

PEEP AT THE PILGRIMS

IN

SIXTEEN HUNDRED THIRTY-SIX

A TALE OF OLDEN TIMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF *DIVERS UNFINISHED MANUSCRIPTS*,

Come, listen to my story,  
Tho' often told before,  
Of men who passed to glory  
Thro' toil and travail sore;  
Of men who did for conscience' sake,  
Their native land forego,  
And sought a home and freedom here,  
Two hundred years ago.      FLINT.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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A

PEEP AT THE PILGRIMS.

CHAP. I.

To lands where foot hath seldom been,  
Were it our fate to roam,  
Still 'tis the heart that gilds the scene,  
The heart that forms the home.

ANONYMOUS.

AS soon as Major Atherton left the house of Mr. Grey, on the evening previous to his departure from Plymouth, — Miriam, who had exerted a surprising command over her feelings during their interview, found herself unable longer to sustain her firmness, and as the door closed after him, and she felt that he was leaving her probably for the last time, she yielded to her emotions, and leaning her head on Mrs. Weldon's shoulder, wept for a few moments without restraint. Mrs. Weldon forbore to interrupt or question her; she could not mistake the cause of her unusual excitement, and the appearance and conduct of Atherton convinced her, that their recent conference had not terminated favourably to his wishes. Miriam first broke the silence, and raising her blushing face, she said in an earnest but unsteady voice,—

“Forgive my folly, dearest Lois, and believe that I have not intentionally deceived you.”

“I am most ready to believe it,” returned Mrs. Weldon, “and you will now allow, Miriam, that I was better acquainted with your heart than you were yourself.”

“I was indeed loth to think it so very weak,” replied Miriam; “but this painful interview has opened my eyes, and I thank God, that I have had strength to sacrifice my inclination to principle and duty.”

“You have done well, my dear Miriam, and the peace of your own conscience and your father's approbation, will amply compensate for your present unhappiness, and soon, I trust, restore your wonted serenity.”

“I could endure every thing with cheerfulness, were *he* less miserable,” replied Miriam, and the tears again filled her eyes; “but I can never cease to reproach myself for encouraging hopes, however inadvertently, which I have in an instant crushed, and without daring to offer one soothing word, or even leaving him the consolation of knowing that the pain was mutual.”

“Do not dwell on these gloomy images, my dear Miriam; sincerely as Major Atherton loves you, believe me his affection is not unconquerable; men are less tenacious in their attachments than our sex, and their intercourse with the world, their more active sources of amusements, soon wean their thoughts from one object, and leave them no leisure to indulge in melancholy regrets.”

Miriam remained silent, probably unconvinced or unwilling to admit the justice of her cousin's assertion; which as it regarded Atherton, would perhaps have occasioned inquietude rather than consolation; for few women wish to regain their tranquillity at the

expense of losing the affection of the man they love, even if convinced their attachment can never lead to a more permanent union. Approaching footsteps were at that moment heard, and Miriam hastily rising, said,—

“Do not betray my weakness, even to your husband, dear Lois,” and hurried to her own apartment.

Major Atherton’s unexpected departure from Plymouth on the following morning, occasioned much surprise and conjecture among the inhabitants, and subjected Miriam Grey to many embarrassing enquiries. Mistress Rebecca Spindle, who possessed a large share of the curiosity natural to her sex and condition, proved particularly annoying; she found it convenient to pay an early visit to Mrs. Weldon, and through the confusion of Miriam, when Atherton and the cause of his absence were alluded to, she detected enough of the truth combined with her own conjectures, to satisfy the inquisitive disposition of all the gossips in the village.

Mr. Calvert, who had long considered Atherton as a formidable rival, was delighted by his abrupt departure, which he doubted not was occasioned by the refusal of Miriam; and from that supposition, he drew the most favourable inferences in regard to his own prospects. He found her as cheerful, and apparently happy as usual; for in society at least, she successfully rallied her spirits, and appeared with her accustomed gaiety. Her manner towards him was frank and unreserved, as it had ever been; and encouraged by his hopes, he ventured to disclose the passion with which she had inspired him, and to solicit a return. Miriam listened to him with surprise, but without any flattering emotion; she had always found him an agreeable companion, and believed him worthy of her esteem; but even had her heart been entirely free, he could never have been the man whom she would have selected for her husband. Feeling no partiality for him, she had scarcely suspected that his regard for her exceeded the limits of friendly interest; and indeed he had considered it politic to conceal its extent, particularly while under her father’s eye, believing his handsome person and insinuating address would make a due impression on her, whenever he thought proper to reveal his sentiments. The gentle but decided refusal of Miriam, perplexed him, and he endeavoured to win a more favourable answer, by exerting all the persuasive eloquence he could command. Finding her inflexible, he tried the force of argument; her objections to his religion, his country, her father’s disapprobation, her own indifference, he at first considered merely as the capricious whims of a pretty woman, who wished to be flattered into compliance; but he at length became irritated by her continued firmness, and gave way to the bitterness of his disappointment in the most violent reproaches. The feelings of Miriam were deeply wounded by his language, which was equally unmerited and unexpected, and betrayed an absence of principle and delicacy that shocked and surprised her. Without deigning to repel his accusations, or to enter into controversy with him, she retired from his presence with an air of dignity, which for a moment awed him, and prevented his endeavouring to detain her. Yet his pride, as much perhaps as his affection, was piqued, and he made repeated attempts to be admitted to another interview. But Miriam steadily refused his request, and he resorted to the expedient of interesting Mrs. Weldon in his behalf. She, however, declined all interference, believing Miriam possessed of prudence sufficient to direct herself, and in reality not at all inclined to favour the addresses of a man, whose religious principles were alone an insurmountable objection. As a dernier resource, Mr. Calvert addressed a letter to Miriam, filled with humble acknowledgements and

passionate professions, entreating her to receive him at least on probation, and allow him to hope that he might even at a distant period, regain her good opinion, if he could not obtain her affections.

Miriam returned him the letter briefly expressing on the envelope her continued wishes for his prosperity and happiness, but declining any further intercourse with him. Calvert's mortification was excessive, and he would have quitted Plymouth, without delay, but his vessel was yet unprepared for the voyage; and in the meanwhile he availed himself of an oft-repeated invitation from Captain Standish to pass some time at his house, happy to remove from the immediate scene of his disappointment.

Soon after these events, Mr. Weldon received intelligence from the new colony of Hartford, which excited the utmost alarm and anxiety. He had invested his whole property in a plantation at that place, and with the laborious care attendant on the first attempts at cultivating a wilderness, had prepared a suitable place for a garden, and cleared several acres of land ready to receive the seed, early in the ensuing spring. He had also built a comfortable dwelling-house, which, with his cattle and implements of husbandry he left with a trusty agent, intending to pass the winter at Plymouth, from whence he felt reluctant to remove his wife at that inauspicious season.

But the Pequod Indians, a fierce and warlike tribe, inhabiting the country near the mouth of Connecticut river, began to spread terror among the scattered settlements in their vicinity; and every man was obliged to use the utmost vigilance to secure himself, his family and property from their depredations. They often penetrated to the abodes of the white people, lay in ambush for the solitary and unsuspecting, and if opportunity offered, burned houses and destroyed every thing within their reach. Their enmity to the English was inveterate and unceasing; they inhumanly murdered in cold blood, even innocent children and defenceless women; and their unfortunate captives were subjected to the most cruel tortures. At that time three towns only were settled within the limits of Connecticut: the whole of which did not contain more than two hundred and fifty men capable of bearing arms, and surrounded as they were by savage enemies, their situation became perilous in the extreme.

Mr. Weldon received a detail of these particulars in a letter from Hartford, and he was sensible that his absence at such a time would place his worldly concerns in hazard, and that it might subject him to the reproach of cowardice to remain in security, and at a distance, when every man was girding on his armour to repel a barbarous enemy. He had assisted in establishing the church and colony at that place, and deeply interested in their existence and prosperity, he resolved at whatever cost, to return and share the perils of his fellow citizens. Mrs. Weldon at once determined to follow her husband, wherever his duty called him, nor were any entreaties, or the prospect of any dangers, able to shake her resolution. Indeed she suffered far less anxiety for herself than he had experienced on her account; she was naturally of a cheerful disposition, and had acquired an habitual self-command, which enabled her to meet every exigence with firmness, every misfortune with resignation. With a constant reliance on divine protection, and the most devoted affection for her husband, she was ready to undertake any enterprise which circumstances rendered expedient.

But the situation of Miriam Grey occasioned Mrs. Weldon much perplexity and deliberation. She was unwilling to leave her during her father's absence, and particularly

while the gaiety of her spirits were clouded by recent disappointment, which all her endeavours could not conceal from the solicitous affection of her cousin.

Major Atherton's name had not passed the lips of either since the evening he had quitted them. Miriam engaged in her daily employments with as much apparent interest as usual; but her sportive smile was often checked by a sigh and a casual allusion or sudden remembrance, sometimes filled her eyes with tears, even in the moment of mirth; while imperceptible to any but the watchful eye of Lois, her countenance seemed gradually losing the brilliant bloom of health and happiness.

Mrs. Weldon was too delicate to mention her fears even to her husband; and therefore left entirely to the counsel of her own judgment, she determined to be guided in a great measure by the wishes of Miriam. The Governor and Mrs. Winslow earnestly desired Miriam to remain with them until her father's return; but though gratified by their kindness and attention, she declined their request, and solicited permission to accompany Lois, to share her fortunes, and still enjoy the solace of her society and friendship. Nothing could have been more grateful to Mrs. Weldon's feelings than such a proposal; but fearful that it would not meet the approbation of Mr. Grey, and might endanger Miriam's safety, she generously endeavoured to dissuade her from her purpose by representing all the evils to which she would be exposed, and her father's unhappiness, should any misfortune befall her. But Miriam opposed arguments and entreaties to her cousin's objections, and was so decided in the belief that her father would approve her conduct, and that she acted consistently with duty, as well as inclination, that Mrs. Weldon considered further discussion useless, and with mingled pleasure and apprehension, consented to admit her as the companion of her hazardous enterprise.

Miriam Grey commenced the preparations for her expected departure with an alacrity which surprised her friends, who considered an expedition to that *distant* part of the country, at any time, and especially in a season of public alarm, as too dangerous to be undertaken, except in cases of urgent necessity. For be it remembered, the conveniences of steam-boats and stage-coaches, which now traverse our country from the lakes of Canada to the shores of Mexico, were then unknown; and a removal to the savage borders of the great Connecticut, was an undertaking more formidable than a voyage of discovery to the North Pole, or an exploring mission to the interior of Africa in these days of improvement, when a love of scientific research, or rage for novelty; a desire to instruct the world or to amuse themselves, is daily leading men to the remotest regions of the earth, and has even suggested the ingenious theory of penetrating through its centre, as a ready way of facilitating intercourse between the antipodes. Nay, when the earth itself has become too grovelling a sphere of action, and the dominions of the air are threatened with invasion by a recent petition to Congress, praying that honourable body for a patent to confine the profitable sale of wings to the sole benefit of the aspiring inventor.

But Miriam did not allow herself to indulge imaginary fears, or even to dwell on such as wore an appearance of reality; once resolved, she was unwavering, and those most interested in her happiness, while they regretted, ceased to oppose her design. Captain Standish was the most persevering of her opponents; but, like all others, he was finally obliged to yield to her fixed determination, though so highly irritated at his defeat, that it is said he gave vent to an almost forgotten Dutch oath, which had served him when

fighting for queen Elizabeth in the Low-Countries,—and which, if whispered among his puritan brethren, was probably overlooked on account of his important services.

“These confounded women,” he said to Calvert, still a guest at his house, “are as wrong-headed and obstinate as mules; but who could have thought my little rose-bud, with all her sweetness and smiles, would set up for a will of her own.”

“The fairest and best of them have a bit of the old serpent in their hearts;” answered Calvert, with a bitter smile.

“No, no, you are wrong, Calvert,” replied the Captain: “their hearts would be well enough, if it were not for their light heads and fickle minds which are always leading them into error, and turning them aside in search of novelty. But I do believe,” he added to himself, rather than to his companion, “my poor Miriam has lost her senses, gone mad outright,—to turn off my cousin Atherton, as handsome and gallant a young fellow as ever sued for maiden’s favour, or drew sword against the king’s enemies,—and now to leave friends and home, and throw herself into the very jaws of these ravenous, heathenish savages.”

As Captain Standish paced the room with hurried steps, and thus yielded to his anger and regret, he quite forgot in the excitement of his feelings, the caution he had hitherto used in regard to the disappointment of Major Atherton, which the art of Calvert had not been able to extort from him; but to which he now listened with extreme pleasure, feeling his own mortification diminished by the conviction that it was shared by his rival.

Mr. Weldon in the meantime, resolved to take passage in a small vessel which had put into Plymouth on its way from Cape-Cod to Boston; being informed that a vessel was then loading with provisions at the latter place for the ill-supplied colonists at Connecticut, in which they would embark for the place of their destination.

But as the time of their departure drew near, Benjamin Ashly, who had certainly said less, and probably thought more on the subject than any other person, became tormented by his apprehensions, and excited by a thousand wild hopes and inconsistent plans. The coldness of Miriam, her occasional raillery and suspected preference for another, had not diminished his affection for her, and if he sometimes doubted of success, hope was never entirely banished from his breast. His disposition was rather reserved than phlegmatic; he had loved her from childhood, his attachment had increased with his years, and was decidedly encouraged by the friends of both. The world, which always takes the liberty of interfering in such affairs, had early declared, in consonance with the young man’s wishes, that it would be a match; and more than once had Master Ashly been on the point of ascertaining from the lips of the damsel, if the said world prophesied truly. But at the fated moment of disclosure, a feeling of unconquerable timidity, or an arch smile lurking on the countenance of the fair one, invariably called forth his awkward bashfulness and completely overawed him. Thus years passed on in a state of uncertainty, till at length the assiduities of Major Atherton and Mr. Calvert aroused his most anxious fears, and caused him bitterly to repent the irresolution which had so long held him in ignorance of his fate. The sudden removal of these formidable rivals, however, with the inference naturally drawn from it, relieved his mind of an oppressive weight; and again finding the field his own, like many other indolent and undecided persons, he concluded to enjoy his leisure and wait a favourable opportunity to decide the combat. His mother in vain entreated him to secure the prize, while there was no opponent to dispute it with

him; for she earnestly desired the marriage might take place, though sometimes piqued to observe the gaiety of Miriam rather increased by the presence of her son; and inclined to think her strangely deficient in judgment to withhold her regard from so worthy an object. But a strong belief which she entertained, in common with many other superficial observers, that young women are not apt to be sincere in affairs of the heart, and that they generally possess the art of veiling their real sentiments, or affecting false ones, to suit their caprice or designs,—still led her to hope for the best; and after all, she could not think that Miriam Grey,—giddy as the young thing sometimes seemed,—would really be so foolish as to refuse her son, who was born to a good inheritance, and withal esteemed comely and well-favoured.

When Benjamin Ashly, however, found that Miriam was actually on the point of leaving Plymouth, he became emboldened by fears for her safety, and the dread of losing her; and resolved, if possible, to dissuade her from prosecuting her hazardous voyage. Yet his resolution was more than once frustrated by some trifling interruption, or his habitual timidity, when fortune at last presented him with an opportunity too favourable to be neglected. He one day entered the setting-parlour at Mr. Grey's, where Miriam chanced to be entirely alone, and busily engaged with her needle. She received him with her usual courtesy, and after a few trifling questions, resumed her occupation and with it the train of reflections which his entrance had interrupted. Ashly improved the silence in framing a suitable prologue to his intended declaration; and to prepare the way, he began with three distinct hems, which startled Miriam, who had almost forgotten his presence, and looking up to repair her error, she first observed the ominous length of his countenance, and the unnatural flush which agitated it. His eyes were fixed on her with an expression of anxiety, not to say alarm, mingled with tenderness, but which as she did not perfectly comprehend their meaning, struck her as rather ludicrous, and an involuntary smile overspread her features. Benjamin Ashly somewhat abashed, cast his eyes upon the floor—the ceiling—and finally they rested on a looking-glass; and as Miriam had diligently renewed her employment, he improved the moment to arrange the knot of his neck-kerchief, and smooth his short brown hair,—for the best of people love to look well, particularly at such critical times, when a lady's favour is often decided by trifles. Miriam was revolving in her mind on what subject to address him,—for as if it was a matter of the utmost importance, she could not at the moment think of anything to say,—when Ashly prevented her any farther trouble, by crossing the room with the utmost gravity, and seating himself close beside her. After a brief pause he said to her,—

“You are about to leave us, Miriam, and sojourn amidst the perils of a wilderness.”

“You should not speak to me of perils,” said Miriam, smiling, “rather be so benevolent as to encourage me with the hope of better things.”

“I would fain,” said Ashly, “by exciting your alarm, prevail on you to alter a determination, which has caused so much grief and anxiety to your friends.”

“Your purpose is vain,” replied Miriam; “I have already ‘counted the cost,’ and am resolved to abide by the consequences.”

“Dear Miriam,” returned Ashly, gaining courage as he proceeded, “will nothing prevail with you? will you indeed leave all the comforts and delights of life, to dwell in a far country, even among the tents of the wandering savages, whose hands are against every man?”

“I have no fears for my safety,” returned Miriam; “and if I had, it would be my duty to conquer them, for the sake of my cousin Lois, whose unvarying kindness to me from infancy, deserves this slight return of grateful attention.”

“Before you decide,” replied Ashly, “consider, I entreat you, —”

“I am already decided,” interrupted Miriam, a little impatient at his persecution; “so I pray you, Master Ashly, give up the subject, and suffer me to follow my inclination in peace.”

“May the Lord be with you, and prosper you;” said Ashly, emphatically; but after a moment’s pause, he ventured to add, “Miriam Grey, your father hath sometimes encouraged me to open my heart unto you, and I would now urge a request which nearly concerns my happiness.”

“Be brief then, if it please you; for time is pressing, and I have many engagements,” replied Miriam, hoping by an air of indifference again to avert an avowal which she dreaded.

But Mr. Ashly had apparently nerved himself for the undertaking: and though trembling like an aspen leaf, he replied,—

“Miriam, I have long loved you, with a love passing that of women; and even as the patriarch Jacob served seven years for the daughter of Laban, so have I waited patiently to obtain your favour, and it hath seemed unto me but a few days.”

“This is some new plan, to divert me from my purpose,” said Miriam, in confusion; “but it is as vain as every other. I have put my hand to the plough, and I cannot look back.”

“You do not understand me, Miriam,” replied Ashly. “I would no longer seek to detain you here; but I pray you, if I have found favour in your eyes, suffer me to go with you; as your husband, I would cheerfully toil for you, nay, I would hazard my life to preserve you from danger or distress.”

“Would you,” asked Miriam, “leave your widowed mother, who doats on you, and her children, who look up to you for guidance and protection, to gratify this vain and unprofitable desire?”

“Yes, I would quit every thing,” replied Ashly, his features glowing with hope, and for once yielding to the excitement of his feelings. “Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou diest, there will I be buried.”

“Say not so,” replied Miriam, affected by the earnestness of his appeal; and after a moment of painful hesitation, she added, “I should be unworthy of your regard were I capable of misleading you by any false expectations. I have never sought to deceive you, Benjamin, but on the contrary, have always discouraged the preference which you early professed for me, and which has long been sanctioned by our friends; circumstances have brought us much together, and this familiar intercourse has discovered to me the integrity of your character, and interested me in your happiness; but forgive my frankness, Ashly; I must add, our destinies can never be united; believe me still your friend, and may the affection of a deserving object soon lead your thoughts from one who can only regard you with esteem and gratitude.”

“Never, never, Miriam Grey,” exclaimed Ashly, vehemently; “I have loved you through life, and I will love you, and you only, to the last hour of my existence.”

He rose from his seat with a flushed countenance, and crossed the room with rapid strides, as he finished speaking; while Miriam remained silent and embarrassed, surprised by a display of feeling so foreign to his character, and which was probably more violent from having been long repressed. Ashly continued standing for several moments, apparently striving to regain his usual firmness, which his habitual self-control soon enabled him to effect; and when Miriam again raised her eyes, every trace of emotion was gone, and his features had resumed their customary expression of calm and rather gloomy immobility. Nothing could have been less becoming or more unfavourable to his suit, than this sudden return of composure; it instantly relieved the mind of Miriam, and convinced her that he would not long suffer under the sting of disappointed hope. She was wondering that he remained so long standing and silent, and endeavouring to frame some excuse for quitting the room, when the voice of Mrs. Weldon, singing in a low tone, was heard approaching them. Benjamin Ashly started as if electrified, threw a hurried glance at the door, and not daring to trust his voice in bidding Miriam farewell, he took her hand and held it for an instant in his own, which trembled violently, while his features were again strongly agitated, and without speaking, he precipitately left the room.

Miriam, deeply regretting the pain she had unwillingly inflicted, concealed the object of his visit even from her cousin, who had, however, her own suspicions on the subject, which were increased by the absence of Ashly, who prudently refrained from seeing Miriam again. But three days after, at a distance and unobserved, he indulged in a parting glimpse, at the moment she was embarking on her voyage, surrounded by friends, amongst whom an embarrassing consciousness and dread of exposing his feelings, restrained him from mingling.

The emotions of Miriam Grey were almost overpowering, when she found herself actually quitting the home and friends who had long been dear and familiar to her; and, for a time, she was tempted to consider her project rash, and to fear she had been governed by feelings, rather than prudence. But as the village of Plymouth became indistinct, and newer prospects opened around her, her thoughts were insensibly diverted to other subjects, and her spirits gradually recovered their usual buoyancy, and much of their accustomed gaiety. A brisk wind carried them forward, and in less than the ordinary time they were within the spacious Bay of Massachusetts. As they entered the harbour of Boston, Miriam became again silent and abstracted; she observed with restless curiosity the different persons who were collected on the shore; and Mrs. Weldon was at no loss to conjecture that Major Atherton was present to her thoughts; but in the imperfect light he was not recognized by either of them,—and immediately on landing they proceeded to the public inn.

## CHAP. II.

I must admire thee more for so denying,  
Than I had dared if thou had'st fondly granted;  
Thou dost devote thyself to utterest peril,  
And me to deepest anguish; yet even now  
Thou art lovelier to me in thy cold severity,  
Flying me, leaving me without a joy,  
Without a hope on earth, without thyself;  
Thou art lovelier now, than if thy yielding soul  
Had smiled on me a passionate consent."

MILMAN.

MIRIAM GREY was in the act of speaking as she entered the room, where the landlady of the inn had prepared their evening repast; but the words died on her lips the instant she recognized the features of Major Atherton, whose eyes were fixed on her with an expression of extreme pleasure, which for the moment absorbed every other sensation. Mrs. Weldon, who did not at first observe him, was surprised at the sudden pause, and feeling her cousin lean heavily on her arm, she looked round to ascertain the cause, and beheld her pale as death, and apparently on the verge of fainting. But the emotion of Miriam was as transient, as involuntary; and when Atherton sprang forward to support her, she recovered her presence of mind, and gently extricating herself from the grasp of Lois, stood erect with an air of maidenly pride, and a countenance glowing with blushes. Atherton respected the delicacy of her feelings, while his heart thrilled with the delightful consciousness, that he possessed an influence over them; and without appearing to notice her embarrassment, he merely bowed, and turning to Mrs. Weldon, said, —

"I scarcely hoped for the pleasure of seeing my Plymouth friends so soon; and even now my pleasure is mingled with apprehension."

"We have become travellers from necessity more than inclination," returned Mrs. Weldon; "but, if our voyage continues as prosperous as it has been hitherto, we shall have cause to 'sing of mercy,' rather than of 'judgment.'"

"You must have suffered from cold and sickness and fatigue," said Atherton addressing Miriam, "at this inclement season, when even the weather-beaten fishermen gladly retreat to the shelter of their cabins."

"We have not suffered from any cause," replied Miriam; "and indeed, our short voyage has been in every respect more comfortable and pleasant than we had any reason to expect."

"But you do look ill;" said Atherton, regarding her with anxiety, and she was really much thinner than when he saw her last, "you cannot, ought not to pursue this voyage Miriam, if, as Mr. Weldon has intimated, you have formed the rash design of going to the savage regions of Connecticut."

"And why," asked Miriam with simplicity, "is it more rash in me than in my cousin Lois, who has never hesitated for a moment on its propriety or necessity?"

"Probably," said Atherton, a little embarrassed by the question, "Mrs. Weldon considers herself bound to follow her husband wherever his circumstances lead him; and

I should scarcely venture to obtrude my opinion, when she has one so much more capable of advising her.”

“And I,” returned Miriam, “have had many sage advisers, but as you see, have turned a deaf ear to them all; Captain Standish will tell you, Major Atherton, that I am a self-willed girl, because I would not take heed to his counsels, for which, however, I am grateful, though he professes not to believe it.”

“You would warn me not to adventure where so many have failed,” said Atherton, smiling; “but if I submit, it will be from necessity, not conviction, that my advice is incorrect.”

“Here is our hostess bringing in supper, and it is truly welcome,” said Mr. Weldon. “You will sit down with us I hope, Major Atherton, though your appetite is not like ours, sharpened by sea-breezes.”

Atherton did not wait for the invitation to be repeated; he seated himself opposite to Miriam, and the cheerful meal was passed in animated and general conversation. Miriam was again all gaiety and smiles, and both to her and Atherton, the past and future were unthought of, the present a scene of exquisite enjoyment; and when Mrs. Weldon reminded her cousin that it was time to retire, they separated with a sigh of regret, as if awakened from a dream of enchantment. Atherton remained in a musing posture for some moments after they left the room, till Mr. Weldon rose, and bidding him good night, was about to follow them, when Atherton started from his seat, and in an earnest voice said to him,—

“Is it too late, sir, to dissuade Miriam Grey from her mad resolution? cannot we yet prevail on her to renounce it and remain here in safety?”

“Remain with whom?” asked Mr. Weldon, rather sarcastically; but he instantly continued in a graver tone, “not I believe if there is stability in woman, and few even of maturer years possess more than Miriam; she has resisted the entreaties of all her friends, and it is not probable will now be induced to abandon her enterprize.”

“Is there no one who has influence enough to detain her?” said Atherton. “Surely it is the duty of all who are interested in her happiness to lift up their voices against an undertaking so replete with dangers.”

“She has listened to the opinion of her friends touching this matter,” returned Mr. Weldon; “but her father was wont to entrust much to her discretion, and no person in his absence has authority to controul her. For my own part I frankly confess my responsibility and anxiety for her almost over-balance the pleasure which her society gives us.”

“Then,” said Atherton eagerly, “you will consent to leave her, if any arguments can succeed in gaining her acquiescence.”

“Her decision has been voluntary,” said Mr. Weldon, “and I have reason to believe it unalterable; at all events, I am sure she would sooner lay down her life than deviate in the least from the straight line of duty and principle.”

“Far be it from me,” replied Atherton, “to offer any inducements inconsistent with the purity and rectitude of her mind and character; I may appear officious to you, sir, and perhaps to her; but I cannot—I have no wish to conceal the deep interest which I feel in her welfare and happiness.”

“I am convinced,” said Mr. Weldon after a moment’s pause, “that nothing but the known wishes of her father would now prevail with Miriam to relinquish her design; and

indeed all circumstances considered, I am far from wishing her to do so. To-morrow, if the wind is favourable we shall proceed on our voyage; for we are now anxious to reach the place of our destination.”

“I will not detain you longer from your needful repose,” said Atherton; and with the usual compliments they separated for the night.

Atherton retired to a small ill-furnished apartment,— for he resigned his own to the travellers— but with a mind too fully occupied by painful thoughts and anticipations, to regard its deficiencies or incongruities. He thought the tedious night would never pass away, and often through its heavy watches he looked anxiously from the window, noted every twinkling star, and followed with his eye the light clouds which flitted over the heavens, hoping they would collect and retard the departure of Miriam for at least another day.

The sun, however, rose with unwonted brilliancy on the following morning; but Atherton’s immediate apprehensions were quieted, on learning that the wind was still unfavourable for a voyage to the Connecticut. Delighted with this reprieve, and not doubting that he should find an opportunity of conversing alone with Miriam in the course of the day, he again yielded to the illusions of hope; and joined Mrs. Weldon’s breakfast table with a countenance from which every trace of sadness was banished. But Miriam, though cheerful, was less gay than on the preceding evening; and as soon as the repast was finished, she retired with Mrs. Weldon to their own apartments. Atherton scarcely saw her again during the day, except at dinner, and though more than once on the point of requesting a moment’s conversation with her, the dread of refusal restrained him, and he deferred it, still hoping that accident would favour him with the desired interview. He fancied too that Miriam intentionally avoided him; and piqued by conduct so different from her usual frankness, he was again inclined to accuse her of caprice and fickleness. When they met at supper, Atherton was silent and abstracted; and the moment they rose from table he pleaded an engagement at the Governor’s, and with a slight apology left them for the evening. As he looked back on closing the door he caught the eye of Miriam following him, with an expression so soft and almost tearful, that for an instant his resolution wavered; but she turned from him with a deep blush, and ashamed of his weakness he instantly retired. Yet the parting look of Miriam still pursued him. “I am too hasty, I have judged her unkindly,” he thought;—and instead of going to the Governor’s, after walking and musing for about half an hour he returned to the inn in the hope of seeing her.

Mr. and Mrs. Weldon were gone out, and Miriam had excused herself from accompanying them by saying she had some arrangements to make for her voyage, and wished to retire early to bed. She was alone in a parlour appropriated particularly to their use, and looking attentively from a window which commanded a view of the town and harbour, when Atherton returned and entered the room, ignorant by whom it was occupied. It was yet early in the evening, and the bright blaze of a wood fire threw a glare around the apartment, and quite eclipsed the feeble light of a candle which flickered in its socket, and whose long black wick showed that the thoughts of Miriam were wandering to other subjects. As Atherton opened the door she looked hastily round to see who was entering, and her recognition was evinced by her heightened complexion as she again turned towards the window and continued to gaze on the scene without. Atherton’s resentment, his suspicions— all were forgotten; and in an instant he was by her side.

“Are you admiring this winter scenery, Miriam?” asked Atherton. “I should think it too familiar, if not too dreary to charm your eyes.”

“The most familiar scenes,” replied Miriam with still averted face, “are generally those which give us the greatest pleasure; they are associated in our minds with all that the heart most prizes and best enjoys.”

“But here,” said Atherton, “there is nothing to awaken such associations; you are in a strange land, where there are no objects to remind you of home and its enjoyments.”

“Indeed there are many, very many,” replied Miriam: “these dazzling snows, and that boundless ocean, have been familiar to me from infancy; and the ‘moon walking in her brightness through the heavens,’ is even now shining on the forsaken home of my childhood; and think you I can look upon it without emotions of melancholy pleasure?”

“Impossible!” said Atherton earnestly, “and never, Miriam, have I gazed upon its calm beauty, since banished from your presence, without thrilling recollections of those happy moments, when with you I was wont to see it slowly rising above the shores of Plymouth, and throwing its silver light through the vine-covered casement where I was permitted to see and converse with you: where, dearest Miriam, I dared to indulge those dreams of happiness which you have so cruelly disappointed.”

“Speak not of the past,” said Miriam, hastily, and with a trembling voice; “it is like a vision of delight which has faded away and ought to be forgotten; when this moon now shining in glory begins to wane in her course, I shall behold its parting rays reflected on the waves of the broad Connecticut.”

“Be it so,” said Atherton, with impassioned energy, “and there also will I be beside you. It is in vain, Miriam, that you fly from me, that you renounce me, that you seek to separate my fate from yours; wherever your path may lead you, across the deep waters, or through the trackless desert; in the sunshine of prosperity, or beneath the dark sky of adversity; there will I be with you, and nought but death shall have power to disunite us.”

“Why,” asked Miriam, reproachfully, “will you force me to regret that I have ever known you? why, Atherton, do you persecute me with a love which I can never recompense?”

“Say that you despise me, Miriam, that I am an object of aversion to you, that, were there no other obstacle to our union, your indifference would divide us— say all this, but do not look at me with an eye of pity— do not cheat me with that voice of tenderness, which creates a thousand hopes at the moment it seeks to annihilate them.”

“I do pity you from my heart,” said Miriam, almost subdued by emotion; “but what avails it? we *must* separate, Atherton, and let not these parting moments be embittered by unavailing regrets.”

“Pity me!” repeated Atherton, “say that you love me, Miriam, that you will love me, and me alone, through weal and woe, and on that sweet assurance I will rest my hopes of brighter and happier days.”

“Why,” replied Miriam, “should you wish to extort from me a confession which ought not to pass my lips! No, Atherton, we must henceforth learn to think of each other as voyagers, who, for a few brief and smiling days have floated together along the current of time, till our frail barks were driven asunder, never perhaps to meet again, until launched into the ocean of eternity.”

“And are you, Miriam, thus indifferent? Thus reckless of the past, and careless for the future? does the memory of joys that are gone, awaken no throb of tenderness? and can you look through the long vista of coming years— darkened by disappointed hope— without one sigh of regret? then, indeed, have I deeply, fatally deceived myself.”

“The wicked only can be long and truly wretched,” answered Miriam, “and God I trust will give us grace to bear whatever his Providence ordains. If you truly love me, Atherton, do not render more keen the misery of this parting hour.— I have left the friends of my childhood and youth, and forsaken the home of my father— I have looked with an undaunted eye on the perils which may encompass me whither I am going, and till now I have endured with fortitude— alas! if I had not again seen you, I should have been spared the trial of this moment— the anguish of another, a final separation!”

Miriam turned from him agitated and confused, and fearful that she had expressed too much in the warmth of her feelings; but Atherton, regarding her varying countenance with renovated hope, exclaimed,—

“And why should we part, dearest Miriam? I know, I feel that you love me, and surely the hearts which God has united, it were impious in man to tear asunder!”

“If you would retain my esteem,” said Miriam, “if you value my love, which I have perhaps too lightly given, do not tempt me to forget my duty; believe me, Atherton, it is dearer to me than any selfish gratification, even than your affection, much as I have learned to prize it.”

“Dear Miriam,” replied Atherton, with tenderness, and taking her passive hands between his own, “this is indeed a recompense for all I suffered, and for all that fate may yet have in store for me! But I would again ask, why should we part? have you not confidence enough in my honour and principles to entrust your happiness in my keeping? say, dearest Miriam, that you will be mine, and let us not delay to be united by the most holy ties!”

“I entreat you to forbear, Atherton,” replied Miriam; “you are led away by passion, and forget the delicacy becoming my sex, and the respect due to your own character. Would not the world justly name me with reproach, should I forsake the friends to whom my father entrusted me, and abandon an enterprise in which I am engaged by every feeling of gratitude and affection— to become the wife of a stranger— one, whose attachment my father disapproves, and whose religion is regarded with aversion? Nay, hear me patiently—would your esteem and confidence in me remain undiminished, were my conduct such as to lessen me in the public estimation?”

“Yes, dear Miriam, I should love you the more for rising superior to such illiberal prejudices.”

“Is the opinion of the wise and virtuous to be regarded as an illiberal prejudice?” asked Miriam; “no, Atherton, my own heart would be the first to condemn me, and for worlds I would not tempt its upbraidings.”

“Miriam, you are too scrupulous,” replied Atherton; “what is it you dread, what law are you transgressing, by entering into an alliance with me? do we not worship the same God, and what matters it that we differ in outward ceremonies? You know that I have ever manifested the most sincere respect for the religious faith which is so dear to you, which my mother taught me to love; and I should be far from wishing you to renounce it for that which I profess; and surely under such circumstances it would be bigotry in the extreme to condemn our union—your father cannot refuse his sanction—he

will not withhold his forgiveness, even if you wait not for his consent—dearest Miriam, give me one smile of encouragement, or rather say that you will receive me for your happy, your devoted husband.”

“I have encouraged you too much already by my rash avowal,” said Miriam, after a moment’s pause; “I have exposed to you the weakness of my heart, and you take advantage of it to urge a request in which, however, I can never acquiesce. I fear your love is selfish, Atherton, or you would not wish me to gratify it, at the expense of any honourable feeling.”

“Forgive me, Miriam,” returned Atherton, with emotion, “if I have said aught, which can justify that conclusion. Heaven is my witness, that your happiness is dearer to me than any earthly object, than life itself; and if I have urged you beyond the bounds of prudence or delicacy, attribute it to the extent of my affection, and the dread of losing you; and believe me, I will in future endeavour to submit more cheerfully to your decisions.”

“I am but too ready to believe all that you wish too,” replied Miriam; “and it is only when duty interposes her authority, that I can prove inexorable to your entreaties.”

“May her rigid interdiction be soon removed,” said Atherton, earnestly. “And yet dear Miriam, I cannot without trembling apprehension, think of your father’s prejudices,—his stern notions of propriety, which may in an instant crush all my fondly raised expectations, and again consign me to misery.”

“We will not borrow trouble from the future,” answered Miriam, ‘sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.’ Still, Atherton, let us not be too sanguine of success; — the result is uncertain, and it is wise to prepare our minds for disappointment.”

“Do not speak of it, Miriam,” said Atherton, impatiently; “suffer me at least to enjoy the future, since present happiness is denied me. To part with you, were alone enough of misery; but to see you go forth to danger and suffering—tell me, Miriam, what duty impels you to such scenes? Why should you not even now abandon your rash design, and return to the friends who you are assured will receive you with smiles of affectionate welcome?”

“Do not speak of it, it is impossible,” said Miriam with emotion; “suffer me to depart, Atherton; our conference has already been too long.”

She endeavoured to withdraw her hand from him, as she spoke; but he held it firmly, and said in an anxious voice,—

“Stay yet a moment, Miriam, and tell me, if you have well considered the perils of your undertaking? the hardships you may be called to encounter, from want and its attendant evils, and above all, from the fury of those barbarous savages, who are even now spreading terror throughout the scattered colonies? Oh, Miriam, my heart bleeds at the bare possibility that you may be left to suffer in a land of strangers and barbarians!”

“I have thought of all, of every thing,” said Miriam; “but I am in the protection of One, who will keep me ‘under the shadow of his wings in safety,’ and who is alike present in every place. Do not seek to persuade me, Atherton, you may agitate me by your fears, but you cannot alter my determination.”

“I well know your perseverance, in what you regard a duty,” returned Atherton; “but is it a duty, Miriam, to rush into certain danger? think if evil should befall you, it will ‘bring down your father’s gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.’”

“And should I shrink from a dangerous duty?” asked Miriam; “would not that father blush for the weakness of a daughter so unworthy of parents, who dared and suffered without fear, in the cause of liberty and religion? No, Atherton, you entreat me in vain— it shall not be said that I yielded to the language of passion, when I was deaf to the voice of reason and friendship— or that like a weak girl, I turned back to enjoy the society of one for whom with capricious fondness, I forsook the friend who cherished me in infancy, and neglected the commands of an absent father.”

“That shall not be said, dear Miriam; only go to the safe shelter of the home you have abandoned, and the most fastidious shall not have cause to reproach you. I will remove far from you,—again become a wanderer on the earth, and however painful the self-denial, refrain from seeing you, until your father shall return and decide my destiny.”

“Do not urge me on this, on any subject,” said Miriam, affected by his earnestness; “you will make me hate myself, as the cause of your unhappiness and anxiety— let me leave you, Atherton; I cannot, must not grant your request.”

“Then I will go with you,” returned Atherton, again detaining her; “I will follow you—be ever near you—I would die to serve you; but I cannot leave you to contend with dangers, which my arm might avert from you.”

“My trust is not in an arm of flesh,” said Miriam; “but in Him, without whose permission not a sparrow falls to the ground. Dear Atherton,” she added with a glowing cheek, and faltering voice, “we *must* separate; but let us remember each other daily in our prayers, and cherish the hope, that God, in his own good time, will grant us a happier meeting: but should we not be permitted to meet again in this vale of tears, there are brighter mansions above, where the pain of parting is never felt, and the distinctions of faith and worship are unknown.”

“Dearest Miriam,” said Atherton, “there is not a moment of my existence, in which you are absent from my mind; your image is blended with every thought, it is the spring of every hope, the inspirer of every pleasure,— and can you blame me, that I reluctantly resign the delight and treasure of my soul? Oh Miriam, the thought that your heart may grow cold and change, is to me more bitter than death!”

“Fear it not!” said Miriam, raising her tearful eyes to his; “Atherton, you have wrung from me the secret of my love, and now why should I blush to assure you, that neither time, nor suffering, nor reproach, can ever eradicate it from my heart.”

“Ten thousand thanks, for this assurance,” said Atherton; “it shall be like a precious talisman, to chase away doubt and despair, in the gloomy moments of our separation.— Look up, my beloved Miriam, on this lovely moon, and often as you gaze upon it, when far away, think that my eyes are also raised to it, and may our thoughts mingle, and the remembrance of this hour descend, like a balmy dew upon our spirits!”

Before Miriam could reply, the sound of foot-steps was heard approaching: and in an instant she fled, like a young doe, from the presence of Atherton.

### CHAP. III.

Contention, like a horse  
Full of high feeding, madly hath broke loose,  
And bears down all before him.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE following morning was bright and cloudless, with a strong westerly wind, and soon after sun-rise, Mr. Weldon and his fair companions re-commenced their wintry voyage towards the wilderness of Connecticut. Major Atherton stood on the sea-shore, straining his eyes to catch a last glimpse of the vessel as it rapidly disappeared; and feeling as if every wave which bore it onward opposed an impassable barrier between himself and the object of his affections. When it was no longer visible, and even the white sails had fluttered for the last time in his view, and sunk below the horizon, he continued to stand and gaze, till finding himself regarded with curiosity, he reluctantly retired from the spot.

Week after week passed away, and Atherton mingled as usual in society, though often with an abstracted mind, and a heart filled with anxiety respecting the fate of Miriam. The return of the vessel, however, at length brought him a few lines from Mr. Weldon, informing him that they had reached Hartford in safety, after a prosperous voyage, and were then comfortably situated and provided with all the necessaries of life. The letter contained few particulars, but it greatly relieved Atherton's apprehensions, and by degrees the situation and prospects of Miriam became a subject of less painful solicitude to his thoughts. Still with all his exertions and all his resolutions, he passed many moments of extreme dejection; and the long and gloomy months of winter seemed almost interminable.

The political and religious dissensions, which disturbed the infancy of Boston, were about that time carried to their height: and in every place, they became subjects of discussion, often of rancour and personal animosity. The administration of Governor Vane,—which even at this day appears equivocal,—was defended with zeal or arraigned with acrimony, according to the different views and feelings of the individuals who judged him, with a degree of freedom which is still considered lawful in the subjects of a free government, who, whether competent or not, regard it as their birth-right to speak unreservedly of the conduct and character of their rulers.

But the golden apple of discord, was the ill-fated Mrs. Hutchinson,—then, according to the opinion of her friends, in the zenith of glory,—and of her opponents, in the depths of humiliation. The boldness of her spirit defied all opposition, and far from yielding to the anathemas fulminated against her, she took up the gauntlet and waged a zealous war with both magistrates and clergy. Her enthusiasm, and apparent sincerity of devotion, with a winning address and most persuasive eloquence, both in her private conversation and public exhortations, which were always seasoned with the 'odour of sanctity,' gained her numerous converts, particularly among her own sex. Encouraged by success, perhaps inclined to shew her contempt for all authority, she set up a weekly lecture at her own house, to instruct and edify the sisters, where it was her custom to repeat the substances of the discourses which had been delivered on the preceding

sabbath, and to add her own remarks and expositions by way of improvement. A very few of the clergy who adopted her sentiments, or at least palliated them, she declared to be under a *covenant of grace*; while those, who stigmatised her errors, and ceased not in public and private to denounce her as a leader of Antinomianism,—one who taught from the very dregs of Familism,— she pronounced to be under a *covenant of works*; and into these two parties, the whole colony was at length divided.

It is not surprising that this universal excitement alarmed the friends of peace and good order; but unfortunately personal dislike and animosity, warped even the coolest judgments, and rankled in the most benevolent hearts; with unchristian virulence they resorted to threats and persecution, and like Saul of Tarsus, believed they were ‘doing God service.’ Even the calm and lenient Winthrop, and the heavenly-minded Eliot, laid aside the spirit of charity and forgiveness which usually influenced them, and took part in the controversy, and assisted to condemn that unhappy woman. The ministers from the neighbouring, and even distant towns, resorted to Boston, to learn the truth of the reports which were rapidly circulated; and if needful to lend their aid to suppress the disorder; but the contagion had spread too far, and Mrs. Hutchinson daily increased the evil, by advancing some new and absurd doctrine of theology, which she maintained with a subtlety of argument, and a versatility of talent, perplexing the soundest minds, and giving to error the appearance of consistency and truth. She was evidently favoured by Governor Vane; and it was probably owing to his influence that her trial and consequent banishment were deferred until another season.

Major Atherton prudently preserved a strict neutrality on these subjects of contention; as he had been kindly admonished to do by Mr. Winthrop, when in the warmth of his feelings, he once ventured to defend the character of Mrs. Hutchinson, whom he really believed far less culpable than her adversaries were willing to allow. Though led away by an extreme of fanaticism, which had blighted her character, and perverted her strong and highly gifted mind,—a mind capable under other circumstances of ranking her with the most distinguished of her sex,—he thought she might, and doubtless did believe herself actuated by a sense of duty, and a desire of being extensively useful. Atherton, however, soon became weary of topics which were often introduced and discussed with acrimony, even in the domestic and social circle; for from the Governor to the meanest dependent on his bounty, every individual espoused the cause of one or other of the rival parties, and argued on the different points of doctrine as inclination or interest or conviction dictated; and with a zeal, which blazed without light, and a faith which had little regard to the law of charity. Atherton vainly hoped to indulge again in the interchange of rational and friendly sentiments, which he had so much enjoyed, before the influence of passion and prejudice banished the kindlier feelings from the heart, and substituted crude systems of divinity and polemic disquisition for those subjects of general interest which at once exercised the mind and affections, and gave indulgence to the flow of harmless wit and chastened gaiety. He often resolved to return to Plymouth; but still delayed from day to day, in the hope that by remaining in Boston he should sooner receive intelligence from Connecticut,—whither he would most gladly have gone, had he not felt restrained by respect for the wishes of Miriam Grey; indeed, he had promised her at the moment of parting, that none but the most urgent motives should induce him to follow her.

Towards the close of winter these local dissensions yielded, in a great measure, to subjects of more general interest. The aggressions of the Pequod Indians, the most cruel and warlike tribe of North America, became daily more alarming, and spread terror and dismay throughout the colonies, particularly of Connecticut, which was marked out for the first object of their vengeance. Sassacus, their sachem, a fierce and daring prince, whose very name was a terror to his enemies, convened his depending warriors, who readily acceded to his wishes, and sought an alliance with the Mohegan and Narraganset tribes. But Providence mercifully overruled his design, which, if successful, must have produced the most fatal consequences, if indeed it had not annihilated the colonies of New-England. Uncas, sachem of the Mohegans, though sprung from the royal blood of the Pequods, and connected with them by marriage, refused to negotiate with Sassacus. Having early entertained a friendship for the English, he remained faithful to their interests, and proved of essential service to them in the perilous struggle which at last closed the warfare.

Sassacus was at first most successful with the Narragansets, a powerful nation bordering the Bay of that name, and stretching inland through the now thriving State of Rhode Island;—but Miantonimo, their sachem, though usually politic and wary, in this instance suffered himself to be governed by feelings of revenge, to the prejudice of his future interests. The Narragansets had generally maintained a friendly intercourse with the English, though occasional acts of treachery, so natural to the Indian character, proved that their friendship was the result of fear, rather than affection. The Pequods they regarded with the jealous hatred of hereditary rivalship. Though scarcely equal to themselves in population and territory, their superior power and influence was a subject of envy and mortification: and the warlike spirit of Sassacus, which had conquered all the petty tribes that surrounded him, and held them as vassals to his will, gave him a pre-eminence which the haughty Miantonimo was most unwilling to acknowledge.

Sassacus, in his treaty with the Narragansets, represented the white people as intruders, and recapitulated the various grievances they had received from them, in a manner calculated to stir up the savage spirit of hatred and revenge. With consummate art he urged the necessity of union against the common enemy, and detailed the means by which it would be practicable, by a predatory warfare, to exterminate them, without the hazard of resorting to open arms. He concluded by predicting that if the Narragansets leagued with the English against the Pequods, they would eventually involve themselves in certain destruction.

These arguments had well nigh proved successful; but the government of Massachusetts, learning the intrigues of the Pequods, determined if possible, to counteract their designs; and while the Narragansets were yet hesitating what course to pursue, they dispatched to them an embassy of peace and amity. Canonicus, the head sachem, had regarded the first settlers of Plymouth as intruders; and stimulated by his jealous fears, he early sent them a challenge of defiance, contained in the emblematic present of a bundle of arrows, bound with a serpent's skin. Governor Bradford ordered the skin to be filled with powder and bullets, and returned, with a spirited message to the savage monarch; and the expedient so intimidated him, that he was not only afraid to touch them, but even refused them a place in his dominions; and he ever after discovered a more peaceable and friendly disposition. He was now grown very old, and had resigned the government to his nephew, Miantonimo, a young prince of great stature, and stern

and cruel disposition. He however entertained the ambassadors from the Massachusetts with royal hospitality; and in the presence of his aged relative and a great number of attendants who ‘trembled at his speech,’ he prepared to receive their message. They were assembled under the shelter of a circular building, formed by long poles driven into the ground and covered over with mats; and during the speech of the interpreters, Miantonimo lay extended on a mat, encircled by his counsellors and nobles, who listened to them with the most grave attention. The hope of subduing the hitherto invincible Sassacus, of whom they were accustomed to say, ‘he is all one god no man can kill him,’ and of exterminating his brave warriors, prevailed in the sachem’s mind over every suggestion of prudence and interest, and he signified his readiness to remain at peace with the English, and consented to repair to Boston, to sign the articles of a treaty.

A few days after the return of the messengers, it was accordingly rumoured that the young king of the Narragansets, with twenty of his principal attendants, were approaching the town; and as a mark of peculiar respect, twenty musketeers were sent to meet them at Roxbury, and escort them the remainder of the way. The windows of all the houses were filled with women and children, impatient to behold the procession; for though the red children of the forest were at that period no novelty in New-England, a train of sable warriors, decked out in savage splendour, was an imposing spectacle;—and when were not women and children eager to see whatever is rare or wonderful? The public officers of Boston assembled in dignified state; and the boys let loose from school, ran shouting through the streets, to the great annoyance of Master Handcuff, who, it is recorded, had a world of trouble to depress their merry hallooing to the puritanic key.

Miantonimo, guarded on each side by an inferior sachem, and immediately followed by the two sons of Canonicus, led forward the procession; his figure was graceful and majestic, his features stern, but noble, and his elastic step and lofty bearing expressed the pride and independence of an untamed and courageous spirit. His dress was composed of deer skins, falling below the knees, and profusely decorated with gaudy colours, interwoven with tinsel beads and wrought with the quills of the porcupine; his moccasins were of the same materials, and adorned in a similar manner; from his shoulders depended a sort of cloak, composed of the richest furs, and a large plume of feathers ornamented his head. His face was painted with various colours, representing the most uncouth figures; he carried a bow, and a quiver well filled with arrows hung at his back. His followers, attired much in the same manner, though less richly, walked after him with a grave and solemn pace, and the English guards, in their military dress, brought up the rear, marching to the sound of martial music, which seemed highly enjoyed by their savage visitors. The Governor, clergy, and magistrates received them at the entrance of the town with becoming ceremony;—for no people are more jealous of etiquette, so far as their knowledge extends:—and having bid them welcome, they were conducted to a place prepared, where a conference was holden respecting the proposed treaty.

Miantonimo consented on behalf of himself and people to engage in a war against the Pequods, on condition that no peace should be made with them, but that they should be utterly destroyed. The Governor and his council took until the next morning to consider his proposals, when certain articles, embracing a system of warfare, offensive and defensive, were agreed upon, and signed by the different parties. The prince and his people were hospitably entertained at the Governor’s own table, and apparently much pleased with their reception; and on the following day they left the abodes of civilization,

and returned to the freedom of their humble wigwams—probably more dear to them than the splendid restraints of a palace.

This coalition between their mortal enemies enraged the Pequods beyond measure. Far from being appalled by the threatening danger, they renewed their warfare with redoubled eagerness, and a degree of malicious cunning, which a savage only could display. They justly relied on their address and duplicity, which had hitherto proved far more effectual than the exercise of their barbarous courage, when contending with men inured to discipline, and possessing powerful machines of destruction, unknown to them. It was, therefore, their constant and too often successful aim, to draw the English from their places of defence, when, concealed in their own retreats, they discharged their poisoned arrows with fatal aim, or led their unhappy victims to a more slow and dreadful death. They were also continually lying in ambush for the incautious labourer, or unguarded traveller, who were often entrapped by their artifice, and inhumanly sacrificed to their revenge.

Fortunately for the early planters of Connecticut, the Indians of that region,—with the exception of the Pequods and their few allies,—were almost universally favourable to their settlement, and in every possible way, rendered them assistance and protection. They instructed them how to plant their corn, carried them on their backs through rivers and morasses, restored the children who had strayed from their parents, and often supplied them with food in their impoverished state. They hoped with the assistance of the white people to resist the despotic will of the more powerful tribes, and in time, to shake off a yoke which had long afflicted them. In this expectation, and in their deeds of kindness, they were supported by the Indians on the western side of the river, who had been subjugated by the Mohawks, a ferocious people, who like the Goths and Vandals of ancient Europe, poured from their eternal forests on the banks of the Hudson and Mohawk, and spread destruction in their course. They had conquered the inferior tribes, even to the borders of Virginia, and annually dispatched their emissaries to exact tribute from their subjects, who if they dared to refuse were punished with the most relentless fury.

The colonists, thus partially protected by the friendly Indians, and using the utmost vigilance to insure their safety, suffered less than might have been expected, considering their defenceless state, and the power and rancour of the enemy. Still they were in continual apprehension; every man was obliged to be constantly armed, and they dared not meet even for public worship, without a sufficient guard to protect them from assault. But the malice of the enemy was at that time principally directed against the fort of Saybrook, at the mouth of Connecticut river, and not more than twenty miles from the royal fortress of Sassacus, which occupied the site of the now flourishing town of New-London. This fort was built under the direction of Mr. Winthrop, a son of the Governor of Massachusetts, who in the preceding year, was sent from England with a commission from certain nobles and gentlemen interested in the patent of Connecticut, to govern their projected colonies. They also supplied him with money, ammunition, and every necessary for the erection of the fort, to which, in honour of his noble patrons, the Viscount Say and Seal, and Lord Brook, he gave the name which is still retained by the village where it was situated. The military command was given to Lieutenant Gardner, a skilful engineer, who had assisted in planning the fortifications; and a settlement was commenced, and houses erected for the garrison. The Dutch, who had long desired to

occupy the fruitful regions of the Connecticut, and had already made some ineffectual attempts to settle in different parts, were then on the point of sailing to take possession of that important place. But the activity of Mr. Winthrop defeated their design; and before the vessel from the New-Netherlands appeared at the mouth of the river, he had mounted cannon sufficient to oppose their entrance, and compel them to retire.

During the winter, the garrison at Saybrook were so hard pressed by the enemy, that it was almost dangerous to venture beyond the intrenchments; but Lieutenant Gardner with only twenty men, maintained a brave resistance, and not only kept the enemy at bay, but spared several soldiers from his small band to defend a house at the distance of two miles, which was exposed to their attacks. The Indians also watched the river so closely, that it was perilous to pass as usual in boats, even with a strong guard; and as there was no other means of communication with the sister colonies at that inclement season, the inhabitants of the Massachusetts heard only casual reports of the situation of their brethren at Connecticut. These were however sufficient to excite extreme apprehension in the mind of Major Atherton, who resolved to embrace the earliest opportunity of repairing to the scene of danger, and relieving his solicitude respecting the fate of Miriam Grey.

#### CHAP IV.

Therefore, all hearts in love use their own tongues,  
Let every eye negotiate for itself,  
And trust no agent:

SHAKSPEARE.

THE return of spring brought little relief to the distressed inhabitants of Connecticut. The Indians continued their hostilities, which were marked by the most atrocious cruelties that ever harrowed the feelings of humanity; and their constant watchfulness rendered it unsafe even to pursue the necessary labours of agriculture. Nothing but that persevering energy and unwavering confidence in divine protection, which so remarkably characterized the venerable pilgrims of New-England, could have enabled them to endure such complicated trials; but though afflicted, they were not discouraged; in the midst of tribulation, they never abandoned the hope of brighter days, and the final establishment of that civil and religious freedom, which they suffered so much to obtain for themselves and their posterity.

In February a court was convened at Hartford, to concert measures for the public safety; and a letter was addressed to the Governor of the Massachusetts, entreating his assistance in the prosecution of a vigorous war. Captain Mason in the mean time was dispatched with twenty men,—though ill-spared from the defence of their homes,—to support the garrison at Saybrook, which had been considerably weakened by skirmishes with the enemy, in which several of the soldiers were killed or taken prisoners. But the Pequods, probably alarmed by this reinforcement, almost immediately withdrew from the neighbourhood of the fort, as it was supposed, to attack some less defensible position.

The people of Massachusetts and Plymouth displayed an active sympathy for the sufferings of the sister colony, and promptly agreed to raise a sufficient force, and march to their relief, as soon as it was possible to make the necessary arrangements. Major Atherton solicited, and received permission to join the Massachusetts troops as a volunteer; happy again to share the dangers of a profession, which had early inspired him with a romantic fondness for scenes of daring adventure; while the image of Miriam Grey, and the delightful thought that he should soon be near to protect her, continually floated in his imagination.

But the organization of even a diminutive army of two hundred men, was attended with many delays at that early period of the settlement, when men became soldiers only from necessity; and at an immense sacrifice of personal interest, left the duties of their station to combat with a powerful and inhuman enemy. These and other circumstances rendered it improbable that they would be able to effect a junction with the Connecticut troops, before the commencement of May; but Captain Underhill, with twenty men, was required to put himself in immediate readiness to go forward and relieve the garrison at Saybrook. It was then near the close of March; and before these arrangements were completed, a small vessel from the Dutch settlement of the New Netherlands, arrived on a trading voyage in the harbour of Boston. It brought many fearful reports of the continued atrocities of the Pequods, the ravages they had made, and the terror which they every where inspired; and this additional intelligence completely roused the spirited exertions

of the people, who again unitedly resolved to resist the daring injuries which threatened to bring destruction upon the whole country. These accounts also renewed the fears of Atherton respecting the situation of Miriam Grey, who he imagined surrounded by a thousand dangers, which haunted his mind without cessation; and impatient of delay, he resolved at once to end the misery of suspense. He therefore obtained leave to repair immediately to Saybrook fort, without waiting for Captain Underhill; and the master of the Dutch vessel, for a handsome compensation, agreed to furnish him with a passage to the desired port.

On the morning of his departure, Major Atherton wrote a few lines to Captain Standish, hastily sketching his plans, though without alluding to the hopes, which almost unknown to himself, were a powerful incentive to action, and had obtained an unbounded influence over his mind. It was therefore with feelings of pleasurable expectation rather than regret—for which he was half inclined to reproach himself as ungrateful—that he took leave of his hospitable friends at Boston; and furnished with suitable credentials to Lieutenant Gardner, again committed himself to the winds and waves, under the guidance of a people, of whose very language he was ignorant. But Captain Van Schiller, a native of Holland, proved civil and obliging in his way—that is, he sat quietly on deck smoking his pipe, his square head leaning against the mainmast, and his short thick legs resting on a keg of spirits, perfectly contented that they were moving, however slowly; and good-naturedly resolved to let every one do as he pleased, and manage affairs in his own way, so long as it did not interfere with his interest or comfort. Besides he would speak but little English, except so far as was necessary to drive a good bargain with that crafty nation, in which, to do him justice, he seldom lost any thing through ignorance;—and Atherton finding him inclined to drowsiness, and the men unable to comprehend any thing but their own guttural and most unharmonious mother-tongue—sat down alone and undisturbed on the deck, his eyes long lingering on the pleasant shores of the bay, as yet scarcely divested of their wintry covering, though here and there a sheltered glade or sunny hill was faintly tinged with verdure, the first promise of approaching spring.

In the mean time, the Dutch vessel, sunk almost to the water's edge, moved slowly along, encumbered by a weight of planks and useless tackle, almost sufficient to equip a man of war in these economical times; but most inconveniently misplaced in the small but clumsy vessel, that ploughed heavily through the waves, which at every instant extorted a groan from it, as if in the act of forcing its ribs asunder. The crew, probably used to its distress, seemed totally to disregard it, and pursued their navigation with admirable gravity, seldom suspending their labour to exercise their colloquial powers, or indulge in those bursts of merriment to which the seamen of other nations are so prone. Perhaps this was from deference to their Captain, whose meditations were long and deep; but whether he was holding high converse with his own thoughts, or admiring the thick wasted beauties gallantly pictured on his vessel,—he might, for aught of life or motion, as well have represented the figure of St. Nicholas which decorated the stern, save for the volumes of smoke which curled from his capacious mouth,— a luxury probably unknown to the worthy saint. Once also, an unlucky wight, who hovered high in air on the main-mast-top, let fall a coil of rope, which lighting on the centre of his pericranium, sent forth from the interior a hollow reverberation like unto the sound of a kettle drum, and beat out a tremendous high Dutch oath, that we care not to repeat. But this transient excitement past, the usual monotony again prevailed; until in passing the Nantasket road,

a vessel hove in sight, and as soon as they were near enough, Captain Van Schiller hauled in his sails and prepared to speak with her. She was from Plymouth, bound to Boston; and Major Atherton had the satisfaction to receive a packet of letters from his friends, which he hastened to peruse, when the vessel was again under weigh. The envelope contained a letter from Mr. Winslow, and one from Captain Standish, but as their contents are not very important or interesting, we shall pass them over, and lay before our readers the following from Peregrine White, which was enclosed in the Governor's.

TO MAJOR EDWARD ATHERTON.

DEAR MAJOR,

I have been trying for these four months past, that is, ever since you left Plymouth, to write a letter to you; but I know not how it is, I am not very familiar with my pen, and have kept putting it off, till I have a world of news to tell you, and can wait no longer. Let me think, what shall I begin with? But I must first ask if you saw Miriam Grey when she was in Boston? I need not ask though, for I will be bound you found her out before she had been there an hour. I hope the pretty damsel was more kind to you than before you left Plymouth; for though we could get nothing out of her or Mr. Weldon about the matter, it was easy to guess the reason of your flying off so, almost without saying good bye to your best friends. Now, Major, you always laugh at me for thinking I have a deal of penetration; but I saw plainly how matters stood with you long ago; and I well know it is all owing to that grim father of hers that you and Miriam are separated,—for she too, poor thing, looked as wan and drooping as a pond lily, after you went away. I wonder wherein was the use of people's coming over to this savage wilderness, for the sake of liberty of conscience, as they call it, if they will not allow any one to think differently from themselves, now they are here, nor to marry whom they choose, and be happy if they can. But only think of Miriam's being in Connecticut at this dreadful time,—foolish girl that she is! I expect every day to hear you have gone to look after her, and that you have killed as many savages as Samson did Philistines—though I think you must have something sharper than the jawbone of an ass to make way with such hardened wretches. Well, perhaps I shall see you there, for our court have agreed to send forward fifty men to help the Connecticut people; and after much persuasion, my father has consented to let me go with them; my dear mother distressed herself bitterly about it for a time, but is now more reconciled. What do you think Captain Standish says about me? why that I shall not have courage to stand fire unless I am cased up to the eyes in steel—so I asked him to lend me his coat of mail, which has kept him in life so long—though in truth I think it would hardly cover my legs. Our friend Benjamin Ashly is going too, if you can believe it—I wish it might be as chaplain, or I fear he will have more arrows in his back than he can well stop to pick out. I wish you had seen him the other day when I met him with a long face, and asked him if he had heard that Miriam Grey was scalped by a horrible Indian! He stood, for all the world, like Lot's pillar of salt, and half afraid he was really changing, I made haste to comfort him by saying, “Pluck up courage, friend; it has not happened yet, and I will warrant you Major Atherton takes good care that not a hair of her head is harmed.” So he turned away from me too angry to say a word.

But now I must tell you what I intended at the first; but somehow or other I have an unfortunate way of saying whatever happens to come uppermost, which often leads me astray from my subject. Did Miriam tell you—though it is not likely she did—that Mr. Calvert left Plymouth soon after you went away, and every body says because she would not marry him and go to Virginia. Well, as his vessel was not quite ready to sail, he went to pass a week or two with Captain Standish, who it seems took a great liking to him. It so happened that while he was there the Captain saw by chance a comely young damsel, and thinking, as well he might, that it was ‘not good for man to be alone,’ he resolved in his mind the means of taking her unto himself for wife. But as it is long since his courting days, I suppose the good man felt a little awkward at the business, being more accustomed to slashing up Indians than making fine speeches, such as win pretty women; and so in imitation of ancient Isaac, he resolved to send forward a herald to speak the word for him. I have ever since thought he would have done well if he had chosen me, who would doubtless have proved a trusty agent; but instead thereof he selected Calvert, who was at his house, and well able to argue fluently on any side of the question, right or wrong. So he repaired to the damsel, full armed with instructions; but, alas! who can foresee the caprices of love? When he had finished pleading the Captain’s cause, the maiden turned her bewitching eyes upon him, and said with sweet simplicity, “Prithee why do you not speak for yourself?”

“Would you,” answered Calvert, “prefer me, an unknown stranger, to the brave Captain whose name is renowned all over the world for his deeds of courage?”

“Ten to one,” replied the damsel, with a smile and a blush.

Now the rest of their conference is unknown, and this has leaked out at unawares; but it was doubtless settled to the satisfaction of both, for Calvert returned to Captain Standish to confess the strange result of the business, and arrange his affairs; and it is whispered that your valiant kinsman flew into a most violent passion, and that very night turned him out of doors. I will not vouch for the truth of all this, being very cautious about spreading reports,—but be that as it may, before noon on the following day, Mr. Calvert put his bride and other commodities on board the vessel, and sailed from Plymouth, probably for ever.

Now is’nt this a very droll affair, Major? I have laughed incessantly about it, and the other night actually waked up in a roar, to the great alarm of my mother, who came running into the chamber to see if I had lost my wits. I could only cry out, “The Captain, mother—that was a sly trick of the girl’s,”—and half provoked she said—“Foolish boy, go to sleep”—and left me, almost as much amused as myself. The best of all is, no one dares to speak openly of the matter, lest the Captain should serve him as he did the Sachem Wittuwamet; and indeed he holds up his head so boldly, that people are half inclined to believe it was all a trick of Calvert’s to amuse and astonish the world. I ventured one day to allude to it before the Captain; but his eyes flashed fire, and he touched his sword with such a menacing gesture, that in good truth I was glad to retreat as well as I could.

“Now, dear Major, I think it is time to draw this letter to a conclusion, and I dare say you are of the same opinion; it is certainly the longest I ever wrote, for my credit’s sake I will not say the best. As for the rest of the good people of Plymouth, I believe they go on pretty much as when you were here. Your old acquaintance, Mistress Gilbert, has been very busy in talking about the Captain’s affair; and I wish in my heart he could hear

of it, and give her one sound dressing that should frighten her out of her gossiping, for a time at least. Her good friend, and your admirer, Mistress Rebecca Spindle, is as interesting as ever; she enquired after you the other day with a sweet simper which would certainly have won your heart, had you been an eye-witness to it, though by the way, I believe she is laying siege to Master Ashly's heart, since he has been forced to give up his pretensions to Miriam. I hear she tells him that giddy young girls are always fond of flirting, and there can be no reliance placed on them till they arrive at years of discretion, at her age for instance; and more than once, if report speaks truth, she has enticed him to walk home with her from a prayer-meeting. "Here is gossip," you will say, "equal to Mistress Gilbert's!" Never mind, Major; it is a glorious privilege of our sex to detail news and scandal, and remark on people and things as we think proper, without the reproach of *gossiping*, which is a term exclusively feminine, and long may it continue so!

"No news have been heard lately from Mr. Grey; but he is expected to return in the course of a month or two. I beg you to destroy this foolish letter for more reasons than one. My mother desires to be remembered to you, and so would my father, did he not intend to write himself. I hope he will not look into this sheet, for he would never let me send you so much nonsense.

Farewell, dear Major, and believe me your sincere friend,

PEREGRINE WHITE.

Plymouth, March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1637.

Major Atherton folded the letter with a smile when he had finished reading it, much amused by the contents so characteristic of his gay young friend; but not a little perplexed with that part of it which related to his kinsman. We shall not stake our credit as historians by insisting on the truth of that report; though tradition has handed it down to us with an accuracy which in our minds admits no doubt of its authenticity.

It would be tedious in the extreme to follow the slow progress of Captain Van Schiller's vessel, which in open defiance of Dutch canvass, continued to drift along with the tide, rather than obey the impulse of the winds,—which to speak truth were sometimes in a wrong direction, and it was therefore not until the fourth day from leaving Boston, that they entered the inland sea now called Long Island Sound, and without one perilous adventure to give a zest to their irksome voyage. Major Atherton's patience was spun out to a mere cobweb; he wondered that the sun could smile so cheerfully, and the south send forth her softest breezes to dally with their useless sails; and the moon shine with such unwonted brilliance on the waveless ocean, and the fairy isles, which ever and anon spotted its surface and seemed putting on a deeper green, and budding into beauty as they approached nearer the regions of the sun. Yet at times he yielded to the serene and balmy influence of nature, then in the youth and loveliness of that genial season, which has so long awaked the poet's song and inspired the lover's dream; and often in the freshness of morning and the stillness of the night-watches, with the flageolet, his only companion, he 'discoursed most excellent music,' mingling its sweet tones with the ripple of the waters, and creating strains which in the golden age might have called the sea-nymphs from their caves to listen.

It was, however, with very pleasant emotions that he at length understood they were approaching the mouth of Connecticut river; though he observed they still bore off towards the coast of Manhattan, which lay in full, though distant prospect, instead of the opposite shore to which they were destined. The Captain complained of the wind as the grand mover of this crooked navigation; but Atherton remarked that there was scarcely enough to swell the sails, and insisted that he would no longer be subjected to such provoking delays. Captain Van Schiller listened to him without either surprise or anger; and when he had done speaking, leisurely knocked the ashes from his pipe, and carefully replacing it in his huge waistcoat pocket, replied,—

“Very well, mynheer, we will see what can be done;” and on this benevolent errand, he stubbed away to hold a conference with the helmsman. Nearly half the day, however, was consumed in total inaction, notwithstanding the continued remonstrances of Major Atherton; but the appearance of a small vessel approaching from the Connecticut shore, at length, inspired even Dutchmen with momentary animation. When within speaking distance, they hailed her, and were answered in their own language; which was so delectable a sound to their sensitive countrymen, that they set up a shout of exultation, which might have been heard on the ramparts of Fort Orange. The two Captains then entered into a long parley, and from their earnest gesticulation, Atherton judged they were discussing a subject of some importance. As soon as their conference was ended the small vessel again hoisted her sails, and with enviable speed pursued her destined course. Captain Van Schiller then called his men together, and remained for some time engaged in conversation with them, which Atherton in vain endeavoured to comprehend; but the result, whatever it was, seemed decisive; the men engaged with unusual activity in their labours, and Atherton, for the first time, suspected they were deceiving him, and demanded of the Captain an explanation of his conduct.

That worthy son of Neptune, apparently exhausted by his late exertions, was drowsily reclining in his usual place of repose, with a countenance as stagnant as one of his own canals; but which began faintly to glimmer into life, as Atherton, with rather less than his usual courtesy, made the needful inquiries. Captain Van Schiller was lost in meditation for a moment, while a dense column of smoke rolled from his mouth, which Atherton stepped back to avoid, and then gravely answered, that the master of the vessel they had just spoken with, whom he knew to be a man of veracity, had given him such accounts of the numbers and ferocity of the Pequod Indians, that he considered it hazardous to venture near their coast: that they were continually out in their canoes watching for the English, and other boats; that his vessel sailed but slowly at the best; and being only defended by one swivel, which, moreover, was out of order, neither he nor his people thought it prudent to run the risk of being scalped, or roasted alive, and, perhaps devoured like fat oxen, for those barbarians actually eat their prisoners, as greedily as a mouse would swallow a bit of toasted cheese: and he finally concluded by declaring that, though he had as much courage as most people, and, perhaps, might be induced to adventure his own life, yet his crew, one and all, had resolved not to go in the way of such heathenish dogs, but to return with all convenient speed to Fort Amsterdam.

Nothing could exceed the indignant surprise of Major Atherton, at this unexpected declaration; and in the resentment of the moment, he asserted that the most unpardonable cowardice and perfidy could alone have instigated such an unwarrantable infraction of their treaty. Captain Van Schiller listened to his reproaches with a kind of blank

astonishment; for he had not dreamed that any one could be so unreasonable as to object against the prudence of his measures; and even when he had finished speaking, continued to regard him with that perplexed and stupid wonder with which a clown is wont to admire the marvellous feats of legerdemain. But with the utmost calmness, he presently resumed his pipe, and Atherton, provoked that he could excite neither remorse nor anger in his phlegmatic companion, had recourse alternately to threats and intreaties, to induce compliance with his agreement. All, however, proved ineffectual; Captain Van Schiller possessed the virtue of self-command to an astonishing degree, and nothing could move his passions, nor would anything shake the determined obstinacy of his disposition, which once resolved, whether right or wrong, was as immoveable as the foundations of the earth.

Major Atherton had no doubt that the sailors were influenced by their Captain on this subject; but his ignorance of their language rendered it impossible to argue with them, or even to discover their real feelings; and sensible that he had no hope of redress, with sensations of bitter disappointment he resigned himself to his perverse destiny, and during the remainder of the voyage continued in a state of gloomy abstraction.

## CHAP. V

—————And the sound  
of axe and dashing oar, and fisher's net  
And song beguiling toil, and pastoral pipe  
Were heard, where late the solitary hills  
Gave only to the mountain cataract  
Their wild response.

SOUTHBY.

MAJOR ATHERTON was at length roused from his painful reverie, by an unwonted bustle among the crew, which announced their near approach to the capital of the Manhadoes; while each one, with a confused murmur of delight, and a countenance that manifested the most complacent satisfaction, turned to catch the first view of the fair city of New-Amsterdam. As yet, however, the clumsy dome of St. Nicholas' church, and a tall flag-staff, surmounted by the colours of the Prince of Orange, flapping idly in the wind, were alone perceptible; and Atherton, with listless curiosity turned his eyes towards them, though inwardly persuaded that, circumstanced as he was, nothing could excite an emotion of interest or pleasure. But as they gradually approached the shore, every sensation of resentful disappointment became absorbed in delight and admiration; and the charms of nature resumed their accustomed influence over his imagination and feelings.

The ancient island of Manhattan, broken into hills and vallies, exhibited the variety and luxuriance of primeval nature, and its silent shores, where now the sounds of business and of pleasure are ever heard, were fringed with lofty forests, then unfolding their tender buds, and mingling a thousand hues from the pale tints of the trembling aspen, to the dark foliage of the mournful cypress. Full in view the expansive waters of the Bay were slumbering in a glorious sunset, studded with innumerable isles, and bounded by scenes of wild and romantic loveliness. New-Amsterdam, the humble beginning of the now gay and commercial city of New-York, occupied a commanding situation on the verge of a fruitful island, encircled by the Hudson and East rivers, and presented a truly picturesque and novel appearance. At that early period it certainly made no pretensions to the grand or beautiful; but it was distinguished by an air of neatness, peculiar to the Dutch settlements, and the houses, uncouth as they appeared, with their projecting roofs, their fronts of black and yellow tile, and other ingenious devices for show and ornament, looked substantial and comfortable, and were in general shaded by forest trees, which gave an agreeable relief to the eye, while it afforded a grateful shelter from the sun.

Captain Van Schiller's broad countenance was enlivened with something like a smile, as he remarked the evident pleasure of Major Atherton; and probably believing it excited by admiration of the superior taste and ingenuity of his countrymen, he continually followed the direction of his eyes, to discover what object was next to meet his approbation. Atherton on his part, so far forgot his late resentment, as to ask many questions respecting the condition of the Colony, which the Captain willingly answered to the best of his abilities, though he proved far less clear in his ideas on that subject, or at least less fluent in his speech, than when descanting on the points of architectural beauty

displayed in the church of his patron saint, and the impenetrable strength of their redoubtable mud fortress. At length, to the satisfaction of all on board, the vessel anchored at a little distance from the fort, and amidst a crowd of men, women, children, and dogs. Major Atherton landed in the western dominions of their high Dutch mightinesses.

Captain Van Schiller soon discovered, in this motley group, his own *Goede Vrouw*, or good woman, who with her daughter, a pretty plump lass of sixteen, was hastening to meet and welcome his return. On seeing her long absent lord, the worthy dame sprang forward, with an alacrity quite astonishing, considering her dimensions; and, with becoming gratitude for this active proof of her affection, the spouse rewarded her with a hearty kiss, which exploded like a signal gun from the battery of Fort Amsterdam. Atherton was rather startled by this public display of conjugal felicity, which was, however, conducted with extreme gravity: but as he was in the act of retiring from the crowd, the Captain grasped him firmly by a button of his coat with one hand, while with the other he dragged forward his blushing daughter, who, on seeing a stranger with her father, had hung back behind the ample folds of her mother's petticoat.

"Come hither, Gertrude," he said, taking her in his arms, and saluting both cheeks, "dunder and blixum, girl, you are not afraid of a young soldier are you?" and with a sort of chuckle he swung her round, and then set her down on her feet again. For an instant, however, she appeared so dizzy, that Atherton felt obliged to offer her the support of his arm; but she tacitly declined it, and only expressed her thanks by a low courtsey, without even looking in his face; though, a moment after, when unobserved, she ventured to steal a glance at *him*, from the corners of her large dark eyes. But the mother had examined him more attentively, and whispered Gertrude to "hold up her head like a woman, and not feel ashamed to be seen;" while, by dint of twitching her good man's sleeve, and the aid of an *audible* whisper, accompanied with expressive gestures, she at length made him comprehend her wish to have Atherton invited home with them. The invitation was accordingly given in due form, by the obedient husband; but Atherton thought proper to decline their hospitality, and soon after took leave of them, and repaired to a public-house, where he fortunately found neat and convenient accommodations.

A week passed away, and still Major Atherton saw no prospect of speedily accomplishing his designs. The Dutch of New-Amsterdam were a cautious people, and cared not to adventure life, limb, or property, without a certain hope of advantage; therefore, their trading vessels, which used to make frequent voyages to Connecticut, were sent to other ports or lay at anchor in the Bay, waiting for more certain information respecting the hostile Indians. They had still a large range of navigable country open to their vessels, from fort Orange, on the Hudson, the ancient Aurania, and present city of Albany, to fort Nassau, on the Delaware, which they held in the name of the States-General, and carried on a lucrative traffic with the natives. Their perseverance and industry had brought the colony into considerable repute; and the English, who always regarded them as mere intruders, had already made several efforts to alienate their possessions from the Dutch government, and attach them to the dominions of their own king, who they insisted was the rightful proprietor. But the Dutch perversely maintained a contrary opinion, and in despite of occasional menaces from their neighbours,—who however found it enough to take care of themselves,—they continued to enjoy for many years, their own language, customs, and laws, in their native purity and perfection. It is

true, they had been sorely aggrieved by certain of the Massachusetts' folk, who seized the goodly lands of Connecticut, which they intended to improve for their own advantage; and when they had already erected a fort, which they called the Huise or fort of Good Hope, and planted two pieces of artillery on what is the present site of Hartford. But they had the mortification of seeing their flag insulted, first, by the people of Plymouth, who refused to strike their colours to it, and disdainng their threats, sailed boldly past, and set up a trading house, well defended from all hostile attacks; and last, though not least, a roving congregation from the Massachusetts, sat quietly down, under the very muzzles of their guns, and built around them an orderly and fair village, which crowded them out of their strong hold; and, by persuasion and a show of strength, they were finally induced to give up all their claims to the country;—very prudently considering, that they could not substantiate, and were too weak to contend for them. Whether the remembrance of these alleged wrongs continued to wrangle in their breasts, it is impossible to determine; they however carried on a friendly commerce with the English colonies, but showed no disposition to interfere in their quarrels,—even in the decisive struggle with the Pequods. Kieft, then Governor of the New-Netherlands, preserved a strict neutrality. The people in general imitated the peaceable disposition of their ruler; feeling it more safe to smoke their pipes at home, than to seek for uncertain laurels in a land of savages,—with no prospect of advantage, but, on the contrary, at the risk of involving themselves in difficulties, and perhaps provoking the vengeance of the natives.

Thus circumstanced, Major Atherton met with little sympathy, and it was in vain that he occupied his mind in forming plans to prosecute his enterprise, which he constantly found it impossible to execute. The inhabitants of New-Amsterdam, however, seemed to regard him with favour, and exerted themselves with wonderful alacrity, to render his residence in their city agreeable. The houses of the most respectable citizens were courteously opened to him, and he was at all times welcome to attach himself to the family circle,—look at the good man, while with the most contemplative air imaginable, he regaled himself with his huge pipe of tobacco, and with apparent delight puffed the smoke from his mouth, like vapour from a steam vessel;—and listen to the conversation of his more loquacious dame, who good-humouredly amused him with family details, not omitting occasional remarks on the affairs of the neighbourhood, which, in her zeal for the public good, were generally regarded with extreme interest. The daughters, with commendable industry, usually sat apart, as demure as the household cats, exercising their genius in garnishing and repairing the family garments; being taught by their prudent mothers to win hearts and husbands,—not by an unfeminine propensity to talking,—but by the dexterous use of their fingers, in which consists the true excellence of woman.

Atherton soon found it was worse than useless to complain; if by chance an impatient wish escaped him, the people looked at him, and at each other, as if struck with doubts of his sanity; for they really believed none but a madman, or one perversely discontented, could reject the charming tranquillity of New-Amsterdam, when there was every thing that heart could wish—that is, enough to eat and drink,—not forgetting the grand inspirer of felicity—tobacco,—and time to smoke and sleep, and an abundance of raiment to put on:—in fine, nothing but a few straight ditches were wanting to render it a complete Dutch paradise. The people, too, were sober and industrious, well pleased to tread in the steps of their forefathers, and never prying into things that did not concern

them, nor dabbling in vain experiments, and seeking out new inventions, which bring trouble on so many young provinces, and old ones too. It was, therefore, beyond their comprehension, that any man should think of leaving such a place, to embroil himself with the horrible Indians, who scalped and murdered every thing they could lay their dingy hands upon— and all to aid the restive Massachusetts' people, who, the Governor had been heard to say, were not much better than savages themselves; for had they not driven away the peace-loving Dutch, and planted fields, and built villages, where they had intended to plant and build, if time had been given them? Indeed, it was more than once suggested in a secret council of thrifty burghers, that those encroaching colonists might, on some luckless day invade their fair capital, if the cautious rulers of the land did not avert their designs, by building dykes, and cutting canals to defend it, after the most approved fashion of their ancestors. Unfortunately, however, the inequalities of this new country, uselessly heaped into hills, and scooped out into vallies, opposed obstacles to their plan, which had never puzzled the brains of their countrymen on the other side of the Atlantic, where the beautiful swamps were perfectly free from such incumbrances, and seemed moulded by nature to suit their peculiar genius.

Major Atherton, therefore, very philosophically resolved to endure with patience what could not be avoided, and to confine his useless regrets to his own bosom,— and many a solitary hour was given to their indulgence. But in public he was ever gay and courteous, and by his affability, the cheerfulness with which he entered into the feelings of the old, and the amusements of the young,—he soon became a prodigious favourite, particularly with the ancient ladies, to whose lengthened discourse, with the deference due to their sex, and the gallantry of a young soldier, he would listen with the utmost politeness, though it is true their language was not always quite intelligible, and his thoughts were generally afar off. But the plump little divinities of the city were so enamoured with his attentions, that their roundheaded admirers began to find themselves slighted by their fair mistresses, and in the height of their alarm, might perhaps have been induced to convey the intruder from their shores, if circumstances had not occurred to render it useless;— though they most uncharitably persisted in ascribing his success, not to any superiority on his part, but to that perverse love of novelty, which it is said clings to woman through all the changes of her capricious life.

Major Atherton was a frequent guest at the house of Captain Van Schiller, and the idle world, which cares not whether it speaks truth or falsehood, presumed to say he was allured thither by the charms of Gertrude, his youngest daughter;—for had not the Captain gone up the Hudson to Fort Orange, and what else could he be seeking? But Atherton remained ignorant of these suggestions, and the subject of them was scarcely a moment in his thoughts; but Gertrude at that time chanced to be a reigning belle, and there was more than one gentle youth, who regarded his supposed pretensions with a jealous eye. He often met there a young man distantly connected with the family, whose frank and engaging manners soon gained his entire confidence and esteem.

Hans Van Haarman,—such was his name,—was a native of Holland; but he had resided several years in the New-Netherlands; and having followed the profession of arms almost from childhood, he was soon after his arrival invested with the command of Fort Amsterdam, the highest military rank which it was then in the power of the Colony to confer. His father had served in the Dutch wars with Colonel Atherton, with whom he was in habits of intimacy; and this circumstance first interested the young men in each

other; a similiarity of situation heightened this interest, which was daily strengthened by a congeniality of sentiments and characters. Van Haarman inherited from his mother, a French protestant, the spirit and vivacity of her country, which entirely preponderated over the Dutch prudence and phlegm, otherwise to have been expected from his father; and always yielding to first impressions, he became at once the friend and intimate companion of Major Atherton. He opened his whole heart to him, without reserve, and Atherton soon learned from his own lips that he also was a lover, and with the consent of her friends affianced to Maria Van Schiller, the eldest sister of Gertrude, though want of fortune, that cruel foe to tender hearts, had hitherto delayed the day of happiness; and it was still put off to a distant period to the great alarm of Van Haarman, who feared the worldly prudence and ambition of her father might tempt him to prefer a more wealthy suitor for his daughter,—in despite of the entreaties of Dan Cupid, who represented that lovers could live on little or nothing—a matter rather problematical, even in those simple days.

Atherton in return, disclosed his own hopes, fears, and perplexities, without reserve, to Van Haarman; and felt much relieved by consulting on his future plans with one who was interested in his behalf, and able to advise, and, perhaps, assist him. Van Haarman, indeed, from the moment he learned his unpleasant situation, used every exertion to procure him a conveyance to Connecticut; he even endeavoured to engage the Governor in his cause, and freely offered his own services in the undertaking. Things, however, went on but slowly; Atherton had been a fortnight in New-Amsterdam, and Governor Kieft, who held his case in consideration for a week, was still undecided,—when a vessel arrived in the harbour from a long voyage, and brought intelligence which produced a general excitement. The Captain, a bold and adventurous man, had penetrated through the very ports of the enemy to traffic with the friendly Indians; and having bartered his commodities on advantageous terms, was returning home, when near the mouth of the Pequod river he was surrounded by the Indians in their canoes, and attacked with such fury, that for a time escape seemed almost impossible. But fortunately the Dutch Captain was supported by a brave crew, who fought with desperate courage, convinced that their only alternative was captivity and a death of torture; and after a severe conflict they completely routed the Pequods, who retreated with all expedition, though not without considerable loss both in killed and prisoners. The Dutch were not materially injured; for their vessel was well-armed, and the men trained to action, which gave them a decided advantage over the undisciplined fierceness of the enemy. The Captain also brought information from unquestionable authority, that the Pequods, driven from Saybrook by the reinforcement of Captain Mason and his party, had retired to the fort of Sassacus, from whence they issued forth to ravage the country; that a body of them had lately surprised the people of Weathersfield, while labouring in their fields, and inhumanly murdered several of both sexes, destroyed numbers of their cattle, and carried two young women into captivity.

These details excited the utmost indignation in every breast; and Major Atherton, in whose mind the image of Miriam Grey was now continually associated with scenes of danger, determined at every hazard, to repair immediately to Saybrook fort. The idea that she might already be among the slain or captives, at times gave him insupportable pain; but he consoled himself by reflecting that she could not have been near that scene of outrage, which was several miles from the abode of Mr. Weldon. Still his anxiety was

unremitting; and independent of his personal feelings, he cherished an increased desire to assist his countrymen in freeing themselves from a scourge, which continually threatened their safety. He, therefore, intreated Van Haarman to use his influence with the Captain, who had lately returned to convey him to the Connecticut shore; and empowered him to offer any reward, which might ensure his services. But these private arrangements were unexpectedly precluded by the spirited conduct of Governor Kieft, who, urged by many considerations, political and personal, publicly announced his resolution to aid the English, on this important occasion. Orders were issued to the proper authorities, to prepare a vessel well armed and manned, to sail immediately to the Pequod harbour, to ransom the captive maids at any cost, and deliver them in safety to the English at Fort Saybrook. Van Haarman, at his own desire, was appointed to command the expedition, and the resentment of the people, was so generally roused against the inhuman conduct of the Indians, that there were more volunteers than could be disposed of in the service.

On the evening previous to their departure, Major Atherton was honoured by an invitation at the Governor's, where all the high mightinesses of the city were assembled in solemn state; and his lady on the important and long remembered occasion, threw open the doors of her *best parlour*,—a term analogous to the drawing-room of the present day, into which her guests were seldom admitted, except on visits of great ceremony. All the bright-eyed damsels of New-Amsterdam were ranged in a circle round it, like puppets in a show-box, each one industriously engaged in accomplishing some formidable piece of workmanship, from which her attention was seldom withdrawn, except occasionally to answer a formal question, with a still more formal monosyllable. A huge round table, groaning under the weight of good things, was at length set forth in tempting array, and happily afforded an opportunity for the young men to display their gallantry, while it enlivened the intellects of the elders, and suggested many interesting topics of discussion, to fill up the remainder of the evening, which closed at a seasonable hour, in a cloud of smoke from the numberless delft pipes which projected into the room, and almost met in the centre. Each gallant then selected the fair one, whom he most admired—if she smiled consent,—and without one murmur at the trouble and distance, escorted her to the door of her dwelling, and took leave of her with a cordial salute;—an agreeable Dutch custom, which Atherton could by no means excuse himself from following, when he parted with the pretty Gertrude, whom he was allowed the privilege of attending home, notwithstanding the manoeuvres of certain of her cidevant admirers, who were forthwith obliged to look round for more obliging, if less comely, fair ones.

## CHAP. VI.

There was speech in their dumbness, language in their very gesture; they looked as they had heard of a world ransomed or one destroyed. A notable passion of wonder appeared in them, but the wisest beholder that knew no more but seeing, could not say if the importance were joy or sorrow.

SHAKSPEARE.

ON a bright morning towards the close of April, an armed sloop weighed anchor in the harbour of New-Amsterdam, and under a salute of all the guns in the fort, which were fit for use, answered by cheers from the men on board, and a mighty shout of the multitude on shore, mingled with the barking of curs, and the grunting of pigs,—it set sail on the destined voyage of amity to the Pequod shores. The worthies of the land regarded the stately bark with prodigious satisfaction, as it boldly ploughed the waves, which sparkled and foamed around it, with the sails swelled by a stiff breeze, and the Dutch colours gaily streaming from the tall mast-head. Van Haarman reclined on the stern, in a very lover-like attitude, unwilling to withdraw his eyes a moment from the spot, where his love and his hopes were fixed; while Atherton walked the deck, with the quick elastic step of one who has escaped a prison-house, and exults again in the light of freedom. He would sometimes stop to gaze a moment on the beautiful island, which seemed floating in the waters, like a region of enchantment, decked out with verdure and bloom, and sporting a thousand hues in the brilliant sunshine and chequered shade;—though still oftener his eye roved impatiently across the sound, and lingered on the clear horizon, watching to obtain a glimpse of the yet distant hills of Connecticut.

A number of the Pequod Indians, who had been lately captured, were put on board the vessel, in the expectation that it would be necessary to offer them in exchange for the young women; and though they submitted in sullen silence to their destiny, it was considered prudent to secure them below the deck, to prevent the possibility of any violent attempt at escape. One of their number, however, a young man of noble countenance and demeanour, was exempted from this general confinement. He received a severe wound in his right arm, during the action with the Dutch, and his subsequent imprisonment, with the pain he endured, and the mortification and chagrin attendant on his situation, had reduced him to extreme weakness. Atherton was particularly interested in the appearance of the young Indian, as he entered the sloop with his companions,—their hands bound, and attended by a strong guard; he saw him stagger as if too feeble to support himself; and yielding to the impulse of humanity, sprang forward, and offered him the assistance of his arm.

“Cushminaw needs no help;” said the Indian in tolerable English, “the white man is his foe, and he disdains his pity.”

He raised his fettered hands energetically as he spoke; but in an instant they fell nerveless by his side, and at the same time, a gush of blood flowed profusely from his wound. The savage looked at it with an unmoved countenance; but Atherton, who now first comprehended the cause of his weakness, hastily removed a cloak of furs which was thrown over his arm, and Van Haarman ordered his fetters to be immediately taken off.

Cushminaw had, for several days, endured excessive pain with a fortitude peculiar to the Indian character, and too proud to complain or ask assistance, he concealed his wound from every eye, and would rather have suffered death than permitted a groan to escape him. It was, however, neither deep nor dangerous; and had he been at liberty to exercise upon it the skill which his race always acquire in the use of simples, it would scarcely have troubled him; but total neglect, and the excitement of his passions, had greatly inflamed it; and, exhausted by the loss of blood, he was obliged to submit quietly to the will of those around him. The other Indians were removed from deck; and, a young man who had some knowledge of surgery, examined the wound, and after applying a lenitive, tightly bandaged it, and placed the arm in a sling. Cushminaw had hitherto yielded quietly to the operation; but, with a smile of ineffable scorn, he tore the sling from his neck, and throwing it from him, exclaimed—

“Shall a warrior of the Pequod tribe be tied like a child to its mother’s breast?”

He rose indignantly as he spoke, and walked slowly around the deck; he sometimes stopped, and for many moments watched the waves rising and dashing against the sides of the vessel; he would then look earnestly towards his native shores, and again resume his walk, with an air of melancholy thoughtfulness. There was a stately dignity in the mien and gestures of the young Indian, and an occasional fierceness in the expression of his piercing eye, which struck the seamen with awe, and they constantly retreated before his steps, as if fearful he would commit some act of violence on them. Cushminaw seemed to understand their feelings; but he regarded them with contempt more than anger, and never deigned to speak unless previously addressed. It was the opinion of almost every one that he ought to be confined; but Van Haarman was convinced that he could do no injury; and hoping he might prove of service, if kindly used, in the expected negotiation, insisted on leaving him at liberty to follow his inclinations without restraint.

Major Atherton endeavoured to draw him into conversation, on subjects which appeared to interest him, till by degrees he won upon his confidence, and the young savage, touched by his kindness, began to feel pleasure in his society, and the sternness of his countenance gave place to a grateful smile, whenever he approached him. Cushminaw was in the spring of life, and could not long indulge a gloom and distrust which belonged not to his age or character; and while he again breathed the pure air, and saw the light of heaven, and felt his pain assuaged by sympathy, and was indulged the hope of a speedy return to the freedom for which he sighed, the native generosity of his disposition prevailed over every hostile feeling, and he soon regarded Atherton with that strong interest and gratitude which is almost peculiar to the savage heart.

Atherton learned from him that he was the only son of a Narraganset Sachem, who early taught him to excel in the athletic sports and exercises of the Indian youth; and even in childhood trained him in the arts of war, and made him his companion in every hostile encounter with the neighbouring tribes. Thus accomplished and inured to fatigue, at the age of fifteen, he went with the warriors of his nation to avenge an alleged injury committed by the Pequods, with whom they were almost continually at strife. But the event proved disastrous to his people, who were utterly defeated; his father was slain in battle, and he fell into the hands of Mononotto, a powerful sachem of the Pequods. Mononotto was but a few years older than himself; he admired his bravery, and touched with compassion for his youth and misfortunes, adopted him for his own son, agreeably to an Indian custom, and ever treated him with the most tender affection. He had a short

time before given him his young sister in marriage; and with the gratitude of a noble spirit, Cushminaw declared that he would cheerfully lay down his life to serve his adopted father and people. In his childhood he was once detained many months as an hostage, by the English at Plymouth, and instructed by them in their language and religion; the latter he had quite forgotten, but the former was kept in remembrance by a frequent intercourse with the colonists, till he was received into the Pequod tribe; and subsequent to that period, he had been often employed as an interpreter in negotiating with them. He dwelt with pleasure on his early connection with the white people, and acknowledged that he felt no enmity towards them, except as they had injured his father and brethren, whose quarrels it was his duty to avenge.

Major Atherton listened with interest to the simple narrative of the young Indian; and, in return, he gratified him with a short history of his own life, his passage across the great waters, and his various journeyings in the western world. Cushminaw lost not a word that he uttered; but when he had finished speaking, he laid his hand on Atherton's arm, and said emphatically—

“Brother, hast thou no wife to be the charm of thy youth, and the comfort of thine old age? to weep for thine absence, and cheer thee with smiles when thou returnest from the field of battle?”

Atherton answered in the negative.

“Listen to me, brother,” returned Cushminaw, “the captive maids whom you seek, are in the hands of my father, Mononotto, and it is in his power to save them alive; he loves me, and will hearken to my words; and if thou wouldst take for thy wife, her who is fairest of the daughters of thy land, I will speak to him, and pray him to give her thee for the ransom of his son.”

“Who is she?” asked Atherton; “by what name is she known? where are her kindred, and who is her companion?”

“I know not her name,” replied the Indian; “my mother calls her daughter, and cherisheth her as her own flesh, she is delicate as the wild rose of summer; but her bloom is fading, and her fair head droops with untimely sorrow; her friends are afar off, and her father wanders in a strange land; her companion is a timid child, ignorant of the dangers which surround her.”

“Good heavens!” exclaimed Atherton, with emotion, “of whom do you speak? tell me, I entreat you, of all that relates to her?”

“Brother,” returned Cushminaw, “I have little more to say; her eyes are dim with weeping, and food and rest are strangers to her; often when my mother's song has ceased, and she has laid down to rest with her little ones, and only the stars are awake to listen, have I heard her sing, in a low voice, a sweet song of her native country, interrupted by her sighs and tears; and my heart was moved with pity for her grief. One day I returned from the chase, just as the shadows began to lengthen on the plain, and found her sitting at the door of the wigwam, with her arms entwined around the neck of her young companion, on whose bosom she wept bitterly. I drew near to her and said, “Daughter of the white man, why has sorrow entered into thine heart?” She started on hearing the language of her people, and turned on me her eyes, soft as twin violets, wet with the dews of morning; but alarmed by my presence, she covered her face, and remained silent. “Fear me not, young maiden,” I continued, “thou art beloved by my mother, and the arm of Cushminaw is powerful, and his tongue persuasive in the council of his brethren.” She

started quickly from the ground, and clasping her hands, exclaimed, "Son of the warrior, save me from a lingering captivity and cruel death; give me back to the arms of my father, who mourns his only child; and the God of the white people shall bless and reward you." Moved by her distress, I was about to give an answer of peace, when my father approached us; he was returning from the fort of Sassacus, his eye was terrible, and his countenance darkened with frowns. At sight of him, the young maids fled, pale and affrighted, from our presence, and I saw them no more; before the setting of another sun, the barks of the stranger visited our shores, and our young warriors were carried into captivity."

Cushminaw's countenance fell, and his eye flashed with resentment, as he alluded to their defeat; and turning from Atherton, with a lofty stride, he walked to a distant part of the vessel. Atherton was affected by the Indian's words; the possibility that the vindictive chiefs would not accept a ransom for their unfortunate captives, or that they might already have fallen victims to their cruelty, gave him extreme uneasiness; and he looked forward with painful solicitude to the approaching negotiation.

On the following morning, the sloop entered the Pequod harbour; and the savages, alarmed by its appearance, assembled in great numbers on the shore, armed and prepared to resist any hostile attack. The vessel was anchored in full view of the multitude, who watched it with extreme curiosity; and Van Haarman proposed sending a boat immediately with a few trusty men, to open the proposed treaty with the chiefs.

Atherton readily undertook the risk and responsibility; and with an interpreter and four stout seamen, advanced boldly towards the land, protected by the guns of the sloop, which the natives regarded with awe and wonder. The Indians drew their arrows to the head, ready to shoot at an instant's warning; but observing that Atherton and his companions did not raise their weapons, and made various gestures to signify they came in amity, they gradually released their bows; and when near enough to be heard, the interpreter announced his commander's wish to speak with the grand sachem.

Sassacus stood in the midst of his warriors, distinguished above them all, by the gigantic proportions of his figure, and the superior richness of his savage attire. His countenance was fierce and vindictive, hideously disfigured with paint, and his naked breast and arms were marked with deep incisions, stained with vegetable colours, bearing a rude resemblance to various wild animals and birds. A string of shells and polished stones, twisted with an enormous serpent's skin, hung round his neck; his ears were weighed down by large pendants of bone, carved into frightful figures, and his hair cut in a fantastic manner, was ornamented with tufts of eagle feathers.

On receiving Major Atherton's message, Sassacus advanced a few paces from his attendants, with an air of command and majesty, which at once proclaimed him sovereign of the rude people who surrounded him; and wrapping a cloak of panthers' skins closely around his right arm, he stood in an attitude of proud defiance, with one bare and sinewy leg extended, his bow half raised, and his eye fixed keenly on the countenance of the speaker.

Atherton hastened to enquire, through his interpreter, respecting the English maidens, whom the Indian monarch held in captivity;—informed him, that the Dutch were desirous of ransoming them; and mentioned the terms which their governor had proposed. He avoided any allusion to the Pequod prisoners, as Van Haarman was instructed not to give them up, unless every other means of negotiation failed.

Sassacus heard him with profound attention; but as soon as he had ceased speaking, he declared, in an imperative tone, that his captives should not be liberated; that they were bravely taken from the English, who provoked his wrath by intruding into his dominions, protecting the Indians who were tributary to him, and committing other acts of aggression which had caused him to lift the tomahawk against them; and that it should not be buried so long as a white man remained to plant in the land. He asked where were his people, who had been lately taken from him? and said he would enter into no treaty until they were safely returned.

Atherton was not empowered to enter upon this subject; he, however, assured Sassacus that the Pequods had been taken when committing violence upon the Dutch, who never injured them, but on the contrary, had always traded with them in a friendly manner; and that it was their Governor, and not the English, who wished to purchase the captive maids; offering the highest terms in his power for their redemption.

The haughty chief rejected his offers with disdain; assured him, that revenge was dearer to him than all the treasures of the white people, and that he would never be prevailed with to forego it. The prisoners would have been sacrificed long ago, he added, had not Mononotto acted the woman rather than the warrior, and been moved to pity by their tears.

The stern resolve of the sachem's words and manner, convinced Atherton that he had entered upon a difficult, if not hopeless task; but veiling his uneasiness under an air of indifference, he answered that he had delivered his message; and if Sassacus had any thing more to say on the subject, he must speak with the Governor's deputy in the vessel, who would wait a few hours for him to consider what had been said.

But while he was ordering the men to put off from the shore, an aged warrior stepped hastily forward, and motioning them to stay awhile, approached Sassacus respectfully, and remained several moments in earnest conversation with him. He then left him, and informed Atherton that his tribe were anxious for the safety of their captive brethren; and if he was willing to remain with them as a hostage, they would send a chief to hold a *talk* with the people in the vessel. Atherton consented to the proposal, provided they would select a person of sufficient rank and importance to render his own life secure; and he hoped by this means to obtain more certain intelligence respecting the captives, and perhaps find an opportunity of speaking with them. Sassacus, on receiving his assent, turned to his subjects and addressed them with many emphatic gestures; the most profound silence was maintained during his discourse; and when he ceased, a low murmur arose, and every countenance was agitated by some strong emotion. Atherton learned from the interpreter, that the sachem was desirous of holding a conference himself with the white men; but the attachment of his subjects led them to oppose his design, believing the person of Major Atherton would be no security for that of so potent and dreaded a chief. But Sassacus was inaccessible to fear, and, like most arbitrary sovereigns, determined at all events to exercise his own will, and exact obedience; with a terrible voice he accordingly commanded silence, and in a tone which could not be disputed, declared it his intention to place himself in the power of the enemy. The poor Indians dared not utter a word, even of entreaty; but with sorrowful looks continued to regard him, while he bade them farewell; and with an air of determined courage, advanced towards the boat. His warriors crowded to the water's edge, as if to protect him to the last moment; and Atherton sprang on shore in the midst of them, at the moment

that Sassacus entered the bark, and was safe in the hands of his own men. The boat glided swiftly away; Sassacus stood in the midst of it, with his hands folded, and an expression of gloomy satisfaction on his features, like one who is about to encounter danger for the glory of overcoming it. Van Haarman from his vessel witnessed all that passed, and with his principal officers waited on the deck to receive the sachem with becoming courtesy. The savages, apparently satisfied with his civility, then began to arrange themselves for a march; and by gestures informed Atherton that he must accompany them to the fort. Atherton cheerfully submitted to their wishes: and his confidence in them evidently gained their good-will. Though closely guarded, they seemed anxious to render his situation comfortable, and repeatedly pressed him to partake of their humble food. He could scarcely realize that he was in the midst of a people, who regarded his nation with deadly hatred, and probably viewed him with personal aversion at the same moment that they treated him with the most attentive hospitality. A forbearance which these singular beings are taught to consider a duty; and the stranger who seeks the shelter of their roof, whatever his country or crimes, even their mortal enemy, is welcome to share their food and lodging; and his voluntary confidence is always sufficient to protect him.

Major Atherton, however, found no one who could or would speak to him in his own language; and being totally unacquainted with the Indian dialect, their conversation was confined entirely to signs. But all his efforts to gain any intelligence respecting the captives proved unavailing; naturally shrewd, they readily comprehended his wishes in every other respect; but with their usual cunning and caution, they were perversely stupid whenever he attempted to draw information from them on the subject which so deeply interested him. Still he continued to hope, that some lucky accident would at length gratify his wishes; and in the mean time, the novelty of his situation, and the strange manners of the savage people around him, kept his curiosity and interest constantly excited. He was particularly amused by the Indian women, who were continually surrounding him; many of them had never before seen a white man, and they examined him with great satisfaction, often laughing and clapping their hands when he smiled or personally noticed them. To one or two, who seemed of superior rank, he offered some trifling presents, which were highly pleasing to the swarthy *fair* ones, and attracted many others to him, in the expectation of sharing similar favours. He, however, made them understand that he had nothing more to give, and signified a wish to go with them to their wigwams, which were clustered together at a short distance from the fort. But the wary chiefs, who perfectly comprehended his motives, interdicted him from following them, and with menacing gestures dispersed the obedient squaws to their places of abode. Yet it was not long before they returned, at first timidly, then with increasing boldness and numbers; though Atherton was so closely watched by the savage warriors, that they could not approach so near him as before. But they were as well skilled in the arts of persuasion as many of their sex who boast of clearer skins; and by degrees, Atherton found himself again encompassed by his female admirers, who mingled freely with their sooty lords, and seemed never weary of looking at him,—often feeling of his dress, and apparently expressing great wonder at his beard: they had never seen the like on the face of an Indian. They also admired the hilt of his sword, which was much ornamented; and Atherton, to surprise them, drew the blade partly from its scabbard; but the sharp edge and glittering appearance so much alarmed them, that they fled with a discordant yell, leaving the men highly amused by their terror.

There was one young squaw, peculiarly modest and interesting in her appearance, who remained totally unmoved by the fears of her companions. She stood leaning against a tree, singing in a low voice; and as Atherton listened attentively, he caught a few words of English mingled with the Indian dialect. Her eyes were fixed stedfastly on his face, and as he looked earnestly at her, he fancied she nodded significantly; though her chaunt was unbroken. Determined to ascertain her meaning, if she had any, he advanced nearer, and offered her a small knife of considerable value. She received it with a smile; and while examining it attentively, Atherton ventured to say to her, "Speak to me quickly, if you can tell me aught of the English maidens." The woman made no reply, but looked first at him, then fearfully towards the warriors who stood around them; and at the moment a stern sachem, who kept a vigilant eye on Atherton, addressed her in a harsh and angry tone. Her soft features instantly assumed a haughty expression, and answering him with an air of disdain, she turned proudly away, and walked slowly from the spot. Atherton was strongly inclined to follow her, but a conviction of the folly and imprudence of such a course restrained him; though he felt fully persuaded that she was acquainted with the situation of the captives, and had no doubt that it was her intention to speak with him concerning them. He therefore continually watched for her re-appearance, but the day passed away in disappointment, and towards its close the Dutch boat was again seen approaching the shore. Atherton was immediately re-conducted to the beach, whither the whole multitude hastened with joyful acclamations to receive their monarch. At that moment he observed the young Indian woman among the crowd, her eyes fixed on him as before, with a significant expression. He cautiously retreated a step or two from his guard, and by a look of entreaty besought her to explain herself. She waved her hand with a warning gesture, and darted from his sight with the speed of lightning. Vexed with her conduct, and half inclined to believe she was sporting with his curiosity, he remained musing on the strange adventure, till roused by feeling some one brush lightly past him, and at the same time something was thrust hastily in his hand. He instinctively grasped it closely, but had scarcely time to remark the figure of the squaw flying from him, before the boat touched the strand, and Atherton heard his name called loudly by Van Haarman. He sprang forward to greet his friend, and exchanging hasty adieus with his savage entertainers, entered the boat just as Sassacus again set foot on his own dominions.

Scarcely heeding the numerous inquiries of Van Haarman, Major Atherton hastened to examine the Indian's gift; it was a strip of smooth bark, and on it written with some pointed instrument, and evidently by a trembling hand, the following words—

"The sachem Mononotto protects us; we are safe; leave this inhospitable land, I entreat you, and do not risk your safety to effect our liberation."

Atherton read this scrawl repeatedly, and with strong emotion; there was no signature, and the writing was unknown to him; could it have been sent by any one who had recognised him by the Indian's description? He thought it impossible; he was not known to any females in the Connecticut colony, except Miriam Grey and her cousin, and the idea that they were in a situation of so much peril, though it had often painfully crossed his mind, was too dreadful to be indulged. Again he examined the characters attentively; he was unacquainted with Miriam's writing, and therefore could not compare them, but the evident anxiety for his safety which had dictated the scrawl, the generous wish to relieve his solicitude, and deter him from rushing upon danger, rather than to

secure her own safety—who but Miriam at such a moment would be so considerate, so disinterested? Full of doubt and inquietude he shewed the writing to Van Haarman, who was perplexed, and rather impatient at his long silence, and related to him all the events of the day.

Van Haarman, however, after a careful examination and attentive hearing, laughed at his fears, and assured him that it was impossible any one could identify him under such circumstances; that even were it in reality Miriam Grey, she could not for an instant suppose he had become an envoy from the New Netherlands, of which place he had not even dreamed when he last saw her. Atherton thought his reasoning plausible, if not conclusive; and considerably relieved of his apprehensions, he listened with interest to an account of Van Haarman's interview with Sassacus. The savage prince had discovered great obstinacy in the negotiation, and a most inveterate malignity towards the English; he had insisted that the prisoners ought to be sacrificed, though he acknowledged that it depended on the will of Mononotto, into whose hands they had fallen. The sachem was at that time absent, but would certainly return before evening, when it was his intention to hold a grand council with his warriors; and on the morrow the result should be made known to the Dutch. Van Haarman on his part had declared his resolution to put to death all the Pequods who were in his power, if the maidens were not safely delivered up to him,—but he offered six of the highest rank for their ransom, including the adopted son of Mononotto.

Thus the lives of so many individuals hung upon a thread; and Van Haarman, to prevent a surprise from the enemy, ordered a double watch to be set for the night, and every precaution to be used to secure their safety, which the most vigilant prudence could suggest.

## CHAP. VII.

————— Though perils did  
A bound, as thick as thought could make them, and  
Appear in forms more horrid, yet my duty,  
As doth a rock against the chiding flood,  
Should the approach of this wild river break,  
And stand unshaken yours.

SHAKSPEARE.

SOON after sunrise on the next morning, Sassacus, with a guard of his subjects, approached the Dutch vessels in canoes, and signified their wish to renew the negotiation with its commander. Van Haarman, with Atherton and a few of his men, met them in a boat,—for they could not again be persuaded to venture on board the sloop,—and a long and interesting conference ensued. As was greatly to be feared, however, from the fierce and haughty character of the Pequods, it ended in disappointment to the Dutch agents, and the only favour they could extort from Sassacus was a promise not to sacrifice the captives within twenty-four hours; and on this condition Van Haarman consented to spare the lives of his prisoners for the same length of time. The sachem Mononotto was not present at this interview, but Sassacus informed them he had returned, and consented to give up his captives to the will of his king and people.

There was no longer a probability of recovering the unfortunate maidens, though Van Haarman endeavoured to encourage Atherton, whose extreme dejection surprised him, and he imparted to him several advantageous offers which he intended to make the savage monarch, on the coming day. But Atherton was persuaded they would prove unavailing; and from the moment he received the scrawl from the Indian, the bare possibility that it was written by the hand of Miriam Grey, with the dreadful idea, that she, whom he so fondly loved, was condemned in her youth and loveliness, to a lingering captivity or cruel death, had constantly employed his thoughts, and left him a prey to the most painful apprehensions. Even when the arguments of Van Haarman, and his own reason, for a time, persuaded him that his fears were groundless, the unfortunate situation of the captives, whoever they might be, excited the deepest commiseration, and he felt that his duty, as a man and a soldier, compelled him to attempt their rescue, however hazardous the undertaking. He forbore communicating his thoughts to Van Haarman, aware that he could not, without exceeding his commission, enter into his plans; and indeed the force of his whole crew, opposed to a tribe of powerful and incensed Indians, would only draw upon them certain destruction:—whatever he did, must be by stratagem, and alone. He passed the day, almost in silence, pacing the deck and forming a thousand plans, none of which was satisfactory to his mind. Evening approached, and he was still undecided, when he observed Cushminaw standing apart from every one, his hands folded on his breast, and his eyes fixed thoughtfully on his native shore. Struck by the melancholy expression of his countenance, Atherton approached him and said—

“Cushminaw, you are weary; pain and captivity have brought low your strength, and dimmed the lustre of your eyes.”

“Pain!” exclaimed Cushminaw, scornfully tossing his wounded arm; “the warriors of our tribe disdain it, and even our women endure affliction without a murmur. Leave me, brother, to watch alone; perhaps I shall never again behold the sun setting in his glory, or the stars rejoicing in the heavens.”

“I will watch beside you,” returned Atherton; “I have many questions to ask you concerning your father’s captives, and I would learn why he refuses to release them, and procure your life and liberty.”

“My father loves me,” returned the Indian; “but he detests your nation, and would sacrifice much to avenge the injuries he has received from it. Dost thou see yonder light flashing across the waves?” he added, pointing to the fort of Sassacus, which was brightly illumined by a fire within it. “The chiefs of our nation are assembled there in council, and this night will decide the fate of their prisoners. Sassacus thirsts for their blood, and there is no sachem but Mononotto, who dares oppose his will. They are his lawful prize, and he is powerful enough to protect them; but I feel assured he will give them up to the will of his brethren.”

“And their fate,” said Atherton, shuddering, “must be inevitable death?”

Cushminaw bowed his head in token of assent; while with a glance of pity, not unmingled with contempt, he regarded the countenance of Atherton, which strongly expressed the feelings of horror and compassion which the idea excited.

“Are you aware,” resumed Atherton, after a moment’s pause, “that their death will be immediately requited on yourself and fellow-prisoners? Cushminaw, I would do much to save you; but my wish will be powerless; the blood of the innocent calls for vengeance, and the call must be answered.”

“I fear not death,” returned the Indian proudly; “I have sported with it, from the day that I was weaned from my mother’s breast; and shall I, who have so often rejoiced at the tortures of the prisoner, shrink in the hour of trial! no, Cushminaw fears not death; yet would he first avenge it on his enemies, and fall as becomes a valiant warrior, with the arrow bounding from his hand, and the scalps of the vanquished at his feet!”

“Were it in your power,” asked Atherton, “would you make no effort to prolong your days? has life become bitter to you already, that you would thus part from it without regret?”

“Three and twenty suns have rolled over my head,” returned the Indian, “and they have seen me contented and happy; yet though I am cut off in the greenness of youth, the deeds of my arm shall be long remembered; the aged will mourn for me, and the young water my grave with tears.”

“Have you forgotten the wife whom you love?” resumed Atherton, “who watches in vain for your return, and numbers with her tears the lingering days of your absence?”

Cushminaw looked reproachfully at Atherton, and for a moment buried his face in his hands; he then said, in a softened voice —

“Young Englishman, speak not of her; I shall never again embrace her, never listen to her voice, nor return from the chase to seek her, in the green bowers of our youthful love. Speak not of her, for no womanish weakness shall bring reproach on the name of Cushminaw.”

“Cushminaw,” said Atherton eagerly, “could you purchase your life, by releasing your father’s captives, would you consent to do it?”

“I would first know the terms,” replied the chief; “sooner would I die ten thousand deaths, than betray my father’s kindred and people.”

“I ask nothing dishonourable of you,” said Atherton; “my own safety only is involved, and that I most readily adventure to save these unfortunate maidens; promise to aid me, Cushminaw, and your freedom shall be the reward of my success.”

“I would it were in my power to save them,” replied the Indian; “they are too weak, and too innocent to injure us; my heart is moved by their distress, and my mother would bless me for their deliverance; but I am in bonds, and were I freed, how could my single arm avail to rescue them?”

“I ask nothing but your counsel,” returned Atherton; “listen to me, Cushminaw; you have told me, the maidens inhabit the wigwam of your mother, retired from the fort and village; at this time the warriors of your nation are assembled in council, and the women only are left to guard them; direct me to their abode, and I feel confident that I can bring them in safety from their enemies.”

“Impossible!” exclaimed the Indian, surprised at the boldness of his design; “our warriors are keen-eyed as the eagle, fierce as the bear robbed of her whelps, and wily as the serpent of the grass; nothing can escape their vigilance, and even should you find a path through the mazes of the forest, destruction is at length inevitable.”

“I fear it not,” said Atherton; “I am swift of foot, and well skilled in the use of weapons; but if I die, it is in a good cause, and may heaven hear the cry of the innocent, and save them and you from an untimely fate! Young warrior, be sincere with me, for deceit will be fatal to you.”

“I have never betrayed even the foe, who trusted to me,” returned Cushminaw; “you have shewn me much kindness, brother, and I would befriend you rather than direct your steps to danger, and perhaps to death.”

“Speak not of it,” said Atherton, impatiently; “my mind is resolved, and I will not give slumber to my eyelids till I have attempted my purpose; if you refuse to instruct me, I will trust to my own guidance wherever it may lead me. Consider, Cushminaw, that your life may be cheaply purchased; but if the captives are sacrificed, all my efforts will be unavailing to preserve it.”

Cushminaw remained silent and perplexed for several moments; but a natural love of life, and gratitude for the kindness which Atherton had shewn him, finally prevailed over his scruples, and he proceeded to give him clear and minute directions what course to pursue; described the path through the forest, and his mother’s wigwam, which was retired from every other. He bade him cautiously approach, and carefully examine it, and assured him that if it was guarded only by the squaws he might boldly enter, and bear away the captives. He then tore a string of wampum from his belt, and bade him give it to his wife, should he find her in his mother’s wigwam, and she would shew him kindness for his sake, and suffer him to depart in peace. “Brother,” he concluded, “the stars are thick in the heavens; our fathers are yet gathered around their council fires; be swift as the wild deer, crafty as the beast of prey, and may success and safety go with you.”

Atherton fixed his eyes keenly on the countenance of Cushminaw while he spoke, and convinced by its frank expression that he was sincere, he grasped his hand fervently and replied—

“Cushminaw, I thank you; the moment of my return will restore you to freedom and your country; and now for a time farewell.”

“You are too brave to deceive me,” replied the Indian, “and I fear not to trust your words; go, my brother, speed on your way, and may the trees hide you in their shade from the red man of the forest, and the stars in their brightness, guide you in peace to the trembling maidens.”

Aware of the importance of using the utmost dispatch, Major Atherton immediately sought out Van Haarman, and imparted to him his plans, with the intelligence of Cushminaw. Van Haarman had scarcely patience to hear him through; astonished at his temerity, he was tempted to believe him under the influence of some strange delusion, or actually deprived of his reason. He declared it impossible to elude discovery, represented the extreme duplicity of the savage character, that their treachery was proverbial; and even if Cushminaw should by a miracle prove sincere, that the captives were undoubtedly well guarded, that their flight would be impracticable, and that his life must unavoidably be sacrificed. Atherton listened to him without interruption; but he still believed his plan practicable, and assured Van Haarman, that he was resolved at every risk to attempt its execution. Van Haarman, convinced he could not prevail with Atherton to alter his determination, proposed to accompany him with a few of his bravest men, and share the danger of his adventure; but Atherton would not hearken to the proposal. He thought Van Haarman was not authorized to hazard the lives of himself and men, in a private and romantic enterprize, while charged with an important commission from his country; and he was persuaded that numbers would only increase the danger of discovery, and that all they could command would be inadequate for defence. Atherton requested nothing of Van Haarman but a promise to release Cushminaw as soon as he returned; and if the event proved fatal to him, he begged him to renew his efforts for the ransom of the captives. He also desired the use of a boat, and the assistance of one stout seaman. These were all readily granted by Van Haarman; but the men shrunk from Atherton’s proposal, believing it would be rushing to certain death; and with much difficulty, he at length prevailed on one to attend him, by the offer of a large reward, and an assurance that he should not be obliged to accompany him to the wigwam.

In a few moments a boat was lowered to the water, and Atherton sprang into it followed with less agility by his Dutch mercenary. The night was perfectly serene; not a breeze ruffled the waves, nor a cloud flitted across the heavens. The oars were muffled to prevent the slightest noise, not a word was spoken even in whisper; and as the boat glided swiftly along the current in silence and darkness, it resembled a visionary bark, piloted by the shadowy beings of another world. Atherton looked back upon the sloop;—the anxious countenance of Van Haarman, the tall figure of the Indian was no longer visible; the fire in the fort of Sassacus dwindled in his sight; and he seemed borne on the mighty stream from the haunts, even of savage man, and plunged into the midst of interminable forests. It was not long before they reached a small island near the shore, designated by the Indian; and just beyond it, they ran the boat into a natural cove, where he had directed them to land. A few bark canoes were drawn up on the bank; many of the trees were cleared away and the grass much trampled, which confirmed Cushminaw’s assertion, that it was a place of general resort for fishing. Atherton whispered his companion to be watchful, and remain quiet till he returned; and then bounded quickly upon the solitary shore. He could not be insensible to the dangers he was about to encounter; but his feelings were too much excited to admit of fear, and his disposition was too sanguine to doubt the probability of success. It is impossible to ascertain how far the mere spirit of

chivalry, or the dictates of humanity would have influenced him, in the same circumstances; but the apprehension that Miriam Grey might be one of the captives, certainly stimulated his exertions, and contributed to lead him on, in contempt of difficulties and obstacles, to execute his perilous design.

Major Atherton soon discovered a narrow foot-path, and without hesitation, followed its windings, which led him back along the margin of the river, as nearly as he could judge, for the distance of a quarter of a mile. It then suddenly turned, and ran through the skirts of a forest; and in a few moments the fires of the fort were again visible. He retired a few paces from the beaten track, to conceal himself under the shelter of the trees; and with a light and fearless step pressed forward, his hand grasping the hilt of his sword, his eyes intent on every object, and eagerly listening to catch the faintest sound. But he encountered no living being, and the very breath of nature seemed suspended, so intense was the stillness of the night. The soft murmuring of the river alone stole upon his ear, and even the sweet music of its waters was at length lost in the distance. Atherton began to feel impatient, and a faint suspicion that Cushminaw had deceived him, more than once crossed his mind; but he instantly rejected the idea, believing he would be restrained by selfish motives, if no other, from an act of treachery which must inevitably recoil on his own head. The path several times branched off towards the Indian fort; the country between was partially cleared and cultivated, affording little security to his person in case of discovery; and according to the Indian's directions, he kept straight forward, and always screened by the intervening trees. He had proceeded about a mile, when the path diverged from the forest, and led into an open plain, which bore the marks of recent labour, and where Atherton several times encountered the rude implements of agriculture used by those savage tribes in the cultivation of their fields. The air was tainted with the odour of decaying fish, with which they prepared their ground for planting; and in haste to escape the fetid atmosphere, he accidentally overturned a basket of seed corn, which fell back into a capacious hole in the ground, lined with the bark of trees, from which it had been lately taken. The accident probably saved Atherton from a similar fate, as he would not otherwise have noticed the chasm to which he was verging; but fearful the noise might attract attention from some wanderer of the night, he concealed himself a few moments within a group of trees. Nothing, however, was seen or heard, and he emerged from his retreat, and ascended a considerable eminence which lay before him. On reaching the summit and looking down on the other side, he was surprised to perceive several wigwams just below him, the outskirts of the Indian village, though scattered and apart from the principal settlement, which was only a short distance from the fort.

Convinced that one of these wigwams must be the abode of Mononotto's wife and captives, Atherton cautiously descended the hill, and gliding through a grove of fir trees, remained a moment under their branches, deliberating what course to pursue. The inhabitants had evidently gone to repose; not a light appeared through the apertures of the rustic tenements, and no sound was heard but the gurgle of a brook which watered the narrow valley, and glittered at intervals in the pensive star-light. Atherton, delighted to find every thing so favourable to his wishes, was in the act of sallying from his covert, when he perceived a light glancing among the trees, at some distance; and looking attentively, he found it proceeded from a wigwam which he had not yet noticed. It was indeed a sylvan dwelling, scarcely distinguished from the surrounding foliage; and

Atherton at once identified it with the description Cushminaw had given him of his mother's dwelling; with a beating heart he ventured to draw a little nearer, if possible, to obtain a glimpse of the interior. It was formed of tall young trees, bent down, so that their tops were fastened in the ground, forming a circular arbour of considerable dimensions, with the branches closely interlaced, to exclude the sun and air. The trees were putting forth their leafy honours, regardless of the distorted form in which they had been placed, merely for the purpose of a summer shelter; for those free and roving inhabitants of the forest, ignorant of the artificial wants of society, removed at will, and took up their humble abodes wherever necessity or caprice might lead them. The cooling draught of a spring, the fruits and vegetables of the earth, and the game which their arrows and fishing hooks procured them, were sufficient for their simple wants; if pressed for food in one place, they wandered to another, without any local attachments to disturb their happiness, or any superfluous wealth to fill their minds with care and anxiety.

Major Atherton was still looking earnestly on the wigwam, when a mat which served for a door was drawn aside, and an Indian youth, armed with a bow and arrows, and much ornamented, as was the manner with those of a higher rank, came out, and approached the spot where he stood. Atherton could not move without rustling the underwood and causing certain discovery; and to encounter the lad, would at once alarm the whole tribe. He had no alternative but to remain almost breathless behind the trunk of a large tree, where he was standing; and almost beyond his hopes, he had the satisfaction of seeing the young Indian pass but a few paces from him, without a suspicion of his proximity. Atherton was watching his retreat with feelings of gratitude for his own preservation, when he was suddenly startled by a strain of sweet music, which roused him from his position, and made him almost forget the necessity of still further caution. It was a female voice, and he was too distant to distinguish even the language; but it sounded familiar to his ear, and thrilled his heart with indefinable emotion. Presently it ceased; he looked around, but no person was visible; and at that moment, the door of the wigwam was again opened, and an Indian girl came to the entrance, holding a torch of bark in her hand. The flame streamed bright and far, glancing on a copse of trees, from whence the voice had seemed to issue; and as Atherton gazed intently, he saw the branches slightly agitated, and a tall female Indian emerge from their recesses. She walked with a slow and dignified step towards the hut; and speaking with her young companion, they entered it together, and closed the aperture with a mat. A few straggling rays of light broke through the crevices, but all beside was darkness and silence. With feelings which he did not attempt to analyze, Atherton left his retreat, and instinctively, rather than with any settled design, bent his way towards the grove. He had scarcely reached it, when the same entrancing melody again burst upon his ear, and a voice, to which he had often listened with delight, distinctly sung the words which had been taught by the lips of love.

Atherton stood transfixed, and with superstitious awe almost believed some spirit of the air was hovering near, and cheating him with sounds which filled him with transport, even in the midst of peril. Half afraid of destroying the sweet illusion, he remained motionless, and vainly striving to catch a glimpse of the invisible songstress. The first stanza had ceased, and with more tremulous tones she was commencing another, when Atherton, convinced it was no delusion, darted through the yielding branches, and seated in a natural alcove of vines and interwoven trees in the centre of the copse, he beheld a figure, which, even in the imperfect star-light, could not be mistaken by a lover's eye. So

sudden was his approach, that she had scarcely time to spring from her grassy couch, before she felt herself pressed with emotion to his heart.

“My own beloved Miriam,” said Atherton, “is it here I find you, encircled by dangers, and devoted to death?”

Miriam’s head drooped faintly on his shoulder, and relieved by his voice from the terror and surprise which at first overpowered her, she attempted to speak; but her words were inarticulate, and she burst into a flood of tears. He felt her cling more closely to his arm, as if afraid he would escape from her, and deeply touched by her distress and confiding tenderness, he was unable for some moments to offer a word of consolation or hope.

“Dearest Miriam,” he said, at length, “speak to me again; let me once more hear your voice, that I may be assured this is no illusion.”

“Atherton,” returned Miriam, “why are you here? why am I so weak, so selfish as to detain you? Fly,” she passionately added, “and preserve a life dearer to me than my own existence!”

“I go,” he replied, “and you, dear Miriam, shall be the companion of my flight; let us hasten; time is precious, and a moment’s delay may prove fatal.”

He gently urged her forward as he spoke; but firmly resisting him, she said, in an accent of earnest entreaty.—

“Dearest Atherton, as you love me, hasten from this dreadful spot; you cannot remain here undiscovered; you will fall a victim to your imprudent affection; go, and intercede for our exchange; Mononotto cannot prove inexorable; but I must not flee with you, and leave the innocent partner of my captivity in the power of these incensed savages.”

“Miriam,” returned Atherton, “Providence has guided me to you, and do you refuse the life thus mercifully reprieved? But I will not be selfish in my anxiety for you; a boat waits to receive us, let me place you in it in safety, and I will return for your companion.”

“Life is but too sweet to me,” said Miriam, “and for your sake, Atherton, as well as my own, I would do much to prolong it; but it is impossible, on the terms you offer; the night is already far spent, and the council fires burn faintly: before you can return my flight must be discovered, and I well know my poor companion would be instantly sacrificed to the sachem’s fury— and you, how could you escape his vengeance? Dear Atherton, can you wish me to purchase a few brief years at a price which must load them with insupportable misery?”

“Dear Miriam,” said Atherton, earnestly, “this is no time to indulge fastidious scruples; let me but see you in a place of safety, and I will soon rejoin you, with the object of your kind solicitude.”

“Never,” said Miriam, “can I yield to so wild, so dangerous a proposal; leave me, I conjure you, while it is yet in your power, and if you love me, Atherton, seek not to withdraw my weak heart from its duty.”

“Are you aware, Miriam,” asked Atherton, with emotion, “of the consequences of your refusal? do you know that these inhuman savages have rejected all our offers, all our entreaties to ransom you, and that they persist in devoting you to a long captivity, if not to death?”

“I know all,” replied Miriam, with an involuntary shudder; “yet even in this hour of extremity, I would not forfeit the approbation of Heaven, and of my own conscience, for aught which the world can offer me; no, Atherton, rather would I endeavour to submit to my fate with perfect confidence to Him, who can even yet work out my deliverance, or give me strength to suffer his will with Christian fortitude and resignation.”

“Tell me at least, dear Miriam,” said Atherton, with extreme agitation, “where is your fellow-prisoner? I will seek her out,— will bring her to you,— and in the darkness of night, we may yet escape in safety.”

“Think not of it,” said Miriam, with clasped hands, and a voice of entreaty; “she is in the wigwam of Mononotto, the women watch over her, and your appearance would instantly raise a note of alarm, and surround you with enemies. Dearest Atherton, by all the kindness you have shown me, by all the love you profess for me, I beseech you to depart and leave me!”

“Never, my beloved Miriam!” exclaimed Atherton; “we will escape together, or I will remain and share your destiny—in bonds, in suffering, in death, we will not be disunited.”

He pressed her hand passionately to his heart and lips, and before she was aware of his intention, rushed precipitately from the grove.

With flying footsteps Atherton approached the wigwam which had recently attracted his curiosity, rightly judging it to be the abode of Mononotto. The mat was removed from the entrance, displaying the interior of the dwelling lighted by several torches; and the first object which he saw, was a young Indian woman, whom he instantly recognised as the same who had conveyed to him the scrawl of Miriam, and who, he felt assured was the wife of Cushminaw. She was sitting on the ground, singing in a low voice, and plaiting a basket of reeds; beside her stood an English girl of about ten years old, looking at her fingers as she twisted the slender twigs; and two or three children, reclining on mats which were spread around the room, apparently too frolicsome to sleep, were raising their laughing dark faces, and chattering in their uncouth language. Atherton thought the moment propitious, and without hesitation sprang into the midst of the group. The squaw darted from the ground, and uttering a cry of alarm, was on the point of rushing through the aperture, when Atherton grasped her arm, exclaiming—

“Fly not from me; it is Cushminaw who has sent me to thee, and here is the token of his remembrance.” And he took the wampum from his bosom, and presented it to her as he spoke.

“It is my husband’s, he lives!” said the woman, almost with a scream of joy; and she pressed it to her lips, with the utmost tenderness, though trembling with terror and surprise.

“He does,” replied Atherton, “suffer me to bear away this child, and by the dawn of another day, he shall be with you in safety.”

The squaw drew the amazed girl towards her, and seemed hesitating between fear and inclination, when a mat at the other end of the apartment was drawn aside, and the tall Indian woman entered whom Atherton had before seen probably attracted by the cries of her children, who had not ceased to scream since his alarming appearance. Atherton felt that nothing but instant speed would avail him, and raising the captive girl in his arms, he bore her rapidly onward, to the grove where he had parted from Miriam Grey.

Miriam had remained almost stupified by his sudden departure, and so brief was his absence, that she had scarcely rallied her spirits, and followed him to the entrance of the wood, when she met him returning with his welcome burthen.

“Lean on me, dear Miriam;” said Atherton, drawing her arm through his; “let us move with speed and caution, and I trust we shall yet be in safety, before they can overtake us.”

“Where are we going?” asked the child, hardly recovered from her astonishment.

“Home,” said Miriam, softly, “if it is the will of Heaven; but be silent, Rachel, or they will hear our voices and pursue us.”

For a few moments they kept on their way, silently and swiftly, when Miriam suddenly grasped the hand of Atherton, convulsively, and murmured in a suppressed voice—

“Hark, I hear their footsteps approaching; oh, Atherton, they are surely near us!”

She had scarcely finished speaking, when the dreadful yell of the Indians reverberated through the forest; Atherton threw his arm around Miriam to protect and assist her, and they pressed forward with a speed and strength, which despair only could give them. Atherton alternately carried the child, and led her by the hand, always careful to keep the beaten path in view, and so great was the fatigue of each one of them, that at times, it seemed impossible to proceed. When the voices of their pursuers sounded more distant, they would stop for an instant’s repose, and then proceed with renewed strength; till at length, with inexpressible delight, and almost contrary to their hopes, they heard the murmuring of the river, and in a moment its waters burst upon their sight! With a transport of gratitude, Atherton beheld the little cove and the boat waiting his return; when suddenly the shouts of the savages were redoubled, and they rushed furiously from the covert of the forest. At sight of the dreadful Indians, the cowardly Dutchman, insensible to every thing but his personal safety, pushed rapidly from the shore, and in an instant gained the middle of the stream. Atherton’s feet already pressed the strand; but in vain he called to the boatman, in a voice of agony; he was utterly disregarded; and in the impulse of the moment, he was about to plunge into the waves with his unfortunate companions, whom he still firmly grasped, and endeavour to reach the boat, or perish in the attempt. But they were immediately surrounded by the Indians, and overpowered by numbers, Atherton was obliged to submit to their will, though he long resisted their attempts to separate him from Miriam. She was rudely torn from his arms, and with Rachel, hurried from his sight. With a yell of savage triumph, they led him, exhausted, to the fort of Sassacus.

But it is necessary to leave him, for a time, and revert to the period of Miriam Grey’s departure from Boston; which will form the subject of the following chapter.

## CHAP. VIII.

—————Yet those untutored tribes,  
Bound with their stern resolves and savage deeds  
Some gentler virtues; as beneath the gloom  
Of overshadowing forests, sweetly springs  
The unexpected flower.

### TRAITS OF THE ABORIGINES OF AMERICA.

MIRIAM GREY felt almost abandoned by hope, when she found herself again launched on the mighty deep, and through her last flowing tears, beheld Major Atherton, lingering on the receding shore, and watching her, as she well knew, with a heart full of sorrow and anxiety. The bright visions of her youthful fancy were fading away, the hitherto gay and peaceful stream of her existence was suddenly darkened by storms, and its future course appeared cheerless and dreary as the wilderness they were approaching. But in the midst of these early trials, Miriam felt the consciousness of performing her duty an unflinching support and consolation; and fearful of paining her cousin by the least appearance of unhappiness, she successfully exerted her cheerfulness and resolution, and soon again became the animated companion, the affectionate and devoted friend. Mrs. Weldon perfectly understood her feelings, and fully appreciated the sacrifice she had made; and, with judicious tenderness, she sought out objects to amuse, and pursuits to interest her. "She has left country and home, to share my humble fortunes," was her frequent reflection; and, with the confidence of a heart which had loved without disappointment, she believed that the generous sacrifice of Miriam would be rewarded, and that a temporary absence would wean her from an object whom she could not love without involving herself in still deeper misery.

Their voyage was prosperous and short, and notwithstanding the advanced season, they suffered little either from cold or sickness. The military settlement of Saybrook, at the mouth of Connecticut river, was the first inhabited spot they approached; the vessel put in there to give and receive information; and with considerable alarm, they discovered the critical state of the garrison, which was then hard pressed by the enemy, who had destroyed the outbuildings, and every thing without the impalement, or beyond the guns of the fort. Mr. Weldon re-embarked, with all expedition, for the remainder of their voyage; and it was not until they ascended the noble stream, that Mrs. Weldon and Miriam could realize how extremely savage and uncultivated was the country, which would soon become their abode. The imagination of each had formed a picture of its own, and Mr. Weldon sometimes smiled at their remarks, which shewed how widely they differed from the reality. On each side of them were lofty and impenetrable forests;—and except where here and there the Indian hunter had felled a few trees to kindle his watch-fires, or form his slight canoe, and occasionally, a deserted wigwam appeared hanging on some aerial height, or half hid by the leafless trees of the valley,—all remained in the magnificent wildness and solitude of nature. On those rich and variegated shores, where cities now present their glittering spires, and villages peep forth amidst their sunny glades and cultivated hills, the footsteps of man had seldom wakened the slumbering echoes of the forest; and the dashing of the waters, the moaning of the winds, and the screams of

the feathered tribes which fled, on startled wing at sight of the solitary bark, alone reverberated through their deep recesses. Herds of wild deer and other animals, which were browsing on the wintry stubble, or drinking the transparent waves, stopped to gaze at them a moment as they passed, and then bounded swiftly back to the thick covert of their native woods.

After proceeding up the river about fifty miles, they arrived in safety at Hartford, the place of their destination. The late season had been one of peculiar trials to the colonists of Connecticut, and the unusual scarcity which had prevailed, reduced many to want and dependence. They also sustained great losses in their cattle and other possessions, were deficient in the necessary implements of agriculture, and amidst the perplexing cares, and multiplicity of business attendant on their settlement, winter had surprised them, unprepared to contend with its severity. Many of the first planters, particularly of Hartford, were persons of fortune and consideration in their native country, and therefore less able to endure the hardships which succeeded their painful and hazardous journey through the wilderness, than others who had been less delicately nurtured, and unaccustomed to the refinements of life. Under such depressing circumstances, their very existence seemed uncertain, and could only have been preserved by the most resolute and persevering exertions.

Mr. Weldon was more prosperous than most of those around him; and though he shared many of their misfortunes, Lois, who remembered the complicated calamities of the Plymouth settlers on their first arrival, often thought her present privations, in comparison, light and trivial. Miriam never for an instant regretted accompanying Mrs. Weldon; and though she had still many anxious thoughts and fond regrets, they were carefully confined to her own breast, and she looked forward with hope to the approaching spring, when her father would return to claim her. Satisfied that her cousin was happy, she anticipated with delight, a return to the scenes of her earliest pleasures; and almost unconsciously, many romantic visions mingled with her future prospects.

The winter passed away unmarked by any important events; an alarm was occasionally excited by the Indians, but they confined their depredations principally to the vicinity of Saybrook, and it was hoped the return of spring would produce a cessation of hostilities, and leave the inhabitants at liberty to engage in the peaceful pursuits of agriculture, which their exhausted resources rendered indispensable. But these expectations were disappointed, and the increasing aggressions of the Pequod Indians rendered it necessary to adopt vigorous measures to check their insolence, which threatened to bring ruin upon the colonies.

In this situation of affairs, Mr. Weldon received orders to join the detachment under Captain Mason, which was sent forward to reinforce the garrison at Saybrook. Mr. Weldon was anxious only for the safety of his wife and Miriam, whom his absence left destitute of a protector, at a time when their settlements were particularly exposed to the incursions of a powerful enemy. He therefore prevailed on them to remove to the house of a relative in the village of Weathersfield, a few miles distant, where he believed they would be more secure than in his own dwelling. Soon after his departure, Mrs. Weldon was attacked by severe indisposition, which was greatly aggravated by continual solicitude for her husband's safety, and confined her long to her own apartment. Miriam watched beside her with unwearied assiduity; but as Lois became convalescent, she sometimes stole from her sick chamber, to enjoy that exercise in the open air, which was

necessary to the preservation of her own health. One morning she had extended her walk to a considerable distance with Rachel, the daughter of her host; and in returning through a large field, where many of the inhabitants were at labour, they were surprised by the fearful yell of the Indians. In an instant a multitude started from the shelter of trees, where they had lain in ambush, and surrounded the unfortunate people, who were unable to offer any effectual resistance to their overwhelming numbers. Miriam on the first alarm, grasped the hand of Rachel, and with flying footsteps, endeavoured to reach a place of safety; but they were arrested by the barbarians, who with menacing gestures commanded them to remain still. Overcome by terror, Miriam fell lifeless on the ground; and a long insensibility spared her the misery of witnessing the dreadful scene which ensued. The savages cruelly murdered several men, and three defenceless women, who were planting in the field, killed their cattle and horses, and pillaged and destroyed every thing which came in their way.

When Miriam Grey recovered her recollection, she found herself lying in a canoe, filled with the Pequods, armed and frightfully painted,—and Rachel leaning over her, weeping bitterly, believing she would never revive. Miriam gently pressed her hand, but feeling her strength quite exhausted, closed her eyes, almost hoping she should not survive to endure a cruel captivity, and perhaps lingering death. But the sobs of the affectionate girl who hung round her neck, fearing she had indeed ceased to breathe, again aroused her, and by a painful effort, she exerted herself to sit upright, and speak a few words of comfort to her. The Indians shewed some pity for their distress; they gave them water to drink from a large clam shell, and refrained from binding them, satisfied they were perfectly secure. Miriam was sometimes inclined to draw encouragement from these favours; but when she looked round upon their fierce and savage countenances, and heard their discordant voices, her heart was chilled with apprehensions, and she felt convinced that a signal interference of Providence alone, could save them from the most dreadful fate. She learned from Rachel that they had been preserved from immediate death, by the intervention of a chief, whom they called Mononotto; but whatever had induced him to shew so much forbearance, the sternness of his countenance forbade her to expect much from his compassion.

The Indians who were engaged in this dreadful expedition amounted to about a hundred; they filled three bark canoes, and glided down the river with astonishing rapidity, lightly dancing over the waves which were scarcely parted by the slender keels. Before dark Miriam found they were approaching the mouth of the river, and she soon perceived the walls of fort Saybrook, and distinguished the motions of the guard, and their arms glittering in the sun-beams. She determined, if possible, to make some signal to the English, and her heart bounded with the hope that they would effect their rescue. But Mononotto and his savage warriors completely surrounded their captives, to hide them from observation, and so entirely excluded every object from their view, that they could not ascertain even when they passed the fort. The Indians, after a short consultation, which was succeeded by a dead silence, bore off rapidly to the opposite shore. The garrison at Saybrook closely observed their motions, and concluding they were bent on some work of mischief, Captain Mason ordered a heavy discharge of artillery. Though at a great distance, they aimed with such precision at the canoe where Mononotto stood erect before his prisoners, distinguished by his gaudy plumes and haughty mien, that the ball struck off the beak head: and for an instant it seemed on the

verge of sinking. Miriam had scarcely recovered from the shock, before the Indians by redoubling the strokes of their paddles arrived at the opposite shore, and hastening from their canoes they drew the frail vessels over a narrow beach, and launched them on the waters of the sound. The guns of the fort could no longer reach them, and with one consent they uttered a shout of defiance, which reached the ears of the garrison, who, with regret and mortification, discovered the English maidens, when it was too late to attempt their deliverance.

The Indians rowed incessantly till nearly midnight, probably apprehensive of pursuit, and without any refreshment, except a little parched corn, which they carried in a leather pouch. They occasionally mixed some of it, powdered, with water, for drink, and always offered a portion to their captives, but they felt no inclination to taste it. Poor Rachel at length fell asleep on Miriam's lap, who almost envied the repose which a keen sense of misery prevented her enjoying, and which continued undisturbed till they entered the Pequod harbour. The inhabitants of the Indian village were soon roused from their slumbers, and in the clear moonlight, Miriam perceived a multitude of every age and sex approaching the shore, eager to welcome the returning warriors. She shrunk trembling from the gaze of savage curiosity, and gently awoke her sleeping companion, who had till then remained insensible to what was passing around her. The child startled from a sweet slumber, and at first unable to comprehend her situation, began to weep from alarm, which seemed extremely diverting to the Indians, who laughed at her distress, and attempted to mimic her voice and gestures. Miriam was endeavouring to console her, when Cushminaw, the adopted son of Mononotto, stepped forward from the crowd with an air of authority and displeasure which checked their savage mirth, and approaching the captives, said to them—

“Be comforted, young maidens; follow me to my mother's wigwam.”

Miriam started almost with a cry of joy, on hearing her native language in such a place; and reading a compassionate interest in the countenance of the young Indian, unhesitatingly prepared to follow him. Mononotto, who had been absent from the spot, at that moment re-appeared, and addressed a few words to Cushminaw; he listened to him with profound respect, and then turning again to Miriam and Rachel, silently motioned them to proceed with him. The wigwam of Mononotto had been recently erected, and stood remote from the village; as they approached it, Miriam observed through the open entrance a female busied over a large fire, in some culinary preparation. She started with surprise, as her unexpected guests entered the apartment, and stood a moment surveying them attentively, and with an air of gentleness and pity, rather than of curiosity.

Miriam on her part regarded the Indian female with involuntary admiration. She had scarcely passed the season of youth, and her mature and noble figure, at once dignified and graceful, possessed that vigour and elasticity so peculiar to the natives of the forest; while her regular features, her soft and intelligent countenance, expressed a mind susceptible of elevated sentiments, and a heart warmed by the gentlest affections of her sex.

Cushminaw cautiously drew a mat over the aperture through which they entered, and advancing close to his adopted mother, with very earnest gesticulation, entered into conversation with her. When they had finished speaking, the wife of Mononotto approached the captives, and taking a hand of each in her own, she said,—

“Do not fear, white daughters, Mioma will care for you; she will speak to Mononotto that no harm come nigh you.”

Miriam, encouraged by the voice of kindness, clasped her hands energetically, and replied in a tone of entreaty—

“If you have pity for us, entreat that we may be sent back to our home and friends.”

“We will speak for you,” said Cushminaw; “it may be my father will listen to our voice.”

Grateful for this unexpected favour, Miriam attempted to reply, but her spirits were weakened by fatigue and misery, and for the first time during that anxious day of captivity, her tears flowed abundantly, and prevented her utterance. Mioma seemed grieved by her distress; she spread a soft new mat, gently urged her to sit down, and when she began to smile through her tears, expressed her delight by patting her cheeks, and stroking the hair from her forehead; and appeared greatly to admire her beauty.

Cushminaw soon after left the wigwam, and Mioma perceiving her captives were faint for want of nourishment, hastened to set before them a portion of the mess she had been preparing. It consisted of corn, coarsely broken and boiled with fish, dressed without salt, of which the Indians were entirely ignorant. This unsavory repast was served up in an earthen pitkin, with no instruments for eating but the hands, and was altogether so repugnant to their appetites, that they could with difficulty swallow a few kernels of corn to satisfy the calls of nature. Mioma in the mean time busied herself in arranging an apartment for her guests; for though a wigwam seldom contained more than one room for the accommodation of a whole family, she knew it was not agreeable to the customs of the white people, and a native delicacy taught her to consult the feelings of those who were cast on her hospitality. Her simple arrangements were soon completed; and exhausted by the events of the day, Miriam and Rachel threw themselves on the thick mats which were spread on the ground, and covered with the skins of wild animals soon fell into a profound repose.

It was late when they awoke on the following morning; and as Miriam looked round the singular apartment, and with painful sensations recalled the circumstances, which had brought her there, a mat was slowly drawn aside, and the merry face of an Indian child thrust through the aperture. As soon as it caught Miriam’s eye, it hastily retreated, but presently re-appeared with another, and they continued their sportive gambols, till called away by the voice of their mother. Miriam trembled at the idea of encountering the haughty Mononotto; but after listening attentively, and hearing only the children, and Mioma, singing to her *pappoose*, she ventured to leave her room, and join them. Rachel, refreshed by sleep, almost forgot her late alarms; and too young to realize the perils of her situation, with the simplicity of her happy age, she believed herself perfectly secure while in the presence of Miriam. Mioma, received them kindly, and set before them a repast similar to that of the preceding evening, with the addition of a cake of pounded corn, dried by the fire, which they found rather more palatable. She spoke English imperfectly, but endeavoured to encourage them with the hopes of release, and to assure them they were in no immediate danger.

Several days passed away, without any important occurrence; Mononotto spent most of his time in hunting and fishing; and when in the wigwam, never intruded upon his prisoners, if they were inclined to remain in their own apartment. He was satisfied

that they were safe, under the charge of Mioma, who would not suffer them to escape, and seemed willing to allow them every indulgence in his power. The miseries of captivity were mitigated by this lenient treatment; but to Miriam, time wore tediously away, and days were wearisome as ages. Fears for her personal safety were absorbed in anxiety for her friends; the grief of her father, of Lois, of Atherton, were continually present to her imagination, preyed upon her spirits, and at times reduced her to the verge of sickness. Mioma, was unwearied in her attentions, and endeavoured by every means to render her situation comfortable; and in gratitude for her kindness, Miriam often assumed an air of cheerfulness, which was foreign to her feelings.

About a week after the captivity of Miriam and her companion, a Dutch vessel was seen coasting off the Pequod harbour. The Indians could not omit the opportunity of shewing their hatred to the white people, and sent out several canoes to attack them; the affray ended in the capture of Cushminaw, and many other brave young warriors of his tribe, beside several killed and severely wounded. Nothing could exceed the rage of the savages, on this occasion; and with one voice, they called upon Mononotto to sacrifice the English maidens to their revenge. Mioma had become exceedingly attached to them, and even the stern disposition of her husband was softened into pity for their youth and misfortunes. She was also unwilling to condemn them, from an apprehension that the Dutch would retaliate on their prisoners, and particularly on Cushminaw, whom he loved with the tenderness of a father. While perplexed in what manner to decide, or how to evade the requisition, a council of the nation was called, at which Mononotto was summoned to appear. He well knew the imperious Sassacus would demand the blood of his captives, and was determined to exact his submission; for without his consent, he dared not execute his cruel design, as Mononotto rightly claimed them for his lawful prize, and, of course, held their lives at his own disposal.

On that eventful night, Miriam, ignorant of what was passing in the fort of Sassacus, remarked that the countenance of Mioma was unusually sad;—she seemed agitated, often looked out at the door, and started at the slightest noise. Rachel had retired early to bed; and Miriam, left alone with Mioma, endeavoured to draw from her the cause of her inquietude; but she evaded her questions, and attributed her uneasiness to solicitude for the fate of Cushminaw. Late in the evening, Mononotto returned to the wigwam; he entered with hurried steps, and his features still wore the trace of stormy passions, which had recently agitated them. He started on seeing Miriam, then rapidly crossed the apartment, and stood for a moment, regarding her with mingled sorrow and compassion. Miriam always trembled at his presence; but she now interpreted his singular emotion as a death-warrant; and would have entreated Mioma to speak with him; but could not articulate a word. Mioma sprang from the mat, on which she was reclining, and seizing the Sachem's arm, addressed him in her own language, with the most impassioned energy. His answer was slow and emphatic. Mioma threw herself at his feet; she clasped his knees, tore the hair from her head, and, by the most violent expressions of grief, seemed endeavouring to shake his resolution. The countenance of Mononotto remained inflexible, and he pushed her, almost with violence from him. Mioma rose from the ground, with an air of commanding dignity; she pressed her hands on her bosom, and fixing her moistened eyes sorrowfully on her husband's face, spoke to him long, with a voice of the most persuasive tenderness. The features of Mononotto gradually relaxed; Mioma saw and pursued her advantage. Suddenly her gestures became more animated,

her utterance more rapid and vehement; she pointed frequently to Miriam, and to her children, and at length, with the mute eloquence of nature, threw herself weeping into her husband's arms. The Sachem gently disengaged himself, and standing proudly erect, laid his hand solemnly on his heart, and replied in a few brief but energetic words. Mioma uttered a joyful cry, and springing to Miriam, folded her in her arms, exclaiming—

“You are safe, my daughter, Mononotto has promised that no harm shall come to you!”

Miriam embraced her preserver, again and again, with tears of heart-felt gratitude, and emotions too profound for utterance. She turned to Mononotto,—every thing but his recent kindness was forgotten,—and, kneeling at his feet, she bathed his hands with her tears. The stern countenance of the warrior was for an instant softened by tenderness; he raised her mildly from the ground, and led her back to the arms of Mioma; but ashamed of a weakness which is considered contemptible by his nation, he hastily turned away, and silently retired from the wigwam.

Mononotto, from that hour, faithfully kept his promise, and resolutely protected his captives from the malice of his countrymen. He was too powerful and fearless to dread the wrath, even of the inflexible Sassacus; and, on his part, the savage monarch dared not irritate his haughty Sachem, particularly at a moment when he might be tempted to revolt to the neighbouring Indians, who had entered into alliance with the English.

Soon after these events, Mononotto went on a hostile expedition to the Mohegan country, and the disconsolate wife of Cushminaw removed to his mother's wigwam. Mioma's attachment to her prisoners daily strengthened, and in return, they regarded her with the most grateful affection. She placed no restraint on their inclinations, believing escape impossible; and, indeed, a dread of meeting the savages confined them entirely to the immediate vicinity of their dwelling. Mioma also assured them, it was the intention of Mononotto to send them back to their friends, so soon as an opportunity occurred of procuring Cushminaw in exchange. Sustained by this hope, Miriam became more cheerful and contented than she had conceived it possible to be at the commencement of her captivity; and to employ her many leisure moments, she acquired the art of weaving small baskets, and embroidering moccasins with porcupines' quills. The young squaw of Cushminaw was her almost constant companion; and her affectionate disposition, the simplicity and gentleness of her untutored mind, interested Miriam extremely. She had acquired a little English from her husband, and could speak it more intelligibly than Mioma, who was, besides, much engrossed by her household cares, and the labour of planting. The indolent savages kept their women constantly engaged in the fields, during the season of tillage; for they consider such occupations beneath their own attention, and often derided the English for spoiling, by indulgence, *creatures* who were formed for work, and capable of rendering themselves so useful.

Nearly three weeks passed away, without interruption, when the Dutch vessel arrived in the dominions of Sassacus, and the captives were soon informed that a treaty was opened for their redemption. With feelings agitated by suspense and hope Miriam Grey, listened to every rumour respecting the negotiation; and it was to gratify her with particular information that the wife of Cushminaw mingled with the women who surrounded Atherton, on the day he was received as an hostage. She was, however, so closely watched by the Indians, who knew her attachment to the English maidens, and

suspected she intended to convey intelligence of them, that she found it impossible to enter into conversation with him. But she had taken vigilant observation; and Miriam, with a bounding heart, fancied she identified the person of Major Atherton in her imperfect description; for she was well assured he would shun no dangers to effect her rescue, if a knowledge of her situation had by any means reached him. Her suspicions were confirmed by the pen-knife he gave the squaw, on which the initials of his name were engraved, and she felt confident of having frequently seen it in his possession at Plymouth. However gratifying this renewed proof of his affection, every other feeling yielded to alarm for his safety; and destitute of proper materials, she wrote on a strip of bark, with the point of the pen-knife, the hasty lines which the young Indian conveyed to him. She little suspected that he was still acting upon uncertainty, and that a vague apprehension that dangers lurked around her, had alone led him to those savage shores.

The remainder of that day and the following Miriam passed in a state of continual agitation. She could not expect to see Atherton, nor did she wish it under such circumstances; but still, in despite of reason, her cheek was flushed by every approaching footstep, and she felt involuntary sadness and disappointment, when she looked round, and *he* did not appear. The thought that he was so near her, and she could not obtain one moment's interview, was a trial of no ordinary severity. She heard without surprise, that Sassacus had rejected the offers of the Dutch, and insisted on the sacrifice of Mononotto's captives. He deceived Van Haarman by asserting that the Sachem had returned, and yielded to his wishes; he was still absent, though momentarily expected, and Miriam believed the savages would not dare proceed to extremities without his sanction. The evening of the second day arrived; Mononotto had not come back, and she heard, with trembling, that a council of warriors was again convened in the fort of Sassacus. Mioma assumed a cheerful air, and endeavoured to encourage her; but the effort was ineffectual, and Miriam read in her countenance a confirmation of her worst fears. The wife of Mononotto evidently feared the result of that night's deliberation; and Miriam felt as if the last hope of life was gliding from her, at the very moment of anticipated freedom. Unwilling to damp the happiness of Rachel, by imparting her fears, and too much depressed to witness a joy, which might so soon be turned into mourning; she withdrew from the wigwam, to commune with her own thoughts in the favourite haunt of a solitary grove; where she was soon after surprised by the unexpected appearance of Major Atherton

## CHAP. IX.

The fatal feast was o'er:  
And to his doom the pinion'd captive led.  
\* \* \* \* \*

One brief interval  
Of anguish'd thought convuls'd the sufferer's mind:  
That all his honours, all his high designs,  
All his ambition's concentrated hopes  
Must end by savage hands.

### TRAITS OF THE ABORIGINES OF AMERICA.

When Miriam Grey was torn from the arms of Major Atherton, at the moment they were so unfortunately discovered in attempting to escape, with the energy of despair she endeavoured to free herself from the Indian's grasp, and in a voice of agony, called repeatedly and loudly upon his name. But her efforts were powerless, and her cries were drowned by the shouts of the savages, who hurried Atherton onward towards the fort, which was visible by the decaying watch-fires. Miriam felt that her cup of misery was full; but even in that fearful moment, every personal danger was disregarded, and the dreadful conviction that her lover must fall a sacrifice to his generous, but rash exertions to save her, alone possessed her imagination, and filled her with anguish and alarm. With the meekness of an habitually pious and submissive spirit, she lifted up her heart in prayer to Heaven, for its interposing mercy on his behalf, and for grace to support her own misfortunes with fortitude and resignation. Exhausted by excessive fatigue and excitement, she soon sunk into a state almost of insensibility, from which she was aroused, even by the loud lamentations of the affrighted Rachel, who was borne along in the arms of a savage warrior.

In this situation, Miriam was placed on a litter, hastily formed of the branches of trees; and the small band which was left to guard her, proceeded with quick but noiseless footsteps, along the borders of the forest. Suddenly the silence was interrupted by the loud barking of a dog; and Miriam was started from her lethargy, by the animal's springing upon her, whining and licking her hands with every mark of affectionate recognition. She instantly remembered the dumb favourite, and constant attendant of Mononotto, which has often received her caresses in the wigwam of his master; and raising herself to return his salutation, she perceived the lofty figure of the Sachem, approaching with his train of followers, and in a moment, his well remembered voice sounded in her ears like the sweet music of returning hope. The Indians stopped immediately on seeing him; and Miriam, as soon as she found him near her, sprang from the litter, and throwing herself before him, in an attitude of supplication, exclaimed—

“Save him, I entreat you,—fly—they have led him away to death.”

Mononotto started at the unexpected vision;—he but imperfectly comprehended her meaning, and believing she was entreating for her own safety, he raised her from the ground, and endeavoured to pronounce a few words of comfort. The image of Atherton was alone present to the mind of Miriam, and clasping her hands, with energy she continued—

“I fear nothing for myself; rescue *him* who has sought out danger and death for my sake, and I will not shrink from any sufferings you can inflict on me.”

In the agitation of her feelings, she forgot that the Sachem was ignorant of her language; he regarded her in silence and with perplexity; then gently placed her in the litter, and turning to his people, addressed to them a long harangue, enforced by many emphatic gestures, and often interrupted by their replies. When he had finished, they all proceeded towards his wigwam, and in a few moments stopped before the humble portal. Mioma, attracted by the noise, hastened to draw aside the mat which covered the entrance, and with mingled joy and apprehension, perceived her husband supporting the two English maidens. She had heard that their flight was intercepted, and ignorant of Mononotto's return, feared her incensed countrymen would at once sacrifice them to their fury.

Major Atherton was unfortunately seen, in his attempt to escape with the captives, by an Indian, who chanced to be roving in the forest, and who carefully concealing himself from them, hastened to alarm the assembled warriors. Mononotto returned from his incursion on the Mohegans, soon after the fort was deserted, in the general pursuit after the fugitives. He heard a few contradictory reports from those whom he chanced to meet, but was ignorant of the real truth, and of Atherton's capture till he encountered Miriam and her guard in the forest. With haughty displeasure he learned that Sassacus and his warriors had presumed to pass judgment on his prisoners, and to refuse the offers of the Dutch to ransom them. Resolute in his determination to exchange them for Cushminaw and his fellow prisoners, he again left Miriam and Rachel in the charge of Mioma—whom he severely reprimanded for her heedlessness in permitting them to escape—and returned to the fort of Sassacus to demand his right, and the acquiescence of the people.

Mioma remarked with concern, the pale cheek and extreme dejection of Miriam, and naturally attributing it to her late fatigue and disappointment, with the solicitude of a fond mother, she hastened to spread the softest skins, and invite her to repose and refreshment. Miriam gladly withdrew, even from the eye of anxious affection, and with a sigh of heart-felt misery returned to the apartment she had so long occupied, and which till now had been often cheered by visions of hope and future happiness. In a few minutes Rachel was sunk in profound repose; and as Miriam stooped down to kiss away the tears which still trembled on her eyelids, she almost envied the innocent thoughtlessness of her unreflecting childhood. In vain she courted the sweet influence of sleep. Atherton perpetually haunted her imagination—he seemed to reproach her as the author of his misfortunes, and dreadful images of torture and death floated before her eyes with the appalling vividness of reality. It was not until the morning sun had pierced the leafy covert of the sylvan dwelling, that a disturbed and feverish slumber stole over her senses, from which she was soon awaked by the soft voice of Mioma, who bent over her with a countenance brightened by joy, though a starting tear proclaimed that her pleasure was not without alloy.

“Arise, my daughters,” she said, “our light canoes are launched on the blue stream, and Mononotto waits to conduct thee to thy kindred.”

Miriam sprang from her lowly couch, and pressing her hands on her forehead, endeavoured to connect the scattered and confused recollection of recent events, while the restless wandering of her eyes, and the unnatural brilliancy of her complexion,

betrayed her anxiety and mental suffering. Mioma took the hands of the captive maidens kindly within her own, and resumed in an unsteady voice—

“Go, my children, return to the abodes of the white man, but forget not the poor Mioma, who loved you, and cherished you in her bosom.”

“Forget you, my friend, my preserver!” exclaimed Miriam, with impassioned energy, and twining her arms around Mioma’s neck,—“oh, never shall I cease to remember you with grateful affection, and to supplicate Heaven for a blessing on you and yours.”

The voice of Mononotto was at that moment heard approaching them; and Mioma disengaging herself from the embrace of Miriam, with the grave dignity which usually characterised her, retired to receive his commands. Miriam followed her with hasty steps, and grasping the arm of Mononotto, she looked earnestly in his face, and entreated Mioma to express to him, her gratitude for his kindness, and to learn the situation of Atherton, and what destiny awaited him. The Sachem briefly answered; and Mioma taking the words from his lips, drew the agitated girl towards her, and said—

“He is safe, my daughter; ask me no more, but prepare to go, while the breeze is up, and ready to waft thee over the sparkling waves.”

The disturbed expression of Mioma’s countenance contradicted her assertion, and redoubled the anxious fears of Miriam.

“*Safe!*” she repeated with a wild laugh, “*safe!* and a prisoner in the midst of his enemies! oh, if you have pity on me, restore him to liberty, and suffer me to die in his stead,—me, for whose sake he is involved in danger and distress. Yes, I will go to him,” she added in a calmer tone, “at least we will die together!”

She was rushing from the wigwam, when Mononotto arrested her steps, and firmly detained her, while he addressed Mioma with extreme earnestness. Mioma again interpreted his language.

“Young maiden,” she said, “what would’st thou do? Listen to the words of Mononotto. I have snatched you from the flames, I have sheltered you under my roof, and nourished you with my own food. Thou knowest that I have a son, whom I adopted in the hour of strife, and he is dear to me as my own flesh; wilt thou leave him to perish by the hands of his enemies, to avenge thy blood which I have refrained from shedding?”

“No, never, never will I repay your benefits with such ingratitude,” said Miriam; “for your sake I will endure life, though every future moment should be embittered with sorrow.”

She instantly prepared to obey the wishes of Mononotto, and clinging to the last and uncertain hope, that the Dutch might still be enabled to offer some acceptable ransom for the life of Atherton, she became restlessly impatient for the moment of her departure. The Sachem had all things in readiness; and with tears and embraces, the wife of Cushminaw parted from the English maidens, whom she regarded as the deliverers of her husband. But Mioma remarked with pity the languor and debility of Miriam,—the surprising change which a few hours of severe mental suffering had produced in her countenance; and with an affectionate solicitude which could not be denied, she insisted on accompanying her to the Dutch vessel. In a few moments they reached the bank of the river; a bark canoe was loosed from its moorings, and Mononotto, with two or three sturdy Indians, paddled them swiftly from the shore. Sick at heart, Miriam turned her eyes to the spot where she had been separated from Atherton, at the dreadful moment of

discovery; and casting one wistful look towards the distant fort, she leaned her head on Mioma's shoulder, and covered her face to exclude every object from her view—for every object was associated with the most painful recollections.

Van Haarman was waiting on the deck of his sloop to receive the liberated captives, and with an air of cordial good will. He congratulated them on their restoration to freedom. Observing they were embarrassed by the gaze of curiosity, he conducted them to a small cabin he had prepared for them, whither they were attended by Mioma; and Van Haarman returned to the deck, and according to his stipulation, restored Cushminaw and five of the Pequods to the Sachem Mononotto.

Major Atherton in the mean time was rigorously guarded by the savages, who, with inhuman barbarity, triumphed over his misery, mocking him with taunts and menaces, and imitating the groans which they had sometimes extorted from their English prisoners. They had closely pinioned his arms, and bound him to a stake in the midst of the fort, in a position which admitted neither of rest nor change. In this painful situation he was condemned to pass the night surrounded by his vindictive enemies, whose disfigured countenances glared upon him like demons illumined as they were by the fitful fires which they kept burning, to prevent the possibility of surprise or escape. Atherton did not for an instant cherish any chimerical hopes of life. From the moment that he found himself in the power of the Indians, he considered death inevitable and determined to meet it with the courage of a Christian and a soldier. Yet in the mist of sufferings which had surprised him in the glow of hope and expected happiness, and in the prospect of tortures from which nature recoiled, the uncertainty of Miriam's fate, and the reflection that her death might be accelerated by his rashness, gave him far keener anguish than the most refined cruelties of his tormentors were able to inflict.

The night, which seemed almost endless to him, at length passed away, and late in the morning the Sachem Mononotto entered the fort. The countenance of the warrior was stern, and he regarded the prisoner with gloomy satisfaction. More accessible to pity than most of his ferocious tribe, he was moved by the innocence and tears of his young captives; and affection for his adopted son induced him to persist in procuring their release. But neither the liberal offers of Van Haarman, nor his earnest entreaties, joined with those of Cushminaw, could prevail on him or any of the savage warriors to accept a ransom for Major Atherton. His apparent rank and youthful vigour rendered him a victim of uncommon value, and the moment of sacrifice was anticipated with inhuman triumph.

As Atherton sustained the haughty gaze of Mononotto with dignified composure, Cushminaw entered with a train of Indians, who had gathered around him to express their joy at his release. He was not permitted to address the prisoner, but stood at a little distance, looking at him with an earnest and sorrowful expression. Atherton's features brightened with momentary joy at his appearance, and the young Indian, comprehending his feelings, a moment after passed near him, and said in a low voice, "They are safe," and immediately left the fort. Atherton felt relieved of an insupportable load by this assurance; for he was at no loss to conjecture to whom Cushminaw alluded; and indeed his freedom alone was a sufficient proof that Miriam and her companion were in safety. He had soon after another instance of his grateful interest; for in consequence of his intercession with Mononotto, the cords which bound him were loosened, and he was offered some water to allay his feverish thirst. Thankful for these favours, which were seldom granted to their prisoners, and exhausted by weariness and pain, he scarcely felt

the relief of his new position before he sunk into a quiet slumber, too profound to be disturbed even by the dreadful preparations which were sounding around him.

The Indians perceived the Dutch vessel still lying at anchor in the river, and with malignant satisfaction they determined to sacrifice their captive within the view of his white brethren. About sunset, the shouts of the multitude who began to assemble, proclaimed that the appointed hour was arrived. Several fires were kindled along the shore, and on a slight eminence beyond the fort, a large stake driven into the ground, designated the place of execution. Major Atherton was conducted from the fortress by a numerous and ferocious guard; he walked with a firm and manly step; his countenance was serene, and the spirit of Christian hope and resignation evidently supported him in that trying hour. Once only, when they had bound him to the fatal stake, he cast a lingering look towards the vessel, which contained the only being perhaps who would weep for his untimely fate; and for an instant his lip quivered, and a deep flush overspread his pale features. It slowly passed away—he raised his eyes to Heaven, and every earthly passion seemed for ever subdued.

The savages then entirely covered their victim with bark, using the most insulting gestures and menaces, which their deadly hatred could invent. Previous to lighting the pile, they formed an immense circle around him, and, with discordant yells, both sexes indiscriminately joined in performing the horrid war-dance. As soon as this infernal rite was completed, a torch was applied to the combustible materials which surrounded the unfortunate Atherton, and instantly the smoke began to mount and wreath around him. Nothing could exceed the horror of the spectacle. Atherton was no longer visible through the clouds of smoke which enveloped him; for to render his death more painful and lingering, they had selected green materials, which long resisted the violence of the flames. The savages still encircled him; a demoniac joy, and vindictive fury was painted on their features, and their dreadful shouts of exultation were mingled with the appalling sounds of the war-whoop.

At that fearful moment, a report of fire-arms was heard, and a shower of musket-balls poured upon the astonished group. A party of white men, sword in hand, rushed from an adjoining thicket, and with determined courage, plunged through the circle to the rescue of the prisoner. Cushminaw recognized Van Haarman in their gallant leader, and with a joyful cry, he sprung forward and severed the cords, which confined Atherton to the stake. Atherton, like one risen from the dead, leaped from the burning pile unharmed, though blackened with smoke; and snatching his own sword from the hand of a bewildered chief, joined in the defence of his brave liberators.

The Pequods, thrown into consternation by this sudden attack, knew not how to conduct, or in what way to defend themselves. They had partaken freely of the ardent spirits which Van Haarman had purposely sent to them, on the return of Cushminaw, and their inebriation added greatly to the confusion of the scene. Stupified by terror and surprise, they greatly overrated the numbers of the Dutch: many fled precipitately, and all seemed incapable of offering the least resistance. Van Haarman took advantage of their condition, and immediately ordered a retreat, which was effected in good order and without the loss of a single man. They heard at a distance the shouts of the Indians, who began to rally, but dared not pursue them; and a light of arrows, which they discharged, fell harmless among the trees of the forest.

The emotions of Major Atherton were indiscribable. Recalled to life from the borders of the grave, the first offerings of his heart were directed to that good Being, whose arm had encircled him, and led him back from the dark valley of death. As they glided over the peaceful waters, he remained absorbed in mental devotion and thanksgiving. Not a voice disturbed the profound silence; the dashing of the oars, and ripple of the waves, were the only sounds which broke upon the stillness of the night. It was not till he had gained the deck of the sloop, that Atherton's thoughts were completely recalled to earth. With a swelling heart, he regarded the little band who had just ventured their lives upon a doubtful and dangerous enterprise in the cause of humanity; and he deeply felt that language was inadequate to express the obligations they had imposed on him. Silently, but with a countenance more eloquent than words, he pressed the hand of each as they crowded around him; and even with tears of gratitude, embraced the generous and disinterested Van Haarman.

"You have need of repose," said Van Haarman, leading him aside; "but first there is one who must be convinced with her own eyes, that you are in safety."

As he spoke, they descended a few steps, and knocked softly at the door of the cabin which was occupied by Miriam Grey; and with a throbbing pulse, Atherton heard the quick motion of her light step within. Van Haarman disengaged his arm from Atherton's and hastily withdrew, unwilling to intrude upon their interview, under circumstances so peculiar and affecting. He immediately ordered the sails to be set, and weighing anchor, they sailed with a fair wind from the unfriendly shores of the Pequods.

Van Haarman had waited with extreme anxiety for the return of Major Atherton, on the preceding evening; and when he saw the dastardly Dutchman approaching alone in the boat, his fears and predictions seemed at once fatally confirmed. From the unwilling confession of the man, he detected his cowardice, and in the excess of his anger and disappointment ordered him to be put in irons for the punishment of his treachery. From that moment, his thoughts were unremittingly bent in devising some means of rescuing his friend from the dreadful fate which awaited him.

Most unexpectedly, Mononotto, on the following morning, restored the captive maidens, and demanded Cushminaw, and five of the Pequod warriors for their ransom, agreeable to the offers of the Dutch. But the endeavours of Van Haarman to include Atherton in the stipulation, were ineffectual, and the Sachem haughtily rejected the most liberal offers for his freedom. The grief and despair of Miriam Grey at times deprived her entirely of reason; again she would remain long in a state of death-like insensibility; and in her calmer interval, she supplicated Van Haarman with tears, which could not be resisted, to save her lover, or suffer her to go and perish with him. Affected by her distress and led on by a daring spirit, as well as a real interest for his friend, he resolved at all events to hazard a bold and decisive attempt to rescue him. With little difficulty he inspired a few of his bravest men with a portion of his enthusiasm, and engaged them to assist him in the perilous adventure.

With a vigilant eye, Van Haarman watched the transactions of the Indians on shore during the day, and the moment their fires were lighted, he prepared to prosecute his design. His vessel was put in readiness to sail at an instant's warning; and when he saw the Indians forming a circle round Atherton, he removed down the river beyond the light of their flames. He reached the shore in a boat with his men; and landing in the shelter of a grove, they proceeded cautiously along, directed by the blaze, which glanced

brightly through the branches of the trees. Van Haarman had placed much reliance on the intoxicating liquor which he had presented to Mononotto in the morning, and rightly judged would be reserved for the evening feast. At the auspicious moment when their senses were deranged by liberal potations, and they believed themselves secure in their savage mirth, he rushed upon them with his intrepid band, in the manner already related.

## CHAP. X.

Farewell, 'tis exquisite to part  
For oh, thou weep'st at parting.

MILMAN.

Early on the next morning, the Dutch vessel anchored beneath the walls of fort Saybrook, and Major Atherton was awakened by the drums of the garrison, beating the reveille. His drowsiness was at once dispelled, and he hastened on deck with an elastic step, and free and buoyant spirits. The familiar and exhilarating sounds of martial music, the glitter of polished arms, and the ancient banner of his country unfurled from the ramparts, burst gaily on his ear and eye. As he inhaled the fragrance of the dewy air, and looked round upon the wider landscape,—the distant hills silvered by the transparent vapours, which curled around their brows,—the beautiful sweep of woodlands, and the luxuriant meadows,—all glowing in the brilliancy of the morning sun;—his mind was filled with almost rapturous delight, and contrasting his present feelings, with those of the preceding day, his heart swelled with gratitude, and he thought the face of nature had never worn so lovely an aspect, nor the pulse of existence bounded with such pure and joyous emotions.

But his happy reverie was soon interrupted by the bustle which prevailed on board the sloop, and hurrying below with impatient steps he passed and repassed the door of Miriam's cabin, half inclined to chide her, that her ear was so inattentive to the footsteps of love. Hearing no sound within, he at length gently rapped, and the door was half opened by the smiling Rachel, who begged him to make no noise, as Miriam was not yet awake. He was much disposed to disregard her; but Van Haarman at the moment, came to inform him he was waiting to go on shore, and Atherton felt obliged to accompany him, though he more than once turned to look back, as he fancied he heard the sweet tones of Miriam's voice.

They were received with the utmost politeness by Lieutenant Gardiner, the commanding officer; and Captain Underhill, who had arrived at Saybrook two or three weeks before with twenty men to relieve the garrison. Captain Underhill immediately recognized Major Atherton, whom he had known at Boston and expected to have found at Saybrook. His unaccountable disappearance, at the moment he had voluntarily embarked in so important an undertaking, had occasioned much conjecture, and no small anxiety, to those who were personally interested in him. The mystery was soon explained to the entire satisfaction of all concerned; and having delivered his credentials to Lieutenant Gardiner, his proffered services were gladly accepted by him, on the behalf of the Connecticut colonies.

The officers, with that respectful gallantry which always accompanies true bravery, were solicitous to prepare suitable accommodations for Miriam and her young companion, and to render their temporary residence at the fort agreeable. Atherton's extreme anxiety for their safety induced him to urge a speedy removal to their friends; as the critical state of the country, the danger of an attack from the Indians, and the embarrassing situation of two young and unprotected females in the midst of a garrison, must render their abode there, perilous and unpleasant. He knew not how soon he should

be called away, and the idea of leaving Miriam in that place, and under such circumstances, was not to be endured. A pinnace from the river towns had put in at Saybrook on the preceding day, and was only waiting for a favourable wind to proceed to Massachusetts. It offered few conveniences which the occasion required, but Atherton thought it would be better for them to proceed directly in it, than run the chance of another opportunity, which was not likely soon to occur, and might not be more advantageous. It was impossible for the garrison, at that critical time, to fit out a vessel for their accommodation; and though Van Haarman would gladly have carried them through the voyage, he did not feel authorised to exceed his instructions, which were to deliver them to the English at Saybrook. He, however, promised to escort them through the waters of the Sound, when they would be beyond the territories of the Pequod Indians, and the danger of any hostile attack. The master of the pinnace was well known to several persons in the fort, and sustained an excellent character. Atherton, therefore, felt no hesitation in placing the object of his solicitude, under such protection; and he received a ready promise to bestow on them every possible attention, and to leave them, with the friends of Miriam, at Plymouth. Atherton learned from him, that Mrs. Weldon had entirely recovered from her illness, though still in deep affliction for the supposed loss of Miriam, which was generally considered inevitable. She then enjoyed the solace of her husband's society, who had returned to Hartford with Captain Mason, immediately on the arrival of Captain Underhill at Saybrook.

Major Atherton hastened to impart this intelligence to Miriam, and to consult her on his proposed arrangements. While yet conversing, they were joined by Van Haarman; and Mr. Winthrop, the founder of the fort and settlement of Saybrook, and afterwards, for many years, a useful and distinguished governor of the Connecticut colonies. He was a young man of superior abilities, which were greatly improved by travelling, and an extensive acquaintance with letters and mankind. With the benevolence and urbanity, which characterised his father, he also imbibed a firm predilection of puritanical doctrines; and though esteemed one of the most accomplished gentlemen, and elegant scholars of the age, he was content to sacrifice the honours and preferments, which courted him in his native land, to plant, what he considered, the true faith, in the rigid soil of New England.

The objects of his visit was to request Miriam and Rachel, to remove to his house, which was pleasantly situated within the impalement; and where he promised them perfect retirement, and the attentive care of a respectable female, who superintended his household. Miriam cheerfully acceded to his request, for her spirits were languid and her strength debilitated by suffering and fatigue, and she gladly exchanged the confinement and confusion of the sloop, for an agreeable and quiet situation.

Mr. Winthrop invited Atherton, Van Haarman, and the officers of the garrison, to dine with him, on that day; but Miriam declined appearing at table, from a natural aversion to encounter the gaze of strangers, under circumstances which excited so much curiosity. Atherton's feelings were much gratified by her reserve; but it disappointed the guests, in general; for they had heard high encomiums on her beauty, and felt their interest strongly awakened by her adventures. As soon as the company began to disperse, Atherton requested permission to speak with Miriam; and Mr. Winthrop, with a significant smile, directed him to a room where he had parted from her in the morning. He found her sitting alone by a window, which opened in to the garden, where Rachel

was amusing herself with the gambols of a playful dog. As he entered hastily, he observed that she had been weeping; but her countenance instantly brightened with pleasure, as she rose with smile and a blush to receive him.

“These are tears of joy, I trust, dear Miriam,” said Atherton, looking earnestly in her face; “surely you have now no source of unhappiness to call them forth.”

“No, none,” replied Miriam, “I should be ungrateful to repine at any thing, almost in a moment when Providence has interposed to snatch me from a dreadful fate. But—” she added hesitatingly; and stopping abruptly, cast her eyes on the ground.

“But what?” asked Atherton, anxiously, “tell me, Miriam, if there is anything I can do to render you more happy, and you cannot doubt my zeal in your service.”

“There is nothing that I can wish for,” answered Miriam; “you have already done for me more than words can express; you have laid me under obligations which a life of devoted gratitude could never repay.”

“Nay, dear Miriam,” said Atherton, “one sunny smile, one glance of affection, has cancelled all, and more than all, that I could do or suffer for your sake. But I would learn the meaning of the hesitation, that untold something, which just now trembled on your lips;—surely, you, who are always so ingenuous, need not now use such reserve to me.”

“I have, perhaps, used too little towards you,” returned Miriam; “and, indeed, I fear you will think me weak and foolish, if I acknowledge that the thoughts of my intended voyage have power to depress my spirits for a moment.”

“On the contrary,” said Atherton, “I cannot sufficiently admire your cheerful acquiescence in the plan we have adopted for you; and which, though it seems the only one that can ensure your safety, under present circumstances, exposes you to so many inconveniences, that I cannot reflect on it without the utmost solicitude, nor too deeply regret that it is impossible for me to go with you, and protect you in the emergency.”

“I have no fears for myself,” replied Miriam; “I am a rugged daughter of New-England, unused to the gentle nurture of your English maidens, and from childhood accustomed to fatigue, and taught to meet the unavoidable evils of life without repining. But why should I blush to acknowledge it, Atherton? I tremble with apprehension at the thoughts of parting from *you*, of leaving *you* in this place of danger.”

“Dearest Miriam,” said Atherton, with a glow of grateful pleasure, “how can I thank you for this kind expression of interest! a sweet assurance of your affection, more precious to me than the wealth of kingdoms, and which I shall cherish as the delightful harbinger of a happy and more lasting re-union, when the gloomy, but, I trust, brief days of our separation have passed away.”

“It is not leaving you at which I repine,” said Miriam, with a faint smile; “at another time, I would, I ought to do it voluntarily without regret; but now I quit you on the eve of a fearful combat, with a powerful and barbarous enemy, whose very name is dreadful, and whose ‘tender mercies,’ you have already bitterly experienced, are ‘cruelty.’”

“Your fears for me, dear Miriam, are too grateful to my feelings, not to give me pleasure; but I trust they are wholly groundless; I feel a secret confidence, that He, who has once so mercifully delivered me from their hands will still be my shield and defence, and that He will give his people a signal victory over their heathenish foes.”

“May your words prove prophetic!” returned Miriam. “Atherton, forgive my womanish fears,” she added; “but I know your courage, and I am assured it will lead you

wherever dangers most thickly abound; remember, I entreat you, that your life is too valuable to be thrown away."

"If it is of value to you, Miriam, I shall be inclined to prize it but too highly; though I would not give you reason to blush for my cowardice."

"I must first," said Miriam, "forget your past services; I must first cease to remember, Atherton, the intrepid courage with which you have twice hazarded your life to preserve mine; and when I forget these things, then will 'my right hand forget its cunning.'"

"Dearest Miriam, name it not again, I beseech you; if you knew how much selfishness was mingled in my wishes to serve you,—how closely my happiness is interwoven with your own,—you would not think that I had made any uncommon efforts, that my trifling exertions were worthy to excite this excess of feeling;—so speak no more of it, or I shall fear that your interest for me is excited only by the cold impulse of gratitude, which would have expanded as generously towards any other object, even the most indifferent, to whom you felt indebted."

"Think so, Atherton, if you will, if you *can*; and it were better, perhaps, and far happier for us, if no other sentiments than those of kindness and gratitude had been suffered to take root and flourish in our hearts."

"No, it cannot be so, my own Miriam," said Atherton, with energy; "I feel assured that brighter days are in store for us, and that it will not always be a crime to indulge the pure and hallowed affections of the heart. In this hope, our parting must not be sad; this is no place for one so innocent and lovely, and I wait even impatiently for the moment of your departure; and may He, who rules the winds and waves, lead you in safety to the shelter of your father's roof, and the protection of his arms."

"Atherton, you are too sanguine," said Miriam; "but be it so; we will not increase the pain of the recent moment, by picturing gloomy images of the future, but submit patiently to that Providence, which directs every event in wisdom."

"You are right, my Miriam; and when the din of battle has ceased, I will return to you, and sue for the treasure of your affections with an eloquence which love shall dictate, and the heart of a father cannot resist."

"We may at least look forward with hope," said Miriam, blushing; "but it is a question which time alone can decide. I have now a request to make, which I am sure you will not deny me."

"I cannot refuse nothing that you ask," said Atherton; "you have only to speak, and if it is in my power you shall be obeyed."

"If," resumed Miriam, "the fortune of war should place the family of Mononotto at your disposal, will you for my sake treat them with that kindness which they showed to me during my captivity; and which I shall probably never have an opportunity of returning in the least degree?"

"Be assured," returned Atherton, "that every possible attention shall be bestowed on them which even your grateful solicitude could desire. And now, my dear Miriam; I have a simple boon to ask from you;—it is one of these silken tresses which I would wear as a precious charm when I can no longer be with you, except in the delusive dreams of fancy."

Miriam with a smile yielded to his wishes, and in compliance with his request had just bound the glossy ringlet around his arm, when their conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Winthrop and Van Haarman.

On the following morning the Dutch sloop took advantage of a favourable wind, and convoyed the Connecticut pinnace beyond the waters of the Sound. They had scarcely sailed out of sight before a fleet of three light vessels, containing ninety men, destined to act against the Pequods, approached the fort. Their appearance, which had been long expected, occasioned the utmost joy; they landed under a discharge of artillery, and were received with military honours by the garrison. This small army left Hartford in company with seventy Mohegan and river Indians who had united with their force, and were commanded by Uncas, grand Sachem of the Mohegans. But as the navigation of the river was much impeded by the unusual lowness of the water, the Indians became impatient of the restraints and delays, and begged permission to land and proceed on foot. This was granted them on condition of effecting a junction with the English at Saybrook: but strong doubts were entertained of their fidelity, which was seldom proof against interest, revenge, or any other passion of their savage hearts. On this occasion, however, they were true to their word; and the next day arrived at the fort, bringing intelligence that they had fallen in with a party of the enemy, completely routed them, and killed and wounded several of their number.

Captain Mason was appointed by the Colonies, commander-in-chief of the Connecticut forces and their Indian allies. He was an experienced soldier, and highly prized for his undaunted courage and profound knowledge of military tactics; with which he united virtues of a sincere Christian, and the deportment of a gentleman. He was at that time about thirty-five years old, tall and athletic, with commanding features, a frank and intelligent countenance, and a martial air and demeanor. In early life he had served in the Netherland wars under Sir Thomas Fairfax; and that celebrated general so highly valued his talents and conduct, that in after years, when the unhappy struggle arose between Charles the First and his parliament, he earnestly entreated Captain Mason to return and assist in the defence of his national rights. But the Captain was preferred to the highest offices of the Colony, and so firmly attached to his adopted country and the religion of the Puritans, that he could not be prevailed on to abandon them.

The army lay wind-bound at Saybrook for two days: and the time was almost entirely spent in consultations respecting the manner of proceeding, in which Captain Mason and his officers entirely disagreed. The Court had instructed them to proceed directly to the Pequod harbour; but for many reasons the Captain judged it expedient to sail first to the Narraganset country, and go from thence by land; he hoped by that means to surprise the enemy, who were expecting and lying in wait for them along the river. As they could not agree in opinion, it was finally left to the decision of Mr. Stone, who accompanied the troops as chaplain. He was desired to set apart a time for devotion suited to the occasion, to seek direction from the God of battles, and entreat his protection and aid in their perilous and important undertaking. Like the patriarch of old, he 'wrestled until the break of day' in prayer, and obtained a blessing. In the morning he informed Captain Mason that he was entirely satisfied with his plan, and believed it perfectly consonant to the will of Heaven. So great a deference at that time paid to the sacred office and character of the New-England clergy, that it was immediately determined in a counsel of officers to adopt the proposed measures, and sail without delay to the country

of the Narragansets.

## CHAP. XI.

Indulge, my native land! Indulge the tear,  
That steals impassion'd o'er a nation's doom;  
To me each twig, from Adam's stock is near,  
And sorrows fall upon an Indian's tomb.

DWIGHT.

In the twilight of a beautiful day about the middle of May, the little army of Connecticut, with their Indian allies, anchored in the noble Bay of Narraganset. The fruitful and finely variegated tract of country which has since received the name of Rhode-Island, and whose shores are washed by the waters of the Bay, was at that time inhabited by a hardy race of savages, scattered through the interior, and leading an erratic life of freedom and independence. This populous tribe could then send forth upwards of four thousand warriors to the field of battle, and was the only nation east of the Hudson, who had rendered themselves formidable to the ferocious Pequods. They were continually at war with them, and had hitherto successfully resisted their encroachments. Their fertile lands and salubrious climate had not allured the English planter to wrest from them the inheritance of nature; nor had the footsteps of art yet tracked the soil, and mingled her magic charms with the magnificence of its native scenery, except where the Providence plantation displayed her youthful settlement, crowning the head of the Bay, and like a sylvan deity decked with the offerings of rural industry.

There the celebrated Roger Williams had laid the foundation of a flourishing colony, and amidst the dominions of the savage found that refuge from persecution which he had vainly sought in the abodes of civilized man. The wild and untutored children of the forest regarded him as a father and a friend; and though defenceless and exposed, he held them in subjection and awe, by the mild ties of gratitude and affection. His influence was uniformly exerted to repress their hostility against the neighbouring English; and with the genuine spirit of benevolence and forgiveness, he was unremitting in his efforts to do good to those who inveighed against the errors of his creed, and ejected him from christian fellowship. Major Atherton had heard much of that extraordinary man, and hoped his curiosity would be gratified by a personal interview, as they approached so near the place of his exile; but he was disappointed on finding the residence of Canonicus, grand Sachem of the Narragansets, was much nearer the entrance of the Bay, which rendered their further progress inexpedient.

The next day being the Sabbath, their business was suspended, and divine service was performed by the chaplain on board the captain's ship, where all the English assembled with the utmost reverence and devotion. On Monday, Captains Mason and Underhill, with a sufficient guard, repaired to the dwelling of Canonicus, to acquaint him with their motives for visiting his country with so large a force, and request permission to pass through it in peace, to attack the Pequod forts, The young Sachem Miantonimo, to whom the old king had resigned the reigns of government, assembled his chief counsellors and warriors, to hold a talk with the English; and after gravely listening to the arguments of Captain Mason, he answered that he highly approved his designs, and would send some of his own subjects to assist him. He however expressed a doubt that

the white men were too feeble to oppose the Pequods, who were exceedingly valiant, and also powerful in numbers.

Encouraged by this reception, Captain Mason ordered his men to land, except a few, who were left in charge with the vessels, and proceed to the place of rendezvous. In the evening, an Indian came from the Providence plantation, bringing a letter from Captain Patrick, who had arrived there with forty men from the Massachusetts. He requested Captain Mason to wait until he could join him with his troops; but although a union of forces was desirable, the officers in general were averse to the delay. The soldiers were already impatient to proceed, and it was of the utmost importance to surprise the enemy, which could not be effected without using great dispatch. It was customary among the Indians to entertain the squaws of either hostile nation in their camps, and many of the Pequod women were mingled with the Narragansets, who, it was feared, would convey intelligence of their approach.

On the following morning, therefore, the army, consisting of about eighty Englishmen, sixty Mohegan and river Indians, and two hundred Narragansets, took up their line of march. Before evening they reached the Nihantick, a frontier to the Pequods, which was then governed by a Narraganset sachem. But the Nihanticks treated the English with haughty insolence, and would not receive them into their fort; and Captain Mason, aware of their treachery, placed a strong guard around the impalement to prevent any one from passing out to betray them. There they encamped that night, and in the morning were joined by another party of Narragansets, which induced many of the Nihanticks to offer their services; so that the army re-commenced its march with a force of nearly five hundred Indians.

The English endured excessive fatigue and suffering throughout the day; the weather was oppressively warm; they were almost destitute of suitable provisions, and obliged to travel through a pathless wilderness, encumbered with heavy arms and ammunition. In the afternoon the country became more open, and they crossed a large field which had been planted with Indian corn, and was watered by a pure stream. Here the captain ordered his men to halt and refresh themselves, while he called a council of his officers, and consulted the Indians respecting the distance of their forts. Wequash, formerly a petty sachem, who had revolted from the Pequods, and who afterwards became a convert to Christianity, and a zealous apostle among his brethren, proved an intelligent and faithful guide. He assured Captain Mason it would be impossible to reach the royal fortress of Sassacus before midnight. It was twelve miles beyond the fort of Mistick, which was also held by the Pequods, and both were considered impregnable.

The Narragansets, learning that the English intended to attack the Pequods, and even the dreadful Sassacus, in their forts, were filled with astonishment and alarm, and nearly an hundred immediately returned to their own country

Captain Mason had determined to divide his force and make a simultaneous attack on the two forts; but on finding that they were so remote from each other, the extreme fatigue of his men induced him to alter his plan, and proceed first with his whole army to Mistick, which lay nor far in advance.

With invincible courage and in perfect silence, the brave little army renewed its march, the Indians falling in the rear, through an excess of fear, utterly incompatible with their native boldness and hardihood. About dark they reached a pleasant valley which offered a verdant couch to their weary limbs. Here they pitched their camp, between two

large rocks, in the now flourishing village of Groton; which has since been celebrated in the page of history by the infamous attack of the traitor Arnold, who with the cold-blooded malice of a demon and a renegade, slew the defenceless garrison of fort Griswold after they had surrendered to the British arms, and spread misery and desolation around the very scenes which had nurtured his infancy and witnessed his childish sports, if indeed a heart so utterly polluted could ever have glowed with the pure and innocent enjoyments of that guileless age.

Wequash was sent forward to reconnoitre, and soon returned with the welcome intelligence that the Pequods still maintained the most perfect security. They had seen the English pass in their vessels towards the Narraganset, and believing they feared to attack them, were holding a high feast, singing and dancing, without any suspicion of their approaching danger. Indeed the noise of their rejoicings was heard by the sentinels, who were posted considerably in the advance, until after midnight.

Long before that time, however, almost every eye in the camp was closed in sleep. Major Atherton, though not less exhausted than most of his fellow soldiers, felt the mild and balmy influence of the evening air too refreshing to admit of slumber. For some time he continued walking before his tent, and busied with thoughts as strangely diversified as the events of the few last months of his life had been. The moon rode high in the heavens, and seemed pouring her light upon a world of shadows. The utmost stillness prevailed; the sentinels moved to and fro with the noiseless tread of spectres; scarcely a leaf trembled on its stalk, and every blade of grass stood erect and glittering with dew. The winding Mistick flowed through its green banks like a stream of silver; but even the gurgling of this water was suspended, and the shadows of the distant hills lay like giants slumbering on the plain.

There was something solemn and soothing in the scene: something inexpressibly beautiful, but lifeless and uncheering. Atherton thought of the coming morrow, when the strife of battle would invade the peaceful retirement, and the thunders of war disturb the harmony of nature; and though he looked forward with the courage and ardour of a soldier, it was also with the compassion of a benevolent heart, and the seriousness of a reflecting mind. But other and softer emotions soon absorbed him. He thought of Miriam Grey—her beauty, her playful grace, her artless affection, was each the theme on which he dwelt with the passionate tenderness of a lover: until reminded by a change of guards of the lateness of the hour, he pressed to his lips the lock of hair she twined round his arm, and with a sigh retired to his hard and lowly pillow.

Two hours before day-break the army was again in motion; and after devoutly supplicating Him, who 'giveth strength to the weak,' advanced with renovated spirits towards Mistick fort. Captain Mason divided his men into two companies, one commanded by himself, the other by Captain Underhill; and following a circuitous path for about two miles, they came to the base of a considerable eminence, on which the fort was situated. The Indians still continued far in the rear, so overpowered by terror, that it was in vain to depend on their assistance. On receiving a command from Captain Mason to remain and see how Englishmen could fight, they began to rally, and formed a circle round the fort, though at a distance which protected them from personal danger.

The English rapidly ascended the hill, and had almost gained the pallisadoes unperceived, when the barking of a dog alarmed the Pequods, and in an instant the dreadful sound of the war-hoop announced that they were prepared to commence the

combat. The troops poured a discharge of musketry into the fort, and at the same moment the two divisions rushed sword in hand through the principal entrances, which had been partially secured by the branches of trees. The Pequods defended themselves with the most desperate and heroic courage; and a scene of carnage ensued, perhaps unparalleled in the annals of our country.

But it is not our intention to invade the province of the historian, by entering into the details of this sanguinary conflict, from which the feelings of humanity recoiled with horror. Suffice it to say a complete victory was achieved by the conduct and intrepidity of the English, though the laurels of the conqueror were unhappily stained with the blood of the innocent and defenceless. In little more than an hour, a flourishing village of seventy wigwams was reduced to ashes, and upwards of six hundred Indians,—the aged and the feeble infant, the warrior in his strength, and the mother with her helpless children, were destroyed by the sword, or perished in the flames.

The English had only two killed, but nearly twenty of their number were severely wounded; and the whole army was faint and exhausted by their extraordinary exertions. Under these circumstances their situation became extremely critical. They were in the midst of the enemy's country, which they had now aroused to vengeance, and every moment liable to an attack from the Indians of the other fortress. Their ammunition was nearly expended, and they were destitute of provisions and necessaries for the wounded; having left their surgeon, and every thing not absolutely needful, in the vessels at Narraganset, which had been delayed by contrary winds, from joining them at the expected time. All the Indians, except Uncas and his party deserted. While Captain Mason and his officers were consulting in this emergency, the vessels, 'as if guided by the hand of Providence,' were discovered sailing before a fair wind into the Pequod harbour.

Their joy at this welcome and almost unhoped for relief, was considerably damped by the appearance of three hundred hostile Indians approaching from the royal fortress. Major Atherton, with a chosen band, was sent forward to oppose their progress, and he advanced upon them with so much spirit and promptitude, that they were glad to retire from the contest. Captain Mason then gave orders to march, the wounded being placed on mats, and carried by the friendly Indians. But when the Pequods ascended the hill, and beheld the ruins of the fort, and the destruction of their countrymen, their rage became uncontrollable. They tore the hair from their heads, used the most violent gestures of grief, and in a paroxysm of despair, descended furiously upon the English. A few volleys from the rear guard again dispersed them; and after proceeding a short distance, the army halted on the margin of a brook, and indulged a few moments of rest and refreshment.

They then marched nearly six miles through an untracked and marshy ground, pursued by the enemy, who continually discharged their arrows amongst them. Fortunately they did no injury; but the musketry of the English severely annoyed the Indians, and at length compelled them to retreat.

The gallant little band reached the Pequod harbour in good order, with their colours flying, and were received on board the vessels with every demonstration of joy. In less than three weeks from their departure, the troops returned to Saybrook; where, to use the words of Captain Mason, they were 'nobly entertained with many great guns,' and treated by Lieutenant Gardiner with the most attentive hospitality.

The news of this signal victory was received with universal satisfaction throughout the colonies; but the Massachusetts still deemed it expedient to send forward the remainder of the troops which they had raised; and accordingly a hundred and twenty men, under the command of Captain Stoughton, sailed immediately for the Pequod harbour. Major Atherton, determined not to desert the cause which he had espoused, rejoined Captain Mason, who with forty men, effected a junction with Captain Stoughton, accompanied also by several of the principal gentlemen of Connecticut, who attended as counsellors to direct their future operations.

Sassacus in the mean time, hard pressed by the enemy, and insulted by his own subjects, who imputed all their misfortunes to his haughtiness and temerity, finding it unsafe to remain longer in his dominions, destroyed the fort and wigwams, and with the feeble remnant of his once fierce and powerful tribe, retired to Quinnipiack, now New-Haven. Their extreme terror of the English, whom they had lately despised, deprived them of all resolution and forethought, and during their painful flight, these poor outcasts were reduced to the lowest degree of misery. They were obliged to dig for clams along the shores, and search the woods for roots to subsist upon: and being encumbered with women and children the English were without difficulty enabled to pursue them closely.

The Connecticut and Massachusetts troops proceeded to New-Haven by land, the vessels coasting along the shore; and in three days arrived there without overtaking the Pequods, except a few stragglers, whom they captured. Deceived by a smoke in the woods, which they supposed proceeded from the enemy's encampment, they hastily prepared for action; but soon discovering that it arose from fires kindled by the Connecticut Indians, they retired to their vessels, which lay at anchor in the harbour. They then sent forward one of the captives to reconnoitre, and he returned with intelligence that the Pequods were resting at a place about twenty miles distant, called Unquowa, since Fairfield. The English resumed their march with alacrity, and early in the afternoon, arrived at the designated place. Several large corn-fields marked it as an Indian settlement, and ascending a hill, they observed a number of wigwams, separated from them by an extensive morass thickly covered with trees and bushes. This dismal swamp was nearly divided in the middle, and in one part of it about an hundred Pequod warriors, with their squaws and little ones, and nearly two hundred of the neighbouring Indians were gathered to conceal themselves. The English entirely surrounded it, so as to prevent the escape of any; but an unfortunate division arising among the officers, much time was consumed in debate, which might have been more profitably spent in action. An interpreter was however sent to parly with the Indians, and offer protection to such as had not done violence to the English; and many gladly availed themselves of the offer. The Sachem of the place, at the head of his friendly Indians, delivered himself up, presenting his garment of beaver-skin to conciliate their favour; and he was followed by many old men, women, and children, in the whole amounting to upwards of two hundred.

But the Pequod warriors, with undiminished spirit, disdained the offer of life, and declared their intention of defending themselves to the last moment. Captain Mason, therefore, ordered the narrow of the swamp to be cut through, and encircling it with his troops, they rested on their arms during the night. Just before day a thick fog arose, and the Indians taking advantage of it with their terrific yell, suddenly rushed upon Captain Patrick's quarters, and endeavoured to force their way through them. Captain Mason hearing the noise and confusion, sent a detachment to learn the cause, and give

assistance, if necessary. But the tumult increasing, he raised the siege and repaired himself to that place, where he found Captain Patrick and his men bravely contending with a formidable number, whom they had several times driven back to their cover. A few rounds of shot again obliged them to retreat; but they presently returned with irresistible violence upon the besiegers, and about seventy of the chief warriors burst through their intrenchment, and they fled beyond the possibility of pursuit. Sassacus, and the Sachem Mononotto were among those who escaped. About twenty were killed in the skirmish, and a hundred and eighty of both sexes and every age were taken prisoners. This second victory was complete, and the brave and powerful tribe of Pequods was totally exterminated. Of the few who escaped, some took refuge with the Mohawks, and were slain by them, other were incorporated with the Narragansets and Mohegans; their name became extinct and their country was alienated to the English.

This memorable, but almost forgotten contest,—however trifling it may appear in comparison with the more brilliant conquests of Europe, which have so often convulsed her fairest kingdoms, and deluged her fields with the blood of thousands of victims to her ambition or revenge,—was, notwithstanding, productive of the most important consequences, and strikingly exhibits the firmness and courage of the early settlers of New-England. Indeed, considering the weakness of the colonies, and their limited resources, and the strength and numbers of the enemy, their success appears almost miraculous; and under the smiles of Heaven can only be attributed to the prompt and cheerful exercise of that intrepid valour, which they brought with them from the land of free and heroic spirits.

The destruction of the Pequods filled the neighbouring Indians with such dread of the English, that they voluntarily sought their friendship, and for upwards of forty years, refrained from open hostilities against them; until the ambitious Philip of Mount Hope, by his insidious and revengeful conduct, tempted their wrath, and eventually involved himself and nation in ruin.

A division of the prisoners was made at Saybrook, on the return of the army, and a due proportion given to Miantonimo and Uncas; the rest were distributed among the troops of Massachusetts and Connecticut. The wife and children of Mononotto were discovered with the captives, and in return for their kindness to the English maidens, they were treated with the greatest attention and respect. The sweetness and modesty of Mioma's countenance and manners interested every one; and Major Atherton in particular, grateful for the protection she had extended to Miriam Grey, exerted himself to alleviate the misfortunes which had overwhelmed her family and country. But whatever Mioma endured, it was in silence; not a murmur or a sigh escaped her; and though pensive and retiring, the loftiness of her spirit was still visible in her serene and dignified deportment. Captain Mason, in a letter to Governor Winthrop, recommended her to his particular care; and during the voyage to Boston, Major Atherton was entrusted with the charge of herself and children.

The troops of Connecticut and Massachusetts took leave of each other with feelings of mutual good will and interest peculiar to brave men, who have been associated in scenes of danger and glory. Major Atherton received the most gratifying acknowledgements of his personal bravery and military skill, in the conduct of the war; and impatient of a moment's delay, returned with Captain Stoughton and his party to Boston, where they arrived early in the month of July.

## CHAP. XII.

But now I am return'd, and that war thoughts  
Have left their places vacant, in their rooms  
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,  
All prompting me how fair young Hero is,  
Saying I liked her, ere I went to wars.

SHAKSPEARE.

A heavy salute from the fort at Castle Island, in compliment to Captain Stoughton and his gallant little band, as they passed homeward bound, announced to the inhabitants of Boston the return of their expected troops, and the shore was quickly crowded with spectators waiting to bid them welcome. There was probably more order and gravity maintained in this assemblage than is usually found in the degenerate mob of the present day; but the shouting of the boys would sometimes rise to a discordant pitch, and the softer voices of their female companions, occasionally mingled with the yelping of curs, who on that memorable occasion, exercised their vocal powers with surprising perseverance. The vessels rode proudly over the waves, as if conscious of the honours they sustained, and pushed close into a deep cove—now disfigured by a wharf—at the northern part of the town. The soldiers disembarked in good order, while the drums beat a national air, and the populace shouted with all the strength of lungs they could command. The men marched to a little distance, where they formed themselves into a hollow square, and stood with their heads uncovered, while Captain Stoughton addressed them in a parting harangue. Mr. Wilson, the reverend chaplain, who had been sent forward with the army for their ‘encouragement and instruction,’ then took up the word of exhortation, and when he concluded, a volley of musketry was discharged, and the different divisions filed off to the respective towns which had furnished them for the public weal.

As Major Atherton stood looking among the crowd for some familiar face, his hand was suddenly seized with a friendly grasp, and a well known voice exclaimed—

“I am right glad to see you again, cousin Atherton, and sound in limb, after your hot skirmish with those heathenish savages.”

“And I am truly rejoiced to meet you here, my dear sir;” returned Atherton; “I was at that moment wishing myself with my warm-hearted friends at Plymouth;—for I had not dreamed of finding you here.”

“Aye, aye, Edward,” replied Captain Standish, “I thought you would be glad to come back to us again, though you went off in such a hurry, nobody knew why nor wherefore. But I hope you have come to your senses at last, and left all your folly behind you.”

“I could scarcely get rid of such a burthen so speedily,” said Atherton; “but here comes another, whom I little thought of seeing to-day;—my friend Peregrine White, how came you hither?”

“Stop, if it please you, Major, till I have found my breath,” answered Peregrine, puffing between every word, “I was full three miles off, fishing with Hobamock, when the cannon roared at the fort; so I left a perch in the act of nibbling, and ran off with all speed to find you.”

“Did you come all the way from Plymouth,” asked Atherton, “to fish with the Indian in the Massachusetts’ streams?”

“Nonsense, Major; we have enough of that sport at home; I came along with fifty stout-hearted lads, to go on and meet you, and help to cut up those insolent Pequods; but when we got here, word was sent us to stay, for that you had made thorough work with them already;—though I wish you had been so complaisant as to wait for us.—I had a mind to see beyond the great fresh river, and have some sport with you in the camp.”

“It is my mind, Master Peregrine,” said the Captain, “that you have been well spared, both as to your pains and your credit; for I am no prophet if your heels had not served you better than your sword, when you came in contact with their painted faces and poisoned arrows. The Indians would not stop to admire your martial appearance, as the pretty damsels at Plymouth did, I can tell you, my boy.”

“Pshaw!” said Peregrine, half laughing; “but I know you don’t think me a coward, Captain, though you do love to teaze me; you would not have persuaded my father to let me go, if there had been any risk of my disgracing him, or myself.”

“It is not best to tell all our thoughts,” replied the Captain, “the wisest man in the world had bidden us to set a ‘watch on the door of our lips;’ and every body knows you are but an indiscreet youngster, Peregrine.”

“Every body,” said Peregrine, “must have less faith than a ‘grain of mustard seed,’ if they do not believe what is so often told them; but since you would not have been there to betray me, Captain, I might have passed off very well with the good people of Connecticut.”

“Did you not have the command of this Plymouth reinforcement, Captain?” asked Atherton, “or were your services required for the home defence?”

“We will find it will not do to leave any corner unguarded; for these treacherous villains to creep into,” said the Captain; “though they have grown rather shy of the guns of our battery, since some of their heads were put up to garnish it; besides, cousin Atherton, I am growing too old to go an hundred miles or more to fight for my neighbours; though while I can grasp a sword, it shall be wielded to protect my own colony from insult.”

“I suspect sir,” said Atherton, “you could keep pace with the youngest of us now, even in marching through the wilderness of the Narraganset, which might put the strength of any one fairly to the test.”

“My sinews are pretty flexible yet,” returned the Captain, “considering how much hard service they have had to sustain; but I have not so much use for them now as I had, when fighting with our brave English gallants, under the banners of good Queen Bess, of blessed memory, to keep the Dutch in possession of their dykes and ditches.”

“They say you shewed prodigious agility,” said Peregrine, gravely, “when Mr. Calvert—”

“Your troublesome ears are always drinking in idle tales,” interrupted the Captain, quickly; “but it is no matter, boy, for no one thinks you are worth minding.”

“A happy privilege,” returned Peregrine, “which I shall use discreetly, as occasion may require. But, Major Atherton, you have not yet asked us what is going on at Plymouth, and I am sure there is, at least, one person there, whom you would be glad to know something about.”

“There are many in whom I feel interested,” replied Atherton; “but I judged from your gay countenance, that no misfortune had befallen the place or people, and I hope very soon to return there and satisfy myself from personal observation.”

“We may go together then, perhaps,” said Peregrine, “I only remain here as a guard of honour to the Captain; and I think he will release me, at a moment’s warning; the rest of our company returned two or three days since, though I sought to detain Master Ashly for my special amusement; but he grew impatient to see his promised bride, whom he was obliged to leave just as he had attained her smiling consent to be his.”

“Is Mr. Ashly married?” asked Atherton, changing colour, “and may I know who is the happy object of his choice?”

“It has been long known who he would choose,” replied Peregrine; “but perhaps you have not heard, Major Atherton, that Mr. Grey has returned from England, which is supposed to have hastened Benjamin Ashly into the bands of wedlock.”

“Hastened him,” said the Captain laughing, “because Mr. Grey, like an honest man, refused to compel his daughter to marry against her will; so Master Benjamin, finding there was no hope for him in that quarter, turned his eyes on Mistress Rebecca Spindle, who has been wooing him with smiles ever since she heard the joyful news, that Miriam Grey had rejected his addresses; they are now married, or will be soon, for the prudent spinster, as I hear, did not take long to deliberate on the propriety of obliging him.”

“A very suitable match, I should think,” said Atherton, who felt greatly relieved by the Captain’s narration, “though the lady seems to have some advantage over him, in point of age.”

“And experience, too,” said Peregrine, “or she would never have cajoled him into matrimony, with such an untempting visage; he had better have looked after a pretty laughing damsel, some twenty or thirty years younger than himself, as Captain Standish and I intend to, one of these days; though *ten to one*, we may get served some roguish tricks by them.”

“And it would be right enough, too,” said the Captain, good-humouredly, and without appearing to notice his allusion. “If such sage persons as you and I, Peregrine, who have been so long schooled in the ways of the world, consent to play with such mischievous beings, we ought not to complain if they forget our dignity, and give us an unlucky blow.—Ha, cousin Atherton, what say you?”

Atherton started on hearing his name pronounced, for he was at that moment thinking of Miriam Grey, and drawing encouragement for his own hopes, from the lenity of her father. Following the train of thought, which led him back to her cheerful home, he replied without exactly understanding the question.

“Go, sir, I am ready at this moment, any time when it may please you.”

Captain Standish looked at him with a significant smile, and laying his hand on Atherton’s shoulder, said—

“I see how it is with you, Edward; but bear up a good heart, till we can storm the enemy in his own quarters, and, God willing, the prize shall be yours at last. I have a snug little room at Master Cole’s, so come with me now, and we will talk over these matters at our leisure. I would learn something more about your friendly visit to Sassacus, and his people, and the warm reception they gave you,—to say nothing of your mad chase after Miriam Grey, which had like to have made a bonfire of you both—for which, craving

your pardon, cousin Atherton, I have ever since thought you deserved to be decked out with a cap and bells; for I cannot learn that she was in any danger, till you provoked the Indians to vengeance.”

“I thought differently,” returned Atherton, “and I am mistaken, sir, if you would not have done exactly as I did, had you been placed in the same circumstances.”

“It may be so,” said the Captain,” and I dare say you did all for the best; but I would not have you throw away your life, even for my little rose-bud, if you could do her no good by it.”

“I suppose,” said Peregrine White, archly, “Major Atherton chose to see with his own eyes; we all know it is dangerous to entrust a third person, in matters of importance, especially if there is a fair damsel in the case.”

Captain Standish twirled his sword round with some violence, but made no reply; and after a moment’s embarrassing silence, Atherton said—

“As you are acquainted with Miriam’s captivity, you must have heard of her Indian protectress; she is amongst our prisoners, and I am charged to place her in the hands of Governor Winthrop—so I must beg you to excuse me, sir, while I execute my commission.”

“Go,” replied the Captain; “and you will find me at the inn, whenever you choose to look for me. And hark’ee, cousin Atherton, I should like to have a peep at this said Mioma, as they call her, myself; one would suppose she was a tawny angel from my rose-bud’s description, and, in truth, I think she must have as good a heart as ever was lodged in a heathen body, to show such kindness to her white captives.”

As soon as Major Atherton had placed the wife and children of Mononotto in the family of Mr. Winthrop—where they were treated with that delicate attention which generous and benevolent minds are ever ready to bestow on the unfortunate—he became extremely impatient to return to Plymouth, and decide the doubts and hopes which had so long agitated him, and on which his future plans, and, as he thought, happiness, entirely depended. But he was obliged in courtesy to remain several days, as the Court of Massachusetts had set apart a day of thanksgiving, to be observed throughout the colony, for the signal victory obtained over the Pequods; on which occasion the officers who had served in that campaign were invited to partake of a public dinner.

On the morning of the appointed day, the inhabitants of Boston repaired to the meeting-house, and united their hearts in grateful praise to Him, who had given ‘peace to their borders,’ and ‘scattered the heathen before them.’ When the devotional exercises were concluded, the magistrates of the town escorted the military officers to an inn, where a plentiful repast was prepared for them; and each individual seemed resolved to shew the abundance of his thankfulness, by partaking liberally of the good things set before him. How grateful should we be, to our venerable ancestors, for transmitting to us so ingenious and agreeable a mode of acknowledging our obligations to the heroes and benefactors of our country, and of expressing our gratitude to the Father of all, by eating to satiety of the bounties he has provided for us! A custom still scrupulously observed, and almost the only one remaining of those worthy Puritans, which the liberality of the present age has thought proper to countenance and encourage!

“These Massachussetts’ people,” said Captain Standish, to Atherton, after they had retired, “do certainly ‘strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel;’ they have passed a law in their wisdom forbidding the drinking of healths, to save a man from the sin of getting

merry; and here, on this joyful day, we have been sipping our wine like owls in a church-yard, without a good wish to our king, our country, or our mistress, Edward. Now at this very moment, they are fitting out a vessel, to send the poor Pequod women and children to Burmuda, and sell them for slaves! May it be long before we, of Plymouth, imitate such humanity!”

“Impossible!” exclaimed Atherton, indignantly—“What sell the untamed children of the forest for slaves? they, who are born free as the wild deer, whom they pursue! do they hope to bend their proud spirits to the yoke of bondage! they cannot be so inhuman!”

“They hope to get money for them, I suppose,” answered the Captain, drily.

“They have already tried to make servants of some, but they proved too cunning and fleet of foot, and took to their heels, without waiting to learn the customs of civilized life.

Cousin Atherton,” he added, warmly, “I know that I have been censured for my zeal against these savages, who, if not made to feel and fear, would have crushed our feeble colony in its birth; but never has my sword been the instrument of cruelty, or my counsel aided a plan so infamous, as that of consigning human beings to a life of slavery.”

“In whom,” asked Atherton, “did this project originate? Surely the rulers of a free and Christian people cannot sanction a practice, so inconsistent with the benevolence of the gospel, and which aims a deadly blow at the root of liberty.”

“The rulers alone, have the responsibility,” said the Captain; “and they have been so long exercised in the school of persecution, that it would seem they have grown enamoured of its discipline, and not content with instructing their own people, are gathering in pupils from the wilderness of this new world.”

“Mioma and her children,” said Atherton, “I trust are exempted from this cruel sentence; I would purchase their freedom at the expense of my whole patrimony.”

“Governor Winthrop has promised to protect them,” replied Captain Standish, “in return for their kindness to the English maidens. But we must let them manage affairs in their own way; and I believe they are in the main conscientious, and mean to do ‘God service,’ though sometimes it returns out the most unprofitable to men.”

“Well, we will leave them in charity,” said Atherton, “and I confess to you, Captain, I feel very impatient to return to Plymouth, since there is no longer any thing to detain us here.”

“I do not doubt your word, Edward,” returned the Captain, “and if the wind blows right in the morning, we will spread our sails and push gaily into the good harbour, and we shall soon see, if a certain damsel smiles encouragement on us.”

Early on the following morning, Captain Standish, with Peregrine White, and Major Atherton left Boston; and towards the close of the day, arrived in safety at Plymouth. Atherton sprung first upon the shore, with a step too quick, and with hopes too buoyant, to wait the slower motions of his companions. As he looked around, with a lover’s eye, on the scenes where he had imbibed and cherished a pure and exalted passion, connected as they were with the image of her who had inspired it, and reposing in the calmness and beauty of a summer’s evening, his heart bounded with pleasure, and he fancied the serenity of the earth and heavens was propitious to his hopes, and a happy omen of success.

A few moments brought him to the house of Mr. Grey; he paused an instant, under the spreading oak, where he had first listened to the voice of Miriam; he inhaled the fragrance of her favourite sweet-briar; and the door around which it clustered was

open, and seemed inviting him to enter. With a trembling hand he opened the little wicket, and hastily approached the threshold. A brilliant twilight rendered every object distinct, and he quickly perceived Mr. Grey reclining in his elbow chair, and indulging the luxury of an evening pipe. Close beside him, sat his daughter, busied with her needle, and both were apparently so much engrossed by their own reflections, that Atherton had entered, before the sound of his steps aroused them.

Miriam first observed him, and starting from her seat, she uttered an exclamation of joyful surprise, and again sunk upon the chair, while her varying complexion betrayed the strong agitation of her feelings. Atherton was in an instant beside her, and forgetful of every thing but the pleasure of seeing her again, and in safety, without uttering a word, he pressed her hand to his lips, with the most impassioned tenderness. Miriam attempted to withdraw her hand, and her eyes were directed anxiously to her father. Atherton understood her meaning, and hastily turned to address him.

Mr. Grey had risen, and stood regarding them with attention; Atherton thought without displeasure. Encouraged, but still embarrassed how to proceed, he was about to apologize for his intrusion, when Mr. Grey offered him his hand and said—

“Major Atherton, I understand your feelings, and it is needless for you to excuse them; my presence was, perhaps, unexpected to you, and probably undesired.”

“Not undesired, sir,” said Atherton eagerly; “I have long wished to see you; to reveal to you my hopes; to entreat you to sanction my union with your daughter.”

“Young man,” said Mr. Grey, “do you know what you ask of me? do you know that Miriam Grey is the daughter of a Puritan? that, from her birth she has been devoted to the faith of her father, nurtured in the principles of his persecuted church, and taught to love the country of his adoption?”

“And I,” replied Atherton, “am the son of a puritan, a puritan in principle and practice, who early taught me to reverence her creed, and respect the rights and consciences of those, who in sincerity adopted it.”

“And yet,” said Mr. Grey, “with the light of truth before your eyes, you turned from it, and, like Balaam of old, ‘loved the wages of iniquity,’ and clave unto the darkness and errors of Episcopacy; and how can I be assured that you will not turn aside my poor child from the true religion, and entrap her in the false and subtle mazes of your superstitious rites.”

“My honour, and the pure and ardent affection, which I am proud to acknowledge for your daughter, must be my best security,” replied Atherton. “Give me the hand of Miriam, and, from that moment, her country shall be mine, and her religion, so far as is consistent with my principles and conscience. In the ordinary acts of worship I trust our hearts will ever be united; more you cannot require of me, nor even to obtain her love, dearly as I prize it, would I consent to retract the faith of my fathers, unless convinced it was erroneous.”

“I like your candour, Major Atherton,” said Mr. Grey, after a moment’s pause; “but are you assured that the affections of my daughter are already given to you, and that only *my* consent is necessary to your union?”

“Sir,” replied Atherton, “I have every reason to believe it; peculiar and trying circumstances revealed our sentiments to each other, sooner, perhaps, than prudence would justify; but in justice to Miriam, I must declare to you, that she has uniformly

discouraged my addresses, with a firmness which principle and filial duty could alone inspire.”

“My son,” answered Mr. Grey, with emotion, “you have twice adventured your life to snatch my daughter from peril and death, and I have long examined myself, lest my gratitude as a father should weaken my duty as a Christian; but God has inclined the heart of Miriam towards you, and in submission to the will of Him, who ‘loveth mercy rather than sacrifice,’ I entrust her temporal and eternal happiness to your keeping; and may the spirit of truth enlighten your understanding, and lead you to embrace that pure ‘faith which was once delivered to the saints.’”

Major Atherton, overwhelmed by this almost unhopd-for consent to his wishes, remained silent, for a moment, and unable to express his grateful acknowledgements. He looked round for Miriam, but she had retired at the commencement of their conversation, and Mr. Grey led the way to an adjoining apartment, which was occupied only by the object of their search. Miriam cast a timid look at her lover and father, as they entered with countenances agitated by different emotions; and a deeper blush crimsoned her cheeks, as she met the eyes of Atherton, beaming with a tenderness and pleasure which at once announced his success. She rose as they drew near her, and Mr. Grey, taking her passive hand, placed it in Atherton’s, and laying his own on the head of each, said, with solemn emphasis—

“My children, I give you to each other; and may the blessing of the God of love descend upon you, and unite your hearts in his fear and service; and may he bless you, in ‘your basket and in your store, in your going out and your coming in;’ and make your lives useful and happy, until in his own good time, he shall see fit to call you unto ‘his eternal rest.’”

So saying he slowly folded his arms, and retired from the room, leaving the lovers to the uninterrupted indulgence of those new and happy emotions, which his unexpected consent had awakened.

It is probable many tender things were said, and many important articles arranged, on that occasion; for on the following Sabbath the banns of marriage were published, in compliance with an early law of New-England,—which is still enforced, to the great embarrassment of all modest persons, who are about to put on the happy chains of matrimony.

This public confirmation of an event, which had long been agitated, greatly scandalized many worthy people, who had not till then, believed the exemplary Mr. Grey could be so utterly given over to the ‘buffetings of Satan,’ as to sacrifice his only child to a son of Episcopacy,—one who had faith in the mother church, and kneeled to repeat prayers from a printed book, read by a Bishop in lawn sleeves.

“I would not have believed it,” said Mrs. Ashly, alias Rebecca Spindle, “truly our ‘hedges are broken down,’ and ‘grievous wolves have entered into the fold, and are leading our lambs astray.’”

“You are right, Rebecca,” answered her complaisant spouse; “and had the damsel Miriam Grey listened unto me, she would have chosen a yoke-fellow from the Lord’s own people, instead of this ‘strange vine from Egypt.’”

“It is no concern of ours, to be sure,” said the wife; “but to me, it seems a clear tempting of Providence, and in special after its great mercy in delivering her from the

hands of the heathen; but she was ever a giddy young thing, as I have often told you, Benjamin.”

“I have always found her discreet and prudent, save in one instance,” returned Master Ashly, “and when she has attained your age and experience, Rebecca, I doubt not she will repent her of this great evil.”

“It may be so,” answered Rebecca, mildly;—for the honey-moon was not yet in its wane; “but as she has sowed so must she reap,’ and I fear, Benjamin, it will be in tears.”

Fortunately the fears of Mrs. Ashly were not realized. The union of Major Atherton and Miriam Grey proved lasting and happy. Time, as it rolled on and withered the graces of youth, left them in possession of the richer treasures of virtuous and contented minds; and the endearing relations of domestic and social life. Atherton’s attachment to the primitive habits of New-England daily strengthened, and familiarized to its simple mode of worship, he became eventually a sincere, but liberal puritan.

Shortly after his marriage, Mioma and her children were received into his family; and the grateful affection of Miriam was exerted to repay the kindness they had shewn her, and to lighten the yoke of captivity, which was peculiarly galling to the lofty spirit of Mioma. The persecuted remnant of the Pequod Indians, who escaped the destruction of their nation, finding that ‘every man’s hand was against them,’ in the autumn repaired to Hartford to seek protection from the English, which was granted them on condition of their paying an annual tribute. Cushminaw perished in the fight of Mistick; and of the chief Sachems of his haughty tribe, Mononotto alone survived. He was rejoined by his family soon after the treaty at Hartford, and forbidden to return to his own country, retired with them to the banks of the Hudson.

Major Atherton in the following year, revisited his native land, but the ties which once bound him to it were weakened by absence, and the influence of that party spirit, which was then preparing the way for those bloody scenes, which terminated in the death of the unfortunate Charles. He disposed of his paternal inheritance, and returned to America, where his affections were entirely concentrated.

Mr. Grey lived to enjoy a green old age, and saw a new generation rising up to take the place of their fathers and hand down to their children’s children those principles of civil and religious freedom, which guided the Pilgrims to the Rock of Plymouth.

THE END.

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