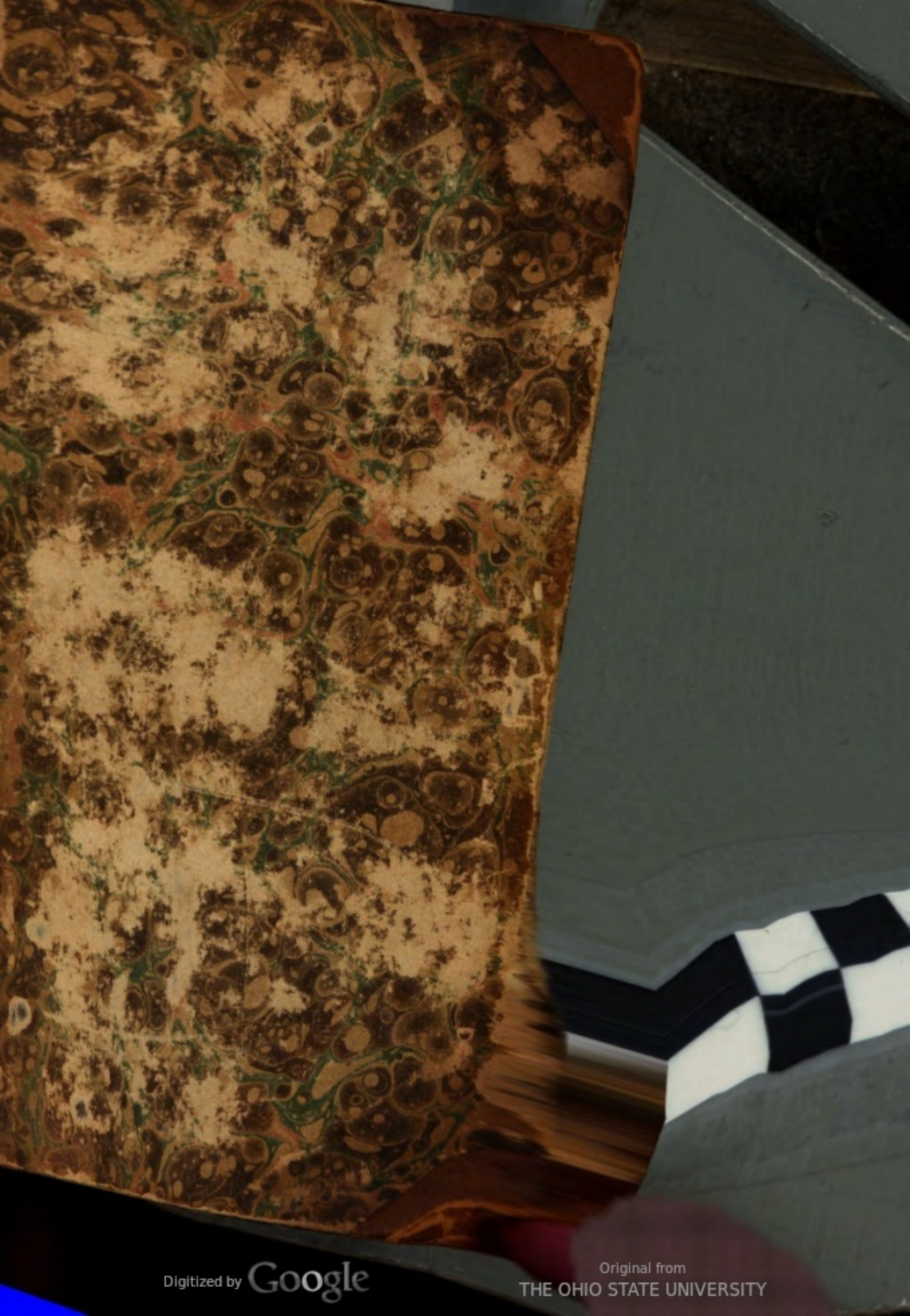

THE SPY;

A TALE OF

THE NEUTRAL GROUND.

"Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land.—"

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "PRECAUTION."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

SECOND EDITION.

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Southern District of New-York, ss.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the seventh day of September, in the forty-sixth year of the Independence of the United States of America, WILEY & HALSTED, of the said District, have deposited in this Office, the title of a Book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors in the words following, *to wit:*

The Spy, a Tale of the Neutral Ground.
" Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said.
This is my own, my native land.—"
by the author of ' Precaution." In two volumes.

In conformity to the Act of Congress of the United States, entitled, " An Act " for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, " and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned ;" And also, to an Act, entitled, " An Act, supplementary to an Act, entitled, an Act " for the encouragement of learning, by securing " the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of " such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits " thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching, historical and " other prints."

JAMES DILL,
Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.

TO

JAMES AITCHISON.

ALTHOUGH we are not natives of the same country, I feel that I can safely offer to your notice a work, which has been chiefly written with a view to induce love to my own. Attachment to the land of our nativity, is a sentiment so intimately blended with our best feelings, that should I have discovered any weakness in the exhibition of this national partiality, I feel confident, that you, at least, will not judge me harshly; for your liberality to this country is untainted with any irreverence for the institutions of the land of our common ancestors. If I find reasons, in your candor, to believe you will do justice to my merited eulogiums, I can equally hope for your lenity, where habit has blinded me to defects.

We have spent many pleasant hours together, and I hope, while perusing these pages,

you may experience some portion of that satisfaction, which has, I trust, hitherto attended our association. With the best wishes for your welfare,

I remain,

Dear Sir,

Your assured friend,

PREFACE.

THERE are several reasons why an American, who writes a novel, should choose his own country for the scene of his story—and there are more against it. To begin with the—pros—the ground is untrodden, and will have all the charms of novelty: as yet but one pen of celebrity has been employed among us in this kind of writing; and as the author is dead, and beyond the hopes and fears of literary rewards and punishments, his countrymen are beginning to discover his merit—b t we forget, the latter part of the sentence should have been among the—contras. The very singularity of the circumstance, gives the book some small chance of being noticed abroad, and our literature is much like our wine—vastly improved by travelling. Then, the patriotic ardor of the country, will insure a sale to the most humble attempts to give notoriety to any thing national, as we have the strongest assurances our publishers' account of profit and loss will speedily show. Heaven forbid, that this don't prove to be like the book it-

self—a fiction. And, lastly, an Author may be fairly supposed to be better able to delineate character, and to describe scenes, where he is familiar with both, than in countries where he has been nothing more than a traveller. Now for the contras—we will begin by removing all the reasons in favor of the step. As there has been but one writer of this description hitherto, a new candidate for literary honours of this kind, would be compared with that one, and unfortunately he is not the rival that every man would select. Then, although the English critics not only desire, but invite works that will give an account of American manners, we are sadly afraid they mean nothing but Indian manners; we are apprehensive that the same palate which can relish the cave scene in Edgar Huntly, because it contains an American, a savage, a wild cat, and a tomahawk, in a conjunction that never did, nor ever will occur—will revolt at descriptions in this country, that pourtray love as any thing but a brutal passion—patriotism as more than money-making—or men and women without wool. We write this with all due deference to our much esteemed acquaintance Mr. Cæsar Thompson, a character we presume to be well known to the few who read this introduction; for nobody looks at a preface until he is at a loss to discover from the book itself what it is the author means. Then touching the reason, which is built on the hope of support from patriotic pride, we are almost ashamed to say, that the foreign opinion of our love of country, is nearer the truth than

we affected to believe in the foregoing sentence. As for the last reason in favour of an American scene, we are fearful that others are as familiar with their homes as we are ourselves, and that consequently the very familiarity will breed contempt; besides, if we make any mistakes every body will know it. Now we conceive the moon to be the most eligible spot in which to lay the scene of a fashionable modern novel, for then there would be but very few who could dispute the accuracy of the delineations; and could we but have obtained the names of some conspicuous places in that planet, we think we should have ventured on the experiment. It is true, that when we suggested the thing to the original of our friend Cæsar, he obstinately refused to sit any longer if his picture was to be transported to any such heathenish place. We combatted the opinions of the black with a good deal of pertinacity, until we discovered the old fellow suspected the moon to be somewhere near Guinea, and that his opinion of the luminary was something like European notions of our States—that it was not a fit residence for a gentleman. But there is still another class of critics, whose smiles we most covet, but whose frowns we most expect to encounter—we mean our own fair. There are those who are hardy enough to say that women love novelty; and a proper respect to our own reputation for discernment, compels us to abstain from controverting this opinion. The truth is, that a woman is a bundle of sensibilities, and these are qualities

which exist chiefly in the fancy. Certain moated castles, draw-bridges, and a kind of classic nature, are much required by these imaginative beings. The artificial distinctions of life also have their peculiar charms with the softer sex, and there are many of them who think the greatest recommendation a man can have to their notice, is the ability to raise themselves in the scale of genteel preferment. Very many are the French valets, Dutch barbers, and English tailors, who have received their patents of nobility from the credulity of the American fair; and occasionally we see a few of them, whirling in the vortex left by the transit of one of these aristocratical meteors, across the plane of our confederation. In honest truth, we believe, that one novel with a lord in it, is worth two without a lord, even for the nobler sex—meaning us men. Charity forbids our insinuating that any of our patriots respond to the longings of the other sex, with an equal desire to bask in the sunshine of royal favor; and least of all, may we venture to insinuate, that the longing generally exists in a ratio exactly proportioned to the violence with which they lavish their abuse on the institutions of their forefathers. There is ever a reaction in human feelings, and it was only when he found them unattainable—that Æsop makes the fox call the grapes sour!

We would not be understood as throwing the gauntlet to our fair countrywomen, by whose opinions it is that we expect to stand or fall; we only mean to say, that if we have got no lords nor

castles in the book, it is because there are none in the country. We heard there was a noble within fifty miles of us, and went that distance to see him, intending to make our hero look as much like him as possible; when we brought home his description, the little gipsey, who sat for Fanny, declared she would'nt have him if he were a king. Then we travelled a hundred miles to see a renowned castle to the east, but, to our surprise, found it had so many broken windows, was such an out-door kind of a place, that we should be wanting in Christian bowels to place any family in it during the cold months: in short, we were compelled to let the yellow haired girl choose her own suitor, and to lodge the Whartons in a comfortable, substantial, and unpretending cottage. We repeat we mean nothing disrespectful to the fair—we love them next to ourselves—our book—our money—and a few other articles. We know them to be good-natured, good-hearted—ay, and good-looking hussies enough: and heartily wish, for the sake of one of them, we were a lord, and had a castle in the bargain.

We do not absolutely aver, that the whole of our tale is true; but we honestly believe that a good portion of it is; and we are very certain, that every passion recorded in the volumes before the reader has and does exist; and let us tell them that is more than they can find in every book they read. We will go farther, and say that they

have existed within the county of West-Chester, in the State of New-York, and United States of America, from which fair portion of the globe we send our compliments to all who read our pages—and love to those who buy them.

PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

THE Author of this work will not attempt to describe the satisfaction with which he listened to his publishers, when they informed him, that his interests required a second edition of the tale. He cheerfully commenced the task of correcting the errors, that from carelessness, in both himself and his printers, were admitted into the former edition;—he thinks this has been done.

The Author is grateful that he is not without a number of friends—at least if all who give him good advice are entitled to that appellation. He has been favored with numberless valuable hints, by the aid of which, the book might be made excellent. Some thought the preface ought to be omitted, and others have declared, the last chapter to be intolerable; several have hinted, that Sarah must certainly be married, and have given him the choice between Dr. Sitgreaves and Tom Mason. One very judicious friend took the author aside, and, in direct terms, and with an interest in the subject that was highly gratifying, said,

that Betty must be killed and the lamentation come from the trooper. Not a few have pointed out a snug place where a chapter could be introduced, that might contain an account of the honeymoon of Frances, together with some little interesting particulars of her nursery. Numbers complain of Harper as an impious attempt to describe a character that would baffle the powers of Shakspeare, and add that the illustrious individual whom he is intended to represent, was never known to eat, drink, or sleep, during the whole war.

The Author has treasured all these valuable hints, and intends giving them to the world at a future day as an original work.

In the mean time, for the want of a better, he must offer the old subject to the public, written in his own manner, and without the aid of printer's journeymen, who had much too large a hand in the first edition.

The Author believes that most of the good will, with which "The Spy" has been received is owing to "love of country." If he has in any degree contributed to this feeling, his principal object is attained.

THE SPY:

A TALE OF

THE NEUTRAL GROUND.

CHAPTER I.

And though amidst the calm of thought entire,
Some high and haughty features might betray
A soul impetuous once—'twas earthly fire
That fled composure's intellectual ray,
As Etna's fires grow dim before the rising day.

Gertrude of Wyoming.

It was near the close of the year 1780, that a solitary traveller was seen pursuing his way through one of the numerous little valleys of West-Chester. The easterly wind, with its chilling dampness, and increasing violence, gave unerring notice of the approach of a storm, which, as usual, might be expected to continue for several days: and the experienced eye of the traveller was turned, in vain, through the darkness of the evening, in quest of some convenient shelter, in which, for the term of his confinement by the rain, that already began to mix with the atmosphere in a thick mist, he might obtain such accommodations as his age and purposes required. Nothing, however, offered, but the small and inconvenient tenements of the lower order of inhabitants, with whom, in that immediate neighbourhood, he did not think it either safe or politic to trust himself.

The county of West-Chester, after the British had obtained possession of the island of New-York, became common ground, in which both parties continued to act for the remainder of the war of the revolution. A large proportion of its inhabitants, either restrained by their attachments, or influenced by their fears, affected a neutrality they did not always feel. The lower towns were, of course, more particularly under the dominion of the crown, while the upper, finding a security from the vicinity of the continental troops, were bold in asserting their revolutionary opinions, and their right to govern themselves. Great numbers, however, wore masks, which even to this day have not been thrown aside; and many an individual has gone down to the tomb, stigmatised as a foe to the rights of his countrymen, while, in secret, he has been the useful agent of the leaders of the revolution; and, on the other hand, could the hidden repositories of divers flaming patriots have been opened to the light of day, royal protections would have been discovered, concealed under piles of British gold.

At the sound of the tread of the noble horse ridden by the traveller, the mistress of the farm-house he was passing at the time, might be seen cautiously opening the door of the building to examine the stranger; and, perhaps, with an averted face, communicating the result of her observations to her husband, who, in the rear of the building, was prepared to seek, if necessary, his ordinary place of concealment in the adjacent woods. The valley was situated about mid-way in the length of the country, and was sufficiently near to either army to make the restitution of stolen goods no uncommon occurrence in that vicinity. It is true, the same articles were not always regained, but a summary substitute was generally resorted to, in the

absence of legal justice, which restored to the loser the amount of his loss, with no inconsiderable addition for the temporary use of his property.

The passage of a stranger, with an appearance of somewhat doubtful character, and mounted on an animal, which, although unfurnished with any of the ordinary trappings of war, partook largely of the bold and upright carriage that distinguished his rider, gave rise to many surmises among the gazing inmates of the different habitations; and, in some instances, where conscience was more than ordinarily awake, to no little alarm.

Tired with the exercise of a day of unusual fatigue, and anxious to obtain a speedy shelter from the increasing violence of the storm, that now began to change its character to large drops of driving rain, the traveller determined, as a matter of necessity, to make an application for admission to the next dwelling that offered. An opportunity was not long wanting; and, riding through a pair of neglected bars, he knocked loudly at the outer door of a building, of a very humble exterior, without quitting his saddle. A female of middle age, with an outward bearing but little more prepossessing than her dwelling, appeared to answer to his summons. The startled woman half closed her door again, in affright, as she saw, by the glare of a large wood fire, a mounted man so unexpectedly near its threshold; and an expression of terror, mingled with her natural curiosity, as she required his pleasure.

Although the door was too nearly closed to admit of a minute scrutiny of the accommodations within enough had been seen to cause the horseman to endeavour, once more, to penetrate the gloom, with longing eyes, in search of a more promising roof, before, with an ill-concealed reluctance, he stated his necessities and wishes. His

request was listened to with evident unwillingness, and while yet unfinished, was interrupted, in a tone of reviving confidence, and an air of pert volubility, as she replied, in sharp key—

"I can't say I like to give lodgings to a stranger in these ticklish times; I'm nothing but a forlorn lone body; or, what's the same thing, there's nobody but the old gentleman at home; but a half mile further up the road, is a house, where you can get entertainment, and that all for nothing—I am sure 'twill be much convenienter to them, and more agreeabler to me; because, as I said before, Harvey is away—I wish he'd take advice, and leave off wandering; he's well to do in the world by this time; and he ought to leave off his unsteady courses, and settle in life.—But Harvey Birch will have his own way, and die a vagabond after all."

The horseman did not wait to hear more than the advice to pursue his course up the road; but had slowly turned his horse towards the bars, and was gathering the folds of an ample cloak around him, preparatory to again facing the storm, when something in the speech of the female suddenly arrested the movement.

"Is this, then, the dwelling of Harvey Birch?" he inquired, in an apparently involuntary manner—checking himself, as he was about to utter more.

"Why, one can hardly say it is his dwelling," replied the other, drawing a breath somewhat between a sigh and a groan; "he is never in it, or so seldom, that I hardly remember his face, when he does think it worth his while to show it to his poor old father and——me. But it matters little to me, I'm sure, if he ever comes back again, or not—turn in the first gate on your left;—no, I care but little, for my part, whether Harvey ever shows his face again or not—no, not I;"—and she closed the door abruptly on the horseman, who gladly

extended his ride a half mile further, to obtain lodgings, which promised both more comfort and greater security.

Sufficient light yet remained to enable the traveller to distinguish the improvements which had been made in the cultivation, and general appearance of the grounds around the building to which he was now approaching. The house was of stone, long, low, and with a small wing at either extremity. A piazza, extending along the front, with neatly turned pillars, together with the good order and preservation of its fences and out buildings, gave it an air altogether superior to the common farm houses of the country. After leading his horse behind an angle of the wall, where he was in some degree protected from the wind and rain, the traveller threw his valisse over his arm, and knocked loudly at the entrance of the building for admission. An aged black soon appeared; and, without seeming to think it necessary, under the circumstances, to consult his superiors—first taking one prying look at the applicant, by the light of the candle in his hand—he acceded to the request for accommodations. The traveller was shown into an extremely neat parlour, where a fire had been lighted, to cheer the dulness of an easterly storm, and an October evening. After giving the valisse into the keeping of his civil attendant, and politely repeating his request to the old gentleman who rose to receive him, and paying his compliments to the three ladies who were seated at their needles, the stranger commenced laying aside some of the outer garments which he had worn in his ride.

On taking an extra handkerchief from his neck, and removing a cloak of blue cloth, with a surtout of the same material, he exhibited, to the scrutiny of the party within, a tall and extremely graceful person, of apparently fifty years of age; his coun-

tenance evinced a settled composure and dignity; his nose was straight, and approaching to Grecian; his eye of a gray colour, was quiet, thoughtful, and rather melancholy; the mouth and lower part of his face expressive of decision and much character. His dress, being suited to the road, was simple and plain, but such as was worn by the higher class of his countrymen; he wore his own hair, dressed in a manner that gave a military air to his appearance, and which was rather heightened by his erect and conspicuously graceful carriage. His whole appearance was so impressive and decidedly that of a gentleman, that as he finished laying aside the garments, the ladies rose from their seats, and, together with the master of the house, received anew, and returned, the complimentary greetings which were again offered.

The host was by several years the senior of the traveller, and by his manner, dress, and every thing around him, showed he had seen much of life and the best society. The ladies were—a maiden of forty, and two younger ones, who did not seem to have reached half those years. The bloom of the elder of these ladies had vanished, but her eyes, and fine hair, gave an extremely agreeable expression to her countenance; and there was a softness and affability in her deportment, that added a charm many more juvenile faces do not possess. The sisters—for such the resemblance between the younger maidens denoted them to be—were in all the pride of youth; and the roses, so eminently the property of the West-Chester fair, glowed with their richest colours on their cheeks, and lighted their deep blue eyes with that lustre which gives so much pleasure to the beholder, and indicates so much innocence and happiness in themselves. There was much of that feminine delicacy in the appearance of the three, which, in a great degree,

distinguishes the sex in this country; and, like the gentleman, their demeanor proved them to be women of the higher order of life.

After handing a glass of excellent Madeira to his guest, Mr. Wharton resumed his seat by the fire, with another in his own hand. For a moment he paused, as if debating with his politeness, but, at length, threw an inquiring glance on the stranger, as he inquired, with a formal bow—

"To whose health am I to have the honour of drinking?"

The traveller had also seated himself, and sat, unconsciously gazing on the fire, when Mr. Wharton spoke; turning his eyes slowly on his host, with a look of close observation, he replied, bowing in his turn, while a faint tinge gathered on his pale features—

"Mr. Harper."

"Mr. Harper," resumed the other, with the formal precision of the day, "I have the honour to drink your health, and hope you will sustain no injury from the rain to which you have been exposed."

Mr. Harper bowed in silence to the compliment, and soon resumed the meditations from which he appeared to have been interrupted.

The young ladies had again taken their seats beside the work-stand, while their aunt, Miss Jeanette Peyton, had withdrawn, to superintend the preparations necessary to appease the hunger of their unexpected visitor. A short silence prevailed, during which Mr. Harper was apparently enjoying the change in his situation, when Mr. Wharton again broke it, by inquiring, in the same polite, but formal manner, whether smoke was disagreeable to his companion; to which he received as polite a negative, and immediately resumed the pipe he had laid aside at the entrance of the traveller.

There was an evident desire on the part of the

host to enter into conversation, but either from an apprehension of treading on dangerous ground, or an unwillingness to intrude upon the rather studied taciturnity of his guest, he several times hesitated before he could venture to make any further remark. At length, a movement from Mr. Harper, as he raised his eyes to the party in the room, encouraged him to proceed.

"I find it very difficult," said Mr. Wharton, cautiously avoiding, at first, such subjects as he wished to introduce, "to procure that quality of tobacco for my evenings' amusement, to which I have been accustomed."

"I should think the shops in New-York might furnish the best in the country," rejoined the other, with his usual gravity.

"Why—yes," returned the host, in rather a hesitating manner, lifting his eyes to the face of Harper, and lowering them quickly, under his steady look, "there must be plenty in town, but the war has made any communications with the city, however innocent in themselves, too dangerous to be risked for so trifling an article as tobacco."

The box from which Mr. Wharton had just taken a supply for his pipe, was lying open, within a few inches of the elbow of Harper, who took a small quantity of the article, and applied it to his tongue, in a manner perfectly natural, but one that filled his companion with instant alarm. Without, however, observing that the quality was of the most approved kind, the traveller relieved his host by relapsing again into his meditations. Mr. Wharton now felt unwilling to lose the advantage he had gained, and, making an effort of more than usual vigour, he continued—

"I wish, from the bottom of my heart, this unnatural struggle was over, that we might again

meet our friends and relatives in peace and love."

"It is much to be desired," said Harper, emphatically, again raising his eyes to the countenance of his host.

"I hear of no movements of consequence since the arrival of our new allies," said Mr. Wharton, shaking the ashes from his pipe, and turning his back to the other, under the pretence of receiving a coal from his youngest daughter.

"None have reached the public yet, I believe," replied the traveller, crossing his leg with steady composure.

"Is it thought any important steps are about to be taken?" continued Mr. Wharton, still occupied with his daughter, yet unconsciously suspending his employment, in expectation of a reply.

"Is it intimated any are in agitation?" inquired the other, in a slight degree, adopting the affected indifference of Mr. Wharton's manner.

"Oh! nothing in particular," said the host, hastily—"but it is natural to expect something, you know, sir, from so powerful a force as the one under Rochambeau."

Harper made an assenting inclination with his head, but no other reply to this remark; while Mr. Wharton resumed the subject, by saying—

"They appear more active in the South—Gates and Cornwallis seem willing to bring the war to an issue there."

The brow of Harper contracted; and a deeper shade of melancholy crossed his features—his eye kindled with a transient beam of fire, that spoke a latent source of deep feeling. The admiring gaze of the younger of the sisters had barely time to read its expression, before it passed away, leaving in its room the acquired composure which marked the countenance of the stranger,

and that impressive dignity which so conspicuously denotes the empire of reason.

The elder sister made one or two movements in her chair, before she ventured to say, in a tone, which partook in no small measure, of triumph—

"General Gates has been less fortunate with the Earl, than with General Burgoyne."

"But General Gates is an Englishman, Sarah," cried the younger lady, with quickness; and then coloring to the eyes at her own boldness, she employed herself in tumbling over the contents of her work-basket, silently hoping her remark would be unnoticed.

The traveller had turned his face from one sister to the other, as they had spoken in succession, and an almost imperceptible movement of the muscles of his mouth betrayed a new emotion, as he inquired of the younger, with much courtesy of manner—

"May I venture to ask, what inference you draw from that fact?"

Frances blushed yet deeper at this direct appeal to her opinions, upon a subject on which she had incautiously spoken in the presence of a stranger; but, finding an answer necessary, after some little hesitation, and with a good deal of stammering in her manner, she replied—

"Only—only—sir—my sister and myself sometimes differ in our opinions of the prowess of the British." A smile of much meaning played on a face of infantile innocence of expression, as she concluded, in a voice, that shared in the covert humour of the speaker.

"On what particular points of prowess do you differ?" continued Harper, meeting her look of animation with an open smile of almost paternal softness.

"Why, Sarah thinks the British are never beat-

en; but I do not put so much faith in their invincibility."

The traveller listened to her with that pleased indulgence, with which virtuous age loves to contemplate the ardour of youthful innocence; but making no reply, he turned to the fire, and continued for some time gazing on its embers in silence.

Mr. Wharton had in vain endeavoured to pierce the disguise of his guest's political feelings; but, while there was nothing forbidding in his countenance, there was nothing communicative—it was strikingly reserved; and the master of the house rose, in profound ignorance of what, in those days, was the most material point in the character of his guest—to lead the way into another room to the supper table. Mr. Harper offered his hand to Sarah Wharton, and they entered the room together; while Frances followed, greatly at a loss to know whether she had not wounded the feelings of her father's inmate.

The storm began to rage with great violence without; and the dashing rain on the sides of the building, awakened that silent sense of enjoyment, which is excited by such sounds in a room of quiet comfort and warmth, when a loud summons at the outer door again called the faithful black to the portal. In a minute the servant returned, and informed his master that another traveller, overtaken by the storm, desired to be admitted to the house, for a shelter through the night.

At the first sounds of the impatient summons of this new applicant, Mr. Wharton had risen from his seat in evident uneasiness, and with eyes glancing, with alternate quickness, from his guest to the door of the room, seemed to be expecting something to proceed from this second interruption, which was connected with the stranger who

had occasioned the first. He scarcely had time to bid the black, with a faint voice, to show this second comer in, before the door was thrown hastily open, and the intruder himself entered the apartment. He paused a moment, as the person of Harper met his view, and then, in a more formal manner, repeated the request he had before made through the servant. Mr. Wharton and his family disliked the appearance of this new visitor excessively; but the inclemency of the weather, and the uncertainty of the consequences if he were refused the desired lodgings, compelled the old gentleman to give a reluctant acquiescence.

Some of the removed dishes were replaced by the orders of Miss Peyton, and the weather-beaten intruder invited to partake of the remains of the repast from which the party had just risen. Throwing aside a rough great coat, he very composedly took the offered chair, and gravely proceeded to allay the cravings of an appetite, which appeared by no means delicate. But at every mouthful he would turn an unquiet eye on Harper, who studied his appearance with a closeness of investigation, that was very embarrassing to its subject. At length, pouring out a glass of wine, the new comer nodded significantly to his examiner, previously to swallowing the liquor, and said, with something of bitterness in his manner—

"I drink to our better acquaintance, sir,—I believe this is the first time we have met."—The quality of the wine seemed greatly to his fancy, for, on replacing the glass upon the table, he gave his lips a smack, that resounded through the room; and, taking up the bottle, held it between himself and the light for a moment, in silent contemplation of its clear and brilliant colour.

"I think, we have never met before, sir," replied Harper, with a slight smile on his features,

as he observed the movements of the other; but appearing satisfied with his scrutiny, he turned to Sarah Wharton, who sat next him, and remarked, with much suavity—

"You doubtless find your present abode solitary, after being accustomed to the gaieties of the city."

"Oh! excessively so," said Sarah hastily, "I do wish with my father, that this cruel war was at an end, that we might return to our friends once more."

"And you, Miss Frances, do you long as ardently for peace as your sister?"

"On many accounts, I certainly do," returned the maid, venturing to steal a timid glance at her interrogator; and, meeting the same benevolent expression of feeling as before, she continued, as her own face lighted into one of its animated and lovely smiles of intelligence, "but, not at the expence of the rights of my countrymen."

"Rights," repeated her sister, impatiently; "whose rights can be stronger than those of a sovereign; and what duty is clearer, than to obey those who have a natural right to command?"

"None, certainly," said Frances, laughing with great pleasantry; and taking the hand of her sister affectionately within both of her own, she added, with a smile directed towards Harper—

"I gave you to understand, that my sister and myself differed in our political opinions—but we have an impartial umpire in my father, who loves his own countrymen, and loves the British, so sides with neither."

"Yes," said Mr. Wharton, in a little alarm, eyeing first one guest, and then the other; "I have near friends in both armies; and I dread a victory by either, as a source of misfortune to myself."

"I take it, you have little reason to apprehend much from the Yankees in that way," cried the guest at the table, abruptly, as he coolly helped himself to another glass, from the bottle he had admired.

"His majesty may have more experienced troops than the continentals," answered the host, fearfully, "but the Americans have met with distinguished success."

Harper disregarded the observations of both; and, rising, desired to be shown to his place of rest. A small boy was directed to guide him to his room; and, wishing a courteous good-night to the whole party, the traveller withdrew. The knife and fork fell from the hands of the unwelcome intruder, as the door closed on the retiring figure of Harper;—he rose slowly from his seat;—listening attentively, he approached the door of the room—opened it—seemed to attend to the retreating footsteps of the other—and, amidst the panic and astonishment of his companions, closed it again. In an instant, the red wig, which concealed his black locks—the large patch, which hid half his face from observation—the stoop, that had made him appear fifty years of age, disappeared.

"My father!—my dear father!"—cried the now handsome young man; "and you, my dearest sisters and aunt—have I at last met you again?"

"Heaven bless you—my Henry—my son," exclaimed the astonished, but delighted, parent; while both his sisters sunk on his shoulders, dissolved in tears.

The faithful old black, who had been reared from infancy in the house of his present master, and who, as if in mockery of his degraded state, had been complimented with the name of Cæsar, was the only other witness of this unexpected discovery of the son of Mr. Wharton. After receiv-

ing the extended hand of his young master, and imprinting on it a kiss, and leaving on it a tear, Cæsar withdrew. The boy did not re-enter the room; and the black himself, after some time, returned, as the young British captain exclaimed—

"But who is this Mr. Harper?—is he likely to betray me?"

"No—no—no—Massa Harry," cried the African, shaking his head confidently; "I been to see—Massa Harper on he knees—pray to God—no gemman who pray to God, tell of good son, come to see old father—Skinner do that—no christian."

This poor opinion of the Skinners was not confined to Mr.—Cæsar Thompson, as he called himself—but Cæsar Wharton, as he was styled, by the little world to which he was known. The convenience, and perhaps the necessities, of the leaders of the American arms, in the neighbourhood of New-York, had induced them to employ certain subordinate agents, of extremely irregular habits, in executing their lesser plans of annoying the enemy. It was not a moment for fastidious inquiries into abuses of any description; and oppression and injustice were the natural consequences of the possession of power which was uncurbed by the restraints of civil authority. In time, a distinct order of the community was formed, whose sole occupation appears to have been relieving their fellow citizens from any little excess of temporal prosperity, they might be thought to enjoy, under the pretence of patriotism, and the love of liberty.

Occasionally, the aid of military authority was not wanting, in enforcing these arbitrary distributions of worldly goods; and a petty holder of a commission in the state militia, was to be seen giving the sanction, of something like legality, to acts of the most unlicensed robbery—and, not unfrequently, of bloodshed.

On the part of the British, the stimulus of loyalty was by no means suffered to sleep, where so fruitful a field offered, on which it might be expended. But their freebooters were enrolled, and their efforts more systematized. Long experience had taught their leaders the efficacy of concentrated force; and, unless tradition does great injustice to their exploits, the result did no little credit to their foresight. The corps—we presume, from their known affection to that useful animal—had received the significant appellation of "Cow-Boys."

Cæsar was, however, far too loyal to associate men who held the commission of George III., with the irregular warriors, whose excesses he had so often witnessed, and from whose rapacity, neither his poverty, nor his bondage, had suffered even him to escape uninjured. The Cow-Boys, therefore, did not receive their proper portion of the severity of the black's remark, when he said, no Christian—nothing but a "Skinner," could betray a pious child, while honoring his father with a visit, full of peril, and the danger of captivity.

CHAPTER II.

The rose of England bloomed on Gertrude's cheek—
What though these shades had seen her birth, her sire
A Briton's independence taught to seek
Far Western worlds; and there his household fire
The light of social love did long inspire,
And many a halcyon day he liv'd to see
Unbroken, but by one misfortune dire,
When fate had reft his mutual heart—but she
Was gone—and Gertrude climb'd a widow'd father's knee.

Gertrude of Wyoming.

The father of Mr. Wharton was a native of England; and of a family, whose parliamentary interest, had enabled them to provide for a younger son, in the colony of New-York. The young man, like hundreds of others in his situation, had settled permanently in the country. He married, and the sole issue of his connexion had been sent, early in life, to receive the benefits of the English schools. After taking his degrees at one of the universities of the mother country, the youth had been suffered to acquire a knowledge of life, with the advantages of European society. But the death of his father recalled him, after passing two years in this manner, to the possession of an honorable name, and very ample estate.

It was much the fashion of that day, to place the youth, of certain families, in the army or navy of England, as the regular stepping-stones to preferment. Most of the higher offices in the colonies, were filled by men who had made arms their profession; and it was no uncommon sight to see a veteran warrior laying aside the sword, to assume

the ermine on the benches of the highest judicial authority.

In conformity with this system, the senior Mr. Wharton had intended his son for a soldier, but a natural imbecility of character in his child, had interfered with his wishes.

A twelvemonth had been spent by the young man, in weighing the advantages of the different description of troops, among which he was to serve, when the death of his father occurred. The ease of his situation, and the attentions lavished upon a youth, in the actual enjoyment of one of the largest estates in the colonies, interfered greatly with his ambitious projects. Love decided the matter—and Mr. Wharton, in becoming a husband, ceased to think of becoming a soldier. For many years he continued happy in his family, and respected by his countrymen, as a man of integrity and consequence, when all his enjoyments vanished, as it were, at a blow. His only son, the youth introduced in the preceding chapter, had entered the army, and had arrived in his native country but a short time before the commencement of hostilities, with the re-inforcements the ministry had thought it prudent to throw into the disaffected parts of North America. His daughters were just growing into life, and their education required all the advantages the city could afford. His wife had been, for some years, in declining health, and had barely time to fold her son to her bosom, and rejoice in the reunion of her family, before the revolution burst forth, in a continued blaze, from Georgia to Maine. The shock was too much for the feeble condition of the mother, who saw her child called to the field, to combat against the members of her own family in the South; and she sunk under the blow.

There was no part of the continent where the

manners of England, and its aristocratic notions of blood and alliances, prevailed with more force, than in a certain circle immediately around the metropolis of New-York. The customs of the early Dutch inhabitants had, indeed, blended, in some measure, with the English manners; but still the latter prevailed. This attachment to Great Britain was increased by the frequent inter-marriages of the officers of the mother country, with the wealthier and more powerful families of the vicinity, until, at the commencement of hostilities, their united influence had very nearly thrown the colony into the scales, on the side of the crown. A few, however, of the leading families espoused the cause of the people; and a sufficient stand was made against the efforts of the ministerial party, to organize, and, aided by the army of the confederation, to maintain an independent and republican form of government.

The city of New-York, and the adjacent territory, were alone exempted from the rule of the new commonwealth; and the royal authority extended no further than its dignity could be supported by the presence of an army. In this condition of things, the loyalists, of consequence, adopted such measures, as best accorded with their different characters and situations. Many bore arms in support of the ancient laws; and, by their bravery and exertions, endeavoured to secure what they deemed the rights of their prince, and their own estates from confiscation. Others left the country; seeking, in that place they emphatically called home, an asylum, as they fondly hoped, for a season only, against the confusion and dangers of war. A third, and more wary portion, remained in the place of their nativity, with a prudent regard to their ample possessions, and, perhaps, influenced by their attachments to the scenes of their youth. Mr. Wharton was of this description. Af-

ter making a provision against future contingencies, by secretly transmitting the whole of his money to the British funds, this gentleman determined to continue in the theatre of strife, and to maintain so strict a neutrality, as to ensure the safety of his large estate, whichever party succeeded. He was apparently engrossed in the education of his daughters, when a relation high in office in the new state, intimated, that a residence in what was now a British camp, differed but little, in the eyes of his countrymen, from a residence in the British capital. Mr. Wharton soon saw this was an unpardonable offence in the existing state of things, and instantly determined to remove the difficulty by retiring to the country. He possessed a convenient residence in the county of West-Chester, and having been for many years in the habit of withdrawing thither, during the heats of the summer months, it was kept furnished, and ready for his accommodation. His eldest daughter was already admitted into the society of women; but Frances, the younger, required a year or two more of the usual cultivation, to appear with proper eclat—at least so thought Miss Jeanette Peyton; and as this lady, a younger sister of their deceased mother had left her paternal home, in the colony of Virginia, with the devotedness and affection peculiar to her sex, to superintend the welfare of her orphan nieces, Mr. Wharton felt her opinions were entitled to profound respect. In conformity to her advice, therefore, the feelings of the parent were made to yield to the welfare of his children.

Mr. Wharton withdrew to the "Locusts," with a heart rent with the pain of separating from all that was left to him of a wife he had adored, but in obedience to a constitutional prudence that pleaded loudly in behalf of his wordly goods. His handsome town residence was inhabited, in the

meanwhile, by his daughters and their aunt. The regiment to which Captain Wharton belonged, formed part of the permanent garrison of the city, and the knowledge of the presence of his son was no littte relief to the father, in his unceasing meditations on his absent daughters. But Captain Wharton was a young man, and a soldier; his estimate of character was not always the wisest, and his propensities led him to imagine, that a red coat never concealed a dishonourable heart.

The house of Mr. Wharton became a fashionable lounge to the officers of the royal army, in common with those of every other family, thought worthy of their notice. The consequences of this association were, to some few of the visited, fortunate—to more, injurious, by exciting expectations which were never to be realized, and, unhappily, to no small number ruinous. The known wealth of the father, and, possibly, the presence of a high-spirited brother, forbad any apprehension of the latter danger to the young ladies; but it was impossible for all the admiration, bestowed on the fine figure and lovely face of Sarah Wharton, to be thrown away. Her person was formed with the early maturity of the climate, and a strict cultivation of the graces had made her, decidedly, the belle of the city. No one promised to dispute with her this female sovereignty, unless it might be her younger sister. Frances, however, wanted some months to the charmed age of sixteen; and the idea of competition was far from the minds of either of the affectionate girls. Indeed, next to the conversation of Colonel Wellmere, the greatest pleasure of Sarah was in contemplating the budding beauties of the little Hebe, who played around her with all the innocency of youth, with all the enthusiasm of her ardent temper, and with no little of the archness of her native humour.

Whether it was, that Frances received none of the compliments which fell to the lot of her elder sister, in the often repeated discussions on the merits of the war, between the military beaux who frequented the house; it is certain their effects on the sisters were exactly opposite. It was much the fashion, then, for the British officers to speak slightingly of their enemies; and Sarah took all the idle vapourings of her danglers to be truths. The first political opinions which reached the ears of Frances, were coupled with sneers on the conduct of her countrymen. At first she believed them; but there was occasionally a general, who was obliged to do justice to his enemy, in order to obtain justice for himself, and Frances became somewhat sceptical on the subject of her countrymen's inefficiency. Colonel Wellmere was among those who delighted most in expending his wit on the unfortunate Americans, and, in time, Frances began to listen to his eloquence with great suspicion, and some little resentment.

It was on a hot sultry day, the three were sitting in the parlour of Mr. Wharton's house, the Colonel and Sarah, seated on a sofa, engaged in one of their combats of the eyes, aided by no little flow of small talk, and Frances, occupied at her tambouring frame, in an opposite corner of the room, when the gentleman suddenly exclaimed—

"How gay the arrival of the army under General Burgoyne will make the city, Miss Wharton."

"Oh! how pleasant it must be," said the thoughtless Sarah, in reply; "I am told there are many charming women with that army; as you say, it will make us all life and gaiety."

Frances shook back the abundance of her golden hair, and raised from the work her eyes, dancing with the ardor of her national feeling, and

laughing, with a kind of concealed humour, she asked—

"Is it then so certain, that General Burgoyne will be permitted to reach the city?"

"Permitted!" echoed the Colonel, in affected surprise; "who is there to prevent it, if he wishes it himself, my pretty Miss Fanny?"

Frances was at precisely that age, when young people are most jealous of their station in society; neither quite a woman, nor yet a child. The "pretty Miss Fanny" was rather too familiar to be relished; and she dropped her eyes on her work again, with cheeks that glowed with crimson, as she continued very gravely—

"General Stark took the Germans into custody —may not General Gates think the British too dangerous to go at large?"

"Oh! they were Germans, as you say," cried the Colonel, excessively vexed at the necessity of explaining at all, "mere mercenary troops; but when the really British regiments come in question, you will see a very different result."

"Of that there is no doubt," cried Sarah, without in the least partaking of the resentment of the Colonel to her sister, but hailing already in her heart the triumph of the British.

"Pray, Colonel Wellmere," said Frances, recovering her good humour, and raising her joyous eyes once more to the face of the gentleman, "was the Lord Percy of Lexington, a kinsman of him who fought at Chevy Chase?"

"Why, Miss Fanny, you are becoming a rebel," said the Colonel, endeavouring to laugh away the anger he felt; "what you are pleased to insinuate as a chase at Lexington, was nothing more than a judicious retreat—a—kind of—"

"Running—fight," interrupted the good-hu-

moured girl, laying great emphasis on the first word.

"Positively, young lady—" Colonel Wellmere was interrupted by a laugh from a person who had hitherto been unnoticed.

There was a small family apartment adjoining the room occupied by the trio, and the air had blown open the door communicating between the two. A fine young man was now seen sitting near the entrance, who, by his smiling countenance, was evidently a pleased listener to the foregoing conversation. He rose instantly, and coming through the door, with his hat in his hand, appeared a tall graceful youth, of dark complexion, and sparkling eyes of black, from which the mirth had not yet entirely vanished, as he made his bow to the ladies.

"Mr. Dunwoodie!" cried Sarah, in surprise, "I was ignorant of your being in the house; you will find a cooler seat in this room."

"I thank you," replied the young man, "but I must go and seek your brother, who placed me there in ambuscade, as he called it, with a promise of returning an hour ago." Without making any further explanation, he bowed politely to the young women—distantly, and with hauteur, to the gentleman, and withdrew. Frances followed him into the hall, and blushing richly, inquired, in a hurried voice—

"But why—why do you leave us, Mr. Dunwoodie?—Henry must soon return."

The gentleman caught one of her hands in his own, and the stern expression of his countenance, gave place to a look of admiration, as he replied—

"You managed him famously, my dear little kinswoman—never—no never, forget the land of your birth—remember, Miss Wharton, if you are the grand-daughter of an Englishman, you are, also, the grand-daughter of a Peyton.

"Oh!" returned the laughing girl, "it would be difficult to forget that, with the constant lectures on genealogy before me, with which aunt Jeanette favours me—but why do you go?"

"I am on the wing for Virginia, and have much to do"—he pressed her hand as he spoke, and looking back, while in the act of closing the door, exclaimed, "be true to your country—be American." The ardent girl kissed her hand to him, as he retired, and then instantly applying it with its beautiful fellow to her burning cheeks, ran into her own apartment to hide her confusion.

Between the open sarcasm of Frances, and the ill-concealed disdain of the young man, Colonel Wellmere had felt himself placed in an awkward predicament; but ashamed to resent such trifles, in the presence of his mistress—he satisfied himself with observing superciliously, as Dunwoodie left the room—

"Quite a liberty for a youth in his situation—a shop-boy with a bundle, I fancy."

The idea of picturing the elegant and graceful Peyton Dunwoodie as a shop-boy, could never enter the mind of Sarah, and she looked around her in surprise, when the Colonel continued:—

"This Mr. Dun—Dun—"

"Dunwoodie! Oh no—he is a relation of my aunt's," cried the young lady, "and an intimate friend of my brother; they were at school together, and only separated in England, when one went into the army, and the other to a French military academy."

"His money appears to have been thrown away," observed the Colonel, showing the spleen he was unsuccessfully striving to conceal.

"We ought to hope so," added Sarah, with a smile; "for it is said he intends joining the rebel army—he was brought in here in a French ship,

and has just been exchanged--you may soon meet him in arms."

"Well let him—I wish Washington plenty of such heroes"--and he turned to a more pleasant subject, by changing the discourse to themselves. A few weeks had elapsed after this scene occurred, and the army of Burgoyne laid down their arms. Mr. Wharton, beginning to think the result of the contest to be doubtful, resolved to conciliate his countrymen, and gratify himself, by taking his daughters into his own abode. Miss Peyton consented to be their companion; and from that time, until the period at which we commenced our narrative, they had formed one family.

Whenever the main army made any movements, Captain Wharton had, of course, accompanied it; and once or twice, under the protection of strong parties, acting in the neighbourhood of the Locusts, he had enjoyed rapid and stolen interviews with his friends. A twelvemonth had however passed without his seeing them; and the impatient Henry had adopted the disguise we have mentioned, and unfortunately arrived on the very evening an unknown and rather suspicious guest was the inmate of a house, that seldom contained any others than its regular inhabitants.

"But, do you think he suspects me?" asked the captain, with anxiety, after pausing to listen to Cæsar's opinion of the Skinners.

"How should he?" cried Sarah, "when your sisters and father could not penetrate your disguise."

"There is something mysterious in his manner; his looks are too prying for an indifferent observer," continued young Wharton thoughtfully, "and his face seems familiar to me—the recent fate of

André has created much irritation on both sides. Sir Henry threatens retaliation for his death; and Washington is as firm as if half the world were at his command. The rebels would think me a fit subject for their plans just now, should I be so unlucky as to fall into their hands."

"But, my son," cried his father, in great alarm, "you are not a spy—you are not within the rebel—that is, the American lines;—there is nothing here to spy."

"That might be disputed," rejoined the young man, musing; "their picquets were out at the White Plains when I passed through in disguise. It is true, my purposes are innocent; but how is it to appear. My visit to you would seem a cloak to other designs. Remember, sir, the treatment received by yourself, not a year ago, for sending me a supply of fruit for the winter."

"That proceeded from the misrepresentations of my kind neighbours," said Mr. Wharton, "who hoped, by getting my estate confiscated, to purchase good farms, at low prices. Peyton Dunwoodie, however, soon obtained our discharge—we were detained but a month."

"We!" repeated the son, in amazement; "did they take my sisters also?—Fanny, you wrote me nothing of this."

"I believe," said Frances, coloring highly, "I mentioned the kind treatment received from your old friend, Major Dunwoodie; and that he procured my father's release."

"True;—but were you with him in the rebel camp?"

"Yes," said the father, kindly; "Fanny would not suffer me to go alone. Jeanette and Sarah took charge of the Locusts, and this little girl was my companion in captivity."

"And Fanny returned from such a scene a

greater rebel than ever," cried Sarah indignantly; "one would think the hardships her father suffered would have cured her of such whims."

"What say you to the charge, my bonny sister?" cried the Captain, gaily;—"Did Peyton strive to make you hate your king, more than he does himself?"

"Peyton Dunwoodie hates no one," said Frances, quickly; and blushing at her own ardor, she added immediately, "he loves you Henry, I know, for he has told me so again and again."

Young Wharton tapped his sister on the cheek, with a shrewd smile, as he asked her, in an affected whisper—"Did he tell you also that he loved my little sister Fanny?"

"Nonsense," said Frances; and the remnants of the supper table soon disappeared under her superintendance.

CHAPTER III.

'Twas when the fields were swept of autumn's store,
And growling winds the fading foliage tore,
Behind the Lowmon hill, the short-liv'd light,
Descending slowly, usher'd in the night;
When from the noisy town, with mournful look,
His lonely way a meagre pedlar took.

Wilson.

A STORM below the highlands of the Hudson, if it be introduced with an easterly wind, seldom lasts less than two days. Accordingly, as the inmates of the Locusts assembled, on the following morning, around their early breakfast, the driving rain was seen to strike, in nearly horizontal lines, against the windows of the building, and forbad the idea of exposing either man or beast to the tempest. Harper was the last to appear: after taking a view of the state of the weather, he apologized to Mr. Wharton for the necessity that existed, for his trespassing upon his goodness for a longer time. To appearances, the reply was as courteous as the excuse; yet Harper wore a resignation in his deportment that was widely different from the uneasy manner of the father. Henry Wharton had resumed his disguise with a reluctance amounting to disgust, but in obedience to the commands of his parent. No communications passed between him and the stranger, after the first salutations of the morning had been paid to him by Harper, in common with the rest of the family. Frances had, indeed, thought there was something like a smile passing over the features of the traveller,

when, on entering the room, he first confronted her brother; but it was confined to the eyes, seeming to want power to affect the muscles of the face, and was soon lost in the settled and benevolent expression which reigned in his countenance, with a sway but seldom interrupted. The eyes of the affectionate sister were turned, in anxiety, for a moment, on her brother, and, glancing again on their unknown guest, met his look as he offered her, with peculiar grace, one of the little civilities of the table; and the heart of the maiden, which had begun to throb with violence, regained a pulsation as tempered as youth, health, and buoyant spirits could allow. While yet seated at the table, Cæsar entered, and, laying a small parcel in silence by the side of his master, modestly retired behind his chair, where, placing one hand on its back, he continued in an attitude half familiar, but profoundly respectful.

"What is this, Cæsar?" inquired Mr. Wharton, turning the bundle over in examination of its envelop, and eyeing it rather suspiciously.

"The 'baccy, sir; Harvey Birch, he got home, and bring you a little good 'baccy from York."

"Harvey Birch," rejoined the master, with great deliberation, stealing a look at his guest. "I do not remember desiring him to purchase any tobacco for me; but as he has bought it, he must be paid for his trouble."

For an instant only, as the negro spoke, did Harper suspend his silent meal—his eye moved slowly from the servant to the master, and again all remained in its impenetrable reserve.

To Sarah Wharton, this intelligence gave unexpected pleasure; rising from her seat, with impatience, she bad the black shew Birch into the apartment; when, suddenly recollecting herself, she turned to the traveller with an apologizing

look, and added, "if Mr. Harper will excuse the presence of a pedlar."

The indulgent benevolence expressed in the countenance of the stranger, as he bowed in silent acquiescence, spoke more eloquently than the nicest framed period, and the young lady repeated her order with a confidence in its truth, that removed all embarrassment.

In the deep recesses of the windows of the cottage, were seats of pannelled work; and the rich damask curtains, that had ornamented the parlour in Queen-street, had been transferred to the Locusts, and gave to the room that indescribable air of comfort, which so gratefully announces the approach of a domestic winter. Into one of these recesses Captain Wharton now threw himself, drawing the curtain before him in such a manner as to conceal most of his person from observation; while his younger sister, losing her natural frankness of manner, in an air of artificial constraint, silently took possession of the other.

Harvey Birch had been a pedlar from his youth; at least, so he frequently asserted, and his skill in the occupation went far to prove the truth of the declaration. He was supposed to be a native of one of the Eastern Colonies; and, from something of superior intelligence which belonged to his father, it was thought they had known better fortunes in the land of their nativity. Harvey possessed, however, the common manners of the country, and was in no way distinguished from men of his class but by his acuteness—and the mystery which enveloped his movements. Ten years before they had arrived together in the vale, and, purchasing the humble dwelling at which Harper had made his unsuccessful application, continued peaceful inhabitants, but little noticed and but little known. Until age and infirmities had

prevented, the father devoted himself to the cultivation of the small spot of ground belonging to his purchase, while the son pursued with avidity his humble barter. Their orderly quietude had soon given them so much consideration in the neighbourhood, as to induce a maiden of five and thirty to forget the punctilio of her sex, and to accept the office of presiding over their domestic comforts. The roses had long before vanished from the cheeks of Katy Haynes, and she had seen in succession, both her male and female acquaintances forming the union so desirable to her sex, with but little or no hope left for herself, when, with views of her own, she entered the family of the Birch's. Necessity is a hard master, and for the want of a better companion, the father and son were induced to accept her services—but still Katy was not wanting in some qualities, which made her a very tolerable housekeeper. On the one hand, she was neat, industrious, honest, and a good manager. On the other, she was talkative, selfish, superstitious, and inquisitive. By dint of using the latter quality with consummate skill, she had not lived in the family but five years when she triumphantly declared, that she had heard, or rather overheard, sufficient to say what had been the former fate of her associates. Could Katy have possessed enough of divination to pronounce upon their future lot, her task would have seemed comparatively easy. From the private conversations of the parent and child, she learnt that a fire had reduced them from competence to poverty, and at the same time diminished the number of their family to two. There was a tremulousness in the voice of the father, as he touched lightly on the event, which affected even the heart of Katy ; but no barrier is sufficient to repel vulgar curiosity. She persevered, until a very direct intimation from

Harvey, by threatening to supply her place with a female a few years younger than herself, gave her awful warning, that there were bounds beyond which she was not to pass. From that period, the curiosity of the housekeeper had been held in such restraint, that, although no opportunity of listening was ever neglected, she had been able to add but little to her stock of knowledge. There was, however, one piece of intelligence, and that of no little interest to herself, which she had succeeded in obtaining; and, from the moment of its acquisition, she had directed her energies to the accomplishment of one object aided by the double stimulus of love and avarice.

Harvey was in the frequent habit of paying mysterious visits, in the deph of the night, to the fireplace of the apartment, that served for both kitchen and parlor. Here he was observed by Katy; and, availing herself of his absence and the occupations of the father, by removing one of the hearth-stones, she discovered an iron pot, glittering with a metal that seldom fails to soften the hardest heart. Katy succeeded in replacing the stone without discovery, and never dared to trust herself with another visit. From that moment, however, the heart of the virgin lost its obduracy; and nothing interposed between Harvey and his happiness, but his own want of observation.

The war did not interfere with the traffic of the pedlar, who seized on the golden opportunity which the interruption to the regular trade afforded, and appeared absorbed in the one grand object of amassing money. For a year or two his employment was uninterrupted, and his success proportionate; but, at length, dark and threatening hints began to throw suspicion around his movements, and the civil authority thought it incumbent on them to examine narrowly into his mode of life.

His imprisonments were not long, though frequent; and his escapes from the guardians of the law comparatively easy, to what he endured from the persecution of the military. Still Birch survived, and still he continued his trade, though compelled to be very guarded in his movements, especially whenever he approached the northern boundaries of the county; or, in other words, the neighbourhood of the American lines. His visits to the Locusts had become less frequent, and his appearance at his own abode so seldom, as to draw forth from the disappointed Katy, in the fullness of her heart, the complaint we have related, in her reply to Harper. Nothing, however, seemed to interfere with the pursuits of this indefatigable trader; and, with a view to dispose of certain articles which could only find purchasers in the very wealthiest families of the county, he had now braved the fury of the tempest, for the half mile between his own residence and the house of Mr. Wharton.

In a few minutes after receiving the commands of his young mistress, Cæsar re-appeared, ushering into the apartment the subject of the foregoing digression. In person, the pedlar was a man above the middle height, spare, but full of bone and muscle: at first sight, his strength seemed unequal to manage the unwieldy burden of his pack; yet he threw it on and off with great dexterity, and with as much apparent ease as if it had been feathers. His eyes were gray—sunken, restless, and, for the flitting moments that they dwelt on the countenances of those with whom he conversed, seemed to read the very soul. They possessed, however, two distinct expressions, which, in a great measure, characterized the whole man. When engaged in traffic, the intelligence of his face appeared lively, active, and flexible, though uncommonly acute; if the conversation turned on the