finger and thumb, and with his nail resting on the third name from the top, he remarked, with a glow of pride, that the direct descendants of the senior Tristram Coffin had been computed at the enormous number of twenty-five thousand!—A prolific progenitor, and a goodly posterity, truly.

We now ventured to start a theme upon which our host dilated with wonderful fluency and apparent delight: and, in the course of a short time, we were made acquainted with the history of the rise and progress of the whale-fishery in these parts. But as the reader may, in other places in these pages, find the subject touched upon by an abler pen than ours, and perchance derive an interest from the perusal great as our own, we will omit the detail here; merely premising, however, that the daring natives of the island of Nantucket, in their frail canoes, first initiated the white settlers in the dangerous art of grappling with

> "That sea-beast
> Leviathan, which God of all his works
> Created hugest that swim the ocean-stream."

But the ingenious whites, who in the beginning dared the perils of the sea in their little open skiffs, and dashed in among the huge game that then played about the island in

troops, soon betook themselves to larger vessels, and made lengthened voyages upon the ocean, out of sight of the island. From such imperfect and perilous beginnings have they come to be the most hardy and expert whalers in the world.

Feeling anxious to ascertain by what means the first settlers had been converted from the faith of the Baptists to that of the Quakers, we gave a hint to that effect, and were enlightened accordingly.

"Quakerism," said he, "was not introduced upon the island until about the year 1701; when John Richardson, an itinerant but powerful and accomplished Quaker preacher, came among the people. Mary Starbuck, eldest daughter of the '*first* Trustum Coffin,' was not only the first English child born upon the island, but the first convert to the Quaker faith. The other settlers gradually embraced the peaceful doctrines of Fox and Barclay, as preached by Richardson, and eventually the Society of Friends became the predominant sect. To the introduction of Quakerism, and its unvarying customs, together with the unyielding manners of the Puritans to which the islanders had been accustomed, and which still lingered about them even after their change of faith, added to their isolated situation, is perhaps to be attributed the unchangeableness of the ways and habits of the Nantucket people. It is the last hold of the simple manners of our English ancestors in America. In this respect, Nantucket is to the rest of America what Iceland is to the northern nations of Europe. For while all has undergone a change, I will not say for the better, in the continental countries, these two islands continue to exhibit the manners, customs, dress, and language of their ancestors, in much of their pristine purity.

"The spirit of resistless change is, however, abroad in Nantucket" (here the narrator heaved a sigh, and continued); "and I grieve to say the few years last past have worked a wonderful change in the people. The Indian prophecy hath come to pass in a shape which our fathers little dreamed of. Thou must know, my friend, that when the pestilence raged among the natives of the island in the year 1764, which reduced their numbers to a mere handful, but left the whites unscathed, the noble *blue-fish*, such as thou hast this day partaken of, disappeared entirely from our waters. It is now more than threescore years since the

species was thought to have become extinct. The superstitious natives looked upon the unaccountable disappearance of the blue-fish, which previously they had caught in immense numbers, as the sure forerunner of the total extinction of their Indian race;—and it was even so. 'But,' said they, in bitterness, 'when our fire is extinguished, and our wigwams have become razed, then the blue-fish will return. Then let the shad-belly and the long-tail (as they called the Quakers) look out for *his* dwelling and his landmarks, and that the stranger wrest not his inheritance from him as he has wrested ours from us!'

"Now mark me, my friend," solemnly and slowly continued our companion, "mark what I tell thee in relation to the Indian prophecy:—the blue-fish *have* returned within the present year,—the *last* Indian lingers among us, without the hope of issue,—and the places of the wigwams of his fathers are only known by their desolated hearths. The lineal descendants of the original proprietors are scattered over the world, and are disappearing from among us before the face of strangers who have come into the isle. Our broad corn-fields are trodden down, and our '*Shearing*' scarce deserves the name;—not a single custom of our ancestors is adhered to in its ancient purity,—all, all is giving way before the spirit of innovation that now stalks abroad in the island,—prostrating all that is venerable for its antiquity, and good as being the delight of our fathers!"

An honest tear came to the eye of the old man as he closed his historical details.

We confess that the ready information furnished by our host had made the time pass away with unwonted celerity. With reluctance we cast our eyes out upon the sun, which was fast running down the west; and we reached for our hat, and held out our hand to take leave. Our companion gave it a kindly pressure, and followed us to the door with our hand folded in his.

"Stop!" exclaimed he, suddenly; "do not go yet. Take it not as flattery, but I am pleased with thy curiosity and thy intelligence. I would fain bestow a mark of my favour upon thee; and the more readily and willingly, because thy conversation hath been both amusing and instructive. I would crave, therefore, a repetition of thy visit to this lone

dwelling, from which the idle and the impertinent have been excluded for years."

While our kind host was once more engaged in ransacking his tobacco-closet, we endeavoured to recall the portions of our conversation in which we had conveyed the least information in the world, or in which we had rendered ourself at all amusing; but, certes, we could not recollect saying more than ten words at any one time,—and those were put in edgewise, in the shape of questions; and truly do we believe that our host uttered ninety-and-nine full sentences to every monosyllable of ours. The thought flashed upon us that we had been an attentive listener—and the secret was out! Men given to be garrulous always praise good listeners.

Great was our surprise when our new-made friend approached and put into our hands a ponderous roll of papers, carefully tied up with a piece of tarred rope-yarn.

"There!" said our host of the monkey-jacket; "take it, friend Tinker" (this was the fourth time he had miscalled the name)—"take it, friend Tinker, and mend it if thou wilt. Peradventure some pestilent printer, like him at the town, may use his types upon it, instead of printing essays upon schools and temperance, as *he* hath done ('ad rat him!), to make children wiser and better than their fathers.* There

* We presume the allusion here made was to Mr. Jenks, the spirited editor of the Nantucket Inquirer, whose faithful labours in the cause of education should be esteemed above all praise. His zeal may have given offence to some of the old-school gentlemen, who, like our narrator, were opposed to innovation of every sort, and were content with the "humanities" as taught by such ancient dames as the "Widow Cradders," and "Mary Gardner," and "Nabby Bunker,"—names well remembered at Nantucket,—who, it is related, suffered their pupils to go to sleep comfortably throughout the hours of their school sessions. But they have been long gathered to their fathers. We marvelled why, in denouncing the "pestilent printer," he did not also give a thrust at Admiral Coffin, to whom he had dedicated his work, and who had, previous to the above interview, established the fourdation of the "*Coffin Grammar School*" at Nantucket, with a most munificent endowment out of his own private funds. It is matter of wonder why he did not address the worthy admiral in the words of *Cade*:—

"Thou hast most traitorously corrupted the youth of the realm in erecting a grammar school. It will be proved to thy face that thou hast men about thee that usually talk of a noun and a verb, and such abominable words, as no Christian ear can endure to hear."

Posterity, however, will do justice to the motives of Mr. Jenks and

is truth in every page of that manuscript, my friend; and moreover something about the perils of the whale-fishery, which I have been a matter of twenty winters in putting together, after an experience and observation of more than sixty years:—and I have hoped the while, that it might some day be instrumental in bringing back to the people of my native island the recollection of the golden days of their ancient customs, from the which, alas! they have greatly departed of late, to cleave unto the fashions and vanities of the great cities. I have shaken the dust from my feet, in testimony against their multiplied follies; and have come out from among them, more in sorrow than in anger, to dwell here alone upon the sea-shore. But fare thee well, friend—how dost call thy name again?"

"Thompson, sir."

"Ah—Thompson!—I shall remember it when thou comest again. Once more, fare thee well!"

We now turned our back upon the little village, and made our way with rapid strides towards the town. The sun was sinking in the ocean as we commenced our retrograde march over the heath, and the full moon danced upon the waters ere we regained our hotel. In our eagerness to inspect the package so singularly committed to our charge, we thought not upon the weariness attendant upon a seven miles' tramp; and putting aside, rather unceremoniously, the cup of refreshing souchong tendered to us by the kind mistress of the mansion, we seized a lamp from the mantel and hastened to our chamber. We cut the matted rope-yarn which secured the bundle with an unskilfulness that deprived one of "Rogers's Best" of its keen edge, which half a day's friction upon the "Franklin Hone," and a faithful strapping upon the "Remedy for Wry Faces" to boot, with difficulty restored.

The severed string unfolded to our eyes the titlepage of the following Tale; and upon the next leaf we discovered the Dedication which the reader has found prefixed to "this present writing." Following the dedication, there came what we shall presently transcribe. Should some of our

Admiral Coffin: and we greatly mistake if the present island generation do not regard their public labours with a proper appreciation.
Editor.

readers pronounce it a fault in us for having omitted sundry obscurities, and "ancient and fishlike" passages which occurred in the manuscript, or for reducing the antique spelling to the modern orthographical standard, or for amplifying all the y^es and y^ts and other elisions and short comings peculiar to ancient writers,—we must plead the license given by the donor in his parting words: "Take it, friend *Tinker*, and *mend* it if thou wilt." But we can assure our indulgent friends that we have left the essence of the matter entire—having only dared to place a few scraps of poetry, by way of finger-posts, at the tops of the chapters, and otherwise to take upon ourself the office of the lapidary, who grinds away the rough corners of the diamond, that the superficial polish he bestows may the better show forth the inherent qualities of the brilliant.

New-York,
April 25th, 1834.

with resistless force every opposing obstacle,—straightening and deepening its own mighty bed,—till finally, pouring its volume of deep and rapid waters into the ocean, it mingles its turbid floods with the clear blue sea, and diffuses itself, as it were, in the immensity of creation.

It is even thus with the American nation. The remote and interminable wilds of the earth witnessed its birth, amid forests boasting the growth of centuries, where, giant-like and unconquerable,—combining its own elements, and wisely directing its own energies,—it moves on surely and steadily to the accomplishment of a glorious and unequalled destiny.

It is not, however, our design to wander over an almost boundless continent in search of the wherewithal to illustrate what is thus hinted at: it will be sufficient to select for exemplification quite an inconsiderable portion of the country,—a mere speck of American earth, —and to point to it, as to a hive of industrious bees, for a miniature representation of the vast whole.

Near the coast of the United States of America, some ten leagues to the south of that part of Massachusetts which is called Cape Cod, the little sandy island of Nantucket peeps forth from the Atlantic Ocean. Isolated and alone amid a wide waste of waters, it presents to the stranger, at first view, a dreary and unpromising appearance. The scrapings of the great African Desert, were they poured into the sea, would not emerge above its level with an aspect of more unqualified aridity than does this American island, with the exception of a few small lakes, and swampy *oases*, nourished by an unwonted moisture, which, while they redeem the island from absolute sterility, rather serve to make the likeness to Zaara more complete. But few trees, and those, it is averred, not the natural growth of the soil, relieve the monotonous surface of the island. Scattered dusky patches of thin short grass, among which is included an unenclosed common of great extent, afford nourishment

to droves of cattle and flocks of sheep, heedfully attended by a few shepherds or keepers during the seasons of browsing, which, be it known, are the same here as in other countries, namely, spring and summer. But, generally speaking, were it not for the moving things upon it that have life and activity, the island, to most eyes, would wear the face of utter desolation. Bleak and uninviting, however, as it may seem, it is the abode of much wealth and intelligence; and, from the nature of the tale which follows, we have constituted it the principal scene of our story. Though we may occasionally leave it for distant shores, the incidents of the tale will still be found divergent therefrom; and our *dramatis personæ* will perform their actions in direct reference to that little and peculiar world, though thousands of miles intervene between them and the common centre from which they depart upon deeds of daring.

We love to linger upon this island. Perhaps there is no other place in the wide world, of similar size and population, possessing so few intrinsic attractions, which has produced, under so many disadvantages, such an industrious and enterprising people as Nantucket. Though it is said to be literally steril in the spontaneous gifts of nature, yet it is rife in the physical and intellectual vigour of manhood. For more than a century the islanders have exhibited the curious and unique spectacle of a thrifty community, bound together by a common interest as well as by a relative tie of consanguinity; primitive, though not altogether puritanic in their manners, as will be seen in the sequel,—winning equal respect for their virtues at home and abroad,—reaping harvests where they have not sown, and fishing up competency for their families from the unappropriated natural wealth in the depths of the sea.

We are not without fear of giving offence by denominating the Nantucketers an amphibious race. We do not mean "*half horse, half alligator*,"—for that is a distinction which the Kentuckians appropriate exclusively

to themselves: but we mean that sort of *half Quaker, half sailor* breed, to be found nowhere else on earth; the men spending the greater part of their lives upon the ocean, and the women, though they tempt not the dangers of the sea, oddly mixing nautical phraseology with that which landsmen are accustomed to listen to "all along shore." Nevertheless, tinctured as their conversation is with the technicalities of the quarter-deck and the forecastle, the females of the island are modest, virtuous, and agreeable, and thrive with a commendable industry at home; while the men are fishermen upon a grand scale, and pursue and conquer the monarch of the seas in distant and remote waters. At the present moment they, together with the whale-fishermen in their immediate neighbourhood, are the lamp-suppliers to more than half the civilized nations of the globe. In the exercise of their hazardous trade they have become a bold and hardy race of men; in danger, cool, collected, and adventurous; seldom or never indulging in the vices or evil propensities of the common sailor, but possessing all his generous and manly qualities, tempered with correct notions of economy and of the true obligations of society. We know not how we can better sum up their character than by giving them their own expressive title of AMERICAN WHALE-FISHERMEN; and adding thereto, that to the successful prosecution of their trade the energies of all the inhabitants, both male and female, are constantly directed.

The town of Sherburne, when its people first undertook fishing for the whale with something like system, was but a small place: but, notwithstanding its insignificance, as contrasted with some of the continental towns, it shortly engrossed the oil-trade of America, and of many of the European nations. It was long after the permanency of its trade was secured, that the eloquent Burke, in the British House of Commons, pronounced the eulogium upon the skill of the islanders which we have written upon the titlepage of this tale;

and he added, that "Neither the perseverance of Holland, nor the activity of France, nor the dexterous and firm sagacity of English enterprise, ever carried this perilous mode of hardy industry to the extent to which it has been pushed by this recent people,—a people who are still, as it were, but in the gristle, and not yet hardened into the bone of manhood."

England, tying up her prosperity by granting a monopoly of the trade to a chartered company, had fitted out and abandoned her whale-ships in despair; the Dutch had been crippled in contesting the right of fishery with her formidable rival; and the ruder Norwegians, bordering upon the Icelandic seas, had as yet contented themselves with entrapping the monster of the deep, which, like the stultified Esquimaux, they valued chiefly for the greasy and unctuous blubber that the animal afforded for food.

It may not be denied, however, that the northern nations of Europe, and principally the bold navigators of England, were the pioneers who opened the way of the whale-fishery to other people. In a long course of perilous and sometimes disastrous voyages of discovery in the Arctic seas, the English endeavoured to penetrate through a supposed north-western passage to the East Indies, and the Danes to regain a doubtful and almost fabulous settlement or colony planted, as they believed, by their ancestors somewhere on the coast of Greenland or Labrador.* Though their principal ob-

* Hecker, a German author, translated by Babington, in treating of the history and causes of the "Black-death" which raged in every part of Europe in the fourteenth century, thus alludes to this colony:—

"The inhabitants of Iceland and Greenland found in the coldness of their inhospitable climate no protection against the southern enemy who had penetrated to them from happier countries. The plague caused great havoc among them. Nature made no allowance for their constant warfare with the elements, and the parsimony with which she had meted out to them the enjoyments of life. In Denmark and Norway, however, people were so occupied with their own misery that the accustomed voyages to Green-

ject was always defeated, yet science has been greatly benefited by the devotion and personal sacrifices of such men as the persevering Hudson, Davis, and Baffin, and the patient, self-denying, and encouraging example of Hans Egede, the benevolent Lutheran. But the mariners of Nantucket were assuredly among the first to turn the labours and, in some respects, fruitless discoveries of those zealous and enterprising navigators to good account.

At the commencement of our tale, which the reader will fix at a period antecedent to our existence as a distinct people, the northern seas were covered with the whale-fishermen of most maritime nations. The field in the north had at that time, as it was thought by American navigators, been well gone over and well reaped; and the precarious cargoes of oil obtained by all warned them that the persecuted whales had been much diminished in numbers, or had betaken themselves to other and more secluded haunts. The explorations of Ross and Parry have since confirmed the latter opinion. Merchant-traders, however, had in the mean time reported that a species of the whale, unlike the "right whale" of the north, was sporting in great numbers in tropical regions, near the coast of Brazil and Western Africa; and some of our captains, who had doubled "*The Horn*," told of immense "schools" of the valuable spermaceti on the coasts of Peru and Chili, in the great Pacific Ocean. Thither we may take occasion to turn the attention of the reader, while we follow the new current of Nantucket enterprise.

Among the low, scattered, and unpainted buildings of

land ceased. Towering icebergs formed at the same time on the coast of Greenland, in consequence of the general concussion of the earth's organism; and no mortal from that time forward has ever seen that shore or its inhabitants."

But this is mere conjecture in the German, with regard to the colony, and does not deserve a moment's credit. Danish writers on this subject make no allusion to the German extravaganza of "the general concussion of the earth's organism!"

the Quaker Settlement, which surrounds a small but commodious bay on the northern side of Nantucket, and in the centre of the ancient town of Sherburne, whose name has since given place to the unromantic title of the island, uprose the unostentatious mansion of Jethro Coffin, the oil-merchant. Originally of small dimensions, it had increased with the gains of the owner, and now appeared a succession of unshapely buildings, of various orders of architecture and design, covering a goodly portion of ground. Uncouth as were these buildings, they were the store-houses of considerable worldly riches, honestly and laboriously gotten, yet never boastfully nor vain-gloriously displayed. Content and quiet were the inmates of Jethro's dwelling; and both wealth and comfort, as well as odd gable-ends and patch-like additions to the main building, increased with each arrival from the whaling-ground. Jethro Coffin was the sole owner of ships and smaller vessels; and had, besides, large interest in others wherein English merchants had invested capital. Wisely preferring to have their vessels fitted out at Nantucket, and manned and commanded by Nantucket seamen, the foreigners had appointed Jethro their agent and factor, and were well content from time to time to receive their gainful dividends through his hands—sometimes in cash, but most generally in shipments of oil and candles of sperm, which were regularly sent to the "mother country." It is worthy also of remark, that at this period nearly all the successful whale-ships sailing out of English ports were commanded, and sometimes entirely manned, by Nantucket-men, who were seduced from their native island by large bounties from the British government. In the end, their skill and economy came to be imitated by the British; but, though they parted with the mystery of their trade, the merit of instructing that nation in the art of killing the whale with dexterity belongs to our own countrymen.*

* Mr. Jefferson, while Secretary of State in 1791, goes into

Two of Jethro's ships were now at sea, and expected to arrive at Sherburne daily. Nearly three years had elapsed since their departure, and he began to feel anxious for their return from the long voyage. One of them had been spoken on the hither-side of the Horn, near the equator, deeply laden with oil; and her consort was reported to be not far behind. The two vessels were manned by nearly a hundred souls, selected from the hardy populace of Nantucket; and every family on the island consequently felt an interest in the successful termination of the voyage. Wives looked anxiously and fearfully for husbands, too long absent from home; affectionate parents for affectionate children; and sisters for brothers long parted. This intensity of feeling, wound up to a painful pitch by the protracted ab-

some detail in relation to the whale-fishery of the island of Nantucket. He was unwittingly led into, and assisted materially in propagating, the common error respecting the agricultural capabilities of the island. He speaks correctly, however, of the inducements held out to the islanders to emigrate to foreign countries:—"But the people," he says, "especially females, are fondly attached to the island; and few wish to emigrate to a more desirable situation." This attachment to the soil could scarcely have existed if the island was so utterly barren as he would lead us to imagine by the words of his Report, which are as follows:—

"The American whale-fishery is principally followed by the inhabitants of the island of Nantucket—a *sand-bar*, of about fifteen miles long and three broad, capable of maintaining by its agriculture *about twenty families;* but it employed in these fisheries, before the war, between five and six thousand (?) men and boys; and in the only harbour it possesses it had 140 vessels, 132 of which were of the larger kind, as being employed in the southern fishery. In agriculture, then, they have no resources; and if that of their fishery cannot be pursued from their habitations, it is natural they should seek others from which it can be followed, and prefer those where they will find a sameness of language, religion, laws, habits, and kindred. A foreign emissary has lately been among them for the purpose of renewing the invitations to a change of situation; but, attached to their native country, they prefer continuing in it if their continuance there can be made supportable."—*See Mr. Jefferson's Report on the Fisheries, January,* 1791.

sence and uncertain fate of the vessels, had however been much relieved by the report of a fast-sailing India trader lately arrived at Boston, then the chief mercantile port of the colonies. The welcome news was in due season transferred to Nantucket, and joyfully bruited on the Oil-'change at Sherburne. The weathercock of the lighthouse, on the sandy point at the entrance of the harbour, was after this more constantly watched than ever. The least unfavourable turn of the huge sheet-iron whale, swinging faithfully with the breeze at the top of the beacon-light, was sufficient at this conjuncture to produce sadness of heart in the multitude; but the chopping of the vane, when the breeze sprung up from the south, was the signal for renewed hope and cheerful confidence. Thus did the slight and inanimate fish-like profile, symbolical of the trade of the place, as it veered about under the impulse of the wind, become the lever to raise or depress the animal spirits, and to excite alternately the hopes and fears of a whole community!

Amid the anticipations consequent upon the report of the India trader aforesaid, preparations were making for the far-famed festival of the "*Sheep-shearing*." It is annually held about the middle of June.* The time set apart for the shearing was sacred to mirth and merriment among the young people, and strangers, in no moderate numbers, flocked to the place to participate therein; while the elders busied themselves in arranging the preliminaries of the festival, or in adjusting the graver matters of high concernment which gave occasion for the merrimaking. This extraordinary jubilee had, down to the times of which we write, been held on the island from time immemorial, or, at least, dated its origin so long

* The celebrated *Sheep-shearing* of Nantucket commences on the Monday nearest to the 20th of June. The ceremony of washing occurs on the preceding Friday and Saturday; the scattered flocks being previously driven from all parts of the island, and secured in pens on the borders of a pleasant little fresh-water lake, called by the Indian name "*Miacomet*."

back that the memory of that wonderful personage, "the oldest man living," claimed not to run to the contrary thereof. It had always brought gladness and plenty, and revived old recollections, and united old friends: but, alas! for the first time (we speak from having seen the fact upon record), it was likely to have an inauspicious beginning. A storm had gathered over the island and extended seaward, which for violence and severity had scarcely ever been paralleled in this temperate region, at a season which, in our latitude, is generally mild and balmy. The heaviest artillery of the gathering clouds, which lay darkly piled upon each other in triple array in the heavens, ushered in the rain and the wind, and both continued increasing in violence, until the one became a deluge and the other a hurricane. The gale proved sufficiently powerful to decapitate chimneys and unroof buildings; while the floods, forming in small swift-running water-courses, did infinite damage to the lands of the settlement. A shudder thrilled the hearts of the islanders at every gust of wind. They knew their ships must be near at the commencement of the storm; and less furious gales had been known to strike down vessels at sea, as well prepared and as well managed as their own.

Much to the annoyance and vexation of the expectant youthful merrimakers, the rain, in unremitting torrents, continued to deluge and gully the sands of the devoted little island long after the thunder had ceased; and, when it had fallen prodigiously for two consecutive days, it is worthy of record that it gave occasion for that original and quaint remark for which Peleg Folger of Nantucket stands sponsor; to wit, that "the storm was *likely* to turn into a *settled rain!*"

Jethro Coffin saw all this with dismay at heart, notwithstanding he was a member of that placid and "straightest sect," which in modern days are known by the denomination of Quakers, and are supposed to be incapable of strong emotion. He inherited his membership from birthright, and had long ago been taught, by

precept and example, to hold his mind under the strictest discipline, let what would befall him.

If evil fell to his portion, no murmurings were heard; if good came, he tempered his rejoicing with meekness of spirit. Assuming a calm outward demeanour, which but ill concealed the workings of his mind, Jethro sat himself down in a corner of his ample old-fashioned fireplace, opposite to his wife Miriam, who, possessing one of those strong minds that sometimes fall to the lot of woman, was far less agitated, both in reality and appearance, than her spouse. It was cold and damp, and required a fire within doors. A cheerful, blazing hearth will go far, at any time, to dissipate gloomy thoughts; and the comfort of a good fire is exquisite while the rain is heard rattling against the casement, and the wind howling over the chimney-top. There is no situation that sooner calls up the grateful incense of the heart.

But if a sensation of personal security and assurance of present comfort came over the mind of Jethro at all, they were but momentary. He had ships on the coast, and his only son trod the deck, or perhaps "rocked on the giddy mast" of one of them. His thoughts were "far —far at sea." In the midst of his painful reflections he frequently drew his breath hard; and anon his lips uttered an unwonted sound, between a sigh and a groan, plainly denoting the agonizing of the spirit. Now, lighting his pipe, he smoked vehemently, but in silence; and then, resigning himself, with a desperate effort to the trying emergency of the time, he leaned back in his chair, and no further betrayed the conflict within than by a convulsive nervousness, that showed itself in the clasped hands and the rapid twirling of his thumbs. Miriam, seated in the other corner of the fireplace, was absorbed in her own reflections, and plied her fingers zealously at her knitting-work. Ruth Coffin, the daughter, stood at a window, looking out upon the gloomy sky, pouting

with her pretty cherry lips, and ever and anon biting her finger-nails with sheer vexation at the weather.

"Heigh-ho!" exclaimed Ruth, as, half-talking, half-thinking aloud, her thoughts began to imbody themselves; "heigh-ho!—will it never stop raining? Bless me, how it pours! Nothing but rain—rain—rain! We go to bed, and it rains—we get up in the morning, and it rains still. The shearing will come on the day after to-morrow, and there will be no going to the common, as I see; and what use would it be if we did? Though the thirsty soil of Nantucket can drink up oceans of water, I dare say enough remains of what has fallen from the clouds to drown the flocks. There will be no occasion to wash the fleece before shearing, for the rain has done that all to our hand. Many thanks for the trouble it has saved the good people of Sherburne! Not a soul has come from the continent to see our doings, and we shan't have anybody but the 'Tucketers to make merry with. Merry, indeed!—very merry we shall be, truly, with the Folgers, and the Gardners, and the Jenkinses, and the Starbucks, and Colemans, and Macys, and Swains, and such-like, that one sees every day from year's end to year's end, with their everlasting drabs and eternal Thees and Thous,—every one of them 'cousins' too, I declare. Vastly new and edifying it will be to hear their greetings:—'Cousin Macy, how's thee do?'—'Thank'ee, cousin Jenkins, how's *thee* do?'—'Quite well, all but the rheumatics, which plague me sorely, as usual. How's thy father, and cousin Miriam?'" (Here Ruth spitefully repeated the names of a long list of Nantucket cousins). "'When didst thou see cousin Mehetable Starbuck—and cousin Peleg—and cousin Joshua—and cousin Josiah—and cousin Obadiah?'—O how amusing!—dear me! Four days of constant rain—and this, the fifth day of outpouring; what an age! and then, to crown all, the wind blows a right down 'harry-cane,' as cousin Peleg calls it, and as cold as mid-winter—ugh!—Father, didst thou not tell me that thy ship Leviathan was expected home shortly? and

isn't the gale dead ahead from the north-east? Poor brother Isaac—I wonder if he is boxing about in this dreadful storm, and thinking of home!"

"Ruth," slowly answered Jethro, "thou talkest too fast and too much. Thou'rt sixteen years old, come the twentieth day of sixth month: thou hast been at cousin Mary Gardner's seminary for seven years, and thy education in the great city of Boston hath cost me a sweet penny; but I don't see that thou hast mended thy ways in proportion to thy opportunities." As he uttered these words, Jethro compressed his lips, and coolly knocked the ashes from his pipe against the thick-lipped figure-head of the iron firedog, by way of giving emphasis to his admonition, and clenching the argument of his preachment.

"Well, but, father," said Ruth, who already understood how to manage the kind-hearted Jethro, "here we've been pent up for nearly a week without setting foot out of doors, and the shearing is close by, and not a living being has yet come to the island to see us. Thou know'st, father, it's only once a year we have a shearing, and our friends are sure never to heave in sight at any other time."

"True, child," observed the father, kindly; "but bethink thee, all things must have an end—the storm cannot last for ever. Thou must learn to take things as thou find'st them, Ruth, and not repine and worry when disappointment comes athwa't thee. The wind that's dead ahead to-day may be free to-morrow; for what saith the verse—

> 'Hoot away, despair!
> Never yield to sorrow—
> The blackest sky may wear
> A sunny face to-morrow.'"

Here the conversation ceased. It was one of those short, pithy lessons, easy of application and abiding in the memory, with which the fathers of the Friendly Faith were wont to school their children. It is thus they

regulate by degrees the outbreakings of the restless spirit in youth, and teach them to be passionless and long-suffering in years of maturity.

Jethro Coffin, however, though an exemplary man abroad, and stiff and straight as a handspike before the eyes of the world, was by no means severe in his household. Turning his eyes from the gloomy prospect without, and from the equally overcast countenance of his cherished and only daughter, they rested affectionately on the matronly form and sedate though majestic features of Miriam. His mind involuntarily reverted to the days of their youth, when, with a fervour incident to the first impressions of love, he passionately admired her. He remembered when, like his daughter, now fast approaching woman's estate, they had set their hearts upon the junketings and merry times of the shearing, and with what pride he harnessed his sleek but well-broken colt to his calêche, or little pleasure-cart, and traversed the common, or peered into the tents of the victuallers, or vexed, by undue familiarities, the few Indian families whose dwellings skirted the confines of the common, upon that beautiful water-sheet, Miacomet; and how he drove, with censurable speed, through the sands, to the Ultima Thûlé of fashionable drives—even unto the little fishing village of Siasconset, some seven miles distant from Sherburne, accompanied by the spirited and joyous Miriam, who in after years became his wedded wife. In this way, as his mind ran over the scenes of his youthful heyday, the waywardness of Ruth was soon forgotten or forgiven. His countenance gradually reassumed its accustomed placidity; but he twirled his thumbs again as the transition of his thoughts conjured up more serious subjects for contemplation.

"Tush!" exclaimed Jethro, communing with himself, while a chilly sensation fell upon his heart, and he wiped away the cold drops from his brow; "tush!—why should I fear? the Leviathan is a good ship, and a stout one to boot—Seth Macy is an able commander—

always on the lookout—vigilant, active, and nervy. His people jump like crickets when he gives the word; and if skill will avail aught, the property and the people will be preserved: a valuable cargo beneath deck, if report speak truly: seven-and-twenty hundred barrels of sperm are worth the toil of three years. Let me reckon: twenty-seven hundred barrels of thirty gallons each—pshaw! I am quite forgetting the boy Isaac. After all, I do believe it is the thought of the lad that overcomes me. His safety is dear to me indeed; bone of my bone—flesh of my flesh—it would surely be unnatural not to care for one who derives his existence from me. He must be a stout boy by this time, and turned of fourteen. The lad had a strong desire to go to sea, and I instructed Seth to put him before the mast, and make a sailor of him; but what if he should have transferred him to the Sea-Horse? Well, and what then? She is a smaller vessel than the Leviathan, to be sure; a trifle short of two hundred and fifty tons; but what of that? She has a large tonnage as vessels go nowadays; and Jonathan Coleman, a light-hearted, honest fellow, will keep the deck as long as the planks stick together. But the Leviathan is the better sea-boat, and rides the waves without labouring. She measures some three hundred tons, carpenters' measurement, and was thought a famous ship; in fact, when despatched upon her first voyage, she was the largest whaleman known in these parts; and I remember, as though it was but a thing of yesterday, what an object of curiosity she was while on the stocks, and how at her launching a multitude of people attended; and how handsomely she slid off into her element—diving deep with her stern, and lighting up like a waterfowl as her bow made the plunge from the ways! We build ships larger now; for one generation always grows wiser by the experience of that which precedes it. The vessel which I expect in a few days from New-Bedford will surprise our nautical men. Four hundred tons—sharp at the bows below

the waterline—bold above water—flush deck—clean counter—salted on the stocks—fastened and bolted with copper, and coppered to the bends: verily, she hath cost me a mint of money, and should be a capital craft. I wonder what Macy will say to her? He is particular in such matters, and people do say a little old-maidish. No matter; he shall command her. There is Jonathan Coleman, too—a queer fish—I misdoubt he will utter some gibe at her model; but I have good reasons for every thing new in her construction, and am pretty certain, though with much contention with the stiff-necked builders, of having a ship at last after my own heart."

It was after this fashion that Jethro's thinking ran from one subject to another. A great man has said that the step is but a short one from the sublime to the ridiculous. Another of less pretension has declared that the thickest darkness of the night immediately precedes the dawn of day. Certain it is that the grave and the gay are apt to go hand-in-hand with each other, even as a tall man will sometimes select a short female for his companion; for—

"In joining contrasts lieth Love's delight."

Jethro Coffin was by no means an exception, in the composition of his temperament, from these general rules. He had forgotten the storm, and the ships at sea, and all on board; and the new ship of four hundred tons, "coppered and copper-fastened," was now uppermost in his mind. The only difficulty remaining was to find a name for her—and sorely it did puzzle him to hit upon a good one.

"Let me think," said he, pursuing the present train of his thoughts; "what shall her name be? It is meet that it should be characteristic and like unto her destined calling. There's the Leviathan and the Sea-Horse for the two ships—Industry and Hope for the brigs—Periwinkle, Nautilus, and Miriam for the small craft. The

'Sea-Lion,' or the 'Sea-Elephant,' would sound well enough for the new-comer—but then already I have the 'Sea-Horse,' and a repetition of the word '*Sea*' would lead neighbours to imagine my invention rather barren. 'Hercules'—that's good, and betokens strength; but it's heathenish, and I may not, even in the naming of my ship, offend the tender consciences of the brethren. The 'Thunderer' sounds well—but it won't do—it's pagan. 'King Philip,' or 'Anawan,' might answer upon a pinch, but such titles savour of man-worship. 'The Grampus'—yea, that's it—I have hit it at last! Grampus—Grampus—ay, that will do. Her name is decided on. It shall be the Grampus, and her commander shall be Seth Macy; and Jonathan may take the Leviathan for the next voyage."

These important particulars being happily disposed of, Jethro sat awhile gazing vacantly at the red blaze upon the hearth; but presently his thumbs began slowly to revolve again, and he cogitated once more. A rupture between the mother country, as Great Britain was familiarly called, and her refractory tax-burdened colonies, was beginning to be not only hinted at but openly discussed by the colonists; and Jethro had lately read, with many misgivings, a powerful and well-written pamphlet, which spoke of the absurdity of three millions of freemen running to the sea-side, upon every arrival from England, to ask what measure of liberty was meted out to them by their haughty governors and lordly masters on the other side of the Atlantic.* He was per-

* In reference to the ineffectual remonstrance of the colonies at this period, the author of "*Common Sense*," the pioneer publication in the cause of American liberty, put forth about the year 1774–5, thus boldly spoke to his countrymen:—

"To be always running three or four thousand miles with a tale or a petition, waiting four or five months for an answer, which, when obtained, requires five or six more to explain it in, will in a few years be looked upon as folly and childishness: there was a time when it was proper, and there is a proper time for it to cease."

plexed as to the course it was proper for him to pursue in case the colonies or the parent country should push matters to extremities; but he hoped for the best—for he was a man of peace, and eschewed quarrel and contention. He could not, however, shut his eyes upon the prospect before him, if war should grow out of the rebellious discussions of the colonists. Should he attempt to side with them, as he was secretly inclined, his property both at sea and on land—his ships and his sheep—would fall an easy prey to the British; and if he continued loyal to the crown, its power could not afford him permanent protection against the saucy cruisers of the Confederacy, which, in all probability, would cover the seas within a month after the commencement of hostilities. Jethro would fain have determined to maintain an "unarmed neutrality," as it best suited the doctrines of that religious creed in which he had been brought up, and which breathes nothing but peace and good-will to man. But there could scarcely be a neutral flag between belligerents; and his ships must either display the ensign of Old England or that which the colonists should adopt as their own. There was, to be sure, no immediate cause for making the choice between them; yet, in looking attentively at the signs of the times, he discovered a lowering political horizon, and the absolute necessity, at no very distant day, of meeting the question or embracing the alternative—

"Under which king, Benzonian? Speak, or die!"

It was true he was exposed to the fires of both combatants; and, let him embrace either horn of the dilemma, danger and even death might follow. Nantucket was assailable from every quarter, and alike subject to the violence of invasion from either side, as the inhabitants might determine where to bestow their allegiance, and provoke the vengeance of the rejected party. The only relief, under this view of the subject, was the

hope in which Jethro indulged, that both parties would mutually agree to regard the little sandy, unprotected island as the contending armies of old did the Wilderness City,—the "Tadmor in the Desert" of Solomon, —and spare it from spoliation, in consideration of the temporary rest and shelter it might afford to the way-worn and weather-beaten.

"Mercy on us!" exclaimed Jethro, suddenly. A vivid glare of lightning and a rattling peal of thunder came simultaneously, and Jethro's dwelling shook to its foundation. This sudden interruption cut short the thread of his musings, and caused him to start upon his feet with an alacrity altogether unusual to his customary formality of motion when rising from his easy-chair in the chimney-corner.

"Mercy on us!" repeated he, in great consternation: "I trust the house is not struck with lightning!—and yet I scent a sulphureous smell—phiew! it almost chokes me. Wonderful!—see, it has struck the vane and the lights from the beacon! the building is tottering! —look, Miriam, look!—there, it falls to the ground!"

"Nay," answered Miriam, calmly, "it is the strength of the gale that hath done the mischief; trust me, the lightning hath had no agency in the matter."

"What say'st thou?" said Jethro, putting his hand to his nostrils: "thou mistakest, Miriam; the lightning hath surely done the deed, for I smell the abomination of brimstone."

"The air may be filled with that unsavoury odour," replied Miriam, "and yet no harm be done by the electric fluid."

"Electric fluid!" rejoined Jethro: "ah! I remember—thou art a true descendant of Mary Morriel,* who

* Mary Morriel, the grandmother of Dr. Benjamin Franklin, was maid-servant in the family of the Reverend Hugh Peters, one of the chaplains of Cromwell, who fled from England in the year 1662. Peter Folger, the first of the name that came to Nantucket, was passenger on board the same vessel, and became

married the first Folger; and consequently thou'rt near akin to Benny Franklin by the side of the Folgers; and I suppose thou hast heard something from him about electricity and the like, that makes thee so positive—"

"I spoke of the *negative*, Jethro," retorted Miriam, playing upon the philosophical signification of his last word. "Thou knowest, or ought to know," continued she, "that the glass which surrounded the lights is a non-conductor—and therefore, instead of attracting, it would *repel* the lightning."

"That may all be true enough; and, if thou sayest it, I dare say it is so: but," continued her argumentative spouse, who did not relish being beaten even by his wife, "I recollect, Miriam, when the image of the whale, that swung aloft, and told the direction of the wind, was forged in the shop of neighbour Tinker, the smith; and the rod upon which it turned was of iron also: now, thou wilt not deny that iron *attracts* the fluid, as thou call'st it?"

Miriam Coffin was a woman of sense and perception, and did not deem it worth the trouble to continue an argument in which she saw her husband was determined

enamoured of the maid, who was a buxom, sensible lass, and won the heart of Peter by laughing at his sea-sickness, and betraying no fear of bilge-water. Peter admired the cheerful endurance of Mary Morriel so much upon the voyage that he proffered his hand to the maid, and bargained for her with the greedy old hunks her master, and counted out to him the enormous sum of twenty pounds sterling, all his worldly store, for the remaining term of her servitude. He forthwith married the lass, and apparently had no cause of repentance; for he always boasted afterward of having "made a good bargain." The value and scarcity of money at Nantucket at the time may be estimated from the fact that when King Philip, as he was called, pursued an offending and fugitive Indian to Nantucket in 1665, about three years after Peter Folger and his wife, Mary Morriel that was, had settled on the island, the Indian king consented to bury the hatchet and let the offender go free, for the consideration of a present of wampum, composed of a string of coins, in value nineteen shillings sterling, which was all that could be found in possession of the twenty original proprietors of the island, and Peter Folger to boot.

to triumph; but she intimated, by way of having the last word,—as all women, gentle or simple, will have,—that if the destruction of the lighthouse had been accomplished by the lightning, it would have been shivered into splinters, and not fallen over upon its broadside. The conclusion that the gale had overthrown the light seemed to prevail among the inhabitants upon a closer inspection of the premises after the storm had subsided; and Miriam's theory was confirmed by the majority. Now, who will deny that it argued well for the general prevalence of good sense and sound reasoning at Nantucket, that the popular decision, in this important matter, should have been a philosophical one? The authority of Jethro, touching the agency of the lightning, did not prevail; although he attempted to sustain his position in an argument of great ingenuity, which the lack of printing-presses at Nantucket has prevented us from handing down to posterity. The people *would* think for themselves; and they refused to look through Jethro's spectacles. It is a good republican example to bow to the will of the majority. But the majority, nevertheless, do not always decide well. We have seen many instances of crookedness in an American multitude, both in politics and philosophy. We have every day examples of blind partisan zeal, which neither investigates cause nor consequence. It must have been after some expression of popular wrongheadedness that Horace exclaimed, in a fit of vexation—

"Odi profanum vulgus!"

and that Virgil turned up his magnificent nose at the uninitiated vulgar, in the line—

"Procul, ô! procul este profani!"

The old lighthouse upon Brant Point, remembered by few people at this day, was a wooden contrivance of

inappreciable ingenuity. In shape it was like an inverted leech-tub, which is known to bear a considerable similitude to the frustrum of a cone. It rested, without stancheons to secure its permanency, upon spiles or stilts, driven partially into the unstable sands; and the approach to the lights at its top was by a ladder placed on the outside. Elevated upon perpendicular timbers, it presented, not only its sides, but an under surface, to the eddying action of the wind; and the reader will easily conceive the possibility of its taking a lee-lurch when rudely assailed by a gale of such power as we have described. Wherefore, as between Miriam and Jethro and their several partisans,—though the point at issue was long contested, and remains "moot" even unto this day, —we do verily believe that Miriam was right in her "assignment of errors," and, *ergo*, Jethro in the wrong: and we pronounce judgment accordingly.

It was whispered at the time, with many wise and portentous shakings of the head,—and the allusion to the "coming event casting its shadow before" was remembered long after the signal descent of the iron image, which erst had crowned the unfortunate building,—that the glory of Nantucket and its commercial prosperity would depart for a season, as typically exemplified in the upturning of the beacon, and the consequent downfall of the symbol of its trade. Jethro Coffin and his wife Miriam, though they came of a sailor breed, did not enter into the superstition which prevailed in regard to the prostrate lighthouse: but this great misfortune gave them more immediate uneasiness on another score; for they dreaded the approach of the Leviathan at this particular conjuncture. There was now no guide to vessels making the island at night, and a dangerous shoal stretched out to sea for many leagues round the island.

The art of navigating vessels over the pathless ocean had not reached that scientific precision which a later day has supplied. The admirable chronometer, which gives the longitude to a minute, was not dreamed of; and

the brain of the sage, and the crazed scull of the visionary, were cudgelled alike in vain to produce an equable and perpetual motion, which, in all latitudes, should determine the eastings and westings of the navigator, with a certainty equal to that which a well-adjusted quadrant deduces for the latitude from the great luminary of day, whatever may be his declination. With no sun from which to take an observation, nor star to aid in the projection of a lunar, the unconscious Macy, feeling secure from the very absence of the accustomed night-signal, might receive the first intimation of his dangerous proximity to land by the striking of his ship upon the shoal, and the sudden breaching of the sea over his ill-fated vessel.

Amid apprehensions such as these, which must be felt to be appreciated, the family of Jethro Coffin retired to rest at the close of this eventful day: Jethro and Miriam to uneasy slumbers, and Ruth to dream of the enjoyments of the shearing. The thunder, which awakened Jethro from his revery in the chimney-corner, was succeeded by a heavy fall of rain, that proved, as the chroniclers declare, "a clearing-up shower." Before midnight the wind had changed to a favourable quarter, promising good weather. The thick darkness ceased to canopy the earth, and the stars, one by one, became visible, until the blue vault glowed with brilliants, obscured at intervals by the lessening and departing clouds.

CHAPTER II.

But lo! at last, from tenfold darkness born,
Forth issues o'er the wave the weeping morn:
Hail, sacred vision! who, on orient wings,
The cheering dawn of light propitious brings;
All nature, smiling, hailed the vivid ray
That gave her beauties to returning day,—
All but our *Ship!*—

FALCONER.

A sail!—A sail!—a promised prize to hope!
Her nation—flag—how speaks the telescope?

The Corsair.

THE bright streaks along the eastern horizon at early dawn, and the small fleecy clouds scattered and scudding over the face of the heavens, indicated that the storm, which had raged with such appalling violence for many days, had passed off, and was about to be succeeded by a glowing sun, and the genial weather of the earliest summer month.

The sun had not yet risen to dispel the hazy atmosphere, that rested like a thin mist on the surface of the sea, when the indistinct figure of a man was seen moving to and fro on the beach, at the side of the island opposite to the town of Sherburne. The distance from the town to the southern shore is not great—for Sherburne is deeply embayed in the body of the island; but he who sleeps in the town and finds himself on the southern beach before sunrise, must have waked with the lark and travelled with commendable speed.

At times the man upon the beach stopped and bent his looks earnestly upon the heaving ocean; and then

slowly resuming his musing perambulations over the sands, the object of his coming seemed to be forgotten. In his left hand he carried a short spy-glass, which afterward, as he looked seaward, he applied occasionally to his eye and carefully swept the whole range of the horizon. His right hand grasped a stout hickory walking-cane of great length, curiously carved by the jack-knife of some ever-busy whale-fisherman. It was wrought into diamonds and ridges, and squares and oblongs, like the war-clubs of the South Sea islanders, and surmounted by the head of a grinning sea-lion, with a straight black pin of polished whalebone driven through its ears, and forming a guard to accommodate the gripe of the hand. This staff was armed at the smaller end with a pointed iron, from the side of which a short grapple turned upwards in the shape of a well-curved boat-hook. It was easy to conceive that the sharp iron point was used to render the footing sure in slippery places; but the utility of the hook could not be so easily guessed at. And how could he manage a walking-stick reaching above his ears, and long enough for the tandem whip-stock of a first-rate whiskered Jehu? We shall see.

The dress of the lone pedestrian was such as the reader may still occasionally see in the habiliments of an aged Quaker in any part of Europe or America, or wheresoever else the Society of the Friends is tolerated. Like the "last of the cocked hats," it is fast disappearing; and, in almost every other place in America but Nantucket, it may be pronounced rare and ancient. All travellers agree that whatever *is* rare and ancient should be faithfully described. *Imprimis:*—A drab single-breasted coat, with useless brass or steel buttons, of the size of a half-dollar piece, on the one side, and sham button-holes "to match," worked in worsted or mohair, on the other—meeting at a single point across the breast, and fastened by an invisible hook-and-eye—collarless, flapless, and pocketless—skirts stinted in breadth, but of

great longitude, and dangling below the calves of the legs. The chest of the wearer was left uncovered by the coat, but protected by an ample vest—drab in its colour, and buttoned close around the throat—collarless, like the upper garment—embracing the body snugly down to the hips, over which depended immensely capacious pockets, covered by huge flaps—a single row of dark-brown apple-wood buttons in front, marshalled regularly from the throat to the lower points of the jacket, which were snipped off, or turned under, so as to offer no impediment to the motion of the legs. As suspenders (a modern invention) were never worn with this dress of antiquity, a portion of the linen of the wearer was visible at the snipping, or at the place where the vest should come in contact with the waistband of the small-clothes in front. When seated, the deep flaps of the jacket served the purpose of curtains to the chair legs. The unmentionables, or tight smalls (long-togs, or pantaloons, were never seen ashore at Nantucket), were much the same as those of modern days, and consisted of drab cloth, like the other garments, and were tied or buckled with much precision at the side of the knee. A pair of homespun stockings for the legs,—blue woollen in winter and unbleached thread in summer,—a string of a muslin cravat, white as driven snow, tied carefully in folds about the neck, so as to be equally visible behind and before—shirt collarless—knuckle-dabbers, or ruffles, over the hand—drab wool hat of immense dimensions in the brim,—*e converso* as to the crown,—round and fitting the head closely, and displaying the convexity of the gourd-shell without its handle, the broad brim being looped up to the crown, *à la macaroni*, or brailed up *à la fantail* with cords resembling a ship's back-stays—shoes of neats-leather, finished in the grain, and saturated with bees-wax and tallow, to render them pliable as well as to preserve the feet from wet, and clasped over the instep with tremendous buckles of steel or massive silver, as best suited the means of the

wearer—and the costume of the solitary upon the beach, as well as the *tout ensemble* of the once fashionable dress of the grown-up Nantucketers, is completed.

The steps of the nameless stranger were suddenly arrested by the appearance of an ill-defined object, which floated heavily in the water close to the shore,—approaching and receding with the surf, but evidently grounding as each successive swell sent it towards the beach. It came gradually nearer to the land, being buoyed up and impelled forward by the powerful rollers which beat on the shore and spent themselves in foam and noisy spray, and then rapidly slunk away, but with diminished force and nearly level reaction, leaving the object for some moments visible and almost motionless.

The man hastily pulled a small cord from his pocket, and rigged a slip-noose at one end. He then cast it over the figure-head of his walking-stick, and threw the coil, with the expertness of a sailor, far up the beach. Watching his opportunity, and taking advantage of a receding wave, he dashed into the water, and, in an instant afterward, the hook of his cane was inserted under the ropes that secured the exterior of the package. A moment more sufficed him to regain the shore, with the cord trailing in his hand as he retired from the water. Bracing his feet in the sand, and surging gently upon the line whenever the surf lightened up the package, he drew his burden to land until it began to be partially buried in the sands of the undertow, where it was soon left high and dry by the receding tide. It was found upon investigation to be a bale of light fancy goods, of great value, so thoroughly enveloped in tarred covers that the water had not penetrated within. Such valuable prizes were not uncommon after a storm; and the early riser was often repaid in this way for deserting a comfortable bed betimes, and performing a morning's chilly ramble upon the beach. But the good luck of the islanders was never kept secret; nor the rightful owner, if he could be found, kept in ignorance of the

whereabout of his property. In pursuance of this praiseworthy habit, the package was afterward advertised in the only newspaper published in the colonies,—but no claimant appeared; and the fine dresses of some of the females of Sherburne, in due season, betrayed the fact that the ownership was considered vested in the finder.

"Good!" exclaimed the beach-walker; "a very good morning's work, I trow; but at the expense of some foundered ship, perhaps. Ah, the dangers of the sea!—but stop a bit—I'll put my *waif* upon it, as they do upon the whales at sea, to prevent the lazy louts of the town from claiming it, until I return with a truck to carry it home, where I may examine the windfall or the waterfall more at leisure. Aha,—here comes an interloper, I dare say! Had the greedy booby come sooner he would have claimed half the profits of the salvage; but he will be disappointed, if I do not mistake the virtue of a first discovery." So saying, the fortunate bale-finder pulled from his fob a little ticket, apparently prepared for such purposes, and fastened it with a string to the bale-rope. Relieving his hickory cane, which had done him such good service, and hastily coiling up his slender cord, he snatched up his spy-glass and took to the beach again, with his back turned upon the approaching stranger. He at once resumed his measured step and his musing; feeling perfectly secure that nobody would dare to remove his waif, or question his sole right to the prize he had left half imbedded in the sands, while that little talisman remained upon it.

The "*waif*," or target-shaped board, and sometimes a little pennant of bunting, fastened at the end of a slender pole, and stuck into the body of a slain whale at sea, is sacred among the whale-fishermen of all nations. It happens frequently that the crews of several vessels are at once engaged among a "school," or troop of whales. When one is struck with the harpoon, and the death-blow is given with the lance, which brings his belly to the sun, the successful crew forthwith plant the

waif-pole firmly and deeply in his flesh, and thenceforth leave the carcass in pursuit of other animals. When the work of death among the "gigantic game" is ended for the day, and the scattered fugitives are deemed beyond pursuit, the boats and the ships shape their course towards the slaughtered whales, and the property of each is easily made out by the peculiar mark of the waif. All dispute as to the identity of the animal is by this means avoided: the waif settles the question at once and for ever. The same principle guided the honest islanders in determining the right of property found astray upon the beach. If the mark of a discoverer was set upon it, the article might remain till doomsday without molestation from a subsequent finder. Our modern wreckers, along the seashore of Long Island and New-Jersey, are not so fastidious—as many an owner of a stranded ship's cargo can avouch, whose goods have been plundered and buried beneath the sand, until the hot pursuit of the revenue officials is over; when the pilfering Arabs are left free to disinter their ill-gotten spoil, and to plunder, if they list so to do, from one another. These "moon-cursers" are the only "thieves" in the western world without some touch of "honour" to redeem the infamy of their character.*

* The editor of these sheets would not be without misgivings, if he should permit the dictum of the ancient writer of this memorial, regarding the exclusive honesty of Nantucket, to go without question. It may be true, as the author declares, that the bygone inhabitants of Nantucket were scrupulously correct in their treatment of wrecks and estrays; but, in later days, he is inclined to the belief that the island assimilates to all other parts of America having a sea-coast. He is credibly informed, that when a vessel, laden with rum and sugar, from the West Indies, was recently stranded near the identical spot where Jethro Coffin found his valuable prize, many of the people were busy in appropriating portions of the cargo to themselves; and an anecdote is told of a couple of practical philanthropists, who laid siege to a hogshead of sugar after this manner:—One had succeeded in landing from the wreck a cask of sugar, and had punched a hole in the head of the puncheon; upon this, the wight stretched out his legs like the Rhodian Colossus, and spread out a sack there-

But let us resume. The stranger, a short, thick-set, dapper figure, habited in the ordinary Quaker vestments of the island, had not yet caught sight of him of the hickory and spy-glass. Presently his eye turned upon the dark bunch upon the beach, and the unusual sight quickened his steps. Coming up with the black mass, he surveyed it round and round with commendable curiosity; and, as he guessed at the value of the god-send, he incontinently rubbed his hands with irrepressible delight.

"Minnows and mack'rel!" exclaimed a shrill voice, "here's a 'bone prize' for thee, friend Peleg! It's an ill wind that blows *nobody no* good, sure enough. The storm, that capsized and smashed the lighthouse last night, hath sent thee this to help pay thy tax for a new one! I am ahead of thee now, neighbour Jethro, anyhow. Thou mayst brag and crack over the barrel of wine which thou fished up and brought to land t'other morning, before I was stirring; but this time I am more fortunate than thou. 'Early to bed, and early to rise,' —that's what makes men's fortunes. A bale of silks, maybe—or of Flanders lace—who knows?—Solid as a pump-bolt, I see; carefully swathed and bound up, and tarred, and lashed crossways, and lengthways, and 'down the sides, and up the middle,' as the profane dancers say—not a mark nor scratch upon it, to tell the owner's name, as I'm a living kritter. Eh!—minnows

between, with mouth prepared to ingulf a goodly proportion of the saccharine mass, when, lo and behold, a new comer, upon the same errand, seeing how matters were going, and disregarding the "*waif*" of his neighbour, silently crept *par derrière* of the sugar abstracter, and placed his own sack in readiness for a grist from the same mill. The roar of the surf prevented detection; and while *Monsieur le premier* was filling his sack from the cask, *Monsieur le second* cut a hole therein, and scooped therefrom sundry parcels, enough to fill his own; wherewith decamping unperceived, the *waifer* was left in the purgatory of absolute astonishment at finding the cask one quarter *less*, and his sack altogether *minus* of its contents, after his fatiguing operation of excavation.

and mack'rel! what's this?—'Sdeath! it's the waif of Jethro Coffin, as I live!"

Turning his eyes coastwise, the chap-fallen Peleg Folger did undoubtedly see Jethro Coffin in his own person, standing at no great distance like a statue, with the spy-glass to his eye, slowly sweeping the horizon as the sun sent his first level ray across the water.

"There he stands," said the belated Peleg, "peering into the sea with his glass, and trying to spy more bales and barrels, I s'pose. Some how or 'nother, it doth seem that if I should sit up all night, in order to be first up in the morning, Jethro would contrive to be on the beach afore me. But I'll see what he's arter now; and, —minnows and mack'rel! I'll be sure to share the next with him!"

"Neighbour Jethro!" screamed Peleg Folger, at the top of his cracked phthisicky voice; "Je—thro—Cof—fin!" But Jethro Coffin, availing himself of the roar of the surf, did not choose to hear; or perhaps the abstraction of his thoughts rendered him deaf to the shrill sea-gull voice of Peleg. Yet the morning greetings of Jethro and Peleg were destined to take place; for the latter soon made the former sensible of his presence by the sound of an accelerated asthmatic wheezing, and a slight punch in the ribs that could not be overlooked. That Peleg had recently walked fast and far was apparent from the staccato crack of his unmusical soprano voice, which emitted a peculiarity of sound that denoted the new-comer to be considerably wind-broken. Poor Peleg was one of those prying, good-for-nothing, meddlesome bodies that vex every community; and yet he was not vicious, nor would he designedly do an ill turn to his neighbour for the world.

"How dost do, neighbour Coffin?" commenced Peleg.

"Ah—is it thou, neighbour Peleg?" asked Jethro; "thou'rt come at last, I see."

"Besure I am—didn't thou hear me half an hour ago,

calling thee at the top of my voice, as I came along the beach?"

"Nay, verily; but, now I bethink me, I did hear something like thy voice, though I mistook the direction, and thought it came from those screeching birds of prey that hover over our heads. Truly thy voice so much resembles the cry of the sea-gull that I was deceived by the similitude."

"Thou art no flatterer, cousin Jethro," said Peleg, endeavouring to hide his chagrin.

"Nay, thou must not take any pride in what I say," said Jethro, repeating a saying old as the hills.

"Thou hast been lucky this morning, friend Jethro; I saw thy waif upon the package. What dost thou think it is?"

"I know not," answered Jethro, evasively; "perhaps a bale of cotton, or some such light trumpery."

"Nay, nay; thou must not tell me that: I felt the bale all over, and—"

"I warrant thou didst," retorted Jethro; "and thou didst think thou hadst stumbled upon nice pickings, until the waif fell into thy hands—eh, friend Peleg? Thou must rise earlier, friend; thou sleepest too late a-mornings."

"Plague on't," said Peleg, wincing under the rebuke of Jethro; "I'll let thee see that I can rise as early as thou—and earlier too, for the matter o' that. Thou'lt find me wide awake as a black-fish herearter, I tell thee."

"I should like to see it, friend Peleg," said the taunting Jethro: "but when didst thou ever hear of a *Folger* rising before a *Coffin?* Never, surely, since the settlement of the island."

"There thou hast lost thy reckoning, at least," said Peleg, who stood up boldly for the blood of the Folgers, and because he understood Jethro not altogether in the literal sense of his words. "Beshrew me, thou canst not claim precedence for the Coffins: thou

know'st, well enough, that the Folgers were among the foremost of those who settled the island, even while the Indian claimed dominion over the soil; and thou shouldst know that my great-grandf'ther was the first English child born on the island. I have the start of thee there, surely—*thou* must rise *early* if thou attempt to controvert that truth. Get up early indeed! Marry, when did a Coffin show a parallel to a Folger in ingenuity or forecast? I should like to know *that*, friend Jethro. Tell me of one of thy petulant race of

'The Coffins, noisy, fractious, loud—'*

(thou knowest how the verse runs)—that hath studied over the midnight lamp, or even at thy favourite dawn of morning, that can show the handiwork of my young cousin, Walter Folger, who, unaided by the lights of science, hath constructed a clock that will, by the slow revolution of its machinery, show a hidden wonder a hundred years hence, and that hath puzzled all the clock-makers of the land; or, who of the Coffins hath had the gumption to turn the lightning from its direction, like the industrious Ben Franklin, who, as thou know'st full well, belongs to the race of the Folgers?"†

* There are some doggerel verses still current among the islanders, which, better than any thing now remembered, or to be discovered in the altered manners of the people, show up the ancient character and propensities of the then prevailing families, with much truth and freedom. They were written, it is said, by a young lawyer, who came to the island about the time we speak of, and who employed his pen in rhyming, for lack of briefs. Two of the verses ran thus:—

"The Rays and Russells coopers are,—
The knowing Folgers lazy,—
A lying Coleman very rare,
And scarce a learned Hussey;

The Coffins noisy, fractious, loud,—
The silent Gardners plodding,—
The Mitchells good,—the Barkers proud,—
The Macys eat the pudding."

† The wonderful clock referred to in the speech of Peleg is still clicking behind the door of the maker; and the maker him-

"Go to—thy history is lame, neighbour Peleg," retorted his opponent; "if thou wilt take the trouble to examine the records of the town, thou wilt find, of a surety, that a direct ancestor of mine was the first English child born on the island; and thy ancestor, that thou ignorantly speakest of, only the *sixth* who can claim the earliest nativity of this soil! Tut, man! the Coffins had the start of thy progenitor from the beginning; and their posterity will assuredly keep ahead of thy slow and easy race, depend on't. The line thou hast quoted is matched by another from the same hand, wherein the author is pleased to call

'The knowing Folgers—*lazy!*'

Thou canst repeat the lines well, and I marvel thou didst omit the one about the Folgers. But enough of this: go thy ways, friend, and let me finish my morning's labour without further interruption. Thou seest I'm busy with the glass," continued Jethro, applying the instrument to his eye; "and I'm trying to catch a glimpse of the Leviathan, if peradventure she be near enough. Take to the left, an thou wilt; or to the right, if thou prefer it;—for, like the peaceful patriarch of old, I offer thee the choice, and will not dispute about the direction. I would be alone, neighbour Peleg."

Peleg was not to be flung off in this cavalier manner. He had hoped to share in some of the prizes of the morning, rightly conjecturing that the storm which had endured so long would do great damage upon the sea, and, as usual, cast some of its spoils upon the island. Besides, Jethro was brisker in his motions than his com-

self,—the Hon. WALTER FOLGER, late a member of Congress—still living in the house of his fathers—a pattern of the gentlemanly manners of the old school—a profound scholar and mathematician, and the inventor and constructer of one of the most powerful telescopes ever known, and which Nantucket still has the merit of possessing.

panion, and took to the water, as Peleg expressed it, "as nat'ral as life."

"Minnows and mack'rel!" exclaimed Peleg, in an under-tone; "I'm not in a hurry to go on my way, and I'll e'en abide with thee yet awhile:"—and then, modulating his voice to its most conciliating key, he observed aloud—"When thou hast done with thy glass, neighbour Coffin, if thou wilt lend it to me a moment I will take a look upon the waters."

"Thou art welcome to look as long as it pleaseth thee," said Jethro Coffin, in despair, as he handed over the glass to his persevering friend.

A new subject now engaged Jethro's attention. As his eye fell upon the surf a few yards from his feet, he saw, as he thought, a small barrel buffeted by the contending waves. Adjusting his cane once more, he hastened down the beach towards his object: but by this time Peleg had seen the barrel also, and determined to offer his assistance.

"Stop, neighbour Jethro, stop, I say!" shouted Peleg, "and I'll help thee to land the kritter; but mark what I tell thee, afore thou layest finger upon it—I claim the halves—"

"Thy greedy covetousness shall be rewarded with *the whole*," returned Jethro, as he hurled a ship's water bucket upon the beach with the hook of his hickory staff. The wet and pliant hand-rope twined round the legs of Peleg in its landward flight, and brought him to a seat upon his mother earth, as neatly as a South American cattle-hunter could arrest a wild horse in full career.

"Minnows and mack'rel!" shouted Peleg: and thereupon his companion took up his glass and unceremoniously departed; leaving his short-legged friend, whom it is but justice to say he had unintentionally brought down, to pick himself up and gather himself together as he might.

Doubling a small point of the island, which effectually screened him from further interruption, and ascending a

convenient bluff, Jethro again adjusted his glass, and busied himself in reconnoitring every fancied speck upon the face of the sea, and every little cloud which his imagination could torture into the appearance of a distant ship.

"It is in vain!" murmured Jethro, with a painful sigh, as he closed up the joints of his glass; "she comes not. The wind has been favourable since midnight, but the adverse weather of the last week has, I fear, driven her off—may Heaven forefend that she should have gone to the bottom! The sun is now well up, and my long fasting warns me to bend my course homeward. I will first secure my prize upon the beach, and then hie me home to my household, and, afterward, look in upon the condition of the factory."

Jethro now descended from his elevation and returned to his bale of goods. With but little exertion of strength he rolled it out of reach of the coming tide. This done, he took his way towards the town by the shortest cut; mounting in his path a succession of sand-heaps, covered with a stinted growth of sea-grass, which eventually landed him on the more compact, but scarcely more productive, soil of which the main body of the island is composed. Lingering a moment upon a little sandy eminence, he determined to take another and a last look upon the sea, as his present position allowed him to compass a wider range of the horizon. Accordingly, the glass was once more brought to its focus, and lifted to the eye. Steadily moving it upon the distant line, where sky and water appeared to meet, Jethro at last arrested its motion, and attentively regarded a tiny spot, which seemed to rise and disappear at short intervals. It cannot be doubted that Jethro's heart began to beat at this interesting moment, which succeeded to that of utter hopelessness.

"Can it be that I mistake?" asked Jethro, anxiously: "I had it but now, and it occurred to me that it might be the truck at the mast-head of some lofty vessel—

perhaps the Leviathan's—would that it might prove hers! But where is it gone?—my direction was south-south-east, as near as may be—but I have lost it, or it may have been nothing after all. There—there it is again!—there!—and there once more! It is surely a moving object, and rises upon the sight. Steady—once more I have caught it! How my heart flutters and my hand trembles!—verily, I am nervous to-day. If it be a vessel, the breeze is fresh and fair for her, if peradventure she makes for our port. I'll hie me to my dwelling, and rest an hour, by which time her spars will come more distinctly into view. I will then mount to the top of the beacon light—pshaw! how my memory fails me—the light was levelled to the earth by the lightning, or by the storm, as Miriam contends—no matter which. I am sick at heart, and faint from long fasting and over-anxious watching—how my head turns!"

Jethro's knees smote each other as he stood murmuring to himself, and gazing on the broad sea with a vacant stare. His body tottered, and he sank upon the ground, overcome with a sudden tide of contending emotions, in which joyful anticipations predominated, though not unmixed with a sickening sensation of fear of some indefinable drawback upon his vision of happiness. His vessels, and, above all, his only-begotten son—his dearly beloved—had been absent for three long years. Was the youth well? Was he alive? Had he prospered? Had he improved in knowledge as in stature and comeliness? These, and the like, were questions which Jethro often asked himself, without the possibility of a satisfactory reply. The moment when all would be answered was probably at hand. The yea or the nay would shortly be responded to the anxious yearnings of his heart, which was now wound up to a tension of indescribable agony and apprehension. It was too much for Jethro, and it overcame him. He felt as a fond

father would naturally feel, and as a man under such circumstances *should* feel.

Jethro was found in his recumbent posture by his quondam associate upon the beach. Peleg Folger had got tired of the fruitless task of speering for windfalls alone, and had wisely taken the shortest cut homewards, which his wiser neighbour had taken before him. As he mounted the sand-spits, with the only trophy of his laborious perambulations in his hand, with its "cable tow" thereunto appertaining, he came plump upon the body of Jethro. Here was a sight calculated to startle even the firmest islander! What to do, or how to act in the premises, did not presently occur to Peleg Folger.

"Peradventure he only sleepeth," said Peleg, musing; "nay—that may scarcely be voluntarily done upon this damp ground! Mayhap he is dead! Of a verity it is not death—the spirit hath not yet departed from its tabernacle—the body is yet warm, and a slight pulse stirreth within his veins. Minnows and mack'rel!—what a dunce was I, not to divine the true cause at once," exclaimed Peleg, grasping the bucket, and waddling with unwonted celerity to the shore. The bucket was dipped into the sea, and the cool liquid sprinkled with no sparing hand upon the pallid face of Jethro. His eyes opened languidly; and in a few minutes he was sufficiently recovered to signify his wish to proceed on his way.

"Lend me thine arm, Peleg," faintly spoke the invalid; "I am better—the air revives me—so—I am quite well again!"

CHAPTER III.

Yes—she is ours—a home-returning bark—
Blow fair, thou breeze! she anchors ere the dark.
Already doubled is the Cape—our bay
Receives that prow which proudly spurns the spray:—
How gloriously her gallant course she goes!
Her white wings flying—.
Hail to the welcome shout!—the friendly speech!
When hand grasps hand, uniting on the beach;
The smile, the question, and the quick reply,
And the heart's promise of festivity!

BYRON.

WITH the kind assistance of Peleg, Jethro regained his dwelling, and rest and refreshment operated beneficially upon his frame, and set him on his legs again, bolt upright, and as stout as ever. The oil-merchant once more sallied forth, and took his position upon the highest point of the hills back of the town of Sherburne, which overlooked the sea in the direction of the approaching vessel. The islanders, who had heard of the strange sail in sight, were already assembled at various points of lookout upon these eminences, which, being studded with windmills, were, and still are, called the "Mill Hills." Groups of men, armed with all the spy-glasses which could be mustered on the island, had assembled together in deep consultation, and were speculating upon the probabilities of the ship proving the long-looked-for Leviathan. The industrious and the laborious had quitted their various occupations suddenly, deeming the approach of a whale-ship a sufficient apology for making a holyday. Women forgot their household affairs—preparations for their frugal meals were arrested at the

news,—and the dinner-pot hung neglected over the fire: beds were left half made up, and rooms half swept; the wheel was stopped, and the distaff thrown by in haste. In the general joy of the town, all but the lame and infirm crowded to the hills. Even little children partook of the excitement, and wended their way with the rest; and the aged too forgot their years, and slowly hobbled towards the point of attraction. The town was soon depopulated, and its thousands were assembled in groupings upon the hills, at once quaint and picturesque. The broad brims and precise costume of the wealthier classes, were contrasted with the close paper and velvet caps and greasy over-dresses of the workmen from the oil factories, who felt no inequality in presence of their employers; nor did it ever enter their heads that wealth could create any distinction between man and man. The plain Quaker bonnet and sedate countenance of the matron, and the somewhat tastier hat, half-concealing the rosy cheeks and liquid blue eyes of the maiden, were sprinkled among the more common and less striking head-dresses of laborious housewives, who had hastily thrown a handkerchief, or the corners of their clean homespun aprons, over their heads, for protection against the rays of the sun. For a time after the reappearance of Jethro, the silence was deep and uninterrupted, and the gaze upon the waters intense. The compressed lip, the immoveable body, and the steady look at a single spot in the ocean, which riveted the gaze and concentrated the thoughts of the assembled congregation, formed no bad picture of a conventicle of pilgrims worshipping in the open air, and paying silent adoration to the Deity.

The upper sails of the far-off vessel were visible to the unassisted eye. Those with glasses had already made her out to be a ship, but as yet no signal appeared, to bespeak her name or identity.

"She steers dead for the island," said one of the spectators with a glass.

"Does she make any signal yet?"

"None."

"Canst thou see her foretopsail?"

"Not yet," was the brief reply.

"What dost make of her with the glass?" demanded the catechist.

"A large three-master, with heavy spars, and every rag of sail set aloft," was the answer.

"No vessel answering that description ever touches at the island, unless it be our own whale-ships," observed a bystander.

"She must surely be a vessel of the largest class," observed the speaker with the optical instrument. "Now her topsail begins to show a little—there, it creeps up!" continued he, bending his glass upon the ship; "there's something painted in the canvass; but I can't make it out yet."

Other glasses had, in the mean time, been levelled at the vessel, and Jethro's among the rest. He was the first to catch the upper outline of the figure in the foretopsail, and it appeared to him to resemble the hump of the whale which had been painted by a travelling artist, before the sail had been bent. The intention of that new conceit, which has since found its way into the signal-books of most maritime nations, was to furnish a picture emblematical of the name of the ship, and, at the same time, a permanent signal whereby she could be recognised at sea.

"I do verily believe it is the Leviathan!" exclaimed Jethro.

A hum of gladness and confidence ran through the crowd, and passed from group to group at the good tidings. It was the first general interruption to the silence of the multitude which had yet occurred.

"Neighbour Jethro," screamed Peleg, at a distance, in his peculiarly shrill tone, "what makes thee guess it is thy ship? Thou know'st that friend Mitchell and myself have a vessel at sea nearly as large as thine; peradventure it may be the Columbus. Take heed that

thou art not too sure, friend; it may be *my* gain, and not *thine*, for aught thou canst tell."

This doubting annunciation of the asthmatic Peleg fell like a damper upon the spirits of a large portion of the people.

"And if it *is* the Columbus," retorted Peleg's old opponent, "I wouldn't give much for *thy* share of the cargo. She has been out but a few months, and if she has returned thus early, the vessel must have put back in distress, and consequently thy venture is clearly as good as naught. Thou keepest a profit and loss account, I hope, after the Italian method? Thou well knowest on which side thy venture will appear in that case."

Peleg Folger did not relish this new view of the question, but nevertheless returned to the charge lustily.

"Thou forgettest, Jethro, that, once in a while, a vessel lights upon a school of whales within a few days after leaving port. A captain in thine own brigantine returned with a hundred and fifty barrels of good oil, besides much blubber, in less than a month from the day he set sail."

"But not of the sperm, neighbour Folger,—not of the sperm; that sort of fish comes not so close to us, I ween. It was wrong for the commander thou speak'st of to return before he had accomplished his voyage, unless he had met with some accident beyond remedy at sea—and I told him so. Little thanks did he get from me or mine for departing from orders. Thou rememberest the old Nantucket saying:—'Obey orders, though thou shouldst break owners!' It is a wholesome motto for the sea-captain, and thou mayst recommend it to the observance of thy skipper of the Columbus."

"A nimble sixpence is better than the slow shilling though, since thou art in the humour for old saws," said Peleg, with exultation; "and a single barrel of

common oil, returning upon us once a month, is better than many of 'parmacitty at the end of a long voyage."

This keen encounter of tongues was cut short by the rough exclamation of a veteran boat-steerer from Cape Cod, made within hearing of the rival dealers in oil and spermaceti. He was perched upon an arm of a windmill, and gave the word from aloft—

"Belay there—the foretawpsil looms up a bit! Take a squint at that queer fish in the canvass, as she mounts the sea. Shiver my timbers, but that's a whale's back, as clear as mud!"

"Ay, there it is, sure enough!" said the exulting Jethro Coffin. "What hast got to say now, neighbour Folger?"

"Say?—why I'm not sure on't yet. Lend me thy glass, Jethro; it's a leetle the best one on the island—though sometimes I can't bring it to the right focus for the plaguy creases, and joints, and night notches. Thou call'st that ship the Levi-Nathan, dost thou?"

"Ay, the Leviathan, to be sure: and by what name dost thou call her?"

"I don't call her any thing yet, for I can't bring her to bear."

"Look south-south-east-half-east; and close thy left eye—what dost keep both eyes open for?"

"Now I've hit her!" said Peleg: "don't talk to me; I can't see so well for't. Why, Jethro! the foretopsail's spick-and-span new! Minnows and mack'rel! that whale is painted too well to be daubed by any of the people aboard—and thou wilt not maintain that the sail is three years old, friend Jethro?"

"Yea, verily, it is full three years old," said Jethro, chuckling: "she had two suits of new sails, as is the custom, and both foretopsails were painted before she left port. I dare say that one of them bid farewell to the bolt-ropes and took sudden leave in the storm yesterday. Nothing can be more natural than to bend a new sail when the old one is gone—eh, Peleg?"

"I give up the argument then," said Peleg. A hearty shout from the young men, and an ill-repressed titter from the maidens, followed upon the discomfiture of the speaker.

The noble ship now came booming on under a press of sail. As she diminished the distance between herself and the land, and, as it were, overcame the rotundity of the earth, her lower sails and then her hull successively appeared, until she stood in bold relief against the blue sky—a ship of three hundred tons, with every available sail set alow and aloft. It was a gallant sight! A pardonable pride (if pride *be* pardonable) took possession of the hearts of the islanders as, some sixty years ago, they saw the good ship Leviathan, a glorious specimen of the enterprise and prosperity of Nantucket, and at that time the largest and noblest of American whalers, careering with the speed of the winds

> "O'er the glad waters of the dark-blue sea,
> ——— like a thing of life,
> That seemed to dare the elements to strife."

The gallant ship now bore away to make her passage through the sound that stretches between the island of Nantucket and the main; and the scene necessarily changes to the bay opening from the town of Sherburne. But there was no diminution in the congregation of spectators. As the vessel rounded the headlands and approached the haven, the people on board became sensible that they were the objects of the regards and solicitude of the assemblage upon the shore. A signal was run up at the fore, which Jethro Coffin, with some little difficulty, translated from his pocket signal-book in the words and figures following, to wit: "*All well*—2700 *barrels.*" The absorbing anxiety of the multitude, for they were all more or less interested, was relieved. "All in good health, and a famous cargo—sperm of of course!" was repeated from mouth to mouth upon

the authority of Jethro's translation of the signal. Then came the hurried greetings of friends, and the gratulations of neighbours, and the dislocating, hearty shaking of hands, as after a silent meeting of a Quaker congregation, when all are right glad to be relieved from coventry; and then—nature would burst forth even among the staid Quakers of Sherburne—then uprose a shout that made the welkin ring. The cheering was rung out again and again from hundreds of mouths with hearts in them. The men doffed the Quaker and raised high their broad brims; and the women shook out the folds of their smooth 'kerchiefs, and waved them joyously to the wind, in token of welcome.

Silence was restored by common consent, and the multitude waited for some recognition from the ship. They did not wait long without a fitting response. The crew jumped to the shrouds, and displayed themselves upon the extremities of the sharply braced yards and in conspicuous parts of the rigging. The Leviathan swept by, and, at a preconcerted signal, a roar as hearty as the rough throats of fifty bold seamen could send forth, burst from the chests of the hardy whale-fishermen, and was renewed and repeated, while the stiff tarpaulins of the crew made the customary circles in the air. She then bore away to avoid a shoal, and the command was given to "take in sail." One by one, as if by magic, the pieces of canvass disappeared under the hands of the active crew; while the few glasses upon the beach passed rapidly from hand to hand, and the sunburnt faces of old acquaintances were easily recognised in the distance, as they successively showed themselves upon the yards and were busied with the sails.

"Stand by the anchor!" shouted the pilot, as the ship approached the harbour. As she rounded to, the few remaining sails flapped in the wind.

"All clear!" was the instant reply.

"Let go!"

"Hoarse o'er her side the rustling cable rings,"

and the heavy plunge from the bow denoted that the good ship Leviathan, Seth Macy commander, swung at her moorings off the harbour of Sherburne, whence, three years before, she had taken her departure upon the long voyage, followed by showers of blessings from separating friends.

The small craft of the town were now in brisk motion, and the ship's deck was soon crowded with eager and inquisitive visiters. Among the foremost, but with decent gravity of demeanour, came Jethro Coffin, the owner, in his light skiff.

"Father!"

"Ah, my son! is it thou?" were the short but heart-felt exclamations of Jethro and his son, as young Isaac flew to embrace his parent at the gangway.

"Seth Macy, thou'rt welcome home again," said Jethro, passing on and approaching the quarter-deck, where stood the captain, a pleased spectator of the warm greetings that were going on in every part of the ship, to the total destruction of all discipline. But the ship was safely anchored, and the sails, that had so long stretched to the breeze, neatly furled—and that was enough for Seth, for the time being.

"Jethro Coffin!—I'm right glad to give thee a shake of the hand again!" shouted Seth: and then, in a subdued but anxious tone, he asked—"How fare my wife and family—thou canst tell me, Jethro?"

"Well—quite well," was the brief but satisfactory answer.

"Thanks to Providence!" exclaimed Seth; and the tears unbidden started to his manly eye. "Pshaw! I am ashamed of this weakness—and before my people too", continued he, dashing the tears off with the back of his hand, and turning his face away from Jethro.

"Tush, man! they do thee credit: I love the honest heart that feels and rejoices for the welfare of its kith

and kin, though it do inhabit the rough bosom of a sailor. He must have a dull soul that would not honour thee for thy tears. What saith an approved writer? 'The tear of sensibility is the most honourable characteristic of humanity.'* Thy wife is well, and thy little ones are getting on bravely. So," continued Jethro, after a fitting pause, "thou hast brought home a full cargo, friend Macy?"

"Enough for thee and me—for *me* at least," answered Seth. "I have made up my mind to cast anchor ashore for a season; and I'm thinking that I shall not put to sea again for a long while to come, if ever. Thou know'st I've been somewhat active in my line of life for twenty years past, and I begin to feel the stiffness of premature age coming over me. Sailors, and especially whale-fishermen, do not sleep on beds of down at sea."

"Tut, tut! Who would have believed that a man like thee, in the full vigour of life, would talk of rest! Thou art not over five-and-forty, and that age is the very prime of manhood; unless one should get the rheumatics, and then one grows old faster than common, sure enough. But plague take rest and rheumatics!—I've got a noble ship for thee, Seth; bran new—just off the stocks—coppered to the bends—and four hundred tons! What dost say to that, neighbour? Wilt thou have her?"

"I cannot answer thee," said Seth, "until I have seen my wife and—"

"Oh—ah—thou must see thy wife for a time, of course: I forget thou hadst been absent so long. But when thou art satisfied, Seth,—thou understandest me,—then I will converse with thee more upon the matter. In the mean time it may not be amiss to inform thee that her first voyage will be but a short one. I must perforce cross the Atlantic to arrange my affairs in the mother country, which are at rather loose-ends between

* Juvenal.

me and my English coparceners in the whaling trade. Thou'lt have time enough to think of the proposal, and I'll e'en leave thee for the present. When thou canst spare Isaac, thou wilt let him come ashore—for there are those at home who are desperately anxious to see him."

Jethro walked forward among the crew, and gave a kind word and a welcome to each individual; and presently his skiff was seen touching the shore. Within an hour after the pilot restored the command of the ship to Seth Macy, the Leviathan was deserted, and the people of the ship, from the captain downward, were among the missing; leaving the tawny cook and a few nameless adjuncts ship-keepers for the rest of the day, and undisputed masters of the noble vessel that but a few hours before was riding so proudly upon the sea.

Need we lift the curtain on those homely joys that succeed the restoration of long-absent kindred? It is unnecessary; they are better left to the fruitful imagination of the reader, than to be spoiled or come tardy off by any effort of ours to imbody or portray them.

CHAPTER IV.

The housewife waits to roll her fleecy stores,
With all her gay-dressed maids attending round.
THOMSON.

———Travellers tell
That in "New-England" folks live well
On good fat pork and bacon hams,
On oysters, lobsters, crabs, and clams;
Pumpkin pies, roast-beef, and mutton—
Enough to satisfy a glutton.
If folks live there so well, why may not I
Live there as well as they?—By George! I'll try.
Pindaricus.

AN eager importance sat enthroned upon the countenances of the islanders on the morning of the "Shearing," which followed the arrival of the Leviathan. Hundreds of curious strangers from the continent had taken advantage of the recent sunshine and favourable breeze, in order to participate in the "doings." No one who has ever voyaged to Nantucket at this interesting period has sojourned with regret, or gone away unamused or uninstructed. The Shearing, which lightens many thousands of sheep of their fleece, and adds proportionably to the wealth of the people, was celebrated with a "pomp and circumstance," before the Revolution, that are, perhaps, not equalled by the parade of the present day. We are not among those who value the past at the expense of the present, and would fain assert that no unseemly innovation has been suffered to creep in upon this time-honoured festival, nor to retrench the homely but well-ordered, nay, liberal provision that of

yore was furnished forth. It is not likely, however, that the festal day will ever be forgotten, though its splendours may be somewhat dimmed. At any rate, it is still kept sacred by the islanders, and the proper day in the month of June is regularly marked upon the calendar as the advent thereof.

It is remarkable that war, though it has more than once sensibly diminished the numbers of the flocks annually submitted to the trenchant instruments of the island shepherds,—and terrible and overwhelming as it has always proved to Nantucket especially,—it is remarkable, we repeat, that it has never put its extinguisher upon the merry sheep-shearing. Amid sufferings the most intense, and privations the most appalling, it has been kept as a holyday season for more than a hundred years, and without the interregnum of a single year. Its undoubted antiquity thus carries it back to a period long prior to the existence of the Republic; while its observance, both ancient and modern, has been as regular as that of the national jubilee. It is a rational holyday of labour and recreation—of toil and profit—of enjoyment, unsullied by dissipation or excesses. Long may it endure—and long may it prove the source of happiness and of increase of store to the worthy island-dwellers!

By early cock-crowing the plain, or common, which we have elsewhere spoken of, was ornamented with its yearly complement of camp-tents and awnings of canvass, marshalled in approved array, and skirting the area in the vicinage of the sheep-pens. The flocks, scattered here and there since the shearing of the previous year, had been carefully collected, and after the inspection of the marks of the owners, and the customary washing in the limpid waters of Miacomet, had been folded in temporary enclosures. They were thus kept in readiness for the operation of shearing. The poet Thomson gives a vivid description of a sheep-

washing in his own land, and has saved us the trouble of entering into the same preliminary particulars:—

"They drive the troubled flocks
To where the mazy running brook
Forms a deep pool; this bank abrupt and high,
And that fair spreading in a pebbled shore.
Urged to the giddy brink, much is the toil,
The clamour much, of men and boys,
Ere the soft fearful creatures to the flood
Commit their woolly sides. And oft the swain,
On some impatient seizing, hurls them in:
Imboldened then, nor hesitating more,
Fast, fast they plunge amid the flashing wave,
And pant and labour to the farthest shore.
At last, of snowy white, the gathered flocks
Are in the wattled pen innumerous pressed,
Head above head: and, ranged in lusty rows,
The shepherds sit and whet the sounding shears."

By sunrise the selectmen, or magnates of the town, dressed in their "best bib-and-tucker," were seen moving towards the common in a body. The solemn importance of the office, and the magnitude of their calling, were observable in their prim and sedate carriage while acting in their official capacity of umpires or judges in the division of the fleece, or in determining the ownership of the sheep whose marks had been obliterated or defaced. Next came the inhabitants and their guests—staying not for precedence nor the order of going forth, but bending their hasty steps to the common. These were immediately followed by a train of carts and calêches, or those little two-wheeled vehicles peculiar to Nantucket, and adapted, by their uncommon lightness and small friction of the hub and axle, to the sandy soil—if such may be dignified by the name of soil which forms the superstratum of the island.* The heavier and more capacious carriages

* It is to be feared that the good people of Nantucket have but a poor notion of the capabilities of their own soil—for there are

were laden with the profusion of good things carefully provided against the great day by every family, and

but few attempts made to cultivate it. Yet, whenever the attempt is made, the crops are found to be abundant.

"The island of Nantucket," observes Mr. Jenks, in a late address to the people upon the anniversary of the Declaration of our National Independence, "has been spoken of as '*a barren sand-bank:*'"—and he adds, "those who come hither with this impression, however, depart with exclamations of pleasure and surprise upon their lips at the utter disproval of their prejudices."

Still, we must say, this disproval does not appear from any great exertion which the inhabitants themselves have made to convert the apparently steril, but in fact productive, soil into farms and garden-spots. They must be insensible to their own agricultural advantages, or they would not have merited the following gentle rebuke of their public-spirited orator:—

"I have already hinted at the opinion usually held by strangers abroad touching the supposed sterility of our soil. From this opinion, every individual who has inspected the qualities and studied the capabilities of that soil will at once dissent. An intelligent gentleman, learned in agricultural science, recently passed a few days upon our island, and acquainted himself particularly with its topography. In the course of his examination of our lands, and his inquiries in regard to their products, he expressed his surprise at the little comparative attention paid to the cultivation of the soil. 'There is scarcely an acre,' he remarked, 'upon the face of your little world which is not capable, by judicious management, of being converted into farms, more profitable by far than very many at the East, or in the famed West.' Farms derive their value chiefly from contiguity to a ready market; and this we have at all times. Most of the productions of our soil are known to excel greatly in quality similar articles raised in other places: for example, our corn, and garden vegetables generally. The husbandman may *here* reap the fruits of his toil as fully as elsewhere; so that whether we plough the land or the sea we may as safely calculate on adequate returns. One observation made by the friendly visiter to whom I have alluded I feel tempted here to repeat—since it expresses, not only a high opinion of the physical properties of our sequestered isle, but conveys a delicate compliment to the moral qualities of its inhabitants:—'You require,' said he, '*nothing*—positively nothing, but trees and tillage, to make Nantucket an earthly paradise.'"

Plant trees, therefore, ye Nantucket people!—or render yourselves obnoxious to the imputation of Dean Swift, who says that "no man is a *good* citizen unless he can boast of having got children—built a house—and *planted trees!*"—*Editor.*

destined for the comfortable refreshment of the body during the progress of the shearing. Each family had reared its own tent, and now garnished the suburban board with its choicest provisions. With some, the savings of a whole year were liberally and anxiously appropriated to furnish the various appointments of tents and camp equipage, and the other paraphernalia of meats, bread-stuffs, and vegetables. The rare teas of the East, so shortly destined to provoke a bloody quarrel between Great Britain and her stubborn daughter; the confectionary of the West Indies, and the substantial *et cetera* of their own island and adjacent coast; foreign wine, of generous vintage—seldom used except upon rare occasions by these people of simple habits; home-made fermentations and pleasant beverages; the freshest produce of the domestic dairy, in all its variety of rose-impregnated butter, yielded by means of the tender herbage of June; pot-cheese, curds and cream, and the venerable cheese, which in distant countries would pass current for "Parmesan;" pies of dried fruit, custards, and tarts of cranberry; cakes of flour mixed up with ginger and treacle, and the more costly and ambitious pound-cake, stuffed with raisins and frosted over with an incrustation of sugar, resembling ice; puddings of bread, of rice, and of Indian meal, enriched with eggs; pickles of cucumber, beans, beets, and onions;—these, and all the other eatables and accompaniments which a prudent and well-instructed housewife can imagine, or put down upon a catalogue after a week's thinking and preparation, were plentifully provided, and importunately—after the good old American fashion—piled and pressed upon the pewter platters of the thronging guests, as long as the shearing lasted or a hungry customer could be found.

While the tables beneath the tents were spread with snow-white linen, and decorated with the choicest and best provisions by the matrons, the sturdy and vigorous men were hard at work among the sheep. It was the pride

and boast of these people, at that day, to rear the best sheep in the colonies; and wool as fine, though without the Merino cross, and mutton as fat as any found in America, were the produce of the excellent breed possessed by the Nantucketers, whose flocks in the aggregate numbered some twenty thousand head. It was, therefore, no trifling job to shear the fleece from so many animals; and although a day of leisure and pastime to most of the islanders, especially the females, it was to the men a busy and laborious season, and, at the same time, to strangers a curious and highly gratifying display.

——"The glad circle round them yield their souls
To festive mirth, and wit that knows no gall.
Meantime their joyous task goes on apace:
Some, mingling, stir the melted tar, and some,
Deep on the new-shorn vagrant's heaving side
To stamp the cipher, ready stand;—
Others th' unwilling wether drag along:
And, glorying in his might, the sturdy boy
Holds by the twisted horns th' indignant ram.
Fear not, ye gentle tribes!—'tis not the knife
Of horrid slaughter that is o'er you waved;
No, 'tis the swain's well-guided shears."

It was not, however, the congregation of the flocks, and the temptations for the appetite, that solely constituted the interest of the scene. The shearing, as it is called, is seized upon, also, as a fitting occasion for the free interchange of those friendly courtesies that so signally distinguish and cement the families of the island, whose pursuits and whose gains—whether on land or on sea—are in a measure common to the whole. Their sheep and their cattle feed and herd together on the same uninclosed pasturage, which of itself is owned in common by the iseanders, and denominated the property of the town. The success of a whaling-ship at sea brings joy and worldly store not only to the owners but to the crew and their families, in their due proportions. The people are thus linked together by the strongest

ties—by a sort of community of interest. The failure of pasturage, or blight in the flocks, curtails the enjoyments of all; and a disastrous voyage affects, in the same degree, the property and happiness of all the members of the little community:—

> ——"If there is sorrow there,
> It runs through many bosoms;—but a smile
> Lights up, in eyes around, a kindred smile."

But there are other considerations that weigh with the inhabitants, and mark the wisdom of the founders, if so they may be called, of this annual festival. Friends and relatives, long sundered and kept apart by a wide expanse of water, now make it a point to cross the Sound which divides them; and a pretty general assemblage upon the island at the shearing, though but for once in the year, compensates in a considerable degree for the long separation, and for the slender and unvarying amusements of the isolated settlement. The reunion is not unlike that of the aged grandfather who assembles his children and his grandchildren, during the Christmas holydays, at his own festive board; and, by promoting general hilarity and exciting the buoyant mirth of his youthful descendants, adds thereby to his own happiness while he contributes to that of those who surround him.

The hour of eating approached, and was welcomed by the worshipful the Selectmen, "and all others in authority," as well as by the industrious clippers of wool and the gadders after amusement; who all sat down, as they could find places in the tents, and intermingled without ceremony. It may perhaps be a work of supererogation to inform the reader that, thus circumstanced, they fell to work upon a substantial and "glorious breakfast." To attack and demolish huge mountains of toast, vast broiled slices of the unequalled salmon caught by the Indians and brought in cars from the waters of the wild region of the Penobscot, cutlets

of veal, slices of mutton, ham boiled and peppered in various dark spots, and garnished at intervals with cloves, beefsteaks swimming in butter, the finest flavoured fish, which but an hour before were sporting in the sea, but which now appeared in the various garbs of "roasted, baked, and boiled, and brown:"—we say, to attack and demolish these comfortable appliances, and to wash them down with a strong mug of coffee or tea, was but the work of a few minutes; for the Americans are quick eaters, and the invigorating air and the morning's exercise had whetted the appetite of the multitude. And yet there was enough for all, and many baskets to spare, without the imputation of a miracle.

The savoury and hearty meal was further supplied, or we may say "topped off," with amazing quantities of a species of animal called by the islanders the "*Pooquaw*," and sometimes by the other Indian name of "*Quohog*." These are found in great numbers on the sandy shores of the island; and but for their great plenty in the northern parts of America, they would be esteemed a delicious luxury.

Lest we may not be well understood while we speak of the inimitable quohog, and by our obscurity engender doubts of its inexhaustible abundance, it may be well to inform the gentle reader and enlighten his understanding. Its aboriginal name, and that which it still holds in the oldest parts of America, is just as we have written it down. Nevertheless the "*quo-hog*" hath neither bristles nor tail, nor is it a quadruped, as its name would seem to import; but it is in truth a species of shell-fish, which naturalists, in the plenitude of their lore, denominate *bivalvular*. It is grievous further to say, in explanation, that its original and sonorous name, and that by which it is still known in Nantucket, has been made to yield, by the pestilent spirit of innovation in the Middle States, to the flat, insipid, and unsounding title of—the clam! Spirit of the erudite Barnes, the conchologist!—spirits of Sir Joseph Banks and Sir Humphrey

Davy!—spirit of the learned Mitchill!—could you not, in the course of your long and well-spent lives, hit upon a more expressive and euphonious jaw-cracker for the persecuted quohog than the abominable name of "*clam?*"

The manner of cooking the quohog in the most palatable way at the "*Squantums*" of Nantucket, as oracularly given out by the knowing Peleg Folger, was resorted to on this occasion, to eke out the foregoing meal. Even unto this day some of the eastern people adopt the same method to "stap the vitals" of the quohog, at their "roast-outs" or forest junketings. As to the peculiar mode of cooking, we adopt the argument of Peleg, even as he learnedly discussed the matter while arranging a bed of the aforesaid bivalvular shell-fish on the morning of the shearing. Imprimis:—The quohogs were placed upon the bare ground, side by side, with their mouths biting the dust. The burning coals of the camp-fires, which had done the office of boiling and broiling, were removed from under the cross-trees, where hung the pot and tea-water kettle, and applied plentifully to the backs of the quohogs. In a few minutes after the application of the fire, the cooking was declared to be at an end, and the roasting of the quohogs complete. The steam of the savoury liquor, which escaped in part without putting out the fire, preserved the meat in a par-boiled state, and prevented it from scorching, or drying to a cinder, and the whole virtue of the fish from being lost. The ashes of the fire were effectually excluded by the position in which the animal was placed at the beginning; and the heat as completely destroyed the tenacity of the hinge which connected the shells.

"And now," said Peleg, "take a few on thy platter; remove the upper shell, and apply a lump of fresh butter and a sprinkling of pepper and salt." Our blessings on thee, Peleg Folger! The morsel, if taken hot, might be envied by an eastern emperor, whose palate

is pampered by bird-nest delicacies—or by the exquisite gourmand of any nation. But, in America, who eats a clam or a quohog? None but the wise—and that includes a majority of the people; the fashionable, never—more's the pity!

"Just in time for the quohogs, eh?" exclaimed Peleg Folger, as, blowing like a porpoise, he ran his head under the tent of Jethro Coffin. "A meal without quohogs goes for nothing with me. But, minnows and mack'rel! as near as I can make it out, I've come behind the feast, and I'm in a fair way to have the quohogs served up without the meal; and it all comes of my running after the rascally ram that jumped over the shear-pen, followed by the other four-and-thirty imps of Sathan that the S'lackmen put under my charge to gather wool from. Cousin Miriam, a cup of thy tea,—ah, it's always the best on the island; where didst thou light on it, pray? A slice of that ham, Jethro—a little toast and a few of thy pickles, Miriam,—and then—I shall be ready for the quohogs. Whew! I'll just throw my coat on the bench, and hang my wig on the peg of the upright there. Now then for a morsel to stay my stomach. I hope thy tea is hot, Miriam, for I'm summat warm with running; and hot tea, thou know'st, cools one so nicely."

Thus warbled the musical Peleg, as, with the utmost *nonchalance*, he took possession of a seat at the board of Jethro. It was nevertheless no intrusion; he might have done the same thing with impunity at any other table on the common. His own tent, had he sought it among the many similar temporary shelterings, he would have found occupied by some of his neighbours and friends, who cared as little as himself where they sated their hunger or slaked their thirst. When both these had been reasonably appeased, and Peleg began to be afflicted with loss of appetite, he came to discover that other persons besides himself were in the tent; though Jethro and Miriam had made their escape, leaving Ruth

and Isaac to do the honours of the morning to Peleg. Between the pauses of slackening efforts at mastication, he found leisure to address himself to the persons present; for when not employed in eating it was painful to restrain his tongue.

"So, Isaac, thou hast found thy way to the shearin' again," said Peleg: "how didst thou relish the sea? rather sickish at the stomach once in a while, eh? Didst thou strike a whale, Isaac?"

"Besure I did," answered Isaac, with the proud bearing of a young whaler: "dost thou think I would be gone three years, and not use a harpoon on a whale?"

"But thou'rt quite young, Isaac, and hardly strong enough to do execution on a 'parmacitty."

"Young or old, cousin Peleg, I've done the deed more than once, and have fairly earned my share of the Leviathan's cargo."

"I warrant me," said Peleg, with a knowing wink,—"young as thou wast, thou hadst some damsel in thine eye, who told thee not to come back without killing a whale, under penalty of losing her favour. Thou hast heard of the female combination at Sherburne? Thy sister Ruth can tell thee all about it, and translate to thee the meaning of my words."

We must defer the explanation of the allusion here made by Peleg to the next chapter.

CHAPTER V.

The world is in pain
Our secrets to gain,
  But still let them wonder and gaze on:—
They ne'er can divine
The word nor the sign
  Of a free and accepted mason.

BURNS.

Lawyer. You have broken the thread of my discourse.
Cobbler. Wax it then.

Old Play.

WE have the best authority in giving the following details, which go to unravel the hint that Peleg gave at the conclusion of the last chapter, about a combination of women at Nantucket. We hope the reader will not skip over what we are now going to say, because he will find, hereafter, that it has an important bearing upon the actions of more than one character who will be found figuring in our veritable pages.

Peleg Folger no doubt alluded to an association of females which existed about this time, and perhaps still exists, at Nantucket, who had constituted themselves a secret society, after the manner of the Free-masons. Some of the male islanders had established a masonic lodge at Sherburne, under the belief that it would prove beneficial to them, while pursuing their profession abroad upon the seas. A striking instance of its utility had been quite lately experienced by one of its members, which, perhaps, more than any thing else, had contributed to the recent rapid growth of the fraternity.

A Nantucket captain of the race of the *Colemans*, as the records of the lodge inform us, sailing a colonial vessel,—or, in other words, an American ship under the British flag,—had been met at sea by a French cruiser. England and France,—those near neighbours, but inveterate hereditary enemies,—were then at war,—as indeed they had been, with but little intermission, for seven centuries or more. The colonial vessel was compelled to heave-to within reach of the Frenchman's guns, and the captain was commanded to go on board with his papers. With a desponding heart the American mounted the side of the man-of-war, expecting nothing but confiscation and imprisonment. As a sort of desperate resort, little dreaming of its efficacy in this instance, the Nantucketer carelessly made the mystic sign as he approached the French commander, who at once gave a recognition! and, instead of being turned over to the inferior officers of the ship, or left to amuse himself as he might while his papers were undergoing scrutiny, the Nantucket captain was courteously invited into the cabin, where a confidential intercourse was soon established between them, which ended in the dismissal of the American, with his papers untouched. A supply of fruit and wines had, in the mean time, been deposited in the boat alongside, by order of the generous Frenchman. As the American was handed over the side, with the neat and becoming ceremony of a man-of-war, his extraordinary host whispered in his ear—"Prenez garde à vous, mon capitaine:—Peut-être, si nous avons à faire ensemble une autre fois, vous ne me trouverez pas si bon enfant:—adieu!"

"Christmas!" exclaimed the Nantucketer, as he filled away; "if that *aint* an escape! Well, who would have thought it! I should have no objection to meet just such a chap once a week at least. So much for masonry: the women may gibe and jeer at me as much as they please when I get home; but if masonry can save a ship and cargo for my owners, and my own

precious body from the dungeons of a French Bastile, and get me three dozen of wine and a basket of grapes to boot, why, egad, I'm strongly tempted to believe there is more in it than a name!"

The impulse given to Free-masonry upon the island when this transaction became known, made the institution a favourite with all classes of the men, and especially with the seafaring portion of the inhabitants. The women, too, who in all ages have been supposed to be constitutional contemners of secrets and secret societies, abated much of their opposition to the masonic association; and some of them went so far as to urge their husbands to become familiar with its mysteries. But, out of this situation of affairs, a rival society sprang up among the women; and the tables of secrecy, with all the attendant winks, and nods, and significant looks, archly implying—"*we* know a thing or two," and "*we* understand,"—were retorted upon the men, with a laughable, and sometimes irritating effect.

The spirit of anti-masonry was thus abroad among the females of Nantucket; and it may hereafter furnish the subject-matter of grave disquisition for prying antiquarians in political matters, and lead to the discussion, if not the settlement, of the important question, whether the origin of the party called "*anti-masonic*," which now seeks to control the political destinies of some of the most populous states of our republic, may not be fairly traceable to the opposition first made to the institution by the Nantucket women; and not, as some imagine, to the abduction of William Morgan.

It was never fairly understood what were the secret obligations of these female masons; and it was even doubted whether they had any "secrets worth knowing,"—inasmuch as no important operations, either of good or evil tendency, were known to be put in practice in the little town of Sherburne, or to disturb the world at large. This much, however, came afterward to be divulged: an obligation, if not under the solemnity of

an oath or affirmation, was at least assumed by the novitiate under the charge of the officiating mistress, that she would favour the courageous whale-fisherman, under every circumstance, in preference to a stranger and a landsman, if the alternative should ever occur. The letter and the spirit of this charge were for a long time pertinaciously adhered to by the unmarried members; and some of them were known to carry it so far as to make it a *sine qua non*, in permitting the addresses of their suitors, that they should have struck their whale, at least, before the smallest encouragement would be given, or a favouring smile awarded as the earnest of preferment.

It has been shrewdly suspected that the chivalric ordeal thus enforced by the fair maidens of the isle was set on foot by some of the patriotic whale-fishermen and oil-merchants of the place, in order to perpetuate a nursery of peculiar seamen; while, in doing so, they were sure to secure valorous husbands, and a certain competency for their daughters, as well as a monopoly of the trade to the island. The intermarriage of so many whale-fishermen with the daughters of whale-fishermen, until almost all the inhabitants did, in reality, claim near relationship, and call each other "cousin," at all events would seem to point that way, and to favour the presumption. Certain it is, that the daughters of some of the wealthiest men of the island had already formed a compact not to accept the addresses of sighing swains, much less to enter into the holy bands of matrimony with any but such as had been on a voyage, and could produce ample proof of successfully striking a whale; and among the rest were Ruth Coffin,—a girl, as we have elsewhere taken occasion to observe, scarce sixteen years old,—and her bosom companion at school, the lovely and amiable Mary Folger, about her own age, and the daughter of our friend Peleg; who, with all his peculiarities, be it said, *en passant*, was a man of substance, and of good mercantile repute

It would seem, then, that the determination of his daughter Mary, or perhaps the general determination of the young females of the island, was familiar to Peleg, by the manner of his intimating to Isaac Coffin that, young as he was, he had sought the favour of some fair mistress by venturing to approach within striking distance of a whale. Certes, the saying of Peleg has carried us away from the natural flow of our discourse, and brought on this long episode, which, we hope, will be tolerated by the reader, as explanatory of Peleg's allusion in the last chapter, when bantering young Isaac in regard to his prowess. We will again take up the thread of the narrative.

"Nay, cousin Peleg, the sea is *my* mistress," answered the son of Jethro; "the girls do not trouble my head at all, I assure thee: but if they did, thou wilt acknowledge that I am duly qualified to make pretension?"

"Yea, verily; but, with all thy freaks upon the whaling-ground, I fear the damsels will question the growth of thy beard. Get me a platter of the quohogs, Isaac; and the butter also, and the pepper and salt likewise—there, thou mayst go now, and try the virtue of thy beard upon the cherry-cheeks of the young maidens—provided thou canst catch them."

Glad to escape from the service and annoyance of Peleg, Isaac forthwith departed to join the merry lads on the common, several of whom were his messmates in the Leviathan. Ruth still remained to keep him company, and to replenish his platter. It was now *her* turn to undergo a questioning; but she did not suffer the infliction with the most exemplary Christian fortitude.

"Ruthy, my dear, why art thou not upon the common with the other youngsters?" commenced Peleg.

"To speak the truth, cousin Peleg," answered Ruth, half-vexed by the prolonged meal of her tormentor, "I

should have been there long ago if thou hadst not made such desperate love to the quohogs."

"Ah, Ruthy, Ruthy, thou must not be so snappish with thy cousin Pillick. I've got so'thing to tell thee that will pay thee for waiting on me—a few more of thy nice quohogs, Ruthy. What dost think? While I was giving chase to that wayward and most 'cursed ram, I met two young strangers who had just landed."

"Didst thou measure the prints of their feet in the sand, cousin Peleg, as the Coofs* say we do those of all strangers?" asked Ruth, not being able to discover any thing particularly amusing in the twaddle of Peleg, and wishing to cut short the sitting which abridged her morning's ramble.

"Nay, child, I did not think of that; though I have done so before now, when I've seen strange tracks on the beach, in order to satisfy myself whether they were the steps of a new-comer or the prints of a new pair of shoes. For the matter of that, Ruthy, I know all the shapes of the neighbours' feet, and can easily find out by the impression in the sand who has been travelling. Some are long and slim,—some short and dumpy,—some turn their toes in, like our Indians,—some turn them out,—some make long steps,—and some, like thyself, Ruthy, mince their steps a little. Everybody has a peculiarity in the placing or the shape of the foot, which an observant man, like myself, can easily distinguish. But that is not what I want to tell thee, Ruthy. Listen now, wilt thou?"

"Well, cousin Peleg, I'm listening," said Ruth, as she sat down and prepared for a long story.

"Thou must know, then, that as I was chasing that 'tarnal ram, I met the two strangers."

"Thou hast said that afore, cousin Peleg," interrupted Ruth.

* "*Coofs*,"—"Off-islanders,"—or people living on the continent: a term of derision or reproach.

"Did I?—then thou'lt remember it the better for repeating. The two young strangers, seeing me hot foot in chase arter the infernal ram, stood stock-still ahead of the kritter. 'Stop that ram!' says I. 'I can't,' says one on 'em; 'I've got no stopper.'—'Turn him, then,' says I, '*turn* him!'—'He's *right* side out already,' says he. But the kritter *did* turn short about, notwithstanding; and, finding no escape, he bolted right at me!—so, in trying to avoid a punch in the stomach, I gave a spring into the air, and threw out my legs to let him pass through; but, wouldst thou believe it! instead of clearing the imp of Sathan, I landed stem to starn smack upon the back of the abomination! Off went my hat, and in it my best wig, that hangs on the peg yonder. 'John Gilpin, by Jove!' exclaimed one of the youngsters. 'You're right,' says the other—

'Away went Gilpin, and away
Went Gilpin's hat and wig.'

And then they both roared out in an unseemly horse-laugh at my misfortune. But who is that John Gilpin that they mistook me for? Dost thou know him?"

"Not I, as I'm a sinner!" said Ruth, convulsed with laughter at the picture of a flying Cupid which Peleg drew of himself.

Peleg now came to the conclusion that there must be something ludicrous in his misfortune, by its making everybody laugh who heard of the odd mishap; and, hastily betaking himself to his trotters, he retreated to his sheep-pen of "four-and-thirty imps of Sathan," which had been placed in his charge by the "S'lackmen." He stopped a moment at the entrance of the tent to don his coat and wig; and, like Grumio while consoling the "good Curtis," he took his leave with a significant shake of the head, and a determined rap upon the crown of his enormous drab sombrero, and muttered as he went—

"Thou'rt not over-mannerly, Ruth, to laugh so immoderately at my adventure with the ram. If thou hadst maintained a becoming gravity, I would have told thee more of the two strange gallants, which would have made thy ears tingle again; but, minnows and mack'rel! thy ears may itch with curiosity for a season, before I scratch them for thee!"

Ruth now departed to seek her companion Mary, with whom she had agreed to commence a tour of that sort of inquisitive inspection among the tents which of late years is better understood by the polished expression of "making a few morning calls;" or, in plainer phrase, prying into the domestic economy of one's neighbours.

The timely arrival of the Leviathan, and the recruits from the continent who had lately come to the island, contributed in no small degree to people the common, and to give life and animation to the scene. The broad plain, which on every other day in the year presented a quiet and uniform appearance, sprinkled with small droves of sheep and a few neats-cattle peacefully cropping the short grass, now showed unwonted signs of activity and gayety, mixed up with more or less of the bustling importance of the middle-aged, and the stalking gravity peculiar to the habits of the older inhabitants. The young men and maidens, in their gayest attire, began to mingle in groups on the plain, or to fill up the little two-wheeled cars, to take a drive round the circuit of the grounds marked out for the encampment.

The young men who had met Peleg Folger while in pursuit of the refractory ram had visited the island as total strangers, being enticed thither by the reputation of the shearing and the hope of beguiling a few hours among the throng. What sort of reception they should meet with did not give them any uneasiness. They were on the *qui vive* for pleasure and pastime, and they trusted to circumstances to make themselves acquainted with the "natives." Strangers, unheralded, were not

closely scrutinized upon occasions like the shearing; and it was sufficient passport to the hospitality of the friendly islanders, to come among them at a time like this simply with the appearance of respectability and civility of behaviour. The breeding of the strangers could not be gainsayed or questioned by any person except Peleg; and it appeared they had suffered but temporarily in his good opinion, as Ruth would have been presently informed, had she listened patiently and soberly to the detail of his rencounter with the pugnacious ram.

When they discovered that Peleg had been unceremoniously capsized by the horned animal, and that he lay motionless after his fall, they checked their ill-timed mirth, and hastened to his relief. Raising him carefully, and attempting to seat him upon the ground, they surmised that he had either been much frightened or considerably injured by the violence of the tumble, as animation was entirely suspended, and not the slightest indication of the pulse perceptible. The younger of the two, assuring himself of the condition of the patient by application of his fingers to the wrist, hastily drew a case from his fob, and thereupon, winding a ligature round the arm of Peleg, which had previously been stripped of its covering, he selected a lancet and made an incision in a vein. The blood flowed, and with it returned animation to the body of Peleg Folger. The bleeding was soon stanched, and the unfortunate man was well again. Falling in the loose and yielding sands, he had escaped bruises or wounds; and, as it happily proved, he had been only prodigiously frightened. Peleg felt no inconvenience from the loss of blood, which had been inconsiderable; and he rose up, adjusted his clothes, and brushed the sand from his coat and breeches, while his companions replaced his wig and hat.

"Friends, you are welcome to Nantucket," said Peleg, in a tone which evinced his solicitude to do the honours of the day and the place with dignity. "But,

pray, what is the matter? what has happened to me? I was but now astraddle of a runaway ram—"

"Yes, Mr. Gilpin—"

"Thou mistakest: my name is Pillick Folger."

"Indeed!" ejaculated the man of the lancet: "you so much resembled a friend of mine by the name of Gilpin,—'John Gilpin, of credit and renown,'—that I did not hesitate to call you by that name. But I beg pardon, Mr. Fogrum, if that be your title—"

"Pillick Folger, men call me, my friend."

"Your fall from the beast, Mr. Folger, was like to prove unlucky for us; for without you we should have been destitute of a responsible person to introduce us to your good people. We are told you make merry to-day on the island; and so, as we found you in rather a sad pickle, and in want of a little professional aid, while we at the same time were in want of a pilot, I made bold to drive a lance into a vein—you understand the rest."

"Thou art a physician, I s'pose? And yet thy red coat doth not betoken thy professional acquirements."

"I am, notwithstanding, a bit of a doctor, sir."

"And your friend here in the black coat is—"

"A limb of the law, sir," answered the doctor.

"A what?" asked Peleg.

"A lawyer, sir."

"And what sort of trade is that?" demanded Peleg, who had never heard of a lawyer before.

"It is an honourable profession, sir," said the doctor: "one that 'doth make the meat it feeds on,' and therefore a very economical and profitable trade, sir. It first makes mankind miserable, and then humanely puts them out of their misery; and thus it has the advantage over mine own humble profession, which is only instrumental in putting those out of misery who suffer under the dispensation of Providence. Pray, Mr. Folger, have you never heard of a land-shark among the deserts of Nantucket?"

"Nay, verily," answered Peleg, in the honest simplicity of his heart; "the animal, if it be one, hath never been found on these shores—but our mariners tell of a ravenous speshy of fish, which swims around the carcass of the whale when it lies by the side of the ship, and the people are slicing away at the blubber. Wo betide the misfortunate man that loses his foothold and slips into the sea!—he is seized in a twinkling by the greedy *man-shark!*"

"The *man-shark!*—that's the animal, sir—and a most dainty fish it is; man, and man only, is his prey. 'There be land-rats and water-rats,' Mr. Folger; and the man-shark is to the sea what the lawyer is to the land. Both lie in wait for the unfortunate man who loses his foothold—and then farewell to the poor devil!"

"And dost thou call the trade of thy friend *konourable?*" asked Peleg, casting a terrified glance at the law expounder.

"Nay, Mr. Folger," observed the man of sheepskin, "my friend the doctor is quite too severe upon the profession of which I have the honour to be a member. We are simply the agents who appear in the courts to settle controversies according to the laws of the land, and—"

"And, to gain your point," interrupted the doctor, "you strive to make the worse appear the better reason, and prove to us that white is black, and black is white. It is an easy thing, Mr. Fulcrum, for a lawyer of skill to whitewash a character that is darkly stained; and still easier to blacken one that is stainless. Have you none of the tribe on the island?"

"The 'Tucketers would have no use for such an animal," said Peleg.

"And how do you get along without such necessary evils? Have you no justices of the peace? Do you never quarrel upon Nantucket?"

"Of a verity, we do not quarrel," said Peleg, seriously; "and if at any time we have cause of differ-

ence, touching the straying of our sheep or the division of our oil, we choose our arbitrators and our umpires; and sometimes we go before our s'lackmen—"

"*Slack-men*—oh, I understand; they are the drones of the town, I suppose," observed the man of physic.

"They are chosen once a year, by the people, from among the wise and the upright," said Peleg.

"Good qualifications those: and does not King George send a magistrate or governor to lord it over you? Strange, that he should not have planted one of his minions or bastards here, to save you the trouble of thinking for yourselves! By-the-by, it would be difficult for so tender an exotic to thrive in this sandy soil of yours. Whew!—knee-deep, by Jupiter!"

The knight of the lancet, unused to the heavy sands of the island, now called a halt, to breathe a little; and Peleg continued:—

"As I was telling thee, sometimes we choose our arbitrators indifferently, and sometimes we go before the s'lackmen, whenever we differ among ourselves. Our nay is nay, and our yea is yea, always: the story is soon told—but no man ever forgets himself so far as to exaggerate; nor does he attempt to make white appear black, as thou say'st. We ask for no man to lay down the *law* for us: it is *justice* between man and man that we're arter. Why, minnows and mack'rel! it is not once a year we have an arbitration; and an expounder of the laws—psha!—he would starve among us—of a verity, he would not make salt to his porridge! As for justices of the peace, we have heard of *them*—nay, now I think on't, a justice did come over here once upon a time from the continent (we are under the government of the Bay Colony, thou know'st); 'Squire Thomas, I think they called him—but it's a long time ago, and I'm not sartin as to his name. Old Captain Macy, father of Seth Macy, who came home yesterday in the Levi-Nathan, lost a noble cow one day from the common, and it was thought wonderful strange what could ha'

come on her. We all gi'n her up for lost, and made up our minds that she had got drowned, or some sich thing, when, lo and behold! a neighbour of ours, Judah Swift, afterward Captain Swift, was fishing and digging for quohogs (we call them *pooquaws* sometimes) off the other end of the island one day, and what should he see but the identical self-same kritter that belonged to old Captain Macy, drinking in the edge of the water on the beach—the kritters love salt once in a while, thou knowest. Judah Swift knew her by her stumpy tail, and because one of her horns twisted down towards her eye. The old captain had sawed off the tip, thou seest, to keep it out of the eye, for in a month or so it would have steered smack into it—as it was, however, it made her squint pretty considerably. She was a famous cow, with a bag as yellow as gold—and that's always a sign of a good cow. What does neighbour Swift do but slip a knot over the cow's horns, and, arter hauling his boat upon the beach, he led her, nothing loath, towards home. He hadn't got a hundred yards, before a 'tarnal Indian—one of the tribe of lazy scamps on the island—came up and claimed the cow as his'n. Swift knew better; but as the Indian insisted on't, he untied her, and went back to his boat—well knowing that the kritter couldn't leave the island without the knowledge of the owner. Captain Macy went the next day, and demanded his cow; but the Indian still said she was his'n, and told a cock-and-a-bull story about dreaming for a cow—and how the Great Spirit had sent her to him. 'I'll spirit thee, thou thieving skunk! if thou don't spirit my cow back again,' said Captain Macy; but all would not do. So he went over to the continent for a justice of the peace and a constable, who soon settled the hash, and restored the cow to the captain; and then the 'squire ordered the constable to give the copper-coloured thief forty lashes save one, with the cat-o'-nine-tails. The whole tribe of Indians was called together on the common by the s'lackmen, to witness

the punishment of the offender, which old Tashima, the chief, said was just and right enough. But the captain begged the Indian off; and, arter he got him clear, he brought his cow up, and said to the fellow—'There, thou scoundrel—take her! I'll let thee know that justice can be had on the island! The kritter has been proved to be mine, and that's all I care about. Take her, and carry her to thy wigwam—but never steal thy neighbour's property again.' That Indian affair was the first and the last business that ever required the presence of Justice Thomas and the constable at Nantucket."

"Are there many Indians remaining on the island?" demanded the doctor.

"A hundred, perhaps, and all told," replied Peleg; "and they are pretty well managed by old Tashima, who preaches to them on the Sabbath, or First-day, and keeps a school for the little Indian children on the other days of the week. They are a poor, spiritless, thieving race, and abominably treacherous withal. To keep them from becoming a charge to the town, when they refuse to work for their squaws and papooses, the s'lackmen send them aboard the whale-ships, where they are compelled to earn a share of the cargo equal to that of any other mariner afore-the-mast. They possess a dogged disposition, and will endure much hard labour at sea without complaining. To be sure, they skulk a great deal; but, in pulling the oar in a whale-boat, when the eye of the mate or the boat-steerer is upon them, they do their duty well enough. Thou canst see, from this little elevation, the tops of some of their wigwams at Miacomet; and there is another settlement of the lazy varmints at Eat-fire. As thou art a stranger here (which one may well imagine by thy flaming dress), thou wilt be welcome at the hamlet; and, besides, thou wilt be amused by calling on the old chief, and inspecting for thyself the economy of the tribe."

CHAPTER VI.

No plumed cap was on his head—
  No sword was at his thigh—
And of the band which erst he led,
  Not one was standing nigh;
    His hour of pomp and pride was o'er,
    He was a battle-chief no more—
    His friends—his followers—were gone,
    And he was left to die alone!
Ah me!—it is a bitter thing,
When those to whom in joy we cling,
Forsake us in our withering!

MISS PARDOE.

PELEG FOLGER now hastened towards the enclosure of the tents upon the common, and introduced his guests to Mary, though with scant ceremony, by reason of not yet having ascertained their names. Of their quality he had, to be sure, already had a taste. The advantage of knowing Mary and the other inmates by name was all on their side; while they, without other titles, were introduced by Peleg simply as "friends" from abroad. Nevertheless, they received all the attention due to strangers from a hospitable people. The flock assigned by the selectmen to Peleg's management so thoroughly engrossed his thoughts, that, without waiting to break his fast, or to see his visiters well bestowed, he vanished from the presence of the lawyer and doctor immediately after their installation. An unavoidable detention at the shear-pen made it too late to return to his own tent in time for the morning meal; and therefore, taking advantage of the nearest opening, where the unremoved apparatus gave prospect of good cheer remaining, he darted, as we have already seen, into the tent of Jethro

Coffin, and solaced himself with the latter end of the feast, consisting principally of quohogs, or pooquaws.

Ruth Coffin, after the departure of Peleg Folger, overtook his daughter Mary on the plain, and found her, much to her surprise, under protection of the stranger visiters. It was incumbent on Mary, after the introduction by her parent, to make her guests acquainted with "the qualities o' the isle;" and accordingly, though under much restraint from the novelty of her situation, she undertook to show them the lions of the encampment. To relieve herself in part from the arduous task, she determined to seek out Ruth, and to request her to share the Herculean task of guiding the two young men. The damsels fortunately discovered each other midway on the common. To introduce the gentlemen properly was an affair of considerable moment; and how could it best be done? They were nameless, so far as the knowledge of Mary extended; and it was altogether a thing not to be entertained for a moment, to ask them for their titles. The introductions were accordingly made in the best way that suggested itself to Mary; and she simply mentioned the name of Ruth to her companions, and left the gentlemen to enlighten them both as to their own, if they chose. The doctor came opportunely to her relief, and observed that—

"As Mr. Folger had omitted to declare their names, when they had the happiness to be introduced to Miss Folger, he trusted they would pardon him for announcing his friend—Lawyer Grimshaw!"

"And, ladies," said Lawyer Grimshaw, taking the hint from his associate, "allow me to make you acquainted with my friend and companion—Doctor Imbert!"

The ceremonious starch of the little party was effectually destroyed by the oddness of the introduction; and a smile of good-nature lighted up the countenances of the whole. They were soon at home with each other; and the obligation seemed mutually imposed to utter

small talk, and to make the agreeable in a thousand little ways. Our heroes and heroines were so well pleased with each other, that the lapse of a few minutes only sufficed for the projection of a tour round the camp, and elsewhere, as circumstances might invite. The necessary arrangements were soon made; and now behold them seated in a calêche, jolting over the common, the gayest among the gay, nodding to cousin This, and saluting cousin That,—threading their way among the tents and sheep enclosures, and passing in their route the numerous merry groups collected at various points, or sprinkled at short intervals over the plain. A visit to the little village of Miacomet, or Indian settlement, then in sight, was proposed and agreed to; and from thence they wended their way to the main settlement at the spring of Eat-fire. While on the road a short historical account of the tribe was furnished by Mary to Imbert and Grimshaw.

The history of the aborigines of Nantucket is the history of every tribe in America; except that, in the instance before us, the withering influence of the whites was in nowise prematurely assisted by the intoxicating draught, "whose every ingredient is a devil." From the moment that the natives felt the ascendency of the "Yenghese," or "Yankees," on the continent, the spirit of despair, and the consciousness of inferiority, unnerved the red warrior, and prostrated his wild and savage nature. The presence of the whites seemed, of itself, to blast the Indian with mildew, and to seal up the source of procreation to his sable race. The command to "increase and multiply" applied no longer to the savage. A deep and abiding, though unwritten, curse appeared to rest upon them; it was the curse of inherent self-extermination—gradually, but surely, drying up the springs of prolific vitality, until the last vestige of Indian originality, and every lineament of the American aboriginal, should fade away into nothingness. The memory of the race is destined to be saved, if saved at

all, only by miracle. Already the flame flickers in its socket;—its fading rays linger only on the pages of romantic fiction. The night will come, and the sun will go down upon the Indian for ever! Even so let it be. They have ever shown themselves cruel and blood-thirsty, with scarcely a touch of humanity in their composition sufficient to redeem them from their native and indisputable brutality.

Relieving the horse from the calêche, and securing him among the tufts of wild bushes which grew near the Indian settlement at the spring, the little party proceeded cautiously to reconnoitre the neighbourhood—not wishing to intrude unceremoniously upon the domestic privacy of the inhabitants. This settlement consisted, perhaps, of a dozen circular huts, bearing the outward appearance of the Indian wigwam. The rudeness of the architecture was, however, by no means to be compared with that of the natives in the interior of America; for the intercourse of the tribe with their ingenious white neighbours had greatly improved their condition, and initiated them in many of the arts of civilized life. The wigwams were surrounded by small garden-patches, filled with culinary vegetables, whose neatness of cultivation was the more remarkable as being the work of the laborious squaws.

Near to the hamlet, the "Eat-fire Spring" of the Indian—a living fountain of the purest water—gushed forth from the sands, forming the source of a crystal stream, scarce a yard in width, which trickled over the white rounded pebbles of its bed, and finally found its way to the sea. Over this little "Diamond of the Desert" inclined the graceful branches of a single American willow, preserving, by its impenetrable shade, a refreshing coolness to the waters of the spring, at the same time relieving the monotony of the arid prospect, and forming, with the little bunches of wild shrubbery before alluded to, the scanty *oasis* of the surrounding desert.

It is worthy of a passing observation, that the springs and small water-courses of America are often adorned with clusters of the weeping-willow—than which nothing can be more appropriate, or more in keeping with the delightful coolness which one is apt to associate with the purity of a natural fountain in a sultry clime. The weeping-willow peculiar to this country is rapid in its growth, and, unlike most other trees, it does not need to be transplanted with the root. It is sufficient for its culture to insert a branch, or slip, in a moist soil, where it quickly takes root, and puts forth vigorous branches. It is, of course, mostly used for ornament, as the texture of its grain is not sufficiently close for many mechanical purposes. The body of the tree in a short time arrives at considerable magnitude; while its branches, numerous, slight, and flexible, droop over from the parent trunk, and fall, with graceful curves, towards the earth—sweeping it, almost, as they depend from the body, and kissing the bosom of the stream, as they wave gently to and fro in the wind. Among all the trees of the forest, or of the cultivated vales of America, there is not one so pleasant to look upon as the inimitable willow. There are those, it is true, that strike the beholder, by their extraordinary size or elevation, with awe and wonder; but none so agreeably and soothingly as the willow, or whose incomparable shade is sooner selected for reflection and repose.

On the margin of the little spring, and beneath the willow aforesaid, Mary and her companions were assembled in consultation, as to the best means of gaining entrance to the wigwams, and obtaining the favourable notice of the old chief. Most of the males of the tribe were assisting at the shearing, for which ample remuneration was promised by the whites. The huts were consequently solely tenanted by the squaws, who were busily engaged in their domestic concerns; while the old and benevolent chief, to whom all paid the greatest deference, had assembled the children of the hamlet at

the schoolhouse. Not a soul was stirring abroad of whom to make inquiries, or who could be secured as a guide for the party. It was finally determined that the doctor should pioneer for the whole; and he forthwith proceeded to explore the nearest hut. At the entrance he was arrested by a sight so unlooked-for that it fixed him to the spot in mute curiosity. Expecting to be greeted by the filthy remains of the last meal, or the stench of raw and uncooked meats and vegetables in process of decomposition, with dirty blankets strewed over the floor, and shared by naked papooses, grunting pigs, and ferocious dogs—Imbert was agreeably surprised and disappointed at the extreme neatness and exact order of the hut, so unlike any thing he had ever heard of as appertaining to an Indian wigwam. Against the partition, which separated the inner from the outer apartment of the wigwam, was erected a dresser, or a succession of pine shelves, white as soap and sand and the boonder could make them. On these were arranged, with the approved exactness of a thrifty and exemplary housewife, rows of vessels, consisting of mugs, pans, and platters, of tin and pewter—all glistening with a brightness that might have been coveted by the daintiest knight-errant of olden time, for the stainless polish of his steel armour. On the lower shelves were secured, in the same ambitious mode of display, upright and on their edges, wooden bowls and kids of red cedar, together with pails and buckets of native manufacture, vying with the metallic utensils in speckless exterior. A loom, at which the sole inhabitant was seated with her back to the entrance, occupied a recess in the apartment; and the process of weaving a species of cloth called "linsey-woolsey" (the making of which formed the first attempt at manufacturing of woollen in America) was going on. The noise of the machine prevented the female within from observing the approach of Imbert; but the tying or adjustment of a thread

requiring a pause in her labour, her visiter's presence within the apartment was discovered.

"*Aw-ooh!*" exclaimed the squaw, with a strong guttural accent, surprised by the sudden entrance of Imbert, whose dress and appearance were so dissimilar to those of the islanders. She rose quickly from her seat, and turning to Imbert, confronted him with a broad stare, which the unpractised physiognomist would have hesitated to designate as the glare of disapprobation, or the look of wonderment. Imbert, too, gazed for a moment at the bright vision of a handsome, well-formed Indian girl, now standing before him; but, lifting his hat and bowing courteously, he pointed to his companions beneath the willow, and asked for a cup wherewith to dip water from the spring. The request was understood, and instantly complied with. As she handed him one of the burnished pewter mugs from the shelf, the young woman spoke a few words in her native tongue, in a tone so musical and so different from the harsh salutation which had escaped from her when Imbert was first discovered within the hut, that he might well have mistaken it for the sweet undulation of the Spanish, when uttered by the soft voice of a Castilian maid.

Imbert retired with his glittering trophy, which he held up to the sun as he came towards the spring, exclaiming, in exultation, as he approached, that he "had never seen any thing so bright and beautiful before."

The eyes of Ruth and Mary met as the exclamation was made by Imbert, and an arch glance of peculiar intelligence passed between them. Their own habits of neatness and cleanliness prevented them from discovering any thing extraordinary in the brightness of the pewter vessel which he brought in his hand; and perhaps it would not have elicited any remark from Imbert, but for its unexpected association with an Indian wigwam, where a conch, or a rude horn drinking-cup at best, might have been looked for. The girls, however,

mistook, or pretended to mistake, the allusion of Imbert; and Mary "guessed" aloud, that "the doctor had been smitten with the *bright eyes* of Manta."

"Manta!" repeated Imbert.

"The same," answered Ruth. "The girl you have seen is the daughter of the old chief, Benjamin Tashima; and prides herself much in being the first woman of the nation."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Imbert. A dark thought entered his mind as he received the intimation of her parentage; and an embryo design was formed within him, which the arch fiend of hell only could have prompted.

"An Indian princess!" thought he; "she is the more deserving of my favour for being above the common herd, and I like her the more for pluming herself upon being the daughter of a chief. It is a sort of kingly paternity."

After slaking their thirst at the spring of Eat-fire, Grimshaw proposed that they should go to the wigwam in a body, to obtain, if possible, a closer inspection of the hamlet, and an interview with the aged chief, in whom, though unseen, he began to feel a deep interest. The Indian girl observed their approach, and received them with a grace and courtesy which, elsewhere, might have been looked for in vain among Indian women. A conversation commenced immediately between Manta and the girls, in a sort of *Lingua Franca*, in which a few English words were observable. But although Manta could not speak our language fluently, she knew enough of the tongue to convey her meaning in proper words; and the rest was easily supplied by her auditor. If she was not a ready speaker of English, she was the next best thing in the eyes of those who are given to the *cacoethes loquendi*—and that is, a good listener. She inclined her ear gravely and attentively while others spoke, and understood well the purport of what was said.

"Look!" said Imbert to Grimshaw, in an under-

tone; "here are the paraphernalia of a kitchen which might grace a drawing-room. Do you observe the neatness with which every thing is arranged? By Jupiter! the bright sun himself is scarcely more dazzling than the tin and pewter before us. I should like to take a peep into the rest of the establishment, to see whether the appointments of the inner temple answer to those of the vestibule. I'll wager a crown that she is like all the rest of womankind, and has a regular set of lumber-holes, in which to tuck away the duds and the dirt. I have always found women guilty of that hypocrisy; and you may be sure the best foot is now foremost."

The keen black eyes of Manta glanced repeatedly at the speaker, while she listened, or appeared to listen, to the prattle of the young women by her side. She had heard enough to gather the meaning of Imbert; or perhaps she judged by his gestures of what was passing between him and his friend. Approaching the aperture which led to the interior of the wigwam, she drew aside a curtain that served the purpose of a door; and, as she passed from their sight, the apartments became visible which overlooked the garden-spot behind. If Imbert was gratified with what he saw in the outer apartment, he was no less so with that exhibited within. A neat withdrawing-room, with a sleeping-closet on each side, was now subjected to the scanning of his critical eye. The furniture of the first was of that simple kind which a woman of good taste always knows how to select according to her station in life, and to arrange with becoming skill. There was none of that slovenly heaping together of the useful with the ornamental, nor the piling of ornament upon ornament, which betrays vulgarity of taste. There was but little of the Indian garniture about the wigwam. The only things which in any way betrayed the nationality of the indwellers were an ancient calumet, or council-pipe, crossing the stem of a rude arrow, tipped with a sharp angular piece of semi-transparent stone; and both were secured

against the slight ceiling over the mantelpiece. These relics were the fabric of a powerful tribe, then almost extinct, which more than two hundred years before had exercised sovereignty over the island of Nantucket; and indeed they were the chief naval power of the northern and eastern tribes. Their canoes were the largest and most numerous of any nation at the north, and their warriors the most athletic and skilful. No war among the tribes upon the main was entered upon without seeking their alliance, and no peace was agreed to without their concurrence.

Manta, the last representative of the princesses of the tribe, now appeared in the passage between the rooms. She had adjusted her dress, and placed a smart bonnet upon her head, and signified that she was ready to conduct her visiters to her father. Lingering for a moment in the doorway, with somewhat of indecision in her manner, her pride, or her vanity, which had been piqued by the curiosity of the gentlemen, induced her to invite the party to look at her garden; in doing which they necessarily passed through the inner room we have spoken of. The curtains of the sleeping apartments were drawn aside; but whether accidentally or purposely was not apparent. A glance sufficed to show that the beds were covered with sheets and counterpanes of incomparable whiteness, a little turned down from the equally snow-white pillow. The arrangements for making the toilet were also in every thing complete. The covering of the earthen floors throughout was woven of the broad flag-leaf found in all swampy grounds. The pale-green colour of the carpeting lighted up and relieved the different apartments from much of that sombre appearance which a floor of heath or of well-trod earth would naturally present.

Passing into the little garden, the same neatness was observable in the arrangement of the beds, and the training of the bushes and vines. It was yet too early for fruits or flowers in any great variety; but it was

evident that both would be forthcoming in their proper season. An arbour, too, had been erected, which in due time would derive its shelter from the green leaves of the prolific hop-vine. And who had done all this? The youthful Manta, with but very little aid from her father. Her taste and her economy were patterns for both of the Indian villages of Miacomet and Eat-fire, and they were not without a salutary influence. Every Indian family had its culinary garden, and its improvements upon the uncomforts of Indian rudeness.

Imbert and Grimshaw were observed to stoop, from time to time, and to gather up from the beds and pathways a number of small stones of an unusual shape. They had noticed the same remarkable stones in various parts of the island: some they had found turned up in the furrows of the ploughed common, where immense fields of the Indian corn had been planted; others they had seen exposed on the surface of the sandy roads as they progressed about the island. The shape was entirely different from the small granitic masses, or globules, that are invariably found mixed with the sands of the sea-shore, or with the soil of the contiguous upland—which, from such appearances, may be supposed to have been once washed by the sea. The little stones which excited the curiosity of the visiters were evidently of a sllicious nature, sharpened like the modern gun-flint, with a thin triangular appearance, and sometimes with a stem projecting from the side opposite to the sharpest angle.

"What can these be?" asked Grimshaw.

"Egad! I was about asking the same question myself," replied Imbert; "I have a handful of them here, that are as nearly alike as one pea is like another. From these indications, I imagine the soil of the island, which is not reputed over-rich at any time, must have been occasionally manured with a cargo of gun-flints! They can scarcely be the *débris* of the island rocks, for I have not seen a large stone in all the land."

"Perhaps the young lady with the brown skin can tell us," observed Grimshaw. "They may be Indian ornaments, or Indian antiquities. Pray, do you know the origin of these 'queerities?'" demanded he, addressing himself to Manta.

"They were the arrow-heads used in the wars of my ancestors!" answered she, while her dark eyes flashed and her form dilated. The words and the manner were not lost upon her auditors.

"She answered you like a queen!" whispered Imbert to Grimshaw; "at it again, and bring her out—will you?"

"No," replied Grimshaw; "she has already spoken volumes in that little sentence; and I would not destroy the impression it has made upon me by further converse. It was indeed spoken like a queen."

"Let us on to her father, then," said Imbert; and they moved from the garden.

We cannot say why it is, but since our arrival at years of maturity we have never entered the doors of a schoolhouse with pleasurable feelings. We have, moreover, doubted the truth of that verse of Thomson which pronounces "teaching the young idea how to shoot" a "*delightful task*." Depend upon it, there are not five schoolmasters in America who will agree with him. The sensations of a faithful teacher of youth are any thing but delightful, when he quits his stifled schoolroom, at the close of a hard day's mental and physical labour. If he feels delight at all, it is because he has seen the last boy depart; and because he looks to the short interval of repose which succeeds as to a blessing. Do the pale, attenuated features of such a man speak of the pleasures of his calling? Does the hand convulsively pressed upon the bosom, as he leaves his refractory charge to rest his "listless length" at home, betoken the delights of buoyant health? What candid man will say that the task is a pleasant one, who has witnessed the deep anxiety of a teacher as he endeavours, but

with small success, to inculcate the truths of morality and science upon the minds of the stupid, or the perverse, or the inattentive? And then, after his conscientious duties are most scrupulously discharged, who but the teacher can tell of the ingratitude of children, the querulousness of unthinking and unreasonable parents, or the tyranny and pretension of ignorant or self-sufficient trustees! With all these the teacher has to deal—all these he must contrive to satisfy—and for what? For a paltry stipend, grudgingly yielded, that in nine instances out of ten will hardly keep soul and body together. It is thus, however, that this species of talent is rewarded in many parts of America: yet, while teaching is looked upon as one of the learned professions, the professor himself is rated in society below his employer, and his emolument is that of the veriest slave. The station and the salary of the priest are princely, when compared with his; and the income of the lawyer and the doctor, who batten upon the miseries and misfortunes of mankind, places them above the reach of want, while their titles alone are passports to refined society. But while these flourish in sunshine, the poor contemned pedagogue—who should be "right honourable," and above them all—ranges below zero, and perishes in the bleak shade. We cannot imagine any thing more beneficial to society, or deserving higher consideration, than the labours of the faithful man who devotes himself to the cultivation of the youthful mind, and prepares it alike for social intercourse with the world and for immortality hereafter. It rests with the schoolmaster—as everybody will acknowledge—to bend the twig in the way it should incline. What a pity, then, that in a country where intelligence is the best safeguard of its liberty, the "schoolmaster," as he walks "abroad" (to quote the words of Henry Brougham—that greatest of men, and the firm friend of schoolmasters), should not be fully appreciated, and fostered with kindly care by all the people! But, gentle reader,

as the world *now* goes with us, and honourable as we deem the labour, may Heaven preserve both you and us from engaging in that

> "Delightful task!—
> To teach the young idea how to shoot!"

May it keep us, now and for ever, from that profession, whose every classical recollection, how beautiful soever (as we have elsewhere seen it better expressed), is marred by some scene of sighs and tears, or painfully associated with images of perversity, ugliness, ingratitude, and contumely!

With this short sermon at the threshold, let us enter the humble Indian schoolhouse. The introduction of the strangers was made by Manta to the venerable Benjamin Tashima; and they were at once struck with his dignified manner, and the commanding intelligence of his features. There was very little in them, except the swarthy colour of the skin, which betrayed the Indian. But for this, and the prominent cheek-bones, and the deep-sunken eyes, the *caste* would not have been discoverable. Though of the true breed, and in his youth a wild ranger of a continental forest, subsequent education, and conformity to the habits of civilization, had wrought an agreeable change in his person and demeanour. He had been long looked up to as the father of the tribe, which was now a fast-fading remnant. The last children of the race were before him; and, like a good man and a good Christian, he was endeavouring to smooth the way of their destiny. He was their lawgiver, their preacher, and their schoolmaster. He inculcated, both by precept and example, sound morality and the religion of the Saviour of mankind. He was honest and benevolent, charitable and humane. His people loved him, and feared his displeasure. By his persuasion, the bane of the Indian race was banished from the little hamlet, and a drunkard was only seen at long intervals. Industry was encouraged, and always

met with its reward. It is difficult, however, to change the skin of the Ethiopian; and it did sometimes happen that the dogged and loose propensities of the Indian would break forth as of yore. Sullen laziness, drunkenness, petty theft, and cowardly violence—inherent qualities of the race—would prevail for a time among a few of the more dissolute; but the correcting hand of the old chief was instantly laid upon them, and the salutary discipline of the whale-ship was their punishment. A long life of vigilance and kindness he had devoted to the tribe: seventy winters had already passed over the head of the venerable Tashima, and he had in the time seen generation after generation of his people pass away. His red companions had dropped one by one around him, and none came to supply their places. The good old man felt melancholy at the sure indications of withering decay, which had caused his people to dwindle to a mere handful of the once terrible lords of the American forest, leaving him to stand—solitary and alone, without the prospect of succession—like the riven and mutilated trunk where the blasting hurricane had been busy. The LAST CHIEF of a once great and powerful nation was here; and but little more than half a century was destined to see the total extinguishment of the island race!

A portion of the industrious life of Tashima had been devoted to study; and he had succeeded, with infinite labour, in adapting his literary acquirements to the language and capacity of his tribe. He had nourished the vain hope of preserving the nation without a cross in its blood, and the language of his people in its pristine purity. It was a magnificent conception! The design was worthy of the last, as he was the greatest, chief of the tribe. He was the last, because none succeeded him; he was the greatest, for he was the most benevolent.

Seated before him, in his little wigwam schoolroom, were some twenty Indian boys and girls. A gleam of

intelligence shot from their dark eyes, which spoke nothing of the savage glare that is so remarkable a trait in the wild Indian when agitated or enraged; and it was equally unlike his stupid, lack-lustre eye when at rest. It was plain that "the schoolmaster had been abroad" among the tribe. Each of the little urchins was provided with a convenient board, upon which a paper had been pasted, containing numerous combinations of words in the Indian tongue. These were illustrated by sensible signs or pictures. This method of delineation was an elaboration of a mode of expression already in use among the tribes of the interior, who, in all their treaties with the French and English, and, of later years, with the United States, drew, for their signature, the outline of some animal, or other object, which they had adopted for their title. Thus, the "*Black Hawk*," whose depredations upon our frontiers, with less than five hundred followers, have recently called forth the merited chastisement of our government (in a campaign which has cost us more than two millions of dollars, and a sacrifice of two men for every live Indian), makes his mark by the strong outline of a pouncing vulture; the "Great Snake," by a coiled viper, &c. It may be apposite here to remark, that Bell, the contemporary and successful rival of Lancaster, took the hint of his plan from an inspection of similar modes of conveying instruction in India, where the pictorial method of teaching has been in use time out of mind.

The characters adopted by Tashima for the instruction of his pupils were, in addition to his pictures, the Roman letters; and the alphabet, so far as it was necessary for conveying Indian sounds, was substantially the same as our own. The combinations of letters were, however, quite remarkable, and exhibited frequent groupings of the vowel sounds. The letter O, in duplicate and even triplicate consecutive arrangement, frequently occurred in the lessons, and was perceptible in

the deep guttural sounds which predominated in the language of Tashima. The utterance of the Indian is slow, but by no means sonorous or agreeable; yet the voice of the female, when giving vent to feelings of admiration or of pleasure, will sometimes ascend into a modulated *alto*, that falls quite musically upon the ear.

Tashima's numerous books and lessons were all in manuscript; and it is to be regretted that the printer was never called in to aid in their preservation.* They would have furnished delicious *morceaux* for the literary wranglers and philologists of the present day; but at the time we write of, a printing-press was unknown at Nantucket. Even in Boston, which some of its people insist upon calling the "Literary Emporium," that persevering printer Benjamin Franklin could scarcely find support for his little "Weekly News-Letter."

There are a few aged people still living at Nantucket and elsewhere, and we might include the gallant admiral to whom these pages are dedicated, who remember the old chief Tashima, and will attest that there is but little romance in the faint outline here given of his occupations. But his efforts were all in vain! The aged patriarch, after a well-spent life, was shortly gathered to his fathers. Although full of years, and ripe for translation, his death was no doubt prematurely hurried on by a melancholy event connected with this history, and in which one of the characters already introduced to the reader had but too intimate a participation. The generation he had undertaken to instruct grew up, and forgot the knowledge he had imparted. Their parents, no longer under his wholesome restraint, soon relapsed into the beastly habits of the Indian; the loom and the

* Since the above was written, the editor has learned that the Massachusetts Historical Society has preserved a translation of a portion of the Bible in the Indian tongue, which was used at Nantucket in the time of Tashima. It is most probably a translation by Eliot, the missionary, and was in fact the first Bible printed in America.

spinning-wheel were cast aside, and intemperance and abject poverty and destitution succeeded to sober and industrious habits. A few years more, and every vestige of the race must become extinct! A solitary Indian, claiming kindred with nobody living, still wanders over the island, and must shortly sink into the nothingness of his fathers. But shall the memory of Benjamin Tashima, the virtuous and the good, be also buried in oblivion? The pages of a tale like ours are too ephemeral to warrant that it will prove otherwise. It is to be hoped that some permanent memorial will preserve to posterity the estimable name of Tashima; for no man better deserved to have his virtues emblazoned in monumental marble.

The example of such a man—such an Indian, if you please—is worth more to posterity, and, the philanthropist will say, should be dearer to it, than all the savage glories of a thousand Philips or Tecumthês, whose claims to admiration rest upon countless deeds of blood and rapine, and a very questionable valour displayed in the slaughter of women and children. May God forgive the uncharitableness! but of such a race of miscreants we are almost ready to say, "Perdition catch their souls!" as, like the ghosts of Banquo's line, the red visions of their cruelties rise up before us. But to the manes of such a truly godlike Indian as Benjamin Tashima, we would say with fervour—

REQUIESCAT IN PACE!

CHAPTER VII.

So withered and so wild in her attire,
Who stopped their way upon the blasted heath,
With strange prophetic greetings.
* * * * * * * *
Ye black and midnight hags!—What is't ye do?

Macbeth.

It's all done by shuffling and dealing!

Tom and Jerry.

On leaving the Indian schoolroom, the guests returned with Manta to her paternal wigwam, where they partook of some slight refreshment which she voluntarily provided; and then, proceeding together to the fountain, they drank again from the waters of the spring of Eat-fire. The day was now past its meridian, and they set out to return to the dwelling of Jethro Coffin. The little Indian village was still in sight, though at considerable distance, and their new route, which was taken by a circuitous path, lay in the direction of a miserable hut, standing alone in the midst of dreary sands. It might easily have been mistaken for the deserted hovel of some poor fisherman; or, as is most likely, it was one of those ancient huts which skirt the sea-shore, erected by the humane islanders, at intervals of a mile upon the coast, for the reception and shelter of shipwrecked mariners. Not the least sign of vegetation grew near it, and in every thing it was the opposite of the carefully-repaired wigwams and neat garden-patches of the Indian hamlet. Like the Upas, it seemed to have blasted by its presence every green blade of grass and every shrub for half a mile round it; and nothing could

be more desolate and forbidding than its cheerless look. In the doorway stood the tall, bony figure of a woman apparently past the middle age. Her tattered dress and haggard features betrayed her extreme poverty, and marked her for the tenant of this abode of wretchedness. Long and coarse black hair, high cheek-bones, and swarthy complexion, bespoke her Indian origin; and yet the lack of the squat figure, and the waddling gait, and the total absence of the parrot-toed planting of the foot, showed plainly enough that the breed was spurious. It was owing perhaps to this circumstance that she was disowned by the tribe of Indians as well as by the whites. Certain it was she could find fellowship with neither. An outcast in the midst of society, she wandered over the island, a poor, neglected object; sometimes subsisting upon charity, and at others gaining for herself a scanty meal by an idle profession, which was far from being reputable in the eyes of the ever-busy and industrious islanders. In process of time Mother Quary came to be the terror of all naughty children, and was looked upon as but little better than a dealer with the evil one. Her fame as a successful fortune-teller had of late received considerable accession; inasmuch as she had told Jerusha Starbuck where her long-lost silver spoons had been mislaid through excessive carefulness; and she had predicted good fortune and a safe return to several of the crew of the Leviathan. Some of the thoughtless, or superstitious, had even ascribed to her an interposition in saving the ship during the late terrible storm—as she was seen wandering on the beach beneath the cliffs at nightfall of the day previous to her arrival, drenched with rain, and muttering strange words; while ever and anon she stopped and made fantastic gestures as if commanding the sea. She had, moreover, gained great credit with Peleg Folger, who had the misfortune to lose a pet sheep, which she was the means of recovering, by pointing in the direction where it might be found. It was

found, sure enough, in a sort of deep pit-hole, originally excavated by the island sportsmen, or gunners, for concealment from their game, and into which it had accidentally fallen, and was unable to extricate itself. But whether her wandering mode of life had made her better acquainted with the by-places of the island than Peleg, and had suggested the pit-fall as the most likely place to find the animal, does not appear.

Under all these circumstances, and possessing much natural shrewdness and ingenuity, which had been sharpened by poverty and neglect, it is not wonderful that Mother Quary should have made up her mind to prey upon the community that had cast her forth from its bosom; nor that she should lay to the charge of that same community all the sin of her practices of deception.

"Live she must—and live she would!"—she was heard to exclaim, as she screwed her mind up to the necessity of making hay while the sun shone, by taking advantage of her rising fame; and in truth she might well have uttered in her wrath, had she known the text,—

> "Since the Heavens have shaped my body so,
> Let Hell make crook'd my mind to answer it!"

"What scare-crow is that?" demanded Imbert of the girls, as they approached.

"It is the fortune-teller—poor Judith Quary," answered Ruth, with a touch of pity in her tone.

"*Sancta Maria!*" exclaimed Imbert; "I thought she looked like a dam of Satan. See, she holds out her hand; I suppose we must stop and cross her palm, or she will send after us one of her blessings, seething hot from the caldron of Beelzebub."

The calêche was accordingly halted before her door, and Imbert and Grimshaw assisted the young ladies to alight.

"Your sarvant, gentles!" said Judith, as she dropped a courtesy to her visiters; "I knew you would not be

likely to go past without stopping to notice poor Judith. A busy day this on the common!"

"How comes it that you are not at the shearing?" asked one of the gentlemen; "there are some good pickings there for you, Mistress Quary: you are too modest by half, to conceal your attractions at home, on such a day as this."

"Ah!" said the hag, "you don't understand looking into the stars as well as I do, or you would discover that the proper place for me to-day is here at home. This is the receipt of custom on such a holyday as this. Those who wish to see me do not like to have their destiny foretold before a crowd of people: they'll all be along directly, gentle and simple, to speer out their fortunes, I warrant ye."

"I dare say they will," observed Imbert; "but the Selectmen and you are no great friends, if I have heard aright; and I'm told they interfere with the regular course of your vocation."

"May my curses light on them for it!" grumbled the fortune-teller, "and on you too for your taunt, ye viper!"

"What do you say?" asked Imbert.

"My prayers for the prosperity of the Selectmen," said the sibyl, aloud.

"Prayers indeed! Do you say them forward or backward?" demanded he, with a sneer.

"Why, that's just as suits the time and my humour," answered she; "but the day *you* commence saying them, there will be a man less in this breathing world."

"Fairly hit," said Imbert; "but a truce with bantering. Come, give us a taste of your trade; there is a piece of silver for you. Be at it quick, old 'un—tempus fugit—out with your glasses and tea-cups, and all the rest of your jack-o'-lantern flummery."

"I must shuffle the cards first," said the woman. "Did you talk about the *jack-of-lanterns*, sir?" continued she, with affected simplicity: "I sometimes turn up *jack* when I deal the cards, but I have none with *lanterns*

on them; nor do I remember ever having seen any with that device."

"I suppose not; for such folks as yourself, old mother, have very little to do with the *lights* of knowledge: I take you to be one of the tribe who prefer the darkness rather," observed Imbert.

"Well, well; come in, and you'll see," said the hag, not altogether pleased with some of her guests. She had seldom dealt with those who spoke and acted so boldly and familiarly with her as Imbert. "Come," she continued, pointing to several dilapidated benches; "sit down round the table, while I close the shutter and shuffle the cards. Who cuts?"

"Oh, no matter who," said Imbert, impatiently; "there—the pack is separated;" and he slapped the portion he held in his hand down upon the table with a force and quickness that startled his companions.

"How you frightened me, doctor!" exclaimed Ruth, as she almost jumped from her seat. Every thing within the darkened hut looked so gloomy, and she had heard so much of the necromantic skill of the fortune-teller, it was not to be wondered at that she did not altogether feel at ease.

"A doctor!" thought the old woman, as Ruth repeated his title; "I wonder who the other is? Never mind—I'll give them a 'screed o' doctrine' at a venture."

"By-the-by, Grim, what is the penalty of the law which the wise ones of your profession award to the fortune-telling tribe? Don't they condemn them for witches in Connecticut?" asked Imbert, carelessly.

"A man of the law too!" exclaimed Judith, mentally: "I am highly honoured truly. A lawyer and a doctor, forsooth! They give pain and trouble enough in their day and generation to us poor bodies:—it's *my* turn now; and if I could only contrive to scare them—"

"I believe," said Grimshaw, "they bind them hand and foot in the Connecticut colony, and throw them into a horsepond; where, if they sink, it is proof of their

innocence; but if they swim, it is proof positive against them. In either case they get a passport to the other kingdom."

"A wise law—that of the blue-bottles!" said Imbert; "that's what you and old Coke-upon-Littleton would call a 'contingent remainder, with a double aspect,'—a sort of two-edged sword, cutting right and left. I've heard of the 'glorious *uncertainty* of the law;' but I suppose the horsepond cooling may be quoted as a worthy sample of the *certainty* of its punishment. But what is the old woman about? Deal me a good trick, my good dame, and spell me out a fair fortune, or I'll have you transported to Connecticut, and punished for suspicion of contumacy of the laws and a bad translation of my fortunate horoscope. Come—begin!"

"There!" said the fortune-teller, dealing the cards to each individual, with the backs uppermost; "and now be silent!"

"The cards are dealt, and the fortune sped,
And weal or wo be on thy head!"

"Come! that's something for our money," said Imbert; but, without regarding him, the fortune-teller placed the cards more carefully against the rim of the little round table, opposite to each person; and, waving a wand, the top of the table began slowly to move on its centre. Presently it acquired an accelerated motion, of such swiftness that the bunches of cards became indistinct, and finally seemed to form a continuous marginal belt of white. During this surprising manœuvre, which, in such a place, could only be accounted for upon the principle of Redheiffer's perpetual motion, or the automaton chessplayer of Maelzel, the fortune-teller continued to wave her wand, and to chant in a measured cadence—

"Tell now, ye fates,
What doom awaits:
And silent speak,
To those who seek
To win your favour here.

Turn—turn again!
On!—circling plane!
* * * * * *
Cease—cease ye now:—
Come weal, come wo—
Appear!—Appear!—Appear!"

The motion of the board gradually became less rapid, until, as the chant ceased, the card-packs again rested opposite to those who were sitting round the table. A deep curiosity, approaching to solemnity, began to take possession of every mind. The woman now continued her incantation, which she delivered with impassioned *onction*, while she pointed upwards with her wand; in which direction she also turned her deep-set eyes, that glowed like balls of fire in the gloom of the chamber:—the spirit of prophecy was come upon her.

"Ye spirits of the upper air,
And ministers of earth and sea,
To these weak mortals lend your care,
And their sure fortune tell to me!
Give me to know their various fate,
Or smooth or checkered here below;
Protect the good—and turn your hate
On such as merit only wo!—
The cards are dealt, and the fortune sped!
Come weal, come wo,
Appear! Appear! Appear!

Mother Quary, as she repeated the last words of her wild invocation, took up the cards from before Imbert, and examined them attentively. He began to feel less at ease than when he first encountered the fortune-teller; he tried to smile as usual, but it was a faint effort, and he did not succeed. A superstitious awe had crept over him. So much for the effect of the *manner* of the fortune-teller. Manner is every thing; matter comparatively nothing. Nobody could possibly believe less in the power or prescience of fortune-tellers than Imbert; yet now he was painfully listening to what fell from the lips of the half-breed Judith Quary. She fixed her

fierce eyes upon his countenance, but the colour had fled from it. In an impromptu she thus "redde" the stars to him:—

"With the eagle's soar thou'rt aiming high—
But the dazzling sun shall pain thine eye:
When with wearied wing thou tri'st to fly,
And thou seek'st some friendly haven nigh,
Then, no resting-place shalt thou descry,
And thy fondest hopes shall droop and die!—
Like to passion's slave I see thee yield,—
And the sullied spot comes o'er thy shield!"

"Enough! enough of that!" exclaimed Imbert; "in Heaven's name, pass on to the next!"

"Have I brought you down, my lark!" mumbled Judith between her teeth; "a prick of a lancet, sharp as your own, will bring health to you, and mend your manners, my jeering gentleman!" She cast the cards into the centre of the table, and took up those before Grimshaw. A moment's reflection, while looking at the cards, enabled her to send another harpoon in the direction of the lawyer. She continued thus, and was listened to with breathless attention by her auditors:—

"Slow draws the curtain from my sight,
And dreamy mist obscures the light;
Dimly shines out thy natal star,
That looks o'er shadowy forms afar!
The cloud clears up!—I see thee now,
With deep design upon thy brow!
Thy struggling victim, too, is there—
Thy hand is grappled in her hair!
Another form, with matron zone,
But heart within as cold as stone,
Stands gazing, passionless, while thy
Victim begs in her agony
For help!—Where is that loved one now
Who should redeem his plighted vow?
Lo, there!—the monster's gaping jaws
Show a deed of blood,
Far,—far o'er the flood!
* * * * * *
The sickening heart has need of pause."

Without waiting to notice the effect of this upon the stolid Grimshaw, Judith snatched up the remaining

cards, which had fallen to the lot of Ruth and Mary, and, seemingly absorbed in her prophetic vision, hastily glanced at them, and proceeded:—

"See the cypress wreath, of saddest hue,
The twining destiny threading through;
And the serpent coil is twisting there—
While, regardless of the victim's prayer,
The fiend laughs out o'er the mischief done,
And the canker-worm makes the heart his throne!"

A scream from Mary, as the door of the hut slammed to with a startling noise, and shut them up in total darkness, cut short the further experiment of the fortune-teller. The young women rushed out, followed by Imbert and Grimshaw, nothing loath. In a moment afterward they were seated in the calêche, and driving rapidly away from the fortune-teller.

"There they go," said Judith, as she looked after them with her gaunt form half-projected from the doorway of the hut; "there they go, like frightened wild-fowl on the wing; and a precious fortune I have foretold for them! They will not soon forget old Judith Quary, I trow. Out upon ye, fortune-hunting knaves as ye are! I pity the poor young things of girls there, if they have any thing to do with you! Jethro Coffin and Peleg Folger had best look after their daughters, while such ill-favoured sharks as they are prowling about the island. I should be loath to predict harm to the gentle young creatures, they are always so kind to me, when I am hungry and cold; but it did almost seem to me that my words would prove prophetic. I saw it all as plain as day, and—it's wonderful to think on't—I never had so little trouble to make rhymes before! Well, well; I am but an humble instrument in the hands of Him who created all things; and, sinful as I am, I may have been chosen to speak the words of fate. Poor things, how they trembled, and turned pale with affright! Ah, here comes 'other-guess' company, who will take every thing for granted I choose to tell them,

in plain prose, without cudgelling my poor brain for verses."

The hut of the fortune-teller was soon filled with idle lads and lasses, who came to have their fortunes told; and Judith received money enough, in the course of the day, to place her above want and the fear of the Select-men for half the year to come.

"How that old hag made my flesh crawl!" exclaimed Imbert, as he slackened the rein to let the horse breathe; "and, faith, she made tolerable verses too. She's a shrewd thing! I thought she would but look at the lines in one's hand, or turn a teacup, or the like, to give colour to her trick; and then tell us all a good story about prosperous journeys, pleasant voyages, happy matches, and so forth; but, blast the old shrivel-skin! she made me fly in the air, like Noah's dove, without a resting-place, and then gave me a bad name—a spotted escutcheon—bad luck to her! By-the-by, Grim, she gave you a heavy wipe too; something about seizing a victim by the hair, and so forth."

"What a dreadful verse she told over for us!" said Ruth to Mary. "Ugh! my blood runs cold when I think of it."

"Let me console you with the butt-end of an epigram," said Imbert; "it is applicable to all rhyming fortune-tellers, and others who derive their poetic license from his satanic majesty. It runs thus:—

> '——The gods in blank verse rule the skies,
> While in *rhyme* speaks the father of *lies!*'"

"God grant she may have shadowed forth nothing but lies," observed Mary; "but the fearful woman sent a withering chill to my heart, that I am sure can be equalled only by the icy coldness of death!"

The business of the shearing was now nearly over, and most of the islanders, with their guests, began to wend their way into the town, and the flocks of sheep, shorn of their fleece, to scatter freely over the extended

common. Ruth pointed out the house of her father to Imbert, and he accordingly drove up to the door; where the calêche and the animal were discharged for the remainder of the day. Imbert and Grimshaw were introduced to Jethro and his wife, and were received with that quiet welcome of hospitality which is characteristic of the people. An early tea soon made its appearance upon the table; after which the young ladies retired to make preparations for an evening's amusement, of a kind which is never enjoyed by the Quaker youth except by stealth, and after great precaution, and dexterous hoodwinking of parents.

While Ruth and Mary were making their toilet, Jethro and Miriam set themselves at work by a peculiar process of questioning and cross-examination, known only to inquisitive Americans, to ascertain all about the connections and professional business of their guests. Imbert acquitted himself to their satisfaction; and they came to the conclusion, that a doctor of physic was a useful animal. Grimshaw did not come off as well, and Jethro looked upon him with suspicion.

"No good can come of a visit from a lawyer," thought Jethro.

His wife Miriam thought otherwise; for she shortly afterward invited him to take a seat by her side, apart from the rest; and, in a mysterious conversation, which lasted more than an hour, Miriam and Grimshaw came to a good understanding with each other, and from that moment were the best of friends. The house of Jethro Coffin from that day forth was the home of Grimshaw; and it was thought, when the extraordinary character of Miriam afterward became more fully developed by the circumstances of the times, that she had made up her mind as to her future course, and taken counsel for her first-measures, at this unaccountable interview.

CHAPTER VIII.

——The joyful maid with sprightly strain
Shall wake the dance to give you welcome home.
The Shipwreck.

We have often thought that parents must have managed their children erroneously, when they have failed to secure their confidence in all their little concerns, however unimportant some of them may have appeared. It is undoubtedly an error not to enter into their amusements. Forbid a child the privilege of going to a ball, or to the theatre, under proper protection, and you may be sure that the desire to enjoy the forbidden fruit will increase a hundred-fold. Depend upon it, the march *will* be stolen, and perhaps the double sin of disobedience and prevarication, if not downright falsehood, will be added to whatever of evil there may be in the amusement itself.

As a general rule, we have found it to prove infinitely more satisfactory to both parties, for parents to gratify the inclination of their children for such innocent amusements, when they cannot be denied without giving pain or disappointment. They at once obtain and secure the undisputed right to select the places of resort; and can easily assure themselves of their respectability. There are undoubtedly assemblies well conducted in most populous places; and none will deny that dancing is a healthy, as well as a graceful exercise. If, therefore, our children were less restrained, and more generally encouraged, in this particular, we should not only produce in them habits of vigorous muscular action, which every physician will declare is requisite for the promotion of health, but they would also acquire a graceful

carriage; the lack of which among us is remarked upon by intelligent foreigners.

We love to look upon a French woman when she moves; there is grace in every step, and even poetry in her motion. The French are a dancing nation, and none are more cheerful in their dispositions, or more healthy in body. The amusements that conduce to their happy temperament should, therefore, not be contemned for slight cause. But touching theatrical displays, we are not so great sticklers, as for those other amusements that assist in promoting the mind's cheerfulness.

Every man, it is said, must "eat his peck of dirt;" and the sooner he does it the better. In these degenerate days, when Punchinello and gorgeous pantomimic spectacle usurp the place of the intellectual and "legitimate drama," the sooner we take our children by the hand and feed them the peck of trash, so much sooner will they become sated with the dexterity of the scene-shifter, and the whistle of the prompter;—for these personages, be it known, are by far the most important characters in a modern melo-dramatic play, which, without much essential variation, begins and ends after this fashion:—

"'Act first—scene first—moon scene behind a cloud;' —enter Count Traveliero, as large as life—(only twice as natural),—disguised in a slouched hat and heavy whiskers; legs encased in enormous jack-boots; armed with a broadsword and blunderbuss; walks rapidly up and down the stage, and then across;—stops short in the middle, and—says nothing!—a crash of discordant music from the orchestra, and a peal of thunder from a Chinese gong—and—the curtain falls amid the most deafening applause from the audience!"

Such are the amusements of a modern play-house. But enough of this. Let the hint for reformation be taken, if it will, and we shall be satisfied.

The twilight of an evening in June began to gather,

and the hum and bustle of the sheep-shearing revellers was fast subsiding in the streets and public places of the quiet town of Sherburne. The wind from the sea freshened into an unpleasant chilliness, and Jethro Coffin, with his guests, retired from the piazza which overlooked his garden enclosure (for even the deep sands of Nantucket may be brought under cultivation), and all but Ruth and Mary were assembled in the comfortable parlour. "Comfortable" it was not altogether, at the present moment, by reason of the fact above stated; for, the windows of the parlour being open, the sea-air, which is republican in its nature, had equalized the temperature within and without. But in the general, Jethro's dwelling was comfortable. It was substantially built, and might even defy the violence of a hurricane. Its furniture and appointments were convenient, and Miriam and Ruth were ever on the alert to keep the apartments in order. But Miriam was somewhat of a royalist in her sentiments, and had but little sympathy with the familiar liberties taken by levellers. She therefore ordered the sashes to be closed, to check the rude and impertinent advances of the chilly air, and firewood to be deposited in the fireplace.

"Where can the girls be gadding?" inquired Miriam. She was fond of paying proper respect to all guests who were admitted to her hospitality; and from the unusual stay of Ruth and Mary above-stairs, she was half inclined to construe their protracted absence into a designed slight of her visiters. Here, however, she was wrong in her surmise. The gallants of the town, uniting with the officers and most of the crew of the Leviathan, had made arrangements for a ball: and Ruth and Mary were among the invited. This *fête* was considered, by the younger folks, as an appropriate finale to the shearing: besides, it would serve the additional purpose of a *réunion*,—a bringing together of many who had been so long separated that they had become almost, if not entirely, estranged. And then there was the pros-

pect of seeing the new faces, both male and female, which were sure to be there. In short, it was an admirable eking out of the festival, which could by no means be foregone by the younger people; although such "doings" were contemned and discountenanced by their elders.

A ball,—or a dance, if you will have it so,—came but seldom at Nantucket. Indeed we have heard (though we hope the report of the result is a slander,) that a concert of instrumental music, which is accounted not half so wicked as a dance, was proposed to be given to the inhabitants of that place, not many years ago, as the best and most acceptable return that could be made for hospitality shown to a numerous cargo of fashionables, who had been landed by one of our splendid floating castles, or steamers,—and was defeated by the stiff-necked perversity of the Selectmen. A celebrated musical band accompanied the steamer, and they proffered a display of their talents at the townhouse, for the gratification of the townspeople. It is related that the towncrier had sounded his bell, and cried his "*oyez* three times," at the corners of the streets, to warn the good people (we give his identical words) that "A celebrated consort of vocal and instrumental music would be given by the celebrated Bostin band at the townhouse; and the ladies and gentlemen were invited to attend punctually, free-gratis-for-nothin', at six o'clock P. M. in the afternoon!"—Again came the "*oyez*," —"three times and repeat" at the next corner, until all the town was duly notified. Hearts beat high with expectation, and dresses and ribands, and bonnets and curls, were in a pretty considerable state of readiness to make a due degree of display at the townhouse. But,—alas!—the towncrier, with sadness in his heart, and bitterness in his speech, was obliged to retrace his steps, and tinkle his bell again, and cry his "*oyez!*" to another tune. "Ladies and gentlemen," cried he, "I am sorry to inform you that the celebrated consort, by

the celebrated Bostin band, which was to be given free-gratis-for-nothin', at the townhouse, at six o'clock P. M. in the afternoon, *is postponed!*—because, ladies and gentlemen, the S'lackmen will not open the townhouse—unless the Bostin band pays them *ten dollars!!*"

From the foregoing fact (if fact it be), the belief may be entertained that half a century's lapse has made but little difference in the habits or tastes of the islanders. Dancing and music, then, may be set down as abominations at Nantucket. Abomination, or no abomination—to the ball of the shearing Ruth and Mary were invited; and to it they intended, by hook or by crook, to go. Being a sudden thing, and "got up" at short notice, it became no small matter of concernment to the girls how they should dress, and get ready in time for the occasion. There was the curling of the hair (another abomination), the assortment of the silks and brocade, the trimming of ditto, and the lacing of stays,—not stays like the body-killing corsets of the present day, but stays made of some fitting material of great strength, and sometimes faced with a bright satin, purposely to show its colour through a thin muslin over-dress. Whatever was the material selected, it was invariably sherred all round, at intervals of an inch, with thin whalebone, to give ease and elasticity to the garment, and comfort to the wearer.

Such were the stays which our mothers and grandmothers wore at Nantucket, even while they were children; and, when they grew up, they were the best shaped and most graceful women in America—rounded, but not cramped or "collapsed" at the waist; with prominent hips and chest, and a fulness of the bosom, like most English women who have been well nurtured. Hauling taught upon the strong platted clewline which was rove through the grumets of the Nantucket women's whalebone stays, was to them a comfortable operation:—not metaphorically or ironically, like the skinning of eels, when the eel-women peeled their jackets

off, and said, "Lord bless your soul—they likes it! they loves to be skinned!"—but literally, in point of fact, an agreeable operation. With the quantity of whalebone about them which it was then the fashion to wear, there was not the least danger of too great compression of the body. The long-waisted sort of court-dress of the females (such as may be seen in the pictures of the full-dress belle of the time of Louis XIV.), ornamented with a neatly stitched and pointed stomacher, of satin or brocade, always sat well and looked well over such admirable stays; and the positions of the wearer, whether standing, walking, or sitting, were greatly improved by their use. While wearing the by-gone stays of whalebone, with the broad busk, no fear needed to be entertained of pulmonary disease being contracted by the leaning posture of the body in sedentary employments. They were the "preventer braces,"—the panacea for consumption, and not the promoters of it. Would that Mrs. Cantello, and the other *merchandes des modes*, would revive the whalebone stays of our grandmothers, and furnish the fashionable lady with a grateful pressure for the body, instead of the pinching, crucifying, squeezing bandage called a corset! We do not despair, after this, of hearing the delicate city dame making inquiries after a comfortable "*Miriam Coffin*," in the warehouses of sherring and padding, or wheresoever else the priestess of fashion presides.

"Where can the girls be?" repeated Miriam; and stepping to the stairway, she called out, "Ruth, where art thou?"

"I'm in my chamber, mother," answered Ruth, from above.

"What art thou doing aloft so long?"

"Nothing in particular," answered Ruth.

"What's Mary about, then?" asked Miriam.

"She's helping me," returned Ruth.

Imbert and Grimshaw burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter, at the *naïve* dialogue which had been going

on between the mother and daughter; and the former felt himself called upon to explain away his rudeness, by the remark that he had been reminded of the current sea-story of the captain who called out to Tom and Jack, in the maintop, to ascertain what they were doing, who answered much after the manner she had been replied to by her daughter Ruth.

"I am also reminded by this little incident," continued Imbert, "that there is a singular habit prevalent among the females of your island, which I have never observed elsewhere."

"And what is it, pray?" asked Miriam, good-humouredly.

"I have noticed," answered he, "that they constantly interlard their conversation with sea-phrases."

Miriam shook her head in doubt; but before she had framed a reply, denying the truth of the assertion, the young ladies entered the parlour, and the current of conversation was turned.

"Well, upon my word!" exclaimed Miriam, addressing Ruth, "thou'rt trick'd out mighty fine, to be sure! Why hast thou changed thy dress? Thou know'st it is e'en a-most time to go to bed, and thou hast taken a deal of trouble for nothing."

"Why, mother, I want to take a short walk," answered Ruth, with an awkward attempt at indifference of manner.

"Where wouldst thou go at so late an hour?" asked Miriam.

"Over to cousin Peleg's with Mary," replied Ruth.

"What wouldst thou do there, that thou canst not as well do at home?" again questioned Miriam.

"Nothing much," said Ruth; "I'm tired of staying at home for ever—and—I want to *go out*," continued she, with impatience.

"Go out!" repeated Miriam, suspiciously; "thou hast been '*out*' enough to-day, and I don't approve of girls gadding about so much. Thou mayst take off

thy bonnet, Ruth; thou canst not go. Pretty respect thou'rt paying to thy company, to '*go out!*'"

"They may go along with us if they will," said Ruth, grasping at the last chance of escaping from her mother.

"Certainly!" said Grimshaw.

"Most undoubtedly!" said Imbert, jumping up with alacrity, and reaching for his hat.

"Nay—nay," said Miriam, "that may not be. Not that I object to thy friends walking with thee, Ruth; but there is some junketing going on down below there, as I hear, and thy stay at Peleg's will be very short, I warrant thee. Thou wert going to the dance, Ruth: put up thy bonnet; I forbid thee stirring tack or sheet."

Ruth did as she was commanded, but tears came into her eyes at the disappointment. Mary also dared not to go, now that Ruth was forbidden, for fear that her father should make the discovery, and be displeased with her. A disagreeable silence ensued; but after the awkward interval of a few minutes, Miriam resumed her conversation with Imbert:—

"So," said she, breaking in upon the pause, "thou thinkest our women use too many words of the sea?"

"Every female I have conversed with to-day has said something of that sort, in the course of her speech, so very broad as to excite my remark upon the fact. I have never, in any other place, observed the females make use of so many sea-phrases in common conversation. I confess, however, that I do not at all wonder at it," continued he; "for the male population, being quite actively and constantly engaged in the business of the whale-fishery, have acquired the technical mode of conversing upon the sea. The customs of the sailor, like all other acquired habits of long duration, are not put off at pleasure; nor can he leave them at will on board the ship. They travel with him, and acquire the force of habit. Now, as all habits, whether of manner or conversation, are caught imperceptibly from those with whom we are

on terms of intimacy, and in time, by repetition or frequent indulgence, become a second nature, it is not surprising that your females should be found in the habit of using sea-phrases."

"Thou mistakest altogether, friend Imbert; I have never observed the practice; and, speaking for myself," observed Miriam, "I can assure thee, thou wilt never discover the habit in *me*." This observation was accompanied with a self-satisfied toss of the head.

"It may be that I never shall be able to detect a sea-speech in your conversation, Mrs. Coffin; but I can scarcely believe you form an exception to the general rule. I am so certain that you do not," said Imbert, "that I will venture to make a hazardous bargain with you."

"Let me hear thee propose it," said Miriam.

"The hazard shall be equal," said Imbert, "and the forfeit must be scrupulously yielded by the losing party. On my part, I will stake you a satin bonnet of the newest Boston fashion, and throw my character for acuteness of observation into the scale;—and on your side, there shall be hazarded a free consent (which, if you lose, shall be granted at once) for the young ladies to go to the ball to-night: and that which shall determine the wager is this,—that in the course of twenty minutes' conversation, you do, or do not, utter some palpable sea-phrase. *I* take the affirmative, and *you* the negative side, of course."

"Agreed!" said Miriam; "your bonnet and your character will strike the beam, depend on't.—Jim!" continued she, addressing an Indian servant-boy, "why hast thou not made the fire? I told thee to build one long ago; and thou hast left the wood carelessly thrown down upon the hearth. Come, stir thyself, and make up the fire; and then do thou get the broom, and brush up the dirt thou hast made."

Now Jim was an obtuse, dogged, matter-of-fact fellow, and never exceeded his orders; and he ventured to contradict his mistress. "You on'y tole me to bring

a wood; never tole me to make a fire," said Jim, as he began to arrange the back-log in his clumsiest manner.

"Psha! how awkward thou art," said Miriam; "take up the log again, and place it—mark what I tell thee—place it *fore-and-aft* the fireplace!"

"Victoria! I've won the wager!" exclaimed Imbert. "Put on your bonnets again, girls, and let's to the ball!"

The girls *did* put on their bonnets, without waiting for a second bidding, and tripped it off to the dance, well pleased at the stratagem that procured them the enjoyment of the forbidden pleasure; while Miriam, as she detected the slip of her tongue, bit her lips with chagrin, and hastily left the room, to conceal her discomfiture.

CHAPTER IX.

"The Manager's Last Kick!"
Burlesque Play.

Merrily danced the Quaker's wife,
And merrily danced the Quaker.
Old Song.

THERE are, or were, no ball-rooms in Nantucket; and it was with dismay that the committee of arrangement, on the morning of the shearing, reported progress; if being foiled at every turn in obtaining a room suitable for dancing, and finally being beaten to a stand-still, may be so reported. The cards of invitation, or rather "*invites*" by word of mouth, slyly whispered, with an injunction of secrecy, by way of *nota bene*, were given out; and it now became an affair of honour, as well as of credit, to make the invitations good. What was to be done? Several of the empty warehouses, or oil-stores, could with but little preparation be put in order for the reception of the company; and it was a matter of perfect indifference as to the appearance of the place, if a spacious room could be obtained where dancing could be going on with comfort: but such a place was not to be had for the asking, nor for love; much less could it be obtained for money, when the object was made known. The bare proposition to any of the owners would have defeated the whole scheme, and rendered any subsequent attempt to get up a ball abortive; for the opposition and the ire of the Select-men would have been roused, and then—"good night to *Marmion!*" Secrecy was, therefore, the watchword;

and he or she who could not keep the secret was unworthy of dancing. Ulysses gave a similar intimation to Telemachus, when he whispered in his ear—"*Quiconque ne sait pas se taire, est indigne de gouverner.*"

The second story of Jethro Coffin's storehouse, situated near the wharf, had been cleared of its contents for a considerable time, in anticipation of the arrival of his ships. Nothing but the intervention of the shearing had prevented its being filled to overflowing with oil-barrels from the Leviathan; and the following morning was set apart for breaking bulk, and for the transfer of a portion of her cargo to the building. The situation was sufficiently remote from the habitations of the uninitiated islanders; the noise of the fiddle would scarcely be heard in the town, and Jethro would retire to bed early—and so would doubtless the rest of the *magnates*, after a day of toil upon the common. The young men were desperate—it was noon of the day—a place *must* be had:—Jethro Coffin's loft was a good loft—a capital and capacious room—he would surely know nothing of its occupation until all was over,—and *then*, what if he did?

Thus pushed to extremities, there appeared no alternative but to take possession of the empty store-room; and the committee forthwith agreed among themselves that Jethro's loft should be the ball-room, and that young Isaac should be called in as an adjunct committee-man: and this for two reasons—first, because he might otherwise feel himself neglected, and so blab of the base uses to which the premises of his father were about to come; and second, because certain keys, to which Isaac could have access, were necessary to unlock certain doors of entrance and egress. Violence would scarcely be tolerated; and indeed it could by no means be resorted to. A convenient flight of steps led to the second story from the outside, and the drawing of a bolt would give them admission, without the necessity of passing through the lower apartment, which was stowed

with barrels, cordage, sea-stores, and apparatus for whale-fishing; and withal was by no means a pleasant entrance for the revellers. Isaac was therefore hastily sought out, and the project was warily proposed to him.

"Neighbour Isaac, how dost thou do? Fine sport this, once more, after thy three years' absence!" said one of the managers to the lad, as he found him strolling among the shear-pens, munching a huge piece of gingerbread.

"To be sure!" said Isaac; "nobody enjoys it more than I do."

"Art thou going to the dance to-night, Isaac?"

"I should like to go very well, but I've got no *invite*," answered he.

"Oh, that's easily managed," replied the manager; "and we've put thy name on the list. Thou must not miss coming by any means; I hear there is a number of smart little girls from New-Bedford, with black eyes and rosy cheeks, who are setting their caps for thee—and they will all be at the dance to-night; so thou seest that thou'rt expected."

"Indeed! I'll come—thou mayst be sure on't," said Isaac; "but where dost thou hold the dance?"

"Why, to tell thee a truth, and a secret to boot, we have not yet made up our minds as to the place. Canst thou not put thy wits at work, and help us in our extremity? There's Peleg Folger's shanty—but we don't like it altogether; it's rather old, and the floor is none of the best—and then he's had the cooper at work for some time, and it might be dangerous to carry lights in among the shavings:—then there's neighbour Hussey's storehouse; but its full of tar and grease, and the try-kettles are in the way. What dost think of thy father's loft?"

"There's not a larger nor a better place on the island," replied Isaac, upon whom the invitation from his seniors, and the story of the New-Bedford girls, with black eyes and cherry cheeks, added to the morning's lecture of Peleg Folger, had their full effect.

"Well, then, suppose thou shouldst take a turn with us down to the landing, and help us to arrange a little; thou'rt not particularly engaged, I see?"

"Not in the least," replied Isaac. "I'll give thee all the assistance in my power to set the dance a-going. Truly, a shearing without a dance would be a new thing with us. But it is time thou shouldst be at thy preparations, if thou dost intend to have any thing but bare clapboards and shingles to look at."

"Thou art right, friend Isaac; and we are well reminded that it is time to be stirring. By-the-by, thou hadst better run and get the key of the store-house, and we will meet thee at the door. Hark, in thine ear,—there's no particular necessity for telling thy father about the affair. He will know all about it in due season, thou know'st."

"I understand," said Isaac, winking, and placing his finger knowingly by the side of his nose; and away he scampered for the key.

"There—that's well got over," said the manager, "and our prospects begin to brighten up apace."

"But," observed another committee-man, "suppose we should be thwarted in obtaining possession; or suppose, after we do effect a lodgment, and all is arranged for the dance, that neighbour Jethro should get wind of the trespass, and come in and order us away—eh? What sayst thou to that?"

"Never fear—never fear; he'll be none the wiser until it is all over. The chances are in our favour, in consequence of the delay in making preparation. I'll tell thee how we've managed such things before. A sentinel must be posted to give us notice of interlopers, and the cabin of some convenient vessel, with a strong padlock for security, will serve to imprison a spy for a time; or, for lack of a cabin, I would consent to head up the ill-natured fellow in an oil-cask, sooner than be defeated after all this trouble. Jethro Coffin was once a young man himself, and is up to all these tricks;—so

that, if he does get information of the dance, he will be wise enough to go to bed quietly, and forbear to thrust his head into the lion's mouth."

"Thou art a veteran, and a daring manager, truly," replied his companion; "and I will follow in thy wake with the obedience of a pupil. But Isaac comes; and see! he holds the key up in token of his success."

Isaac now made his appearance, and applied the key to the yielding lock. Having admitted the managers through the inside passages to the loft, the door opening upon the outer stairway was unbolted, and the trap-door over the store-room secured against intrusion from below. The committee-men were soon reinforced, and they went about their task in good earnest. Jethro's key was shortly afterward hanging in its usual place at his dwelling-house, over the mantelpiece. The reader will pardon us for being thus particular about small matters, because we are anxious to show what pains were taken by the young men of the time to hoodwink the authorities, both legal and parental, in a community that was once, if not now, accused of being Puritanic and over-strict in their manners and habits.

Many hands make light work, they say: and some twenty young and athletic men soon completed the decorations of the loft. The beams and the rough siding were quickly covered with the spare white canvass of the neighbouring vessels—the festooning of which was much easier and better accomplished by the sinewy hands of the sailor-managers, than it could possibly have been by the delicate touch of a modern upholsterer. It is said that the Grecian architect took the hint of his capital from a bush of acanthus drooping from a flower-pot; and why should not the sailor learn the art of festooning from the brailing of a sail, or from the graceful appearance of a half-flowing sheet when he is reefing? There are more natural folds in the drapery of a ship's canvass, on various occasions of enlarging or taking in sail, than a landsman would dream of. There-

fore, let the fresh-water critic put a stopper upon his smile, if haply one should light up his vinegar countenance at the idea of a sailor turning upholsterer.

Flags of every description, and eke of every maritime nation extant, were procured from the same source that yielded the canvass. The stripes and the stars—the handsomest of national emblems—were then not in being. The grouping of the party-coloured bunting upon the white ground of the canvass, and the festooning overhead to hide the rafters of the building, were not so soon arranged as the groundwork. But by dint of putting up, and taking down to alter for the better, and a deal of consultation upon every point of the display, it was at last agreed that the ornaments could not be improved in arrangement, nor be placed so as to present a more finished *coup d'œil* to the spectator.

The lighting of the apartment next claimed the grave consultation of the committee. But how could that be a subject for long consultation, when oil of the best, and candles of the whitest sperm, were the staples of the island? There were ship-lamps to be had for the asking; and the lamp apparatus of the lighthouse, which still lay untouched and uninjured where it had fallen, was to be had for the trouble of picking it up. Chandeliers, to be let down from the peak of the roof, were easily supplied, by boring holes in barrel-heads, and suspending them with light cordage, from which the incomparable sperm-taper would send forth its clean light as well as from a more costly piece of workmanship. A dressing-room for the ladies at one end of the apartment, and a closet for refreshments at the other, were prepared by stretching sails across the room, whose blank and bald appearance was relieved by festooned flags, and bunches of party-coloured signals, fancifully grouped. Benches placed round the entire space of the ball-room, covered with clean ravens-duck unrolled from the bolt, furnished seats for at least two hundred guests. These arrangements being completed, the floor

next claimed attention. The holy-stones of the craft in the harbour were put in requisition; and a vigorous application of these abominations of the sailor, over a plentiful supply of soap and sand, soon reduced the asperities of the planking, and rendered the floor sufficiently smooth on the surface for dancing. The trundling mop did the rest, and put the finish to the arduous duties of the committee-men; who now, with arms a-kimbo, surveyed their handiwork with no little pride and exultation.

"We have two hours yet to sundown," said one of the active managers, "and have barely time to spread the information among those who have received invitation to the dance. Let us retire;—an ablution, and a change of dress, will do some of us no harm—particularly those who have scaled the rafters among Jethro's cobwebs."

The door of the ball-room was carefully closed, and the managers went into the town. Presently young men and women might be seen scudding from house to house, where a nod, and a wink, and a whisper, or a telegraphic signal from the fingers, told the news that all things were prepared for the dance. The information spread also among the young folks who yet lingered on the common; and by sundown all the *invitees* were rigged out in their best, and ready to steer for the metamorphosed store-room of the unconscious Jethro.

The secret was well kept as to the place of meeting; and even Miriam, and the other staid dames, could only conjecture that a dance was on the carpet, by the unusual attention of their daughters to their personal appearance, after the amusements of the day were supposed to be over. By a species of management which the young ladies of Sherburne were obliged to resort to, and which is well understood by all other females who are bent upon the gratification of their wishes, they slipped off under various pretences,—such as a walk, or a visit to a neighbour, in company with their fa-

voured swains; and when evening began to gather, the ball-room began to fill. The young damsels were delighted with what they saw, and they took every opportunity to praise the zeal and taste which had been exerted, "at the shortest possible notice," in their behalf; and they essayed to recompense, by their smiles, and their cheerful behaviour, the projectors of the entertainment which would wind up the festivities of the Island Carnival. Who, but a sour old hunks, would put his veto upon an amusement so congenial to the buoyant feelings of the young,—especially on a day like the shearing!

But, alas! what a short-sighted animal is man! How small a thing is sufficient to disperse his visions of glory, and becloud the bright colours of the rainbow! Napoleon, it is said, would have gained his last battle, and riveted the chains of Europe, but for a trivial accident; and Columbus would have missed the discovery that gave him a deathless fame, except for the appearance of a few straggling spears of sea-weed, as he was on the point of putting his ship about to return homeward. The great machinery of life—as well as that which brings happiness to mankind, or gives peace and plenty to a nation, is equally dependent upon trifles for its nice adjustment and regularity of motion. The drawing of a bolt or a pin, which a man may move with his little finger, will set an entire establishment at work, which gives bread and employment to a thousand human beings; and—for further illustration—the scraping of a single bow upon the strings of a fiddle will set a whole ball-room in active motion. In the hurry of "getting up" the preparations for the dance, not a thought had been bestowed upon the fiddler—the very mainspring of the great movement! Certes, it was a most unfortunate oversight; for some fivescore of dancers were already assembled, and stood on tiptoe with expectation, and waited, with beating hearts and anxious palpitations, for the signal to begin. But if the dancers

appeared with beating hearts, how much more did the hearts of the managers beat with anxiety and throb with dismay!

"We are all aback!" exclaimed one, as with blanched cheek he hurriedly gathered some half-dozen of his coadjutors into a corner; "devil a fiddler have we provided, and not a man is there on the island who can draw a bow!"

"The devil!" exclaimed the rest, in concert.

"What is to be done? I would give a barrel of the best sperm, if Captain Jonathan Coleman was here. He doffs the Quaker, and plays the fiddle at sea; although he wears his big beaver and shad-belly when ashore. We might press him into the service, if Jethro's other ship had arrived;—zounds! was there ever any thing so unfortunate!"

"What's the matter?" asked a manager who had just come in; "why aint you on the floor, jigging it away to some lively tune?"

"Matter enough, my friend!" was the reply; "we have no tune to jig to—*no fiddler, d—n it!*"

"*The devil!*"

"We have called upon that gentleman often enough, and I don't see that he is forthcoming to aid us in our strait. But hist!—listen!—what is that? Speak of the devil, and straightway his imp appears! There is a fiddle agoing somewhere in this vicinity, or my ears deceive me. Don't you hear the squeak? Come!—let us follow up the sound in a body; and be he man or devil, forth he shall come,—unless he be too unsubstantial for our grasp!"

"Ay—ay!" exclaimed, another, "I'll lend a hand to bring him, will he, nill he; at all events, he *shall* fiddle for us, 'whether he will or no—Tom Collins!'"

The affair did not brook delay, and forth rushed the managers in pursuit of the fiddler; exciting by their conduct no little wonder in the ball-room. They traced the sounds of the scraper of catgut, until he was fairly

made out to be the black cook of a sloop that had lately arrived from New-York, and was waiting for a cargo of oil. The negro was the sole tenant of the little vessel, and was amusing himself in the cabin, during the absence of the commander, by running over his short catalogue of dancing tunes, which he played "*by ear*;" that is to say, mechanically, without knowing one note from another. He was now playing them for the thousand and first time, and had, of course, by much practice, got them well established in his memory. He was one of that numerous tribe of self-taught violin-players who inhabit the Dutch neighbourhood along the shore of New-Jersey, and in sight of the city of New-York. The spot most prolific in such ebony artists is familiarly known by the name of Communipaugh.

The black, who was now sawing away for his own edification, had played many a night, and all night, at the frolics in and round about the little village of Bergen, while the untiring Dutch girls and their athletic admirers "stomp'd it down" to his rattling music. He was just the man for the dance at Jethro's storehouse; and, as time developed, proved no mean professor in his way.

"Hillo there!" exclaimed a voice at the companion-way of the sloop; "come up here, thou man of the fiddle!"

"Hello dere, yoursef! what a want wid a nigger, massa?" demanded the black.

"Come up here, thou gut-scraper, and bring thy fiddle along with thee," said a committee-man; "thou'rt wanted ashore, to play for the folks."

"I can't leave de sloop, massa; cap'n gone ashore, and nobody here. What you gib a nigger, if he go; heh, massa?" demanded the negro, thrusting his curly pate through the companion-way.

There was no time for parley nor bargaining; and he had no sooner shown his body half-way above deck, than he was seized by four gentlemen in drab, against whom

he found it useless to contend, and was quickly trundled ashore; while a fifth descended into the cabin, and captured his instrument. A few steps brought them to the foot of the stair at the store-house. Here, putting down the black, who was sorely frightened at the unceremonious usage of his abductors, they addressed a few words to him, of the following effect:—

"Now, friend, thou'rt to understand that there is one of two things to be done, and that quickly. Mark! we will have no words: either thou must go up, and fiddle for the dancers until midnight, for the which thou shalt be well rewarded; or thy fiddle shall be broken into shivers over thy pate, and perhaps a ducking alongside the wharf will be thrown into the bargain. Choose, and be quick! Yea, or nay?"

"Well, but, massa—"

"Not a word more; be quick, or I'll try the strength of thy instrument on thy head!"

"Stop! massa, stop!—don't smash a fiddle, massa. I s'pose I *mus* go; but you scare a nigger so—you 'mos make 'em turn white!"

"Never care for that; up-stairs with thee! and a noggin of strong waters shall restore the tone of thy stomach, and the Egyptian darkness of thy complexion. March, march!" And up-stairs went the unfortunate fiddler, attended by the honourable the committee as a rear body-guard. The bareheaded professor was quickly "ensconced behind the arras," and a full half-pint of "raal ginniwine Jimmecky," without dilution, was poured down his throat by a desperate tormentor.

"Hah! dat smacks! Yah—yah—yah! I t'ink I feel 'mazin better now," said the black; "I don't care if you scare a nigger agin, if you treat him *arter* wid good likker like dat."

"Thou feel'st much better, dost thou? What's thy name?"

"Pete Schneiderkins, massa."

"Where art thou from?"

"I comes from Communipaugh, in de Jarseys."

"Well, then, Pete Schneiderkins, of Communipaugh, thou wilt be pleased to take thy station, and strike up." The manager's edict having gone forth, Pete was introduced to a little bunk, or raised pulpit, at the side of the ball-room, where he began to tune his instrument; and the dancers took their places.

Scrape—scrape, jangle—jangle, twang—tang—went Pete's fiddle, as he screwed it up in the tuning; but he screwed up the string too much; and then he let down the peg too far. Between his flats, and his sharps, and his scrapings, the restraint of the dancers began to wear off. The glee and the good-humour of the managers returned, now that they had secured a fiddler, which ten minutes before was considered a hopeless thing. The incident was buzzed about, while Pete was trying to hit the happy medium of the strings; and it caused no little merriment among the dancers. The relief did not come a moment too soon: for that something was out of joint was manifest to the girls; and the absence of all the active managers, at a time when dancing should have been under way, threw an awkward chill over the spirits of the assembled guests. All was now right again; and so determined were the conductors of the revel that there should be no other vexatious interruption, that, had the meddlesome Selectmen made their appearance in a body, it would have been only a "*hey—presto—begone!*" operation, to bottle them up in their own oil-casks.

We find it recorded among the papers of Peleg Folger, who amused himself, at an advanced age, in writing an unpublished history of his time, that "Certayne Yuthe nott having ye feare of God afore theire Eyes did sorely grieve ye S'lack Menn by their Doings, and did threaten most contumashusly and with an high Hand to bungg ye aforesaid Magistrates up within certayne Ile-Casks—ye which would indubitably have prooved an unsavoury Operation and a most unChristian

Trespasse upon the Libertys of y° Subjecte." We are thus fortified by the authority of a writer of antiquity, whose lucubrations no contemporary worthy of notice has dared to controvert; and we may therefore venture to publish the fact to the world, that the managers of the ball aforesaid did actually prepare "certain oil-casks" for the reception of the intruders, provided the Selectmen had made the anticipated onslaught.

But let the dance proceed: scrape, scrape, again sawed out the violin of Peter of Communipaugh, and a short prelude upon the strings announced that his instrument was in perfect tune. The precision with which an ignorant Communipaugh fiddler will attune his strings has often excited the astonishment of the scientific professor; and a violinist of repute, who had witnessed their displays, was once heard to assert, that not one player in a hundred, who make pretensions to skill, ever equalled the sable Dutch fiddlers of Bergen in nicety of ear in the detection of discord.

Peter Schneiderkins of Communipaugh gave the signal, and a country-dance was led off. Vigorously did Peter play that night, and well did he sustain the musical reputation of the Dutch neighbourhood, which the inimitable Deidrich Knickerbocker, the American Herodotus, informs us may be distinguished from all other places by an overshadowing cloud of tobacco-smoke. The sweat rolled down the ebony face of Peter, while labouring at his instrument, and keeping the time with the heel of his iron-shod brogan of horse-skin and ben-leather. And lightly tripped the cherry-cheeked damsels to the music of the ebony Peter; and never has Nantucket seen a sprightlier dance nor a better arranged ball-room, nor an assemblage of fairer women, nor a more robust, active, and intelligent set of young men, than were then gathered together, by stealth as it were, to partake of an innocent amusement.

Imbert, accompanied by Grimshaw and the young ladies, entered the ball-room in the midst of the first

give the word as we once saw it on the sign of a last-maker beneath the window of a classical school*), was inserted at the back part of the sole, and covered with delicate kid, or glistening goatskin from Barbary. Being neatly fitted, and stitched with rows of white silk thread, it was finished by a cap, or single overlay of sole-leather, of the size of a shilling, and nearly as thin, at the place forming the bearing part of the heel. That these were pretty things to look at cannot be denied; but that they were precisely "*the thing*" to dance in, we are not prepared to aver. Nevertheless, they were used in the dance before and after the introduction of the quadrilles; and their slight clutter upon the floor was far pleasanter to the ear than the sharp rattle of the Spanish castanet, which we sometimes see brought in to give distinctness to the measure of the music.

The costume of the stranger gentlemen, also, was not without its peculiarities. While Grimshaw appeared in plain habiliments of black, as became his profession of the law, Imbert, who regarded not the attendant honours of the doctorate, which are frequently shad-

* And why should not the manufacturer of *lasts*, smelling daily of the ancient dust of a classical seminary, coin an expressive word to suit his necessity, as well as Dr. Johnson, who saw the poverty of our language, and gave to the world a similar term. Let us hear Peter Pindar, in his satire of "*Bozzi and Piozzi*," upon this subject:—

"BOZZI.

"When Foote his leg by some misfortune broke,
Says *I* to Johnson, all by way of joke,
'Sam, sir, in paragraph will soon be clever,
And take off Peter better now than ever.'
On which says Johnson, without hesitation,
'George will rejoice at Foote's *depeditation*.'
On which says *I*, (a penetrating elf!)
'Doctor, I'm sure you coined that word yourself.'
On which he laugh'd, and said I had divin'd it,
For *bona fide* he had really coin'd it;
'And yet, of all the words I've coin'd,' says he,
'My dictionary, sir, contains but three.'"

owed forth in a dress of sables, had donned the fashionable garments of the period, and came forth, the very pink of dressy gentlemen, in a coat of bright red broadcloth, with buttons of silver; small-clothes of white cassimere, with polished steel buckles at the knee, silk stockings, and shoes of sealskin; while his own incomparable hair of jet black was covered with a tailed wig, with pendent curls, over which he sported his beaver, or three-cornered "*fantail macaroni;*" a name, by-the-way, given to the jaunty cocked-hats of the last century.

And now behold our young ladies winding in the mazy dance on the floor of the ball-room (the place of all places best calculated to discover beauties or faults in a woman), with their rich rustling brocade dresses fitting over their whalebone stays enchantingly; with trails, and hoops, and trollupées, and negligées; high-heeled shoes, stitched to admiration; bright eyes, glossy ringlets, clear skin, and faultless forms; with slender feet, that the long-skirted dress permitted once in a while to show forth, as they dodged backward and forward, like Sir John Suckling's "peeping mice,"—a simile applied to a modest woman's feet, when she dances, which Sir John expresses very prettily in his couplet—

> "Her feet, beneath the petticoat,
> Like little mice, peep'd in and out."

And then sprinkle among these enchantresses a corresponding number of good-looking men—some with unromantic, drab-coloured, single-breasted coats, and small-clothes; and here and there a smart sailor-jacket (adorned with double rows of gilt buttons), surmounting white ravens-duck pantaloons; and the rest of the mankind dressed, knuckle-dabbers, red coats, tailed wigs, and all, like the rest of the world—and a picture as characteristic as can well be painted of by-gone times in America, and of Nantucket in particular, will present

itself to the mind's eye, and require but little aid from the imagination to fill up and render complete.

Imbert selected, by right of being her *cavalier servente* for the time, the gentle and amiable Mary for his partner in the dance; while Grimshaw, with becoming solicitude, sought and obtained the hand of Ruth. The dance proceeded, and Imbert acquitted himself marvellously well. There were none who excited more admiration for agility and grace than the couple who led off; and it may not be denied that Mary was a good deal envied in the possession of so handsome and so fashionable a partner as Imbert, who attracted all eyes, and was most critically scanned both by males and females. Ruth was less fortunate in her partner; and she was deeply mortified by the mistakes and general awkwardness of Grimshaw, who was, in truth, no favourite with the Graces. His long legs got entangled in the dresses of the females, and created sad havoc among the satins and brocade of his neighbours; while, like a raw recruit under the hands of the drill-sergeant, he invariably turned to the right when he should face to the left. A general titter followed all his essays at agility, and completed his confusion, as well as the vexation and shame of Ruth. Deep burning blushes overspread her face; her black eyes flashed, and a curl of contempt sat upon her lip. It would have been too much for the endurance of a spirited girl like Ruth, but for an accident which happened near them, and turned the laugh upon other objects. A neat girl had been "trotted out" by a tall young sapling in Quaker costume, and both met with an unpleasant discomfiture as they were sailing down the dance together at too rapid a pace. The foot of the gentleman slipped, and he fell sprawling before his partner; while the damsel was forced to make a flying leap over his recumbent body. Her foot tripped, and lo! they were seated, face to face, upon the floor. The effect was ludicrous enough, and thereupon, instead of exciting commiseration, a hearty

laugh ensued, which luckily drew off the attention of the dancers from the odd manœuvres of Grimshaw. However unfortunate it might be to others, it was at any rate a great relief to Ruth in the further prosecution of the dance.

There are few things that have a more abiding continuance in the imagination of a young and elegant female than the awkwardness of a partner in dancing. She can forgive and forget any thing but clumsiness in her attendant, which, by contact and association, brings ridicule upon herself. It will be sufficient for the present to say, that the seeds of dislike to Grimshaw were already sown in the mind of Ruth; and we shall afterward see what fruit they bring forth.

There were other eyes this night that looked with pleasure upon the countenances of Ruth and Mary, besides those of Grimshaw and Imbert. But, if the whole truth be told, the strict attention of these gentlemen to the daughters of Jethro and Peleg had also excited the observation and displeasure of several sighing swains; and among others were Thomas Starbuck, the admirer of Ruth, and Harry Gardner, who in childhood had been the playmate of Mary, and of late years affectionately attached to her. Both these young men had followed the sea, though in an humble capacity, and were not much over eighteen years of age. The girls themselves were two years younger; and, of course, all the parties were too juvenile seriously to make and receive visits in the light of professed lovers; much less could they allow the world to believe that they were affianced. Young men at eighteen are supposed to be at a greater distance from that arbitrary period of maturity when they are accounted capable of taking upon themselves the cares of a family, than young women at sixteen, who at that age are frequently made the objects of particular attention of men much further advanced in years. Nevertheless, soft words had passed between them; and Harry and Thomas felt themselves privileged to hope

that, when they should come to the age of manhood, and parents should give consent, they might successfully prosecute their respective suits. It was therefore with anxiety and alarm that they saw their favoured ones gallanted all the day by strangers, and as pertinaciously danced with at night by the same intruders. Causes slight as these have, before now, strung the bow and shot the arrow of jealousy; and that the poisoned shaft was rankling in the bosoms of these young men was most certain. But, before the evening closed, it was equally certain that the wounds were half-cured: for Thomas had danced with Ruth, without entangling her dress like his fancied rival Grimshaw; and Harry led his Mary gayly through a reel; and the touch of her soft hand, and the glance of her blue eye, almost convinced him that he had not been supplanted by Imbert.

The evening began to wane, and the dancers to tire. Refreshments suitable to the occasion were handed round, and the young women were waited upon by the beaux with a devotion that did credit to their gallantry. A set or two more, and a promenade to the music of Peter Schneiderkins of Communipaugh brought the hour of midnight; and, by common consent, the amusements of the dance and the shearing were declared to be ended.

We have thus given the outline of a festival which was no new thing at Nantucket sixty years ago; and which, from every indication, will not probably change materially for sixty years to come.

CHAPTER X.

Then as we watch the ling'ring rays,
That shine from every star,
I'll sing the song of happy days,
And strike the light guitar.

BARNETT.

IMMEDIATELY after the termination of the ball, the decorations and embellishments of Jethro Coffin's store-room were removed. To give an adequate idea of the despatch with which they were displaced, it may be only necessary to say, that they were swept away with as much facility as a child's house of cards, with its gingerbread ornaments, could be prostrated in ruins. Of the tapestry of canvass, ornature of bunting, and candelabra of barrel-heads, not a wreck was left behind, to tell the tale, within a short half-hour after the company had dispersed: so much easier is it to pull down than to build up. The holy-stoned floor alone remained a monument of the sinful excesses of the night, and was a puzzler to Jethro for many a day afterward. But how fared the sable knight of Communipaugh? Let us "put out the light, and then" let the following dialogue upon the wharf tell the tale:—

"Well, massa! I hope you satisfy with my 'zertion for de benefit ob de lady and de gentimen?" said Peter, as he carelessly thrumbed the strings of his violin, to call attention to his vocation. "Shall I call to-morrow on massa Jeter Coffy for de pay?"

Peter, amid the hurry and bustle of removing the trappings, had been unintentionally overlooked. He felt the neglect; and knowing that Jethro Coffin was the

last man in the world whom his kidnappers would wish him to call upon, he had framed the question for a little retaliation.

"'Sdeath!—call on Jethro Coffin for thy pay indeed! Let me catch thee at it, and thy Ethiopian hide shall be flayed, thou impudent skunk! What is thy demand?" asked the manager.

"I don't 'zackly know, massa," said Peter, scratching his head, in doubt whether to be reasonable or rapacious; "sometime I git more—sometime less—jis as I can ketch it. When I play fiddle for de Bargen gals, I stop in de middle ob de dance, and gib rap on de fiddle wid de fiddlestick; and den de men sing out '*de fiddler's dry!*' and den, massa, I hole out de hat, and git shower ob sixumps: but when I work by de job, I sometime git six shil'n, and sometime seben shil'n. I tink, massa, about seben shil'n for de long job, and anudder dram for de scare, which almos make white man ob me, be about 'nuf for de nigger, massa."

"There's twice seven shillings for thee; and here is the liquor—take it, bottle and all, and decamp. Dost hear? Begone!—Vanish!"

"Yes, a-massa! Tank a-massa—I'm off in de nex boat; yah, yah, yah, chaw!" and away went Mr. Pete Schneiderkins of Communipaugh, chuckling and laughing loud enough to be heard a mile off, at the folly of his paymaster, who had given him a month's wages, that is to say, at hoeing corn, for fiddling half a night.

"D—n the nigger! will he never cease laughing?" was the exclamation of the last of the Quaker managers, as he turned a somerset over the lower fence of his father's garden, to obtain entrance at the back door of the dwelling, which had been slyly unfastened by a friend within after the family had gone to rest.

It is to be regretted that the foregoing is the last and only blessing we have to record, as being invoked upon the head of Peter Schneiderkins of Communipaugh, "professor of dancing, and all other sorts of music;"

and sorry are we that we can follow his fortunes no further, except to tell the reader, who may be curious to trace out his lineal descendants, that Peter begat ten strapping sons, black as the ace of spades, and these ten begat near a hundred more; a majority of whom turned out to be fiddlers of the first water, and are now scattered in and about Communipaugh. They all remember their grandfather's version of the scene at the Nantucket store-house, and can give accurate imitations of his never-ending chuckle, whenever he repeated the story about the young Quakers "stomping it down."

* * * * *

A short walk after the dance broke up brought Ruth, accompanied by Mary, who intended to stay with her cousin for the night, to the door of her father's dwelling. They were attended by Grimshaw and Imbert. The seats of the "*stoop*," as the New-Yorkers call it (or "*porch*," as the Pennsylvanians have it, who, by-the-way, should call it *stoop*, for they are more Dutch nowadays than the New-Yorkers), seemed to possess considerable attraction for the gentlemen; for they came to an anchor thereupon, and were quite desirous that the girls should do the same, to keep them company. It was too late to invite them to enter into the house; and a sense of propriety made it obligatory upon the young women to abridge the sitting, as soon as an opportunity offered to give a hint to that effect. But the time slipped on; one o'clock in the morning found them still chatting in half-whispers at the door, and indulging in a recapitulation of the incidents of the day, and of the entertainment which had just terminated. The lively fancy of Imbert, to say nothing of the occasional efforts of Grimshaw, easily invested each occurrence, and each prominent actor, with the reality of new life and animation; his colouring was so fresh and natural, and his caricatures so quaint and amusing, that daylight would have found them still at the door, had not a voice from within sounded over the threshold, and warned them to retire.

"Ruth!" exclaimed the watchful Miriam, from her chamber.

"It is the voice of my mother! Friends, we must bid good-night; or, if the time was truly told, perhaps good-morning would be the better bidding."

The gentlemen made their adieux, and retired to the boarding-house of a neighbour, where they had arranged to sojourn for a season. The invitation of Miriam, however, had changed the intention of Grimshaw, and the morrow was destined to see him seated at the board of Jethro Coffin. Imbert placed his arm within his companion's, and a silence of a minute or two succeeded. Each seemed to have "hung up his fiddle," after the exertions of the day, and to be wrapped in his own reflections, while pacing through the heavy sands.

"Grimshaw!" exclaimed Imbert, at last.

"Well, doctor?" was the short reply.

"I have been ruminating upon your good luck; and thinking what devilish fine quarters you are about getting into at Coffin's. The old woman seems to have taken a fancy to you. I should like to know why she preferred you,—a silent, plodding fellow,—before me, who have so frequently found my account among the women for an exhibition of good-nature, and a deal of rattling nonsense. Explain, will you, Grim? Tell us a little about your 'drugs and spells,' and give us a gliff of that immensely long talk that you and she had together in a corner."

"It was professional; and therefore must remain a secret," answered Grimshaw, after a little hesitation.

"Close as oak, I perceive," replied Imbert; "I suppose," continued he, "you intend taking her bright-eyed daughter off her hands one of these days, by way of fee for your professional services."

"Such a thing may be within the range of possibility," carelessly answered Grimshaw.

"I should think it by no means impossible, nor improbable," returned Imbert, "if your zeal continues as

it has begun. 'Sdeath, man! you stuck to her to-night like a burr. Go on and conquer, my boy; you will feather your nest well if you succeed, for old Coffin is worth his tens of thousands. But what think you of my laying siege to the blue-eyed beauty? She hath, indeed,

——'An eye,
As when the blue sky trembles through a cloud
Of purest white!'"

"Do you mean Miss Folger?"

"The same. She is just such a confiding, flexible, kindly being as I should desire to cling to me. There could be no danger of rubbers in after-life with a woman of her happy temperament; but the devil may take the woman who would refuse to twine her will with mine, and to bend to the wish of her lord and master. I have no notion of allowing a female to imagine herself the oak, around which the *man* may twine as the ivy; nor would I, for the riches of Crœsus, lay siege to a termagant like—"

"Like whom?" demanded Grimshaw, observing that Imbert hesitated.

"No matter whom," said Imbert; "I was only thinking of a scene at the dance. By-the-way, Grim, did you notice Miss Ruth while you were dancing? 'Egad! I thought she would have run you through the gizzard while you were entangled in her skirt."

"I was, it is true, somewhat unfortunate with her long dress; but, bating that, don't you think I got on pretty well, for one who is not a professed dancer?"

"Um!—so so—a few lessons from Flurry, the Boston dancing-master, would do you no harm."

"How much does he charge?" asked Grimshaw, who was a lover of pence; "I wouldn't mind taking a little '*tuition*' in that way, if it won't cost too much. These dancing-masters and musicians are extravagant fellows in their charges. Only think—it cost me five silver

crowns, besides a world of pains, to learn to play the flute."

"The flute! Did you bring it with you to the island?"

"Yes."

"And luckily I have brought my guitar, which an old uncle, who resided many years among the *Señors*, taught me to thrumb passing well. I was not sure what sources of amusement we should meet with in this vile *terra incognita*, and so I tucked it into the berth of the packet. No doubt it has been transported to the boarding-house with our luggage; and, if you like, as the moon is up, we will return and surprise the girls with a serenade. What say you to the project?"

"Agreed! But what can we play together? My musical vocabulary is none of the richest; and, but for the assortment of psalm-tunes which I play, will be found like my wardrobe—consisting of only a few pieces."

"We will think of that; and, as we come along, I'll give you a new lesson. If you have a good memory, I can teach you the music of a little Spanish serenade, which I wot of, in five minutes; and as I will either say or sing the words of the song myself, my unmusical voice will cover the defects of your playing, if so be you do *not* play well, of which you must be your own judge. So—*allons!*"

Ere Ruth and Mary laid their heads upon the pillow, they also had compared notes; and Imbert and Grimshaw, and Harry and Thomas, were severally passed in review. Disrobing themselves of their heavy gowns and quilted petticoats, and unlacing their whalebone stays, the girls gave a glance at the mirror, and took a last survey of the devastation committed by the midnight dews upon their ringlets.

"What a fright I look like!" exclaimed Ruth.

"Fright, indeed! Lawyer Grimshaw did not appear

to think so," returned Mary; "his eyes glared and gloated upon thee the whole livelong evening."

"Don't mention the hateful creature!" cried Ruth; "didst thou ever see such an awkward lout in all thy life? I have just learned from mother that this lawyer Kick-shaw will take up his abode with us for the future. Dost thou not think it strange, Mary, that such an ungain being should have made so great an impression upon the good-will of mother?"

"I own I do," replied Mary; "but the man can't help his awkwardness; and I think thou art far too severe upon him, when thou callest him out of his name."

"Oh, as to that, one name is as good as the other," said Ruth; "Grim-shaw or Kick-shaw,—both are applicable to the long-shanked animal. Dost thou remember with what agony he got through the dance?—how he stuck out his fins, and stiffened his fingers, till they looked for all the world like tallow-candles?—and how he set his teeth as if he had the lockjaw, when he trundled his legs into the skirts of the girls' dresses? In good sooth, his name doth not belie him. He looked *grim* as a giant; and, that he can *kick*, like a restive mule, the girls at the dance can bear witness. Grimshaw or Kickshaw, it is immaterial for us which name he goes by; to-morrow he quarters upon my father. The Yankee starveling will haunt us for a season—Heaven knows how long, since mother is his friend—and I dare say he will stick to us, like a Portengal leech, until he falls off from repletion!"

"*Yankee* didst thou name him? How fiercely and immoderately thou talkest, cousin Ruth; something has gone wrong with thee to-night."

"To be sure!" replied Ruth, "I did call him a Yankee: he comes from Connecticut, depend on't; for that's the only place for slab-sided, long-legged, tin-peddling, leeching *coofs*, like Grimshaw. The Yorkers call all the people of the eastern colonies '*Yankees*:' but it's right down ungenerous to do so. I would deny

my nativity in the Bay colony for ever, if I thought we were to be classed, with any justice, with such a mean set of psalm-singing drivellers! For the matter of our Yankeeism, thou knowest, Mary, that our island once belonged to the colony of New-York; and though in fact our ancestors did come, in a manner, of the ungracious Puritans, we have abjured their intolerant faith, and claim no affinity whatever with the race of bigots who still linger in Connecticut. It is the last hold of their blue-laws, persecution, and selfishness; and I will have to do with none of their offspring. Yankees, indeed! Let the Yorkers look to their own colony, that it be not shortly overrun with the vermin!"

"Dearest cousin Ruth, how canst thou thus declaim against an honest, industrious, and enterprising portion of the American people!"

"*Honest*, indeed!" replied Ruth; "hast thou never heard of the duration of their honesty? Nay—then I will tell thee. In the days of their witchcraft the genius of Connecticut bestrode a broom, and rode through the air over the whole colony, to hear the complaints of the poverty-struck people; but every snivelling varlet received from their genius, in reply to their complaints, an answer in the words—

'Work or die!
Work or die!'

But, behold, it came to pass that the genius relented, when she saw the misery and starvation that, notwithstanding, followed upon the feeble efforts of their constitutional laziness. Mounting the broomstick once more, and flying again over the colony, she shrieked out in a loud voice—

'Cheat and lie!
Cheat and lie!'

and ever since that time they have lived up to the command of their colonial genius. Their *honesty* and *in-*

dustry consist in making ash punkin-seeds, wooden nutmegs, and horn gun-flints, which they meanly palm upon the unsuspecting for the genuine productions of nature; while their *enterprise* consists in mounting a pedler's cart, and driving into the other colonies to vend their tin notions, wooden clockery, brooms, and cheatery. Bah! —I despise a Yankee!"

Here was a breeze!—and while Ruth worked herself into a passion, her face became flushed, and her black eyes flashed lightning. Mary had never before seen Ruth so excited; but, on the contrary, she had usually displayed much good-nature and a cheerful countenance. She had, however, seen Miriam when under the influence of deep excitement, and was struck with the palpable resemblance the mother and daughter bore to each other on such occasions. Miriam, however, was seldom thrown from her balance, although a woman of strong passions. When offended, her eyes took the semblance of the basilisk's; her form dilated, and she would plant her feet firmly, and poise her body in an erect and haughty posture, as if defying "the world in arms;" her lip would curl, and her proud eye would bend contemptuously upon the object of her disdain. But Miriam was no shrew, nor did she descend to utter womanish invective. Her displeasure was felt the keener because she spoke but little when she was angered; but what little she did speak in wrath was the concentration of venom.

"Wouldst thou believe it," continued Ruth; "the fellow had the assurance to press my hand, and put his arm around my waist, as we came home! I did not strike him in the face, for presuming upon the civilities we have shown him as a stranger, but I wished for a man's strength, to lay him prostrate in the sand! Oh, if I should whisper this to Thomas, the island would be too small to hold them both!"

"Harry Gardner and Thomas Starbuck," observed Mary, "were at the dance, and I think they looked with

jealousy upon our gallants. In future they will not be so shy as they have been heretofore, if I may judge by the satisfaction they seemed to take in being permitted to dance with us."

"To tell thee the truth, Mary," said Ruth, "the only pleasure I had was in dancing with Thomas; and I am sure he must have discovered it in my conduct towards him. He is a noble-hearted young man; and a hair of his head is of more worth to me than fifty such suitors as Grimshaw. But thou hast not said a word about Imbert? What dost thou think of him?"

"He seems to be a gentlemanly, lively, good-natured person," said Mary; "but our acquaintance has been too short to warrant me in passing judgment upon him."

"Thou art cautious in confessing," retorted Ruth; "trust me, a young man with the agreeable qualities of Imbert, both mental and personal, will stand a fair chance of rivalling Harry in thy good opinion, or I miss my guess. He is fairly caught with thy blue eyes, and that pensive, intellectual look of thine. Go to, Mary; he has made a successful impression on thy heart; and Harry must keep a bright look-out for breakers ahead. Is it not so, coz?"

"How strangely thou talk'st, Ruth; it was but now thou spokest of Thomas with commendation; dost think thou art the only person in the world who can be faithful to old friendships?"

"Come, confess, coz," replied Ruth, in a bantering tone; "did not Imbert talk agreeable nonsense to thee as we came along? I saw you incline your heads together, as if thou and he were afraid the night should get wind of your sayings."

"Well, I may as well repeat what he *did* say to me; for I plainly see thou canst not rest till thou know'st it all. He said," continued Mary, "that the satisfaction he had received in being in my company would not easily be forgotten; and, with respectful demeanour, though I confess with something more than the tone of

ordinary compliment, he asked permission to visit me while he remained on the island. Thou knowest it would have been prudish and impolite to deny him; and, besides, our company is not so varied, nor so over agreeable, as to refuse ourselves the opportunity, so seldom offered, of having somebody to enliven our time with a little chat now and then."

"Ah, I thought it was so," said Ruth; "but, come what may, thou must not forget thy compact with me, Mary. After what I have seen of the conduct of Imbert towards thee this day, he will propose himself as thy suitor, depend on't,—and why should he not?—but thou must insist on his earning thy favour by a display of courage in killing the whale, like the other island suitors. We must give no advantage to continental admirers; else in time we may run the hazard of being contemned by both. Remember thou didst put the task on Harry; and Thomas already understands that he must never talk of—thou knowest what—until he has fairly sped the harpoon. They have both been a short voyage to the Brazils; but, being new to the seas, they have not yet been intrusted with the command of a whale-boat. I am told that they go out in the next ship, and are both determined to tell a whale-story when they return. O, if Mr. Grim-dragon there would only dare to speak out, and tell *me* a tale of love—as Imbert will to thee—how quick I would despatch him on a three years' voyage, and pray to the saints the while that he might ride on the back of a whale for a century! How it would convulse me with laughter, to see him uncoiling his long joints in the bow of a whale-boat, with a spermaceti under the prow! What a figure he would cut, to be sure, poising his harpoon, like grim death in the primer!"

How much longer this confidential conversation might have continued, it is impossible to say, had not the chamber-light sunk in its socket, and left the young women in darkness. They hurried into bed, and soon

lost their senses in the quiet repose to which they were fain to address themselves, and which is so charmingly expressed in the invocation of the Latin poet, thus rendered into the best of English:

> "Come, gentle sleep, attend thy votary's pray'r,
> And, though death's image, to my couch repair:
> How sweet thus lifeless, yet with life to lie;—
> Thus, without dying, O how sweet to die!"

The light tinkling of a stringed instrument under the window of the bedchamber, and the soft breathing of a prelude from a tolerably well-played flute, awoke Ruth and Mary from their half-dreamt dreams of youthful delights. Some moments elapsed before they were well aware whether notes so unusual at Sherburne were the vivid remains of their dreamy impressions, or in very deed the reality of sound produced by earthly agents. Who has not felt himself transported to the third heaven of Elysium, if we may so speak, while, with the delusion of a dreamy indistinctness, he has listened in the dead hour of night, when not a leaf was stirring, nor a foot-fall broke upon the ear, to the soothing music of some kind serenader! And who has not felt regret, as the strain and the delusion ceased together, in the soft cadence of a dying close, to be renewed no more!

A deep, well-modulated, manly voice, now rose on the ear; and a guitar (the first, and perhaps the only one, ever heard on the island) gave a softened melody to the song; while the flute filled up the breathing harmony.

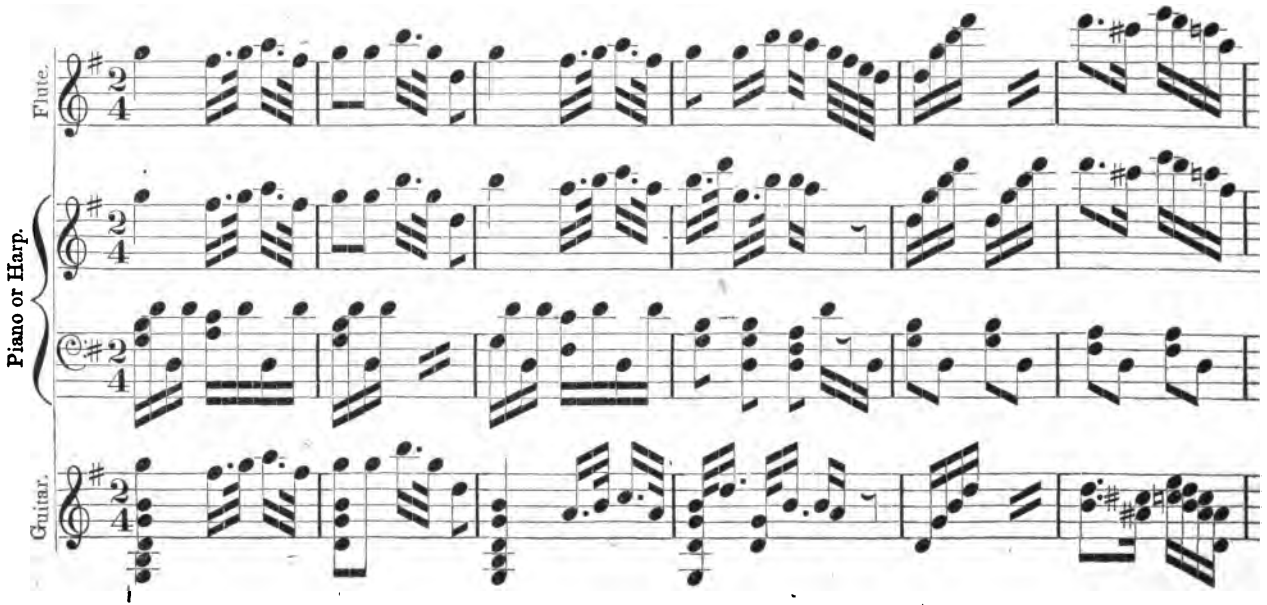
Many years ago, while sojourning at Nantucket, the little air was hummed over to us by a venerable and aged lady, whom we suspected of having been participant in some of the scenes of this tale. The melody, with some difficulty, has been preserved, and is herewith imprinted for the benefit of modern serenaders. Why should not the pages of a tale be illustrated by the music type of a song, as well as by the graver of the artist? If we contrive to please the hearing or-

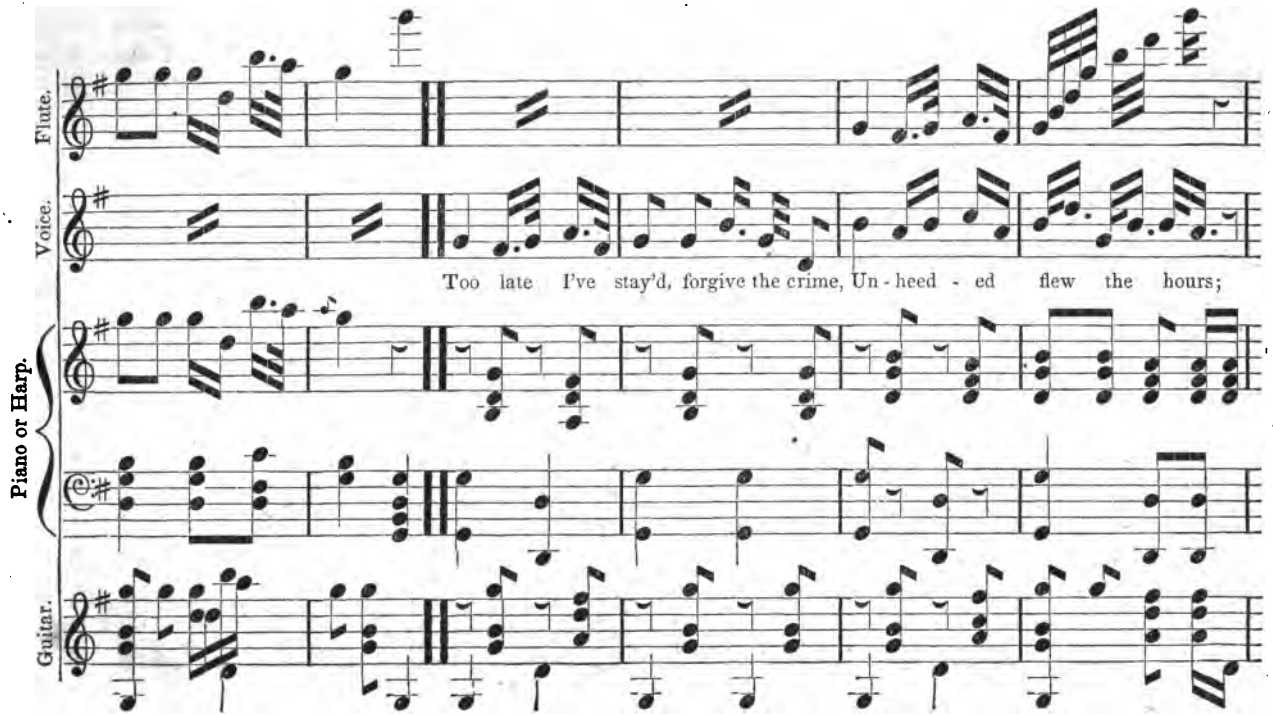
gan, in the place where that of sight only has heretofore been courted, it cannot surely be said that we are gratifying one sense at the expense of the other; but, on the contrary, that we have made a useful discovery, and, to change the simile, have found out the art of making "two blades of grass grow where but one grew before." The words of the song have entirely escaped us; but, as far as memory serves, we can assure the reader that the loss is more then compensated by those supplied below from the pen of Sheridan. The old lady was much agitated as she repeated the strain—

"And sung the song of happier days;"

and a tear was detected stealing down her cheek, at the reminiscence of her youth, which the air no doubt revived.

SERENADE.—By the Author of Miriam Coffin, or the Whale-Fishermen.—Words by Sheridan.




Flute.
Voice.
Too late I've stay'd, forgive the crime, Un - heed - ed flew the hours;
Piano or Harp.
Guitar.

Flute.

Voice.

How noise - less falls the foot of time, That on - ly treads, that on - ly treads,

Piano or Harp.

Guitar.

Flute.

Sym.

Voice.

That on-ly treads on flowers. Ah! who with

Piano or Harp.

Guitar.

Flute.

Voice.

clear ac - count remarks, The ebbing of the glass, When all its sands are di'mond sparks, Which glitter as they

Piano or Harp.

Guitar.

Flute.

Voice.

pass! Then, dear - est, oh, forgive the crime, For rose - ate were the hours! I lin - ger'd, and

Piano or Harp.

Guitar.

Flute.

Voice.

the foot of time Stole light-ly o'er, Stole light-ly o'er, Stole - - - - - - -

Piano or Harp.

Guitar.

Flute.

Sym.

Voice.

lightly o'er the flow'rs

Piano or Harp.

Guitar.

THE SERENADE.

I.

Too late I've staid—forgive the crime!
  Unheeded flew the hours:—
How noiseless falls the foot of time,
  That only treads on flowers!

II.

Ah! who, with clear account, remarks
  The ebbing of the glass,
When all its sands are diamond sparks,
  Which glitter as they pass!

III.

Then, dearest, oh forgive the crime,
  For roseate were the hours;
I lingered—and the foot of time
  Stole lightly o'er the flowers!

CHAPTER XI.

Our mountains are crowned with imperial oak,
Whose roots ages have nourished.
ROBERT TREAT PAINE.

And one beneath his grasp lies prone,
In mortal grapple overthrown.
* * * * * *
Miscreant!—while lasts thy flitting spark,
Give me to know the purpose dark
That armed thy hand
Against offenceless stranger's life!
WALTER SCOTT.

It was as if the dead could feel
The icy worm around them steal,
Without the power to scare away
The cold consumers of their clay.
BYRON.

IF there be no other excellence to which the Americans can lay claim (and there are those who cavil at nearly all our pretensions), there is at least *one* which will not admit of question:—*videlicet*, we build the finest ships in the world. In combining elegance of model and swiftness of sailing with capacity for burden, we have distanced the clumsy floating castles of Europe, and furnished its shipwrights with models for imitation. England, opinionated, and therefore slow to imitate the excellences of other nations in the arts, has at last been compelled to admire and to copy our naval architecture; France has seized upon the hints we have given her, in our fleet vessels of war; Russia has coveted and obtained our models; and even Turkey has, at a late day, opened her sluggish eyes in wonderment at our superiority in this respect.

The Middle States of the Union are, at the present

day, the best ship-builders, and New-York the very best; while the South bears the palm for the swan-like floating of her smaller craft. The Eastern States are reputable in naval architecture, but confine themselves principally to the structure of the burdensome class of vessels, which are most in demand for the carrying and coasting trade; but, at the time when our tale commences, Massachusetts was the great ship-builder of America.

We are possessed of an immense seaboard of several thousand miles; of rivers of great depth and extent, which shame the diminutive though boasted rills of Europe. Our river-banks at the north are lined with forests of the white-oak, cedar, and locust; and at the south, with the matchless pine, and the incomparable and undecaying live-oak,—all furnishing the most desirable materials for ship-building, within the easy grasp of a people whose enterprise is proverbial, and whose expansive genius aims at, and will eventually secure, the dominion of the seas.

It is not strange, therefore, that at an early period in our history, we should have become conscious of the means by which a great national destiny might be accomplished, and set to work to apply the resources that abounded so plentifully.

Nor is it surprising that America—by which term we allude more particularly to the best portion of the western continent, namely, the part now known as the United States—should have furnished the means of carrying a large portion of the produce and the manufactures of other nations; nor that the American flag should be found proudly and broadly displayed in all ports open to commerce in the wide world. Nor is it at all surprising that other nations should build ships in American ports, where materials are cheap, the workmen expert, and their ingenuity, expedition, and improvements in the construction of water-craft beyond all praise.

The large whaleman which Jethro Coffin had built at New-Bedford was the admiration of all the accomplished skippers who had noted her just proportions. Yet she did not pass under the criticism of some of the veterans of the sea without many qualifying objections. He had most audaciously discarded the high and lumbering poop, which disfigures the quarter-deck of any vessel, and impedes her sailing; the quarter-galleries, which, though considered an ornamental finish to a tapering stern, are nuisances in a storm, and act as a drag to the ship in a heavy sea, were omitted in the construction of the Grampus; her bows were sharper than common beneath the water-line, but above it she swelled out in the fullest proportions, and her bulwark forward corresponded so nearly to her rounded stern, that to an uninitiated spectator, placed suddenly upon her clear flushed deck, it would have occasioned a momentary indecision whether he should walk forward or aft to find the cabin gangway. Her tall masts, as she swung at a single anchor in the inner harbour of Sherburne, appeared, in consequence of the absence of her deck-load of unseemly cabin-trunk, and unsightly cambouse, to rise above her deck with a length disproportioned to the compactness of the hull, that, in the unusual absence of the high quarter, assumed a neat though diminished form by no means common to a ship of her tonnage. When looked at singly, she would scarce have been pronounced a craft of four hundred tons; and it was only by comparison with the other large vessels in the harbour that her great length and extraordinary bulk could be discovered. Her sails were neatly furled, and her appointments being complete in every respect, her novel outline, as she lay broadside to the town, drew upon her the gaze and the admiration of the islanders.

The last of the cargo of the Leviathan had been discharged, and barrels of oil were rolled promiscuously upon the wharf, ready to be hoisted into the loft of Jethro's warehouse, when two men came sauntering down

upon the quay, and seated themselves upon the casks, so as to have a full view of the vessels in the bay; while the unladen ship, at a trifling distance, was working over the bar with a few sails set, and a light breeze, favourable to entering the harbour. The individuals seemed lost in contemplation while watching the manœuvring of the whale-ship, and comparing the new-fashioned rig and cleanliness of hull of the Grampus with those of the Leviathan, which were less modern.

"What dost think of her, Seth Macy?" said Jethro Coffin, as he pulled a few pine pegs from the deep gulf of his ample waistcoat pocket, and began with his jack-knife to whittle them into spiles for the use of the ship's cooper. "Will she answer for a voyage across the Atlantic, think'st thou?"

Before answering the questions of Jethro, the skipper of the Leviathan brought forth *his* knife, and, placing one leg over the other, he strapped the blade carefully on the upper leather of his shoe. Reaching over to Jethro, who understood the motion instinctively, he obtained a handful of the rough pine splints, and began whittling after the fashion of his companion. This was the signal for a long conversation; and as the ever-busy Nantucketers deemed it almost a crime to remain idle for any great length of time, they frequently resorted to this simple method of producing something that might turn to good account, while wordy discussions were going on; even as the women ply the knitting-needle most zealously while their precious confabulations are in a state of progress. We do not mention this little trait in the character of the islanders to excite ridicule. It is praiseworthy in itself, and deserves commendation. The fashioning of spiles and barrel-bungs with the jack-knife, to fill up the gap in one's time during a long talk, is worthy of the reputation of a Franklin, who never suffered a moment of his life to go unimproved; and we are now writing of a community who boast blood-relationship with that great man. There are many indus-

trious Franklins, under other names, in Nantucket, who, if he were alive, would salute him by the title of "cousin."

We have somewhere read of a great banker, who, upon receiving his letters from abroad, quietly tore off the envelope, or spare leaf, and laid it by in his portfolio for future use in his counting-house; and, upon being stared at by a young nobleman who handed him a letter of credit and introduction, and saw the saving operation of tearing off the flyleaf of his perfumed billet, he took occasion to observe that to this attention to small matters he owed the great bulk of his fortune; and his hearer, being a sensible, discreet personage, afterward acknowledged the force of the practical lesson, by saying that he thereby fully comprehended the philosophical secret of making up an aggregate mass from particles. Even thus does the making of pine spigots and stoppers for oil-casks help amazingly towards the increase of the oil-merchant's wealth. It is, to be sure, a small trade, and full easy of comprehension; but when it is known that many precious hours of the ship's cooper are saved to the owner, by having the spiles and the bungs carefully fashioned, and smoothed, and tapered off in an idle hour, and made ready to his hand, it may easily be conceived that the fortune of the oil-merchant becomes enhanced in proportion to the time saved to that useful appendage to a whale-ship. Besides this, whittling sticks is a better and more amusing habit, by far, than sitting cross-legged after dinner, and twirling one's thumbs, or folding the arms to rest. It is an active employment, and therefore promotes digestion, and saves one from the horrors of dyspepsy.

"To tell thee the truth, friend Jethro," replied Captain Macy, "I do *not* admire the rake of her masts; or, rather, I would be understood as finding fault because they do not rake at all, but approach so much to the perpendicular that they seem to lean forward."

"I see how it is, neighbour Seth; thou hast the In-

dian's reed in thine eye, which thou hast heard was so straight that it bent t'other way. But the masts of the Grampus are not stepped over the centre of gravity without design. I will teach thee the philosophy of this thing. I grant thee, that for a fore-and-aft vessel, the rake of the mast should be well aft—the more the better—for in such case, there being but a single stick in the mast, the wind acts upon the broad sheets of canvass, which form the fore and mainsail of the schooner, after the manner of a lever; and it lifts her from the water instead of pressing her under at the bows, as the effect would be if her masts were stepped in the perpendicular.* With the square-rigged vessel, where there are several pieces in the mast, which give it greater length, the case is different. The sails act independently, and they never can be sheeted home so thoroughly, nor drawn so flat to the mast, as to act upon her bow like the canvass of a schooner. Consequently there is no occasion to rake a ship's masts aft their centre; besides, thou seest, if the masts should rake unnecessarily, the rigging could not be well set up so as to sustain the spars in the pressure of a gale. But, above all, the wind, which always acts horizontally, would lose the force of its action, in proportion to the inclination of the sails to the mast."

"Thou speak'st truly, I do believe," answered the captain; "but what hast thou done with the poop-deck? Wouldst thou crib the people up in a narrow and confined cabin, without the convenience of ventilation?"

* The editor does not hold himself responsible for the opinions of the author, whose outline of this work was penned a long time ago: but he is well aware that the opinions above expressed, in relation to the rake of a vessel's mast, prevailed, many years since, among the judges of well-rigged craft, and do still prevail in a great degree; and that intelligent commanders are even now at variance in their estimate of the efficacy of Jethro Coffin's dogmas. Some, indeed, have discarded his notions altogether, and insist upon it that they should be pointed out as vulgar errors. We must leave the doctors to settle the question.

"Nay, verily," observed Jethro; "thou speak'st of a minor and imaginary evil, and dost wrong to my intentions. I would relieve the ship from the weight of the sea when it breaks over her; for thou knowest that when she plunges, as it were, beneath the mountain wave, the bulk-head of the poop receives the shock of the surge, and the helm for a time becomes useless, while the strain is injurious to the timbers of the quarter. There is danger of foundering at a time like that; but a clear deck makes clear work, friend Seth; and the invasion of a heavy sea need not be dreaded, when nothing interposes to retain its force."

"Thou art right again, neighbour Jethro," said Seth, as conviction began to work on his mind. "The bow of thy vessel hath, however, a curious and unseemly shape, which, I fear, thou canst not as well explain away."

"Of what dost thou complain?" inquired the owner of ships.

"Why, without making any specific objection, I observe that thou hast departed from the approved method of graduating the bows from the keel upwards; and it doth appear to me that thou hast given an unnecessary sharpness below the waterline, while the swell becomes too suddenly bold after leaving the water."

"I have fashioned her after the body of the duck, in some respects, friend Seth; for I hold it better to follow nature than the arbitrary rules of art, which are often erroneous."

"If thou wert obliged to tow a log in the water," asked Seth, with an argumentative design, "which end wouldst thou fasten thy line to?"

"To the but-end, surely," answered Jethro; "for the water being once broken, the whole mass moves easily, and the reaction of the flood upon the sides of the stick assists the motion thereof; while the contrary would be the effect if the small end were towed foremost, as it would be impeded by the wedge-like motion of the

timber through the water. The same doctrine may be applied to the towing of a whale."

"Thou hast hit it," said the captain, "and hast given the identical reasons why the duck-like shape of thy vessel, about the upper works of the bows, is misplaced. Thou hast put the sharp end of the log below the water, and hast unfortunately opposed the but-end to the wind."

"There thou mistakest," answered Jethro, as he comprehended the objection of the captain. "Seest thou not that the breasting of the wave commences after the sharp wedge of the bow has opened the way and rendered the water quick? And that the boldness of the bow above the waterline assists in turning the water off, even as the flare of the ploughshare overturns the sod? Thou wilt find no laborious ploughing of the Grampus with a heavy bone in her mouth, I warrant thee. Trust me, when I assure thee she will ride *over* the water, so to speak, and not labour *through* it as a dense mass, like the Leviathan and the other vessels of the port. The force of the surge, instead of being directly ahead, will be carried off at the sides of the ship; and the eddy, whirling the closer to the vessel, will act the stronger under the clean taper of her stern. Thy objection as to the action of the wind upon the full bow above is easily met. Wouldst thou not rather breast a thin fluid, like the wind, than the palpable resistance of a mass of water? Try the difference of thy speed, friend Seth, in making thy passage against a gale, and afterward observe thy progress, body-deep, in the water. To be sure, I might have continued the sharpness from the water upwards; but the gain in opposing the wind with a sharp bow would never compensate for the loss of burden, and for the wet jackets of the people."

"There is reason in what thou sayest," answered the captain, "and I begin to think better of thy ship."

"Well, then," said Jethro, "as thou hast been ashore long enough to see thy friends, whom thou hast found in good health and in prosperity (how could they be

otherwise upon our thrifty island?) what say'st thou to a voyage across the Atlantic? Wouldst thou not like to see the wonders of London, that queen of cities, as people call her? Thou shalt command the Grampus, if thou wilt; and afterward, if she is found to work well, and sustains the character of a good seaboat, thou mayst take her upon the long voyage, and mend thy fortunes among the spermaceti. What say'st thou?"

"I did not intend to try the sea again, friend Jethro; but it is dull work lounging about shore, and I begin to tire of inaction already. So I shall be with thee whenever it may suit thee to sail."

"Let us then," said Jethro, as the parties put up their jack-knives and wooden pegs—"let us take passage to the Grampus in the small skiff before us, and ascertain what is lacking to fit her out completely for the voyage. I shall fill her with a cargo of oil, and try the market of London with the commodity."

Jumping into the little boat, and unloosing the fastenings, a few strokes of the paddles brought them to the side of the noble ship, which lay but a cable's length from the wharf. Macy, on gaining the deck, surveyed her various appointments with the practised eye of a sailor; and while he stood upon her ample flushed quarter, casting his looks alternately from the deck to her taper yards and towering masts, the novelty and beauty of her proportions filled his eye so satisfactorily, that a professional feeling of pride and pleasure was visible in his countenance, as he began to realize the idea of commanding a vessel which was by far the largest and, as she now seemed to him, the most beautiful craft of any he had ever seen in America.

A violent splashing in the water, in a shallow part of the harbour at no great distance, disturbed the silent reflections of Jethro and the captain. A full-grown Indian and a lad were bathing in the neighbouring water, which covered the shelving shore of sand, that in some places inclines so imperceptibly towards the sea that

before one gets shoulder-deep in the water he is a furlong from its margin. At most times the frolic of the swimmers would have excited no attention from such men as Jethro and his companion, who were accustomed to such scenes. The islanders are proficient in the invigorating art of swimming, to the exercise of which they are invited by the facilities at their very doors; and, as whale-fishermen, they often find their account in this accomplishment, when, as is frequently the case, they are spilt from a boat into the broad ocean, by the resistless struggles and dangerous flounderings of a wounded and angry whale.

The play of the Indian and the boy was, however, of the roughest kind; and it seemed to the two spectators, as they leaned over the quarter of the Grampus, in doubt whether to interfere or to resume the inspection of the ship, that the Indian, who was powerful and muscular, was taking undue advantage of his youthful companion. Both were in a state of nudity, and were interlocked in each other's arms. It was apparent that the Indian was fast overpowering the boy, and at one time he caught him in his arms and buried him for a moment in the water; but the lad by a dexterous manœuvre slipped from his grasp, and, rising suddenly, sprang at the Indian's throat. The native staggered back a few paces, but saved himself from falling by his proverbial eel-like agility. His eyes now glared with savage ferocity, and he gathered himself for the spring of the tiger. With a single leap, half-swimming, and slightly touching the hard sandy bottom with his foot, he struck the unresisting boy down into the water; and in an instant one hand was grasped tightly in his short hair, while with the other he pressed the body of his victim under, with the face downwards.

Nothing was now discovered but the bent body of the Indian, as he held the boy beneath him with a firm clutch; the agony of his struggle was scarcely perceptible upon the surface, and it was evident the poor fellow was fast relaxing his efforts by reason of strangula-

tion. A half-minute more, and his body would float a lifeless corse!

"Thinkest thou it is foul play?" said Jethro, as he moved with hasty steps to the gangway of the Grampus.

"It doth appear so," said the captain; "that copper-coloured rascal would murder his fellow-creature for the pleasure of the thing. It is the nature of the savage: no kindness can tame him—no art can civilize the brute. It is but a short distance to where he stands, and, as he has not yet discovered us, we may steal upon him unawares and prevent mischief."

So saying, the captain pushed the light skiff from the side of the vessel with the strength of a Hercules, and it shot out in the direction of the combatants with the speed of a race-horse. Jethro and Seth quickly seized upon the sculls, or paddles, and, standing erect, they propelled the skiff silently, but swiftly, after the manner of the Indian, who faces the prow, but never uses the row-lock, or thole-pin.

"Give way!" whispered Jethro, in a husky undertone; "it is for life—for *life*, Seth!"

"Or perhaps *death!*" groaned the captain, as he plied his oar with all his strength.

Cold chills came over Jethro, and his flesh began almost to crawl, at the idea of murder being perpetrated before his eyes. The agitation of his mind became visible in the unsteadiness of his stroke; and it was evident to Seth, that before they could reach the Indian the deed would be done, and the immortal part of the youth sent by unhallowed means into eternity. As the efforts of Jethro became weaker and more unsteady, the little boat sheared and yawed about, being strongly urged on one side, and not counterbalanced by similar power on the other.

"My God!" exclaimed Jethro, wildly, "must the boy perish? Hell-hound!—let go thy hold! See—the savage stands erect!—but where is the boy? Does he retain the unresisting body beneath his foot?"

"Damnation!" exclaimed Seth, incontinently, as both

he and Jethro ceased rowing, and stood gazing at the Indian without the power of further exertion. They had not yet approached half-way to the scene of action. "Take to thy oar again, Jethro," continued the captain, "take to thy oar—give way—quick, or all is lost! Hah! see—he is safe!—the boy's head peeps from beneath the water to breathe—there! he dives again to elude his pursuer!"

The boy again stood upright in the shallow water; and reaching its rippling margin, and casting a quick glance behind him, he saw the Indian making towards the shore in pursuit. Neither of the combatants had yet discovered the men in the skiff; and, without the knowledge of the succour at hand, alarm began to show itself plainly on the countenance of the boy, while that of the Indian swelled with the workings of unsated revenge. The speed of the youth was no match for the fleetness of the native, who gained upon him at every step. Suddenly the little fellow wheeled about, and planted himself before the Indian in the attitude of desperation. A bound or two brought the latter full upon his youthful antagonist, and his brawny arms were already extended in anticipation of his prey. But there are slips between the cup and the lip! The Indian was too eager, and entirely off his guard. Life was at stake with the lad—not a soul was near to protect him from the brutal fury of his swarthy opponent. Summoning all his strength, which had been almost exhausted in the water, and concentrating his resolution for the desperate effort, he dealt the Indian a blow on the temple that felled him to the earth. It was now the boy's turn to triumph. Ere his antagonist had well made the shape of his body in the sand, or could attempt to recover his foothold, the victor's knee was planted upon his breast, and his grip firmly fixed in his throat.

"Bravely done, my little fellow!" exclaimed Jethro.

"Throttle the scoundrel!" vociferated Seth.

The applause of Jethro and the advice of Seth were alike unheard and unheeded by the boy. Panting with

fatigue, and desperate in his intentions, he held the Indian motionless beneath him. It is characteristic of the race, when they find themselves conquered, to yield quietly to the necessity of the case, and trust to other opportunities to accomplish their purposes. No distance of time can blot from an Indian's memory an injury; it is indelible and enduring as the mind itself. Years of quiet and peaceful demeanour—years of apparent kindness and willing courtesy—are counterfeited, to deceive the victim against whom revenge is nourished in secret, until the unsuspecting individual is lulled into complete security. Beware of yielding confidence to the Indian! For an imaginary injury done to his remote ancestor, and handed down to him by tradition, he will wreak vengeance upon some innocent descendant of the wrong-doer, even to the fourth generation. He will steal upon you at midnight, or strike you in the back, when the way is open to him, and the fear of detection is removed from his mind.

"I have thee now, Quibby," said Isaac Coffin—for it was he who bestrode the Indian—"I've got thee safe; and, but that I would not commit murder, which thou didst come near dealing unto me, I would meet my thumb and fingers through thy windpipe, in requital of thy good intentions towards me. Nay, stir not! I shall hold thee to the earth, depend on't!"

"Ugh!" groaned the Indian, "my throat, my throat! Not so tight—strangle, strangle!"

"Aha!" said Isaac, "thou feelest the pleasure of being strangled, dost thou? Well, then, since thou say'st so, the score is balanced; and I'll let thee up, if thou wilt promise not to molest me more. Say—wilt thou keep truth?"

"I will; I swear by the Great Spirit—ugh!"

"Swear not!" said Isaac, "it gives no force to the promises of an Indian with me. I know thee and thy race to be a deceitful and bloodthirsty set of fellows; and if I let thee go now, depend upon it, I shall keep a

bright look-out for thee in future. There, thou jail-bird, thou mayst rise: but first tell me, before I loose my hold, what is the cause of thy enmity against me? Have I ever crossed thy path in any thing?"

"No; your father!" muttered the Indian.

"My father, say'st thou! and what of him?"

"He made my brother go to sea in whale-ship for getting drunk," answered Quibby, doggedly.

"Is that all?"

"Yes!"

"And for that thou hast sought revenge upon me, who am but a boy, and do not possess half thy strength. Take that, for thy good-will, thou cowardly assassin!" said Isaac, as the blood mounted to his face, while he clutched his fingers the closer about the throat of the Indian, and dealt him a blow that the vulgar pugilist would have called a "*gall-burster*," which, when duly delivered, is apt to make the recipient sick at the stomach.

"Ugh!" grunted the Indian.

"Begone from my sight, imp of Satan as thou art! and thank the Great Spirit that I have left life in thy carcass. Away with thee!"

The Indian rose slowly from the sand. As he gained his feet, he cast a glance of contemptuous defiance at his young opponent, but did not think it advisable to renew the combat. He had apparently got "glory enough for one day." Turning his back upon Isaac, he soon disappeared behind one of the storehouses near the beach, and the victorious young Quaker, feeling his strength returning, and elated with his good fortune, again took to the water, and soon forgot the affray which had come near costing him his life. Jethro and the captain, who were unable to reach the scene of action in time, seeing how matters had terminated, doubled a projecting pier with a few strokes of the boat-paddles, and remounted the side of the Grampus.

"What think'st thou, neighbour Coffin," said Seth, as they reached the deck: "never, in all my life, have I

longed for any thing so much as for a good rifle to wing that copperhead withal, as I saw him thrusting the boy down with savage exultation!"

"It was an unchristian spirit that stirred within thee, Captain Seth," answered Jethro; "thou knowest that we are forbidden to take up arms against our neighbour."

"But," replied the captain, "we are justified in buckling on our armour against the fiends of hell; and if yon athletic figure of bronze is not a devil incarnate, then there's no snakes!"

"I will inquire into the cause of the fracas when we go ashore," said Jethro; "and if I deem the native dangerous to the community, I will recommend his removal to the Selectmen."

"Speaking of fire-arms, neighbour Jethro," said Seth, "I was about to give thee a little advice thereunto appertaining, when we were interrupted by the Indian and the boy. Thou knowest that the English Channel is full of French privateers, and such like piratical traps, which are let loose upon the commerce of the mother-country; and a colonial ship runs no better chance for escape than a vessel registered in London."

"True; but we must take our risk with the rest. The fleets of England are numerous, and may clear the way for us," answered Jethro.

"Nay," said the captain, "I have had some experience with such fellows, as well as with the Caribbean freebooters. They are easily scared by a row of teeth. Indeed, I have kept off many a picaroon in the West India seas by rigging out a few well-painted Quaker guns, as they call the wooden barkers which we sham for the sake of appearance. Mark me, Jethro; thou wilt not regret the purchase of a few six-pounders for thy ship. With four of them and thirty stout seamen I will make assurance doubly sure, and warrant to take thy vessel safe into the Thames."

"I will have none of them," said Jethro; "my ships shall sail under the protection of Providence and the colonial flag: I will not be instrumental in lifting the

murderous hand against my fellow-man, even to assure the safety of my property, peradventure even of my life. Thou forgettest the peaceful doctrines of the sect which claims us both as members."

"I have seen much of the manner of doing things at sea," replied the captain; "and, in most instances, have found that 'might makes right.' I have, therefore, long ago come to the conclusion that all lawful means may be used for the protection of one's property, or one's life; which, at sea, are not unfrequently invaded and jeoparded at one and the same moment. But hist!—seest thou that lurking rascal, prowling stealthily around thy warehouse?"

"Ay; 'tis the same that had to do with the boy just now: and see, the lad is again gambolling in the water. Let us keep an eye upon him."

The Indian soon afterward deposited his bundle of clothes between two oil-casks, and dropped silently into the water from the side of the wharf next the Grampus. He disappeared beneath the surface, as he doubled the corner of the pier, which had previously hid him from the sight of Isaac, who was carelessly and boyishly turning somersets in the water—sometimes floating like a sleeping animal upon its surface, and then diving like a waterfowl, and reappearing, after a half-minute's absence, a long distance from the place of his exit.

It was necessary for the Indian to breathe more than once before he reached Isaac; and he did so with the dexterity worthy of an Indian, by turning on his back and merely projecting his nose for an instant above water. Jethro and the captain watched the wary approach of the Indian to the vicinity of the unsuspecting boy, until they had satisfied themselves of the ulterior design of the assailant. The skiff was again in motion. Assailant and assailed had both disappeared: the first, to ferret out his intended prey, and take him by surprise; and the other, without a thought of what was about to ensue, to try the length of time that he could remain beneath the water without drawing breath. Presently

two heads appeared simultaneously above water, confronting each other; and two long breathing sounds, like the blowing of a porpoise, accompanied by a hurried ejection of water from the mouth, freed the lungs of both the swimmers at the same moment.

"The demon Quibby again!" exclaimed Isaac, as he dashed forward in the water.

A strife of breasting the waves again ensued, which betrayed the earnestness with which each sought to outdo the other. In every thing, physically speaking, the Indian appeared to be superior to the boy. His sinewy frame, broad chest, and flat feet were the identical requisites for a swimmer; while the undeveloped form of Isaac and his protracted exertion in the water unfitted him for coping with his athletic opponent. But though he was not the equal of the Indian in strength of limb, he was superior to him in stratagem, which the aquatic disciples of Franklin, who, in his time, was a practised swimmer, know so well how to execute in the water. Quibby had several times nearly overtaken Isaac, and had stretched forth his hand to secure his prey; but the little fellow eluded his grasp, and slid away from him under the water in an opposite direction, which left the Indian completely at fault. Though the scoundrel was baffled time after time, he returned to the assault so often, and so unremittingly, that he succeeded at last in tiring the boy down. Isaac made his last dive; but the Indian anticipated him, and pounced upon his back, as he was repeating for the fifth time the trick of passing under his opponent; and thus, by a well-managed feint, drawing his attention to a point towards which he appeared to be steering while his head was above water, but which he changed to a different direction the moment his body became submerged.

The greatest captain of the age ceased to be victorious, after he had taught his enemies the trick of his art by beating them in a hundred battles. The obtuse intellect of the Indian (they have thick sculls, like the African negro) at last comprehended that the little

Quaker meant to go south, below the surface, when his head was driving north above. But he had him now; and dearly did he intend to repay the gripe of the throat and the punch in the stomach which Isaac had administered. Take thy last look upon the sun, brave boy! The demon of the island has fastened upon thee, and it will be a miracle if thy spirit is not soon winging its flight to eternity.

It is said that the struggles of the dying man, in the possession of all his faculties, are irresistible; and that no human hand can grapple and master his, without the sinews of a giant are brought to try the issue of strength. It was the demoniacal intention of the Indian to drown the boy forthwith, let the consequences be what they would. He had Isaac's neck between his legs, at the depth of several feet beneath the surface of the water, where he held it immoveable; while with his hands he pressed the body again strongly to the bottom. One minute in this position is an age!—it is an eternity of time! The death-struggle was again come upon the poor little fellow, and the fiend was once more exulting over him! He felt the blood of his whole body rushing to his brain—imagined loathsome snakes twisting about his neck and brow, and his body assailed by frightful sea-monsters. A streaming gush of water poured into his ears and mouth. His reason was on the point of giving way in the agony of gasping suffocation: but for a moment it rallied—and that moment was his salvation!

Isaac, without being aware of the fact, had, in his struggles, been working himself as well as his opponent into deeper water. The murderer was obliged to discontinue his endeavours to press the body of the boy downwards, from the necessity which required that he should keep his own head, particularly his mouth and nostrils, in the free air. By this means the limbs of the boy were left at liberty, and he was enabled to brace his feet firmly upon the sandy bottom. His hands were also free; but heretofore he could do nothing with them,

while his feet were *hors du combat.* But now he gathered himself, instinctively, for a desperate effort; and locking his arms around the legs of his foe, and planting his feet strongly beneath his body, with one mighty surge he raised the Indian from the bottom, and pitched him headlong into the sea! The relief thus gained was but just in time. A moment more would have closed the mortal career of the boy. But the advantage thus acquired was not to be lost. Isaac sprang after his enemy with the agility of a dolphin; and, ere he could regain his balance, his young hand, still nerved with the desperation of one battling for life, was firmly twisted in the lank black hair of the Indian. He avoided the experiment which the native had tried, to conceal the struggling of his victim, and contented himself with holding the head, face downwards, beneath the water, at arm's length,—caring nothing for the splashing and floundering of the foe,—which the Indian, while he held the lad, was anxious to conceal, for fear of attracting notice from the shore.

"Perish!" exclaimed Isaac, in accents not loud, but deep; "perish! thou black-hearted savage! Ay, kick if thou wilt—struggle on, monster! it is my turn now. I owe thee no mercy; and die thou shalt the death thou hast twice essayed to bestow upon me for the alleged sin of my father. Ay—sprawl—bite—scratch; it will require something more than human interposition to save thee from the death!"

"Boy! what dost thou do? Release the Indian, and we will protect thee—release him, I say!" repeated an authoritative voice, close to the ear of Isaac.

"I am not deaf, good friend; I shall release him in a minute or two, but in my own discretion. The peril be mine—keep off—meddle not with this quarrel—I am desperate! I was but now dying in the grasp of this hell-hound: twice within the hour has he given me a taste of the other world; and it shall go hard but I requite the favour. Keep off, I say! By the heavens above us, I will serve thee after the same fashion, if thou

darest to come between me and my prey! Away! I have said it; he shall die the death of a dog! There —all is over now!"

The limbs of the Indian became relaxed and quiescent. The tide of life had withdrawn to the citadel whence it sprang; the body floated for a moment, without convulsion, on the surface of the water, and then settled away gradually from the sight. Isaac had loosed his hold, and he stood gazing with stupid wonder upon the water.

"Isaac, my son, what hast thou done?" demanded Jethro, in a choked but fatherly voice, as sorrowfully he reflected on the termination of the violent and tragic scene, and marked the wild and altered looks of his son.

"Father, is it thou? Oh, save me from the fangs of that dreadful Indian! But where is he?"

"Where, indeed!" responded the father, mournfully.

Macy plunged into the water after the drowned body. He found it without difficulty, for the water was shallow, and not more than half-body deep. The captain placed the Indian carefully in the boat, across a seat in the stern, with his mouth downwards, to give the water egress from the stomach; and then, quickly seizing the oars, he pulled for the shore with all his strength, leaving Jethro and his son wading in the sea. The case of the Indian would not brook delay. The gaze of poor Isaac was fixed and vacant, while Jethro, taking his passive hand in his own, led him gently towards the beach. Exhaustion had rendered him powerless; and perception and memory had fled. The faculties of his mind were sleeping, curtained by what seemed to be a horrid dream, but which partook too nearly of a tragic reality

END OF VOL. I.