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William Alexander Caruthers**

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**THE CAVALIERS OF VIRGINIA,**

**OR, THE RECLUSE OF JAMESTOWN.**

**AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE OF THE OLD DOMINION.**

**BY WILLIAM A. CARUTHERS**

**THE AUTHOR OF "THE KENTUCKIAN IN NEW-YORK."**

**IN TWO VOLUMES.**

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## THE CAVALIERS OF VIRGINIA.

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### CHAPTER I.

The romance of history pertains to no human annals more strikingly than to the early settlement of Virginia. The mind of the reader at once reverts to the names of Raleigh, Smith, and Pocahontas. The traveller's memory pictures in a moment the ivy-mantled ruin of old Jamestown.

About the year 16—, the city of Jamestown, then the capital of Virginia, was by no means an unapt representation of the British metropolis; both being torn by contending factions, and alternately subjected to the sway of the Roundheads and Royalists.

First came the Cavaliers who fled hither after the decapitation of their royal master and the dispersion of his army, many of whom became permanent settlers in the town or colony, and ever afterwards influenced the character of the state.

These were the first founders of the aristocracy which prevails in Virginia to this day; these were the immediate ancestors of that generous, fox-hunting, wine-drinking, duelling and reckless race of men, which gives so distinct a character to Virginians wherever they may be found.

A whole generation of these Cavaliers had grown up in the colony during the interregnum, and, throughout that long period, were tolerated by those in authority as a class of probationers. The Restoration was no sooner announced, however, than they changed places with their late superiors in authority. That stout old Cavalier and former governor, Sir William Berkley (who had retired to the shades of Accomack,) was now called by the unanimous voice of the people, to reascend the vice-regal chair.

Soon after his second installation came another class of refugees, in the persons of Cromwell's veteran soldiers themselves, a few of whom fled hither on account of the distance from the court and the magnitude of their offences against the reigning powers. It will readily be perceived even by those not conversant with the primitive history of the Ancient Dominion, that these heterogeneous materials of Roundheads and Cavaliers were not the best calculated in the world to amalgamate in the social circles.

Our story commences a short time after the death of Cromwell and his son, and the restoration of Charles the Second to the throne of his fathers.

The city of Jamestown was situated upon an island in the Powhatan, about twenty leagues from where that noble river empties its waters into those of the Chesapeake Bay.

This island is long, flat on its surface, and presents a semicircular margin to the view of one approaching from the southeast; indeed it can scarcely be seen that it is an island from the side facing the river—the little branch which separates it from the main land having doubtless worn its way around by a long and gradual process.

At the period of which we write, the city presented a very imposing and romantic appearance, the landscape on that side of the river being shaded in the back ground by the deep green foliage of impenetrable forests standing in bold relief for many a mile against the sky. Near the centre of the stream, and nearly opposite the one just mentioned, stands another piece of land surrounded by water, known to this day by the very unromantic name of Hog Island, and looking for all the world like a nest for pirates, so impenetrable are the trees, undergrowth, and shrubbery with which it is thickly covered.

To prevent the sudden incursions of the treacherous savage, the city was surrounded with a wall or palisade, from the outside of which, at the northwestern end, was thrown a wooden bridge, so as to connect the first mentioned island with the main land. A single street ran nearly parallel with the river, extending over the upper half of the island and divided in the centre by the public square. On this were situated the Governor's mansion, state house, church, and other public buildings. Near where the line was broken by the space just mentioned, stood two spacious tenements, facing each other from opposite sides of the street. These were the rival hotels of the ancient city; and, after the fashion of that day, both had towering signposts erected before their respective doors, shaped something like a gibbet, upon which swung monotonously in the wind two huge painted sign-boards. These stood confronting each other like two angry rivals—one bearing the insignia of the Berkley arms, by which name it was designated,—and the other the Cross Keys, from which it also received its cognomen. The Berkley Arms was the rendezvous of all the Cavaliers of the colony, both old and young, and but a short time preceding the date of our story, was honoured as the place of assembly for the House of Burgesses.

The opposite and rival establishment received its patronage from the independent or republican faction.

It was late in the month of May, and towards the hour of twilight; the sun was just sinking behind the long line of blue hills which form the southwestern bank of the Powhatan, and the red horizontal rays fell along the rich volume of swelling waters dividing the city of Jamestown from the hills beyond with a line of dazzling yet not oppressive brilliance.

As the rich tints upon the water gradually faded away, their place was supplied in some small degree from large lanterns which now might be seen running half way up the signposts of the two hotels before mentioned, together with many lights of less magnitude visible in the windows of the same establishments and the various other houses within reflecting distance of the scene. The melancholy monotony of the rippling and murmuring waters against the long graduated beach now also began to give place to louder and more turbulent sounds, as the negroes collected from their work to gossip in the streets—Indians put off from the shore in their canoes, or the young Cavaliers collected in the Berkley Arms to discuss the news of the day or perhaps a few bottles of the landlord's best. On this occasion the long, well-scrubbed oaken table in the centre of the "News Room" was graced by the presence of some half dozen of the principal youths of the city. In the centre of the table stood the half-emptied bottle, and by each guest a full bumper of wine, and all were eager to be heard as the wine brightened their ideas and the company received fresh accessions from without.

"Oh, here comes one who can give us some news from the Governor's," said the speaker *pro tempore*, as a handsome and high-born youth of twenty-one entered the room with a proud step and haughty mien, and seated himself at the table as a matter of course, calling for and filling up a wine glass, and leisurely and carelessly throwing his cap upon the seat and his arm over the back of the next vacant chair, as he replied—"No, I bring no news from the Governor's, but I mistake the signs of the times if we do not soon hear news in this quarter."

All eyes were now turned upon the youth as he tossed off his wine. He was generally known among his companions by the familiar name of Frank Beverly, and was a distant kinsman and adopted son of the Governor, Sir William Berkley. News was no sooner mentioned than our host, turning a chair upon its balance, and resting his chin upon his hand, was all attention.

"What is it, Frank?" inquired Philip Ludwell, his most intimate friend and companion.

"Some mischief is brewing at the Cross Keys to-night," replied Frank, as the landlord moved up his chair nearer to the table, more than ever on the *qui vive*, when the Cross Keys became the subject of discussion.

"There is no one in the Tap of the Keys, as I can see from here," said another of the party, "and there is no light in any other portion of the house except the apartments of the family."

"They hide their lights under a bushel," continued Frank, with an affected nasal twang and a smile of contempt. Taking his nearest companion by the lappel of his doublet, and drawing him gently to where the rival establishment was visible through the door—"Do you not see a line of light just perceptible along the margin of the upper window? and if you will observe steadily for a moment, you will see numerous dim shadows of moving figures upon the almost impenetrable curtain which is drawn over it."

"Master Beverly is right, by old Noll's nose," said the landlord, as they all grouped together to catch a glimpse of the objects mentioned.

"You may well swear by Noll's nose in this case," returned Frank, "for unless I am much mistaken, those motions and gestures proceed from some of his late followers; indeed I know it. I was accidentally coming up the alley-way between the Keys and the next house, when I saw four or five of them cross the fence into the yard, and from thence enter the house by the back door."

"That's true, I'll swear," said the host, "for there they are, some dozen of them at least, and I'm a Rumper if a soul has darkened his front door this night. But couldn't you, Master Beverly, or one of the other young gentry, just step to the stout Sir William's, and make an affidavit to the facts? My word for it, he'd soon be down upon 'em with a fiery facias or a capias, or some such or another invention of the law."

The youths all burst into a loud cachinnation at the zeal of the landlord to unmask his rival, and reseating themselves, called for another bottle, which our friend of the Arms was not slow to produce, by way of covering his retreat and hiding his disinterested zeal. As they all refilled their glasses, Frank waved his hand for silence. "Has any gentleman here seen Mr. Nathaniel Bacon very lately?"

"I have not—I have not," replied each of the party, and the interrogator then continued, "I would give the best pair of spurs that ever graced a Cavalier's heels to know whether his long absence has had any thing to do with the getting up of yonder dark conclave?"

Whether any of the party were Bacon's immediate friends, or whether they suspected Frank's motives in the case, we shall not undertake to determine at present; but certain it is they were all silent on the point except his intimate friend Ludwell, who replied—"By St. George, Beverly, I believe you are jealous of Bacon on account of the favourable light in which he is said to stand in the eyes of your fair little mistress."

"If I thought that Virginia Fairfax would entertain a moment's consideration for a person of such doubtful parentage and more doubtful principles as Mr. Nathaniel Bacon, the ill-advised protégé of her father, I would forswear her for ever, and dash this glass against the floor, with which I

now invite you all to join me in pledging her,—What say you? Will you join me, one and all?" All rose at the invitation, and while standing with glasses suspended midway to their lips, Ludwell added the name of "the pretty Harriet Harrison." It was drunk with three times three, and then the landlord was brought up by the collar of his jerken between two of the liveliest of the party, and made to tell the reckoning upon the table with his well-worn chalk. Having settled the score, they proceeded to decant full half the remaining bottle into one of his own pint flagons, seized from his shelves for that purpose. "Mine host" made sundry equivocal contortions of the countenance, and practised by anticipation several downward motions of the muscles of deglutition, and then swallowed the enormous potation without a groan.

"There now," said Ludwell, "bear it always in your remembrance that a like fate awaits you, whenever your wine bears evidence of having passed rather far into the state of acetous fermentation." As the party were now leaving the room in pairs, linked arm in arm, "Stop! stop!" cried Beverly; "I have one proposition to make before we separate. It is this. You know that there is to be a grand celebration the day after to-morrow, which is the anniversary of the restoration. The whole to conclude with a ball at the Governor's, to which I feel myself authorized to say that you will all be invited. Now I propose that we all go at different hours to-morrow and engage the hand of the fair Virginia for the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth sets. So that when Mr. Nathaniel Bacon returns, as he assuredly will, to claim her hand, to which he seems to think he has a prescriptive right, he will find no less than six different successful competitors. What say you, gentlemen?"

The proposition was instantly acceded to by all the party, and then the landlord of the Arms was left to digest the pint of his own sour wine in solitude, as he leaned his overgrown person against the casings of the door and watched the youths as they departed one by one in different directions to their respective places of abode.

"Natty Bacon is a goodly youth, however," he muttered in soliloquy; "ha, ha, ha; but he shall know of the plot if I can only clap eyes on him before they see the young lady. Let me see; can it be possible that Natty can have any thing to do with yonder dark meeting of Noll's men? I'll not believe it; he is too good a youth to meddle with such a canting, snivelling set as are congregated there. He always pays his reckoning like any gentleman's son of them all; and a gentleman's son I'll warrant he is, for all that no one knows his father but Mr. Gideon Fairfax."

The Cromwellians alluded to, who were supposed by the youths to be assembled at the Cross Keys, were a few of the late Protector's veteran soldiers, and were the most desperate, reckless and restless of the republicans who, as has been already mentioned, had fled to Jamestown after the restoration. These soldiers were unfitted for any kind of business, and generally lived upon the precarious hospitality of those of their own party who had settled themselves as industrious citizens of the new community.

The names of the leaders of these veteran soldiers and furious bigots were Berkinhead, Worley, Goodenough and Proudfit; and of these the reader will hear more anon.

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## CHAPTER II.

Late in the afternoon of the day succeeding the one designated in the last chapter, towards the southwestern extremity of the beach and outside of the palisade, a young and gentle creature, of most surpassing loveliness, moved thoughtfully along the sandy shore, every now and then casting a wistful glance over the water, and as often heaving a gentle sigh, as a shade of girlish disappointment settled upon her blooming face. Her dress was simple, tasteful, and exquisitely appropriate to her style of beauty. She had apparently scarce passed her sixteenth birthday; and of course her figure was not yet rounded out to its full perfection of female loveliness. So much of her neck as was visible above a rather high and close cut dress, was of that pure, chaste and lovely white which gives such an air of heavenly innocence to the budding girl of that delightful age. The face although exceeding the neck in the height, variety and richness of its colouring, was not disfigured by a single freckle, scar or blemish. The features were generally well proportioned and suited to each other, the lips full and gently pouting, with a margin of as luxurious tinting as that with which nature ever adorned the first budding rose of spring, and when parted, as they often were, by the most gentle and *naïve* laughter, displayed a set of teeth beautifully white and regular. Yet one could scarcely fasten the eye upon them for the admiration excited by the exquisite expression of the dimpled mouth, ever varying, and as it seemed, more lovely with each succeeding change. The motion of her eyes was so rapid that it was difficult to ascertain their colour; but certain it is they were soft and brilliant, the latter effect produced in no small degree by long fair dewy lashes which rose and fell over the picture, as lights and shadows fall from the pencil of an inspired painter.

The fair flaxen ringlets fell beneath the small gipsy hat in short thick curls, and were clustered around her brow, so as to form the most natural and appropriate shade imaginable to a forehead of polished ivory. She was about the medium height, symmetrically proportioned, with an exquisitely turned ankle and little foot, which *now* bounded over the beach with an impatience only surpassed by her own impetuous thoughts, as her eyes became intently riveted upon a moving speck upon the distant waters. The wild and startled expression, excited in the first moment of surprise, might now be seen merging into one of perfect satisfaction, as the distant

object began to grow into distinct outlines at every plunge of the buoyant waves; her heart heaving its own little current to her face in perfect unison with their boisterous movements.

A beautifully painted canoe soon ran its curled and fantastic head right under the bank upon which she stood, and in the next moment a gallant and manly youth leaped upon the shore by her side, and taking her unresisting hand, gently removed the gipsy hat so as to bring into view a certain crimsoning of the neck and half averted face. Nathaniel Bacon, the youth just landed, was about twenty-one, and altogether presented an appearance of the most attractive and commanding character. He wore a green hunting jerken, buttoned close up to his throat so as to show off to the best advantage a broad and manly chest. Upon his head was a broad brimmed unstiffened castor, falling over his shoulders behind, and looped up in front by a curiously wrought broach.

A small brass hunting horn swung beneath one shoulder, while to the other was suspended a short cut and thrust sword. In his hand he bore a fishing rod and tackle.

Few as evidently were his years, much painful thought had already shadowed his handsome and commanding features with a somewhat precocious maturity. It was obviously, however, not the natural temperament of the man which now shone out in his features, after the subsiding of the first glow of delighted feeling visible for an instant as he watched the heightened bloom on the countenance of the maiden.

"You were not irreconcilably offended then at my rash and disrespectful behaviour to your father at our last meeting?"

"Certainly not irreconcilably so, Nathaniel, if offended at all; but I will confess to you candidly, that I was hurt and mortified, as much on your own, as on my father's account."

"You are always kind, considerate and forgiving, Virginia, and it behoves me in presence of so much gentleness, to ease my conscience in some measure by a confession. You have sometimes, but I have never, forgotten that I was thrown upon your father's hospitality an orphan and an outcast. This fact constantly dwells upon my mind, and sometimes harrows up my feelings to such a degree that I am scarcely conscious of my words or actions. It was so on the occasion alluded to. I forgot your presence, the respect due to your father and my benefactor, as well as what was due to myself. I had been endeavouring to revive some of the drunken reminiscences of that eccentric fellow who sits in the canoe there, but they tended only to inflame my ardent desire to know something more of myself. Certainly some allowances must be made for me, Virginia, under the mortifying circumstances in which I am placed. I thought your father could and ought to relieve this cruel suspense!"

"He will if he can, Nathaniel; and that he does not do so immediately, is the best evidence to my mind either that he knows nothing on the subject, or that some powerful reason exists why he should not disclose his knowledge at present. Come, then, return with me to our house; my father will take no notice of your absence or its cause, unless to jest with you upon your want of success in your fishing expedition, which it seems was the ostensible motive of your absence."

"It was my purpose to return, but I had not so amiably settled the how and the when; indeed the objects I had in view were so urgent that I determined to brave even your father's continued anger in order to obtain an interview with you."

"With me, Nathaniel!"

"Ay, with you, Virginia! You know that there are on the island some restless and turbulent spirits—late soldiers of the Protector. They have some dangerous project brewing I am well satisfied, from circumstances which accidentally fell under my own observation. You know too that the Recluse is said to have unbounded influence with these desperate men, and to be familiar with all their designs and movements. And notwithstanding your childish dread of him, you know that he loves you more than any living creature."

"I know all the things you speak of, except the last, and for that I suspect I am indebted to your imagination; but to what does all this lead?"

"I have just returned from a visit to that strange and mysterious old man, and as I have already hinted, hastened hither for the purpose of seeking an interview with you, which fortune has so opportunely thrown in my way."

"But I am yet in the dark. Why did you hasten from the Recluse to me, after discovering the things you speak of?"

"I will tell you; but you must be cool, calm and considerate while I do so, because I have that to tell and that to propose which will astound you!"

"Oh do tell it at once then, and not play upon my feelings thus."

"Your father's and your uncle's life is in danger, Virginia! Heaven, what have I done?" he continued, as he saw his companion turn deadly pale and lean against the palisade for support. But instantly recovering herself she asked—

"Whence does this danger come?"

"That I do not know exactly; but the Recluse knows, and I have been vainly endeavouring to learn

it from him; and this brings me to the proposition which I have to make. You must visit him this night! 'Ay, Virginia! start not, you must do it for your father's and your uncle's sake!'

"Visit the Recluse, and at night! What will my parents say to it, think you?"

"They must not know one word of it."

"Then it is absolutely out of the question."

"Do not say so, Virginia, till you hear me out. As I have already said, the Recluse loves you better than he does any creature in the colony. He knows all the plots and counterplots that are going on, and if you will surprise him with a visit to-night, he will divulge the whole affair to you."

"Why must it be to-night?"

"Because there is no time to be lost. To-morrow is the anniversary of the Restoration. There is to be a grand celebration during the day, and a ball at night; this opportunity is to be taken advantage of in some way or other by the desperate men alluded to. If we wait till to-morrow, and make our visit publicly, these men will all know of it, and its very object be counteracted by that circumstance."

"Your reasons are plausible I confess, Nathaniel, and secret enemies are at all times dreadful, but your alternative is scarcely less so."

"I will pledge my life for your safety. You have the keys of your father's house at command, you can go and return through the servants' hall when they are all asleep. No sentinels are placed on the walls since the general peace with the confederated tribes of Indians. My canoe lies under the first abutment of the bridge. I will watch you from your father's door till you arrive there. We can then cross the creek in the canoe, so that no one will see us at the bridge. Brian O'Reily shall wait on the opposite shore with my horse and pillion for you, and another for himself. What then is there so much to be dreaded in this simple nocturnal excursion to a retired old man, who, to say the worst of him, is nothing more than fanatical on religious subjects, and certainly he is very wise and learned upon all others."

"It is the clandestine nature of the expedition that I object to, Nathaniel; it is so hurried—at such a strange hour too. At all events I must have a little time to consider of the propriety of the step."

"Certainly, you shall have as much time as the nature of the case will admit of. But see, the long shadows of the trees are already extending across the river and the birds are seeking their resting places for the night."

"Oh, happy little songsters! would to Heaven that my rest could be as sweet and tranquil as theirs this night? But Nathaniel, at what hour shall I meet you at the bridge, provided I determine upon the step you propose?"

"As the clock from the tower of the church strikes eleven I will be at my post." And as he stepped into his canoe, he continued, "Remember, Virginia, that it is your own peace and your father's safety that I am endeavouring to secure in the course I urge you to adopt."

As the little vessel rose and sunk over the swelling waves in its passage round the town, Virginia stood on the brink of the river and gazed upon the scene in a deeply meditative mood, very new to her young and hitherto careless heart. At length when her late companion had long disappeared from her sight, and the sombre shadows of evening were fast closing around the ancient city, she slowly passed into the gates of the palisade and sought her father's dwelling.

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## CHAPTER III.

Violent was the struggle of contending emotions within the bosom of Virginia Fairfax, when she had gained her own apartment, and strove to form her determination in the matter proposed by Nathaniel Bacon. On such occasions feeling usurps the place of reason, and the longer we deliberate, the more perplexing seem to grow our doubts and difficulties. If, however, there were powerful feelings contending against the enterprise, there were equally if not more powerful ones operating in its favour. Not the least among these was the estimation in which she held both him who proposed the nocturnal expedition and him whose advice and aid were expected to be gained. Bacon himself, it was generally believed, had acquired most of his knowledge of books from the mysterious personage alluded to, and he in his turn had been the instructor of his fair young associate and playmate. It is true that these relations of the several parties had somewhat changed of late years, as the two younger ones approached the age at which their continuance might be deemed improper, to say nothing of any little misgivings of which, they might themselves be conscious, as to the nature of many strange and novel impressions, the growth of years and intimacy, perhaps, but not suspected until with advancing years came change of relative situation and prospect for the future.

All the various relations of our heroine to the other parties presented themselves in successive aspects to her view, as she endeavoured honestly to decide the matter according to the dictates of duty. While she was thus deliberating, the usual evening meal was announced. As she entered the apartment, and beheld her father and mother waiting for her to assume the head of the table,

which on account of the latter's delicate health had been her custom of late, all the contending emotions which had so lately occupied her mind were renewed with increasing force by the sight of the beloved objects in whose behalf she was solicited to undertake the strange adventure.

Gideon Fairfax, the father of Virginia, was one of the Cavaliers, before alluded to, who fled to Jamestown during the interregnum. He was brother-in-law to the Governor of the colony, and was, at the time of which we write, a member of the council. He was one of that remarkable race of men which has so powerfully influenced the destinies of the Ancient Dominion from that day to the present. He was rather above the medium height, with light hair and eyes, and although he had considerably passed the prime of life, there was a sparkling of boyish vivacity in his eyes, and a cheerful expression always hovering about his mouth, which instantly dispelled any thing like formality in his intercourse with others. Yet withal there was a bold, reckless daring in his look, together with an open-hearted sincerity which served to give a manly dignity to the lighter expressions already mentioned. To his only daughter he was most devotedly attached.

Mrs. Emily Fairfax seemed about the same age as her husband, and though she still preserved some evidence of former beauty, her countenance was now mostly indebted for any charm that it possessed to a mild, lady-like and placid serenity, which was occasionally shadowed by an air of melancholy so profound, that more than once her friends were alarmed for her reason. As Virginia assumed her place at the board, the conflict in her mind was in nowise subdued by observing that one of these melancholy visitations was just settling upon her mother's countenance; indeed there seemed to be a mutual discovery on the part of mother and daughter, that each had some secret cause of uneasiness; but the effect was by far the most painful to the mother's heart, as it was the first time that she had ever seen her daughter's gay and happy temperament seriously disturbed. The parting hour for the night arrived, without making either of them wiser as to the cause of the other's pre-occupation and evident anxiety; the mother having sought an explanation in vain, and the daughter being too much accustomed to her present state of mind to intrude farther upon her sorrows, whatever might be their cause or nature. Bacon's arguments prevailed, and long before the hour appointed, Virginia was sitting at the window, her light extinguished, mantle drawn close around her to exclude the damp air from the river, and her hat tied on in readiness for the expedition.

At length the town clock began to send its slow and solemn sounds across the water. The house was still and dark, and the inmates apparently wrapped in profound slumber. Her own clandestine movements, so new to her, seemed like the trampling of armed heels rather than the footfalls of her own slight figure. More than once she was on the point of retracing her steps, so tumultuous and painful were her emotions in prosecuting an adventure which still appeared to her of such questionable propriety. The servants' hall, garden, and postern gate were all passed without the slightest interruption, save an occasional start at her own shadow, or the impetuous beating of her agitated heart. The moon was at her zenith, and the clouds coursing high in the heavens, so as every now and then to obscure her reflected beams, and present alternate and fantastic contrasts of light and shade upon the surrounding objects. The river for one moment looked like a dark abyss, and the next a mirror of light as the silver rays fell sparkling upon the rippling waters beneath the bridge. The interminable forest beyond was at one moment dark as Erebus, and the next as light as fairy land. There is no appearance of the heavens, perhaps, which produces a greater tendency in the mind to undefined and superstitious terror than that which we have attempted to describe. Our own shadow, visible as it is only for an instant, will startle us; and the ill-omened birds of night acquire huge and unnatural proportions as they flit swiftly by on noiseless wings in this rapid alternation of light and gloom. The wolves and other beasts of prey might be heard at long intervals, as their wild and savage howls broke upon the ear, reverberating from cliff to cliff as they fell upon and were borne across the water. Under these circumstances it may be readily imagined that our heroine was not a little relieved at the sight of Bacon leaning against the nearest abutment of the bridge, anxiously watching for her approach. In a few moments he had seated his companion in the boat, upon a cushion formed of his cloak, and was rapidly approaching the opposite shore. When they arrived at the appointed rendezvous, a very unexpected source of uneasiness was speedily discovered. As has been already intimated, Bacon had early in the evening despatched his usual attendant, Brian O'Reily, across the bridge to wait their arrival. The horses were indeed there—and O'Reily was there, but so intoxicated as to be apparently in no condition to guide the motions of a horse, even should he be able to keep the saddle. Bacon lost all patience at this discovery, and would perhaps have taken summary and not very agreeable means to sober his attendant, had he not been reminded by his gentle companion of the peculiar and privileged position which Brian had from time immemorial enjoyed in his service, as well as that of their own family. "How comes it, sir," said the young man, "that I find you in this predicament when I gave you such strict injunctions to keep yourself sober? Now of all other times!—when I had taken so much trouble to instruct you whom you were to guard, and upon what expedition?"

"By the five crasses, but you've hit the very nail upon the head. By the contents of the book but that's the very reason I took a drop of the crathur!"

"What is the reason, you drunken old fool?"

"The business were an to be sure! you wouldn't be after axing a sinner like Brian O'Reily to expose himself to such a temptation without taking a drop, and may be your haner would do that same for all your spaking against it so intirely."

"And what may the nature of the temptation be of which you speak?"

"And is it Brian you're after axin? O begorra, but that's runnin away wid the story intirely, so it is; sure it's me should be axin your haner after that same!"

"None of your subterfuges, sir! I am determined to know your ideas of this dreadful temptation."

"By my purty an is it Brian's idaas you're axin after, divil a miny o' them he's got any way, barrin a small bit of a smotherin about the heart whenever I think of the business we're on, and the gintleman we're goin to see, savin your prisence and the beauty o' the world by your side."

"What gentleman—speak out and I will forgive your drunkenness, provided you give me up that bottle I see peeping from the pouch of your jerkin."

"An is'nt it the man widout the shadow you're after making a tay party wid?"

"And who is the man without a shadow, Brian?" inquired Virginia, willing to forget her own misgivings in the more ludicrous superstition of the son of the Emerald Isle, whose countrymen, it may be remarked, formed no inconsiderable part of the inferior population of the city at that day.

"Oh bad cess to me, but I'm as glad to see you as two tin pinnies, you beauty o' the world; but it bates all the love I had for you and ever had these ten years past to see where you'r going."

"Well, where is it, Brian?"

"Hav'nt I tould your ladyship it was to a tay party wid the inimy himself."

"Come, see if you can assist Virginia to the pillion," said Bacon, as he sprang into the saddle.

"By my purty and I'll do that same;" kneeling upon one knee and taking one foot in his hand, and then seating her as easily and gracefully as if he had been a stranger to the bottle for a month.

"I had no idea that you were such a coward, Brian," continued his master.

"Sorra a dhrop o' coward's blood runs in Brian O'Reily's heart, iny way. It's one thing to trate the grate inimy with dacent respect, and its another to fight the yellow nagres that go dodgin from tree to tree like so many frogs; the devil fly away wid the one and the t'other o' them for me, I say."

"And who is the great enemy?"

"Sure hav'nt I tould your haner and the beauty o' the world by your side, it was the man widout a shadow what lives in the stone house widout windows, as well he may, seein the light o' his own counthenance may be seen across the river the darkest night any day."

"Sit your horse straight, you drunken piece of stupidity, or you will break your neck."

"Oh! an if Brian never breaks his neck till he falls from a horse, sure he'll live to take many a dhrop of the crathur yet before he dies. Sure I was only crassin myself, divil a word o' lie's in that, iny way."

"There, I have broken one of your necks at least," said Bacon, as with the butt of his riding whip he struck the neck from a bottle which every now and then peeped from Brian's pocket as the motions of the horse raised him in the saddle.

"Oh! murther all out, but you'll come to want yet before you die. Oh sure, but the crathur's safe after all. Wo, ye divil of a baste, don't you hear the crathur all runnin down the wrang side o' me. Wo, I say! Oh but the bottle sticks as tight to the pouch as if it growed there. Oh murther all out, I'm ruined, I'm ruined intirely."

"Draw your arm from your jerken, Brian, and then you can drink out of your pocket," said Virginia, suppressing a laugh.

"Oh you beauty o' the world, see what it is to have the larnin," replied the Irishman, immediately adopting the expedient; but here a new difficulty presented itself. "Oh murther, but the gable end's all knocked off and fax the chimney went along with it. Oh, but the crokery sticks up all round like pike staffs. Wo you murthur'n baste; Now I've got it, now I've got it, you beauty; sorra one of the lane cows at Jamestown gives sich milk as that, fax if they did, I'd be head dairyman to the Governor any way."

Thus our adventurers beguiled the way through a dreary and trackless forest of some miles, until they approached a spot where Bacon signified to the party that they had accomplished so much of their journey as was to be performed on horseback. What farther befell them will be described in the ensuing chapter.

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## CHAPTER IV.

Bacon and his companion having left O'Reily with the horses, now commenced descending an immense hill which formed one side of a dark and dismal looking glen. The tall pine trees with which the higher grounds were covered seemed to reach half way to the clouds. A cold midnight



breeze swept through the damp and dewy foliage of the trees and shrubbery. The birds of night chimed mournfully and dismally in unison with the monotonous rustling of the leaves, and the rippling of a little brook just before them. When they had stepped across the stream, and cast their eyes up the face of the opposite hill, the rays of the moon suddenly broke through a fissure of the clouds, revealing to them rather the darkness around than any distinct traces of the path which they were to pursue. Bacon stood for an instant, and gazed intently upon a little spot of partially cleared ground half way to the summit, then gently drawing his companion to the same place where he stood, and pointing upwards, he said "Do you not perceive something moving yonder? It is he! you must now proceed alone!"

"Alone, Nathaniel? Impossible!"

"You must, Virginia; he will not admit more than one person at a time within his cell. Fear not there is no earthly danger; I will be within call. Rouse your drooping courage! the worst half of your undertaking is now accomplished."

"By far the worst half is yet to come, Nathaniel; you can form no conception of the awe with which I look upon that being! You forget that I have never seen more of him than I see now, notwithstanding you say that he is so much attached to me."

"It is strange, I confess Virginia, but it is nevertheless true."

"His affection, if it exists, must be the fruit of your representations as to some imaginary proficiency in my studies."

"Not at all; he seems to know every one in Jamestown, and all the circumstances connected with their history: but come, Virginia, we are losing precious time. Move on and fear nothing."

Clasping her hands, and internally summoning up all her resolution, she advanced with a sort of desperate determination. Having arrived within some forty yards of the spot before alluded to, the outlines of a gigantic figure could easily be discerned as his footfalls were distinctly heard moving restlessly to and fro on a sort of platform or level space, left by nature or formed by art, in the side of the hill. His head towered far above the stunted undergrowth, interspersed among the rugged outlines of the scene. And as he impatiently measured the narrow limits of this outer court to his castle, he seemed not unlike a chafed and hungry monarch of the forest when making the narrow rounds of his iron bound limits. Having gone thus far, she was sensible that it was nearly as bad to recede as go forward, and that if she retreated now upon the very eve of the fulfilment of all that Bacon had promised, her past anxieties would have been endured for nothing: she braced her nerves therefore, and endeavoured to subdue the overpowering terror which the distant view of this strange and mysterious man had excited. Summoning all her resolution for one desperate effort, she threw herself forward and fell at the feet of the huge mortal, who stood apparently astounded at the abrupt appearance of his unwonted and untimely visiter. When Virginia found courage enough to raise her lately closed eyes, she was not a little astonished to see him leaning against the stone walls of his cell, no less agitated than herself. He was apparently about sixty years of age, his hair slightly silvered, and his features worn and weatherbeaten, yet eminently handsome. His person was very remarkable, being about six feet and a half in height and perfectly proportioned. His dress conformed in some degree to the military fashions of the day, having however rather the appearance of undress than full uniform. The expression of his countenance was decidedly intellectual; and about the lower part of his face there were some indications of a disposition to sensuality, but tempered and controlled in no ordinary degree by some other fierce and controlling passion. His eye was wild and unsettled at times, and again assumed the mild serenity of the profound student. Altogether, his presence was intellectual and commanding in the highest degree.

As he stood against the wall of his cell quaking like an aspen, an indifferent observer would have been at a loss to determine which was the most agitated, he or his gentle visiter. Virginia noted with more than one furtive glance his strange and unexpected embarrassment, still however, preserving her humble and supplicating posture. At length, struggling with the emotions which unmanned him, muttering all the while broken sentences which fell strangely upon her ear, and among which she could distinguish repeated allusions to herself, and to events of long passed years, recalled as it appeared by some fancied resemblance traced by his excited imagination in her form and features. He approached the kneeling maiden, and taking her hand, he raised her from the ground, and said in a tone of kindness, "My wayward fancies frighten thee, my child; be not alarmed, however—there is nothing here to harm thee. My house is poor and cheerless, but such as it is, thou art welcome to its shelter, and to any services which I can render to thee. Come, my daughter, let us in from the damps of the night."

The cell of the Recluse was formed on three sides by stone walls without windows, as O'Reily had described them, the fourth being furnished by the side of the hill, and the roof an arch of masonry overgrown with moss, grass and weeds.<sup>[1]</sup>

Pressing open the rude door, he entered, followed by Virginia. Near one corner of the room stood a common deal table, on which was placed a small iron lamp, and near to it a three legged stool of the rudest construction. These were the only articles of furniture of which the apartment could boast. The floor, which consisted of the earth, as nature had made it, was overgrown with weeds and bushes. "This," said he, with a bitter smile upon his countenance, "is my hall of audience! Here I receive my guests, with one solitary exception; thou shalt be another." Having thus spoken, he took the lamp from the table, and drawing aside some dried bushes which were piled

against the side formed by the hill in apparent carelessness, he exhibited to her view the mouth of a cavern, not sufficient in height by several feet to admit his person in the erect position. "This," said he as he stooped to enter, "is not a house made with hands, and it is built upon a rock of ages. The rains may descend, floods may come, winds blow and beat upon it, but it falleth not. It is proper that thou shouldst see it, and such has long been my intention. I have much to say to thee, and doubtless thou hast something to communicate to me, or thou wouldst not have made this visit. But not a whisper of what thou mayst see or hear must ever pass thy lips, save to those I shall authorize thee to make partakers of thy knowledge. This is a condition which thou must impress upon thy mind." Stepping in a bent position within the mouth of the cavern, he moved forward and downward, motioning her to follow. They descended many rude and natural steps, which were imperfectly seen by the light of the lamp borne by her singular guide, the rays being often obscured by the bulk and great height of his person in the narrow passages of the cave, so that she was more than once compelled to grope her way by sliding her hand along the cold damp and dripping walls, and by slipping her feet over the uneven ground, without raising them in the act of stepping. Having completed the descent, she found herself in a long natural vestibule to the inner apartments. Her guide had gained rapidly upon her, so that when once more upon level ground, some thirty feet below the outer surface of the earth, he was almost out of sight. She would have cried out, had she not been restrained by a counteracting feeling, which placed her in a grievous dilemma between horror at the dismal place, and fear of the singular being who had undertaken to guide her through its recesses. Commending herself however to her Maker in mental prayer, and trusting in his protection the more confidently on account of the motive for her undertaking, she hastened forward so as with great exertions to keep within sight of the rising and sinking light of the lamp, and the devious windings of the cavern. The footfalls of her Herculean guide reëchoed along the damp and gloomy tunnels with an awful and dismal effect, amidst the grave-like stillness of the place. Occasionally flickering shadows were reflected against the walls, when the light turned suddenly round a projecting rock, affording to her imagination the most startling and frightful images. While her mind was combatting these unreal terrors, she was surprised by the tone of a deep hoarse voice abruptly rumbling through the high dark arches far above her head, with that reverberating sound peculiar to these secret places of the earth. But her amazement was still greater, when lifting her eyes in the direction of the lamp she beheld the Recluse standing upon a lofty but narrow ledge of rock, the lamp flickering and sinking every now and then so as to threaten total darkness. He was pointing with his finger, and directing her to a projecting and winding pathway by which she must ascend to the platform upon which he stood. This once gained, she had a complete view of the resting place of her mysterious guide.

Immediately fronting the platform was a natural doorway, about as high as her own head, leading into the inner chamber. From the high and vaulted arches hung thousands of the fantastic creations of hoary time, and from the centre of these a cord swung into the middle of the area, to which was suspended a burning lamp, the rays of which were brilliantly reflected from a thousand shining mirrors of nature's forming. In one corner she discovered, as they entered, several pieces of firearms, and against the wall on one side hung huge swords, long enough for two-handed weapons to ordinary mortals, together with Indian war clubs, moccasins, wampum, pipes, tomahawks, spears, arrows, and other implements of savage warfare. In another corner stood a rude bedstead, evidently constructed by the hands of its nightly occupant, a small table, two or three chairs, and a few culinary articles,—some the manufacture of the savages, and others the product of civilized ingenuity. By far the largest part of one side of the room was occupied by coarsely constructed shelves, bearing many volumes of the most venerable appearance. One of these was lying open upon the table, a pair of horn spectacles upon the page to mark the place where the owner had last been engaged. The very letters in which it was printed were entire strangers to the eyes of our heroine. Some thirty yards distant, in the remotest part of the room, a little furnace diffused a narrow circle of glowing light through its otherwise gloomy precincts. These completed the establishment, so far as the eye could discover its arrangement.

When he had led Virginia into the habitable part of this area, he placed a chair, and motioned for her to be seated, drawing a stool near the table at the same time for himself, and resting his head upon the palm of his hand. "I will not affect ignorance of thy name and person, my daughter, nor yet of thy errand here. The first I should most certainly have known, if I had not surmised the last. Alas! my child, thou wilt think no doubt that I speak in riddles when I tell thee that those features have been engraven upon the heart of one who has forsworn the world for many a long and irksome year. Thou mayest well look amazed, my poor bewildered child, but it is true! I cannot explain it to thee now, however; some day perhaps thou mayest know all. Oh, if thou couldst imagine what events must take place in this little isolated world around Jamestown, before the mysteries of which I speak can rightfully be made clear to thee, thou wouldst fall upon thy knees and pray that such disastrous knowledge might never come to thy understanding!"

As his eye rested from time to time, while he spoke, upon the features of the beautiful girl, he covered his face with his hands, and seemed for an instant to give way to an agitation similar to that which unnerved him at her first appearance on the platform. Occasionally too, when not speaking himself, he became profoundly abstracted for a moment, and his eye was wild and restless, and not a little alarming to his gentle visitor, as it ever and anon fell upon herself, and seemed to gather in her face the solution of some subtle doubt of his troubled mind. But observing that his glances, wild as they were, always became humanized and softened as they rested upon her face, she seized the first opportunity to complete the object of her journey, not well knowing how it might terminate, being herself ignorant of its especial object, and indeed of

the very nature of the threatened danger.

"Father, I came here to seek your aid and protection for those who are near and dear to me; My honoured parents—my mother"—she would have proceeded, but at the mention of her mother's name he was seized with such a convulsive shudder that she paused in astonishment. It seemed as if the hand of death was already laying its cold grasp upon his vitals. His eye gleamed wildly—his lips trembled, and his hands shook as one stricken with the palsy, or overwhelmed by some sudden stroke of calamity. By a desperate effort of resolution, he speedily resumed his attention to the discourse, and she proceeded: "I have been advised and urged in my resort to this step by one not unknown to you, under the vain hope, I fear, that you were cognizant of some threatened danger to my dear parents and kindred, and that you would communicate the knowledge to me rather than to him."

"As I have already said, my daughter, I surmised that something of this nature was the object of thy visit, and I will now confess to thee that this appeal places me in an embarrassing position between some friends of former and better days and my desire to grant thy request." Pausing and apparently soliloquizing, he continued: "But have they not acted against my advice? Did I not tell them, that we had had enough of that already? Did I not warn them against this very result? I cannot betray them, however; no, no, my old comrades, I will give you another warning, and then your blood, if it must flow, be upon your own heads." He was about to resume his discourse to his visiter, but stopping suddenly and raising his finger in the attitude of one listening in the profoundest attention, he seized the small lamp, rushed past the little furnace in the direction of the cave through the hill opposite the entrance, at one time rising and anon descending, until Virginia (who had followed, fearing to be left alone) supposed they must be again near the surface of the earth. He paused once more to listen, motioning her at the same time to be silent. He had scarcely done so, when the distant sound of running water struck upon her ear,—sometimes distinct, and again as if buried in the bowels of the earth. Then came the noise as of a stone splashing in the water. The eye of the Recluse sparkled as he turned with a quick and expressive glance towards his companion. He hastily applied his ear to the rocky side of the cavern and listened for a second, then hurried back, taking Virginia by the hand in his return, and leading her to her former seat. He then busied himself for a few moments in exchanging the short cutlass by his side for one of the huge weapons hanging on the wall, and placed a pair of large and richly inlaid petronels in his belt, as if about to march on some secret and desperate expedition.

Whether these were really for such a purpose, or were his usual preparations for repose, Virginia was entirely at a loss to determine. Meantime she had an opportunity to survey the features and expression of his countenance, as he from time to time faced towards her, intently engaged with his occupation, and muttering all the while words to her altogether inexplicable at the time.

His large and light blue eye had an expression of forced resignation and calmness, drops of cold perspiration stood upon his brow, lip, and bald head, which was now uncovered. His features were large and striking, but well proportioned, the lips protuberant, the teeth large, white, and regular, and as a smile, indicative more of wretchedness than mirth, played upon his face, the impression was irresistible that the wrinkles which marked his features were the impress of suffering rather than of age. In his personal as well as mental attributes he was eminently gifted, though there seemed to be a settled design, as much to clothe the one in the garb of age, as to exhibit the other, if at all, in meekness and humility.

"It is not consistent with my duty to all parties in this business, my daughter, to enlighten thee as to the nature of the danger which threatens thy friends, or as to the means of preventing it. I owe it to myself, first to warn those from whom it comes, yet once more against their undertaking, as I have already done—but thus far in vain. If they are still deaf to my admonition and entreaties, rest assured that I will leave no power or influence within my control unexerted to thwart their purposes. Thou mayest therefore direct him who must have conducted thee hither, to see me early on the morrow, and I will inform him as to the result of my endeavours and the best means to pursue in case they are unsuccessful. Rest thou contented yet a little while; I see thou art impatient, but I have some things to say to thee concerning other matters than those which brought thee hither. I see thou art studying these evidences of years in my features as the forester examines the rings in the fallen tree to estimate its age, but these (pointing to the wrinkles) are records which years alone could not have wrought. Few of us, my daughter, can read these marks of time and destiny, and trace through them one by one, the disappointed hopes, the cruel mishaps, the hair-breadth adventures, their failure, sealed perhaps in the blood of those who had basked together with us in the sunshine of youth and hope, without a sinking of the heart within us, and a deep sense of the utter worthlessness of all those gay illusions which beam so brightly on thy own youthful features.

"I allude to this subject now, my daughter, because there seems to be some connexion between it and the one upon which I have been so anxious to commune with thee. Although we have never met before, it is not the first time I have seen thee, nor is this, which thou hast given me, the first information I have received concerning thee and thine. I have taken some pains to learn even the minutest circumstances connected with thy past history, present occupation and future prospects. I see thy surprise, but it was not done in idle gossip thou mayest be well assured. My motives will all be made plain enough to thee some day. In the mean time I must approach a subject which I fear will give thee pain, but my duty is imperative, I mean the state of thy mind and feelings."

"Alas, father, I fear you will find them but too deeply engrossed with the cares and pleasures of this world."

"Thy mistake is a natural one," said he, (one of those smiles of wretchedness passing over his pale countenance, as a flash of electricity darting along the horizon sometimes shows us the extent and depth of the darkness beyond) "my situation and past misfortunes would indeed seem to fit me for a teacher of holy things, but my present business is with thy worldly affections. Start not, my daughter; I have the most urgent reasons which a mortal can have for thus endeavouring to intrude myself into thy feminine secrets; believe me, no trifling cause could impel me thus to startle thy maidenly delicacy, nor indeed needest thou be startled on one account which I see agitates thee. Thou very naturally supposest me to have some charge to bring against thee for want of proper spirit and maidenly reserve; I see it by thy blushes; but there is no such thought within my breast; thou mayest have been even more guarded than is customary with females of thy age. My business is with facts, and facts of such a nature that however stubborn they may be, I fear that thou art unconscious of them, though they relate to thyself and one other person only. However, without bringing thee to confession, I think I can sufficiently put thee upon thy guard without wounding thy delicacy. The only question in my own mind is, whether the time to speak has not already passed."

"I am at a loss to comprehend you, father."

"I will speak more plainly then. Thou hast been associating for some years with a youth of little more than thine own age. He is noble and gifted with every manly and generous attribute; well instructed too for his time and country. To thee I will give credit for corresponding qualities suitable to thy own sex, and I have no doubt that thou possessest them. Thinkest thou then that two such persons could grow up together constantly within the influence of each other's expanding personal attractions, besides the nobler ones of mind and heart, without feeling more towards each other than two ordinary mortals of the same sex? Oh, I see the crimson tell-tale mounting in thy cheeks; thou hangest thy head too in tacit acknowledgement, that I have surmised no more than the truth." His visiter for some time made a vain effort to speak, and at length overcoming her confusion and surprise, in broken sentences exclaimed, "Indeed" indeed, father, you wrong me! indeed you wrong us both! such a subject was never mentioned between us to this hour! Nay more, it never entered our"—as she looked up and perceived his searching glance riveted upon her countenance, her head again sunk in embarrassment, and the words died upon her lips.

"Cease, cease, my daughter, to punish thyself. I will give thee credit for all thou wouldst say. I am willing to believe that neither of you has ever mentioned this subject, and perhaps that neither has ever been conscious of more than a brotherly affection towards the other. Nevertheless, the last half hour has fully convinced me that self-examination, some sudden prospect of separation, or some untoward circumstance in the ordinary current of your intercourse was only necessary to awaken both to the perception of the truth. But my business now is of a far more painful nature than the mere finding of the facts. I am bound in duty to warn thee! solemnly warn thee that this passion must be subdued in its inception. I beg of thee not to suppose for one moment, that my warning has reference merely to obstacles which commonly obstruct the current of young and mutual affection! They are absolutely insurmountable,—far more so than any that could arise from difference of rank, or faith, or country! Nay, if death itself had put its seal upon one or both, the gulf could not have been more impassable!" His language began gradually to grow more impassioned, his eye shot forth a continued instead of occasional gleam of wildness—he rose upon his feet, and as he pronounced the barrier to be impassable, he took down a large and ancient manuscript volume, bound in leather, threw it open upon the table, and to her astonishment a bloody hand was all that was visible upon the page which seemed to have been accidentally turned up. He pointed to this singular sign-manual—his finger trembling with emotion—"See there," said he—"see what it is to neglect a solemn warning. There is the diary of my eventful life—the transactions of every day for more than twenty-seven years are there written, save one! There is the only record of that day! Its history is written in blood! The seal of Cain is stamped upon all the events of the succeeding pages. Since that bloody token was placed there, its author has been a wanderer and an outcast. I was born among the haughty and the proud of a proud land—there is my coat of arms," said he, with a horrid laugh which sent the blood coursing back to the heart of our heroine chilled and horrified. "These are not or should not be uninteresting records to thee!—had that crimson attestation never been imprinted there, thou wouldst never have been born! but this will suffice for the first lesson," (and he closed the book and replaced it upon the shelf;) "at some more convenient season I will reveal another page of the history of one with whom henceforth thou wilt be more connected than thou now imaginest. Now, my daughter, before thou takest leave, let me entreat thee to remember and ponder well upon what I have said to thee. Shouldst thou ever be in any sudden strait of danger or difficulty send to me a memento of the bloody seal and I will come to thee, if within the compass of mortal means; and remember likewise, should I ever send such an emblem to thee—pause well upon what thou art about to do. Now thou mayest depart in peace, but say nothing of what thou hast seen or heard farther than I have directed thee to do." And thus speaking he took the lamp and conducted her out by the same opening at which they had entered.

They stood upon the platform overlooking the shadowy mazes of moonlit foliage down the glen; all nature was as silent as when it first came from the hands of its Creator. Looking towards heaven, and placing his hand upon her flaxen ringlets, now wafted about in the richest reflections and deepest contrasts of light and shadow, as a cold breeze from the valley beneath sought an

opening to the plains beyond, he said, "May God Almighty bless and preserve thee, my daughter!" And then led her some distance down the hill—bade her adieu, and left her to seek her more youthful guide, and to ponder upon some novel and not very pleasing passages in the diary of her own experience.

Her ideas were any thing but clear and definite. The whole scene of her late interview was so new—the subject so startling to her young and innate delicacy. Taking it for granted, however, that all the surmises of the Recluse were true with regard to herself, that person has studied human nature to little purpose, who supposes that she, after all that had been so solemnly announced, admitted the undefined obstacles mentioned to be as insuperable as the person who suggested them seemed to imagine. Nevertheless an injunction so grave and authoritative had its minor effects—the first of which were visited upon the head of our hero, who impatiently awaited her approach at the foot of the hill.

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## CHAPTER V.

When Virginia arrived at the foot of the hill, and looked back, she could see the Herculean figure of the Recluse, throwing its tall shadow far down the face of the cliff, as he paced his narrow court exactly as she had found him doing.

The surrounding scenery now looked doubly brilliant to her confused senses, after the gloomy contrasts of her late subterranean journey. The fleeting clouds were entirely dispersed, and the moonbeams shone clearly forth in undimmed splendour, tipping with silver light each tree and shrub, on the hill side and in the dale, and sparkling like gems along the rippling current of the purling brook on the banks of which Bacon waited her approach.

Although the language of the Recluse was somewhat dark and oracular, it was sufficiently explicit to produce a very sensible effect upon the mind of Virginia, which our hero was not long in discovering; for as he extended his hand to assist her across the brook, she tacitly declined the proffered aid, as if unobservant of his intention, and leaped the streamlet unassisted. He was the more astonished, that in the whole of their long intercourse he could not recollect such a whim or freak occurring towards himself. She seemed reserved and formal too, as they moved up the opposite hill; but without remarking on her altered mood, he sought to draw from her the result of her expedition. Barely communicating so much as she had been directed to do, however, she remained to him inexplicably silent.

While he was revolving these things in his mind his companion, silently and moodily walking at his side, without availing herself of his offered arm, they met Brian O'Reily somewhat farther down the hill than the spot where they had left him—the bridle of a horse slung upon each arm—a handkerchief tied round his waist, into which were stuck two petronels from his own saddlebow; and in his hand his master's ready for use.

"In the name of all the saints in Ireland, what is the matter, Brian?" exclaimed Bacon.

"Oh! an be the Holy Father at Rome, is it there'ye are? Sure as death, but I'm the boy that thought ye were clane murdered iny'way."

"Murdered! why who was to murder us?"

"Faix, an there's enough iv them to do that same in *this* bloody place. Barrin the tay party wid the great inimy in the side iv the hill yonther, a'int there enough iv the bloody nagurs (the savages,) ranting about like so many wild bastes, ready to peale the tap iv your heads like a pair of onions or murpheys—divil a word a lie's in that iny way."

"Are there any of the savages abroad to-night?"

"Be the contints iv the book, but there is five yallow rascals gone over the hill towards the city half an hour since. Oh, by my purty, but I was as near putting a key note to one of their whistles, as two tin pinnies, only, that I was jalous iv your own safety, and the beauty by your side at that same reckning."

"I commend your discretion in not shooting—and I wonder at your sobriety, considering the condition in which we left you."

"Oh, is it Brian O'Reily's discretion your haner's after namin?—an is'nt it me that's a pathern o' sobriety? Oh, by the five crasses, but it all comes iv the dhrap o' the crathur I got by the larnin iv you, ye beauty; divil a word a lie's in that."

"Gone towards the town have they?" said Bacon, musing—and then examining the priming of his petronels, he took them—placed them in their holsters, and mounted his horse, motioning to his attendant at the same time, to assist Virginia to the pillion. She being mounted, he continued his discourse to her. "Keep up your courage my brave pupil; no danger shall molest you unencountered."

"Strange as it may appear," replied she, for the first time uttering something more than a monosyllable. "The real danger in which we seem placed, has few terrors, after my late subterranean visit." This last part of the sentence was said in an under tone, as they cantered

over the hill.

"You have done bravely, Virginia, and now Brian it is our turn. Do you ride foremost—but on no account pull trigger, or draw your sword, without my orders. We are at peace with the confederated tribes of the peninsula:—should the party therefore prove to be any of these, bloodshed will be, unnecessary. Remember, and be watchful!"

"Oh! be the powers iv mud and darkness, but there's no more profit in watchin these skulking nagurs, than there is in spakin to the fish to make them take the bate; both the one and the tother o' them bites when you laste expect it. Oh! would'nt it be a fine thing to have a praste to walk along afore ye wid the contints of the book spread out before him?"

"Get along O'Reily with your nonsense; one would suppose, to hear you talk, that you were the greatest coward in Christendom."

The conversation of the Hibernian was at all times amusing to our adventurers, and was enjoyed with more zest, doubtless, on account of the many excellent qualities which they knew him to possess, being as they knew, brave, devotedly attached to them both, and of unvarying good humour. On the present occasion, Bacon encouraged his volubility in order to divert his companion's attention from dwelling upon the danger which he but too clearly saw might await them on their passage to the city; and thus was the time beguiled, until they arrived at the top of the hill commanding the town and river, without encountering a single foe, or meeting with any adventure worth recording. As they descended towards the river, and O'Reily was just felicitating himself "that there was a clane path intirely across the stream." A sudden exclamation of surprise from Bacon, induced him to rein up his steed, in order to ascertain the cause. This however was clearly seen before the retrograde movement was completed.

"Oh! the murtherin thaves iv the world," said O'Reily, "there they are in our boat too, as sure as my name's Brian O'Reily. Your haner's a good shot across that same little river, any way, and by these pair o' beauties that never lie nor chate" he continued, unslinging his arms, "but I'll be bound for a couple or three more iv them. By the vestments but we'll put some o' them to slape, wid a tune that'll ring in their ears to the day o' their deaths."

"Softly! softly, O'Reily" said Bacon, "you are as far on the one extreme now as I thought you on the other a while ago. Don't you see that two watch on this side, besides the three in the boat? And as I live, they are preparing to push off. Quick, Brian, dismount and follow me behind these bushes! we must despatch these two, at least, without the use of firearms. And you, my gentle pupil, must remain with the horses. If we fall, remain quiet until they have carried off whatever it is they are endeavouring to steal, and then leave the horses, and seek a passage by the bridge. I know your situation is a trying one, but it is the best we can do under the circumstances."

"Oh! no, no, Nathaniel!" said Virginia, suddenly recovering her feelings as well as her voice. "It is not the best we can do. Stay here yourself, and I can slip round, unperceived, to the gate of the bridge, and from thence alarm the city. Do, Nathaniel, suffer me to go."

"Not for worlds!" answered Bacon; "do you not perceive that it would be impossible for you to pass the two on this side unnoticed? Besides, were you even to gain the gate, they would tomahawk you before you could arouse one person in the town. No, no, you must remain. Seat yourself on the sward and hide your eyes, if you will, until we despatch these two, and then we can hold the others at bay."

"But what is the necessity of attacking them at all, Nathaniel?"

"Do you not see that they have been committing some depredation?—perhaps worse, and would be sure to make fight were we to show ourselves in so small force. But come, O'Reily, we are losing precious time; follow me, and for your life do not shoot."

This short and earnest dialogue was held in whispers, and in much less time than we have taken to record it.

The precaution against using firearms was doubtless given for fear of betraying to the inhabitants of the town the delicate and apparently equivocal position in which Virginia was placed. "We must be upon these two with our good swords, O'Reily," said Bacon, "before the others can join them, and if possible before they perceive us."

"Devil burn me but my hand itches to get acquainted wid the taste o' their skulls any way. Oh! if we can only smash these two but we'll keep the others to see their own funerals iny way."

In a few moments, Bacon and his trusty follower were silently gliding through the bushes on the banks of the river, and advanced to within a few rods of the savages, unperceived either by the party on the beach or those loading the boat on the opposite shore. But as they were just emerging from the last bush which protected their movements, a characteristic and startling exclamation "hugh!" from the watch stationed in the boat, at once precipitated their movements, and put the two on their guard whom they were about to attack.

There was at that day no male inhabitant of Jamestown or the surrounding Colony, arrived at the years and vigour of manhood, who was entirely unacquainted with the mode and usual end of Indian warfare. Of course, on such occasions as the present, the contest was for life or death.

Bacon, notwithstanding his youth, had already acquired some renown as a warrior in these

desperate single-handed conflicts, which doubtless gave him and his companion more assurance of success on this occasion, notwithstanding the fearful odds which it was possible might be brought against them. Springing upon their adversaries, who, as has been seen, were on their guard, the conflict at once became desperate, while those in the boat made the utmost efforts to join their companions and overpower their unexpected enemies. No sooner were the two good swords of Bacon and O'Reily flashing in the moonbeams, than corresponding motions of the savage war clubs gave evidence that they also were ready for battle. Many and hard were the blows which were given on both sides in the struggle, a mere protraction of which Bacon perceived was destruction. Accordingly bracing up his own nerves, and cheering O'Reily, he made a vigorous and successful lunge at his immediate antagonist, but not before the reinforcement of the enemy was on the ground to take his place. A contest of this kind, when the parties were any thing like equal in number, was generally not long doubtful—victory in most instances being upon the side of superior skill and weapons. But O'Reily, although a veteran soldier, had met his match in this instance, his antagonist being a tall and brawny warrior of most fearful proportions. Yet he laid about him stoutly, while Bacon, merely having time to catch his breath, renewed the unequal contest with two of the new assailants, the third at the same time joining his already too powerful chief against the Irishman. The conflict was now desperate and bloody; our adventurers fought well and skilfully, every blow was followed by a crimson stream, and they too in their turn were more than once beaten to their knees by the terrific sweep of the war clubs. At one time Bacon was entirely prostrated, but instantly recovering and rising to his knees he continued to defend himself until he had once more regained his feet.

This warfare had now lasted for some minutes, which seemed an age to the trembling maiden who stood an unwilling yet enchained spectator on the side of the hill above them. But victory appeared at length about to crown the desperate efforts of her friends, whose assailants were now reduced to exactly their own number, and one; the tall old chief opposed to Brian, covered with his own blood and just ready to fall, when a sudden and terrific yell immediately behind them announced a reinforcement; and Virginia sank upon the earth in terror and despair.

"Plunge into the stream and swim for your life," shouted Brian—"Oh! but I'll keep their hands busy till ye go clear, even wid a stack of the yellow devils afore me!"

Six horrid and painted human monsters, (so they seemed to our adventurers) now leaped into the midst of the conflict, relieving their own brethren and thundering their blows upon the heads of their already exhausted adversaries. In vain they made furious lunges, forgetting the cunning of fence in the perfect desperation of the hopeless conflict. At length they both fell under the weapons of their new enemies and two of the savages, flashing their knives from their sheaths, prepared to complete the sacrifice; indeed a despairing yell from O'Reily announced that the butchery had already commenced; when in an instant the head of the old Chief stooping over him was severed from the trunk, and in the next a second blow from the same gigantic arm prostrated the one about to tear the bloody trophy from the fallen Cavalier.

Virginia had by this time ventured another despairing look upon the fate of him who was the cherished companion of her childhood. In that moment, doubtless, all the warnings and injunctions of the Recluse were forgotten, or if remembered, instantly set aside as the over prudential suggestions of pride in rank, or wealth, or power, governing the feelings of her friends, or of him who undertook to give her counsel in their stead.

But there were still enemies left besides the two who had flourished the scalping knife over our prostrate adventurers. With these the Recluse (for he it was who had come so opportunely to the rescue) at once renewed the conflict. Placing his back against a tree, and throwing away his castor and scabbard, he joined in the strife with a zest like that of an epicure who bares his arm to the exercise of the carving knife—whirling his enormous weapon amidst the falling clubs with the precision, ease and coolness of a professor exhibiting his skill with the harmless foils. His first exertions were, of course, on the defensive, among so many assailants, but if his blows were rare they were sure and fatal. He was evidently but putting in practice a sort of exercise in which he must have both delighted and excelled in days long past.

At every blow or thrust a savage went down to rise no more, Bacon, too, now rallied his scattered senses and exhausted strength, and resumed his part in the conflict, with enough of both to render him a valuable auxiliary in the way of defence, which the Recluse perceiving, sprang into the midst of the enemy and speedily put to flight, or the sword, the exhausted and disheartened remnant. When Virginia saw this devoutly-prayed-for termination to the battle, she sank upon the ground as powerless and exhausted as if she too had been actively engaged. The Recluse stooping over O'Reily and feeling his head and wrist, hastened to the boat, and seizing the wooden vessel with which the water was usually bailed out, returned and bathed his face and temples. Not so swift were his motions however as to prevent his stopping for a moment at the boat and gazing with astonishment at Something which it contained; but there was little time for wonder, and he hastened on his errand. When Brian's face was cleansed from blood it was found that the scalping knife of the old warrior had probably been struck from its intended destination so that the point had caught in one corner of his mouth and inflicted a wound of some magnitude across his face. While he was thus attended, Bacon hastened, with what speed he was able to exert, toward the spot where he had left his helpless companion. He found her just recovering from the listless stupor in which we left her. "Oh, Nathaniel!" was all that she was enabled to articulate as she fell into his arms, forgetting in the deep excitement of the moment every feeling save the strong and innocent affection which had so long existed between them.

Bacon placed her upon his horse, and taking the bridle in one hand, and holding her steady in her seat with the other, proceeded to the scene of the late mortal struggle. They found O'Reily sitting up, with his mouth already bandaged, and his late assistant and protector gone, having first, as Brian indistinctly muttered, pointed to the boat, as if there were something there which craved attention. Their own perceptions were now startled from the same quarter, by the sound of groans. Bacon ran to the spot, and found a female bound, and lying upon her face in the bottom of the boat. Having cut the cords and bathed her swollen face and temples, he speedily restored her to something like consciousness, and then bore her to the shore and laid her upon the ground. O'Reily now recognised her as Mrs. Jamieson, wife of Jamie Jamieson, principal fisherman to the town, whose hut, for convenient purposes in his avocation, was situated without the protection of the fort. This statement also accounted to Bacon for the presence of a quantity of fish netting in the boat, which doubtless excited the cupidity of the poor ignorant savages, who lay cold and lifeless at his feet.

New embarrassments seemed to stare our wanderers in the face at every step on this eventful night. Scarcely was O'Reily restored to his senses, and Mrs. Jamieson to such a state as to give hopes of recovery, when it occurred to our hero that something must be done with the dead bodies. But when he came to reflect upon the appearance which the battle ground itself would present, he determined to leave the rest to chance, and to say nothing himself or through his follower, and thus leave the gossips of the town to account for the slaughter of the Indians as they might. Mrs. Jamieson was now carefully replaced in the boat, and O'Reily assisted to his post at the *tiller*, while Bacon, having seated Virginia, occupied Brian's usual place at the oar, being the least injured of the two.

The former was for once in his life perfectly silent, perhaps owing to the awkward accident which had happened to his mouth, thereby rendering it difficult for him to enunciate with the true Hibernian pathos.

The females having been landed, Bacon desiring Virginia to sit by the still benumbed Mrs. Jamieson, returned for his horses, which were led by the side of the boat without any difficulty.

The whole party now proceeded to the fisherman's hut, Bacon supporting the feeble steps of its exhausted mistress. Here a new disaster awaited them. A few yards from the house towards the river, they discovered the body of the fisherman himself, cold, stiff, and lifeless. O'Reily was directed to remain with the woman of the house until she should completely recover her senses, but on no account to stay longer, or enter into any explanations.

Bacon and Virginia entered the gate of the fort unchallenged, and proceeded to the house of Mr. Fairfax, when the latter entered as quietly and as unperceived as she had sallied forth; while he officiated as ostler to his own steed, which service being finished to his satisfaction he sought his apartment; the morning being far advanced towards the dawn of day. His slumbers, it may be readily imagined, were not profound and undisturbed,—the restless nervousness of over exertion in mind and body, being very similar in its effects to that of too much repose.

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## CHAPTER VI.

On the morning of the Anniversary of the Restoration, the sun was just emerging above the eastern horizon, the sky was unclouded and serene, the air balmy and elastic, and the volumes of misty drapery from the river were fast rolling away over the hills, as the Recluse stood upon one of the highest points of the river cliffs, with folded arms, surveying the scene around him.

Far back as the eye could reach to the west, all was interminable forest—the foreground exhibiting occasional specks of cleared land, where some planter, more adventurous than his fellows, had boldly trusted his fortunes to the mercy of the savage.

He looked upon the little city beneath, as the weary mariner on a long voyage may be supposed to look upon a green island in the midst of a desert of waters. His chest heaved as the swelling emotions of pent up years burst from his over-loaded heart. Bacon, the manly and ingenuous youth, whom the reader will remember as having been appointed to visit him on this morning, had just sprung upon a mettled and pawing charger, which was now throwing the fire and pebbles from his heels in thick volleys, as his master with a fire and impetuosity scarcely inferior to his own, bent over his uncurbed neck as he descended into the plain. Several pieces of light artillery, together with volleys of musketry in quick succession, thundered over the smooth waters of the Powhatan, and reverberated in multiplied peals under the feet of the Recluse. There was something connected with this day, and its celebration, which seemed powerfully to have stirred up the still waters within him. Thick coming fancies connected with by-gone days were rolling over his soul in an uncontrolled torrent. But we must leave him for a time to his own reflections, amidst the solitary grandeur of the scene, while we pursue the road of the flying Cavalier towards the city.

The bells from the Church and State House were now also heard in the intervals of the cannonade, and as we approach nearer to the scene, a strange confusion of many sounds greet the ear. Drums and fifes, violins and banjoes, and even jews-harps, all lent their aid to swell the burst of joy and gratulation. Smiling and happy faces were grouped along the streets, while gay



damself, in their holyday finery, adorned the doors and windows of the busy citizens. A perfect Babel of commingled noises issued from the spacious area of a tobacco warehouse, which, after the usual fashion, consisted of an extensive roof, supported by colonnades to every front. Here was congregated the rising generation—boisterous and happy in the midst of their games and sports. No schoolmaster was abroad on that day, to rush in upon the unwary urchins, and wreak upon them the vengeance of Samson upon the Philistines.

Our forefathers suffered their children to follow very much their own humours in the selection of those amusements suited to their age and condition. We see not but the result was as happy as that of the systems of our day, when every thing is regulated by system, even to the games and amusements of our children. The time is certainly not far distant when Geography will be taught by a game at cards; Chemistry by set *conversations* upon the constituents of our edibles, and Natural Philosophy developed in nursery rhymes, that we may imbibe it with our lullabies.

On the morning in question, as merry a set of boisterous lads kicked up the dust in the old warehouse, as ever fought over a game of marbles, or laughed through one of leap-frog. And while the merry urchins, whom we have taken under our special protection, were thus enjoying a glorious holyday, their elders and superiors were moved by the same impulses. The mansion of the Governor itself was in visible commotion; servants swelling with importance, aped the grandeur of their masters' looks, while they ran from room to room on their various duties. A provincial band of music was stationed under the windows, uniting their sweet sounds to the Babel-like uproar, in the well known tune of "Over the waters to Charley."

There was one little green spot upon the common inviting the contemplative mind to pleasing reveries. Here a few of the humbler maidens of the city were adorning the overhanging bushes with gay garlands of flowers, preparatory to the evening dance, which they contemplated celebrating in imitation of their superiors, who were to move in more stately measures at the mansion of the Governor.

The household of Gideon Fairfax was likewise earlier than usual on the alert, and he being one of the council of the Colony, came in also for a share of the honours noised forth under the windows of the most distinguished Cavaliers.

Breakfast had been some time waiting at the table, and the fondly indulged daughter had been repeatedly summoned, but still she came not. This excited the more surprise in the minds of her parents, as they supposed, that on this eventful morning, of all others in the year, she would be up with the lark. The truth was, that after retiring at such an unusual hour of the night, or rather morning—her slumbers were disturbed between sleeping and waking, by shadowy dreams of yelling savages, chivalrous youths, and mighty giants.

At length, however, she appeared, but instead of bounding into the room with gay and elastic steps, and more buoyant spirits, in happy anticipation of the promised enjoyments of the day, her movements were slow and heavy—her eyes red and swollen, and her whole appearance indicative of languor and dejection. Her fond parents were instantly at her side—each taking a hand as she walked into the room, and striving to learn from the fancied invalid the nature of her sufferings. She assured them that she had nothing to complain of but want of rest, and with this they were the more readily satisfied, as towards morning there had indeed been much firing of guns, and other demonstrations of loyalty. Her parents being thus satisfied, that her account of the matter was the true one, Virginia was suffered to assume her place at the head of the table—a place she had for some time occupied on account of the delicate state of her mother's health. Meanwhile the anxious parents assumed their own places, and endeavoured to beguile their daughter's languor by allusions to the merry sounds, and gay group without, not forgetting the assembly at the Governor's; and it is more than probable that they would have succeeded, as few spirited and blooming beauties of sixteen can long listen unmoved to such details, had not Virginia, raising her half cheerful face at that moment to a large mirror which hung opposite, caught the reflection of a person in whose welfare she took a lively interest, standing in one corner of the room, and partly behind her chair, with a countenance and attitude which expressed the deepest misery. This was no other than Wyandokee, her own little Indian attendant, who officiated near the person of her mistress, in a medium capacity between friend and servant; the mistress only requiring the companion, and the maid spontaneously offering the services due both from affection and gratitude.

The figure of Wyandokee was diminutive, but like most of the aboriginal females, exquisitely proportioned, and graceful, after the fashion of nature's finest schooling. Her face was oval and between a brown and yellow colour, yet there was a vital tinge occasionally illuminating this predominant dark ground, which bespoke the refined female, in language intelligible to all, and far more eloquently than the tongue. Her hair was jet black, and folded upon her small round head after the fashion of the Europeans; and her brilliant teeth exhibited a striking contrast to the dark shades of her skin, and darker sparkling eyes. The delicately penciled brows, arched beautifully over a countenance strikingly feminine and lady-like; and the general expression was that calm sadness which has been remarked as characteristic of the domesticated aborigines from that day to the present. Her dress was essentially after the fashion of the whites of that day, just retaining sufficient of the Indian costume, however, to set off her slight but graceful figure to the best advantage. The exquisite proportions of her finely shaped foot and ankle were displayed in a closely fitting deer skin moccasin, studded around the eyelet holes, and wrought in curious, but not unpleasing figures, with party-coloured beads and porcupine quills. Around her neck, and falling upon her gently swelling bosom, were many ingeniously wrought ornaments of wampum

and silver—and around her wrists, bracelets of the same materials. Wyanokee was of the Chickahominy tribe, and had been taken prisoner after the murder of her parents by one of the neighbouring tribes, who at the time were at war with the Chickahominies. Nathaniel Bacon saw her in one of his hunting excursions, and struck with her native beauty, and pleading countenance, redeemed her from captivity at the expense of a string of blue beads. From thence he brought her to Jamestown, to remain until some opportunity should occur of restoring her to her tribe. Her parents having been slain, however, as we have already said, and much time necessarily having elapsed before such opportunity occurred, Virginia took advantage of it, and by mild and affectionate treatment, endeavoured to win her to herself. A mutual and peculiar attachment was the consequence, so that when the opportunity actually occurred, Wyanokee refused to return to the almost extinct tribe of her fathers. Two years had now elapsed since her introduction into the Fairfax family, during which time Virginia, an assiduous pupil herself, became in her turn instructress to her little protégée. Already had she learned many of the little feminine arts and accomplishments of civilized life, and made considerable proficiency in the English language—which, however, she never employed except in private to her instructress, or on some urgent occasion. Half the young Cavaliers in Jamestown would have been willing devotees at the shrine of Wyanokee's beauty, after the corrupt fashions of the parent court and country. But such celebrity was not suited to the taste or ambition of the Indian maiden. Whenever the little errands of her patroness led her to the shops of the city, instead of encouraging the forward and impudent gallantries of the young profligates, she would trip along like a frightened partridge—always turning a deaf ear to their flatteries, and keeping her eyes fixed upon the earth, in the most modest, natural and simple guise. Notwithstanding her habitual indifference to the flatteries of her many admirers, there was one youth whose very step upon the door sill her practised ear could detect. Not that her deliverer had ever taken advantage of her gratitude to him—her ignorance of civilized refinements, or her dependent situation, to poison her mind with the deceitful flatteries too common with his comrades of that day. The passion was perhaps the growth of time and reflection and the effect of gratitude, as the little Indian maiden became capable of instituting comparisons between his conduct towards herself and that of the young Cavaliers, whose assiduities have been already mentioned. Certain it is, that if it had been from some sudden impulse in their earlier intercourse, the customs of her race would have fully borne her out in declaring her passion to its object at once. At the time of which we write, however, this feeling was a profound secret within her own bosom, as she hoped and believed; and the more Virginia impressed upon her mind the necessity of reserve and modesty in her intercourse with the other sex, the more jealous she became in concealing the passion that possessed her heart. Nevertheless, it influenced all her after life, and gave a touching interest to the progress of her moral and intellectual development.

Some few of her Indian peculiarities were still retained by Wyanokee; her gesticulation was far more powerful and expressive than her small compass of language, and the ordinary indifference of her race to passing and exciting themes, was yet preserved by her. Her gentle mistress could indeed work upon her sensibilities through the medium of her affection and gratitude, like a skilful musician upon a finely toned instrument, but the master key was still wanting even to her. There was one peculiarity of her race not quite so agreeable or inoffensive as those already mentioned—namely, the silence and celerity of her movements; sometimes she would appear to Virginia in the middle of the night with the imagined abruptness of an unearthly spirit. Often would the fair maiden awake from her slumbers and find her stooping over her couch—with the saddest and most intense interest expressed in her countenance—and again she would glide through the silent apartments of the spacious mansion with a movement so shadowy and noiseless, that it seemed almost impossible to be effected by a substantial being.

When Virginia raised her eyes from the breakfast-table, and beheld Wyanokee's mute despair, as exhibited in the opposite mirror, her former nervous alarm and agitation instantly returned.

She was entirely at a loss to account for the unusual feeling exhibited by her attendant, except by connecting it in some way with her late nocturnal adventures. And it was a fearful supposition which flashed through her mind, that Wyanokee was acquainted with her last night's undertaking; yet at the same time ignorant of her motives. Hurrying mechanically through the meal, she rose, and taking the hand of the young Indian, was about to retire; but at that moment Nathaniel Bacon rode up to the door, his charger covered with dust and foam; leaping from his back and throwing the rein to an attendant, he entered the room at the very moment when the two maidens were about to make their exit. Under the peculiar circumstances of the case perhaps no one could have entered more mal-appropriately. Mr. Fairfax himself and Bacon had parted, at the termination of their last interview, with excited and unpleasant feelings, both having lost command of temper. Virginia had last seen him under circumstances also which in themselves were calculated to excite no very pleasing reminiscences; but considering the precise attitude in which she stood at that moment with regard to Wyanokee, the interview promised to be still more embarrassing. Nor was the promise falsified—the salutations of the gentlemen were cold, formal, and embarrassing to both parties, while the two maidens stood on the eve of departure, each labouring under her own peculiar difficulties. Virginia felt as if all the adventures of the preceding night stood revealed to her parents, without any of the justificatory motives which had satisfied her own mind for embarking in them—while her attendant looked to her as if she too was labouring under a weight of surreptitious knowledge. Mrs. Fairfax was the only one of the party who preserved self-possession enough to welcome their young friend, after so long an absence, in intelligible language.

With the peculiar tact of the cultivated female mind she judiciously led the conversation to such

subjects of universal interest at the time, as to induce her husband and the young Cavalier to forget their late unpleasant difference, and Virginia to resume her seat at the table, where she busied herself in helping the visiter to his breakfast. It was singular enough too, as Virginia no doubt thought, that one of these subjects should have direct reference to some personages who had so lately and so intently occupied her own thoughts—namely the Roundheads and Independents. Frank Beverly it seems had already blown abroad the meeting of these persons in secret conclave, as mentioned in the first chapter. The meal being concluded, Bacon again sprang upon his horse and hurried forward to the portico of the Berkley Arms, in which were now displayed no very equivocal evidences of loyalty, from the master of the house and his numerous guests, who thronged its area upon his approach. All the *elite* of the Cavalier youth were there in a perfect throng.

No sooner had Bacon alighted and made his way into the throng, than the tumultuous discussion of the youths was hushed into silence. This was not so much owing to any sternness in the dignity of the youth as to the peculiar nature of the discussion which was going on between Dudley and Beverly, and their several partizans, at the very moment of his entrance. The tumblers of julip were held in suspense, while heavy bets were offered, and about to be taken, upon the disputed question whether the very person who so suddenly appeared among them would be present at the celebration. No sooner had he set foot on the premises, however, than the fat landlord came waddling up, grasping the hand of our hero in one of his own, while in the other he presented him with a goblet of the national beverage.

"A pledge! a pledge!" now resounded from several quarters of the well filled Tap. It may well be supposed that the suspected one had no very great relish for julip after breakfast, but knowing the importance of such trifles on an occasion like the present, and under all the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed he took the cup, and elevating it, said—"Here's to the merry king Charles, who shall be king but Charley."

"Bravely done," shouted the host—and "huzzah for Bacon," shouted his own immediate partisans, many of whom belonged to a volunteer military company of which he was the commander, and whom to see was the very object of his visit to the Arms. Taking Dudley therefore by the arm, and calling to others of the corps, he invited them to a private interview in another apartment. As Bacon passed Frank Beverly a mutual but cold salutation was exchanged—dignified and polite on the part of the former, and cold, haughty and sneering on that of the latter—the ungracious feeling not at all lessened, it is probable, by the pointed exclusion of Beverly and his partisans from the private meeting just alluded to.

Although this was Bacon's first appearance in public, since his abrupt departure from the house of his friend and patron, it was not the first visit he had paid to the hotel, where he and his partisans now held their meeting. He had privately visited the landlord on the preceding evening, previous to the adventures related in the last chapter, for some purposes connected with the present meeting of his friends, but which he was by no means willing should be generally known. At that visit he was informed by the landlord of the mischievous plot laid by his rival to deprive him of the pleasure of Virginia's hand during the approaching festivities at the Mansion of the Governor, and his first intention was to counteract their machinations. But so intensely had his mind been engaged with the adventures of the preceding evening, that all minor interests escaped his recollection. It was the object of his visit on this morning, to remedy that oversight; but so cold and formal was his reception by Mr. Fairfax, and so embarrassed was that of his daughter, that he gave up the scheme for the present, leaving the house with any thing but pleasant emotions. Indeed, from the various combinations of parties and factions, he saw his own position becoming hourly more embarrassing and difficult, and still more so from the neutral position in which he was thrown—partly from the mystery connected with his origin, and partly from his connexion with the Recluse. But let the Independents on the one hand, and the Cavaliers on the other, plot and counterplot as they might, his course was clearly taken in his own mind. None of the doubts as to what cause he should espouse, which had been hinted at by some of the personages of our narrative, really existed in his mind. His course was plain, manly, upright, and straight forward. Nevertheless, as has been seen, he had not thus far entirely escaped suspicion. But trusting to the uprightness of his intentions, he took his measures on this eventful morning with a single eye to the public peace and the cause of truth, justice and humanity. It was to promote these great ends, that he now assembled the members of the military company of which he was the commander. Upon what service they were to be engaged, will appear in the succeeding chapters.

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## CHAPTER VII.

While Bacon and his partisans were deliberating in one of the upper rooms of the Berkley Arms, and Beverly, Ludwell and their friends, still kept up their potations in the Tap below, all of a sudden the bells ceased to chime, and the cannons to roar, and the various other demonstrations of noisy mirth that pervaded the city, were hushed into silence. A corresponding stillness instantly prevailed throughout both the assembled parties, for a moment, in order to ascertain if possible the cause of this interruption to the public rejoicings. No one in either being able to explain the matter, both parties at the same moment rushed tumultuously into the street. They beheld men, women, and children, thronging in the direction of the public square, and naturally

fell into the current, and were borne on its tide into the very centre of attraction. Here they found several ox-carts standing in the street, in the beds of which were stretched the dead bodies of eight Indians—fearfully mangled, and one with his head entirely severed from the body. Twenty voices at once were interrogating the gaping negroes who bestrode the cattle, but no other satisfaction could be gained from them than a mute reference to their master; a little busy important man, who resided on the main land, and was now holding forth with great energy and amplitude of expression, touching his various adventures of the morning, to a crowd of eager loungers gathered around him, as if to appropriate his wonderful disclosure entirely to themselves.

He stated that he had found the dead bodies upon the banks of the river, where there were still many evidences of a desperate conflict of both horse and foot. That the ground was covered with blood, and that one party must have been driven into the river, and drowned, as he had been enabled to trace them by their footmarks to the very edge of the water.

It will be readily imagined by the reader that Nathaniel Bacon was no unmoved spectator of this scene, or of the various conjectural explanations that were now given in his hearing, of a transaction in which he had been such a principal actor, and of which he could have given such an authentic history. He was rather rejoiced than otherwise, that the little planter of the main seemed so much disposed to indulge his imagination, as a discovery of his own part in the matter, and of Virginia's delicate position on the occasion, was thereby rendered less probable. But his self-congratulations were too hasty; for scarcely had he revolved these things in his mind, before a sudden rush of the crowd towards some new object of surprise arrested his attention. This was no other than Brian O'Reily, bearing into the crowd upon his back the dead body of Jamie Jamieson, and followed by his wife, who to her bruises and misfortunes had applied the comfort of whiskey in great profusion. O'Reily, it seemed, had fully sympathised with the widowed lady, for his motions were anything but accordant with the solemnity of the occasion. Bacon could scarce suppress a smile as he caught a glimpse of this group through the crowd. His first object; however, was to catch O'Reily's eye, and make him understand, if possible by a look, that he was to volunteer no evidence in the case. He had no sooner succeeded in gaining the notice of his attendant, than the latter applied his finger slyly to his lip, looking another way at the same time, and thus indicating that he understood the policy to be pursued, and that he was not so much intoxicated as he thought proper to seem. With this doubtful assurance Bacon was compelled to rest satisfied, walking about the square all the while in visible agitation.

The corpse of the fisherman being laid out in the market-place, the officer, whose duty it was, proceeded to summon an inquest to inquire into the manner and cause of his death. The first witness summoned before this tribunal, was, of course, the wife of the deceased. She testified that a party of savages had on the preceding night entered their house, and after having cruelly murdered her husband, beaten herself, and bound her limbs with cords, had carried away all their fishing nets. That having placed these in a canoe, they laid her in it also, and paddled across the river—where they were met by another party of savages, about fifty in number, as she supposed, and while they were busily engaged in dividing the spoil, a gigantic man, with a face flaming like fire, and a sword as long as a fishing pole, had suddenly fallen upon the murderers, and quickly put them to flight, or the sword. That having thus conquered the whole horde, he had placed her in the boat again, and brought her to her own house, where he left her, and where she remained alone until morning, when she was found by Mr. Brian O'Reily, who happened to be coming that way.

Improbable as some parts of this story were, it met with a ready credence from nearly the whole of the multitude; no tale, having any relation to the Recluse, being so marvellous that they would not readily believe it. But in no one of the assembled listeners did it excite greater surprise than in Bacon himself. It is true, that he readily recognised in the whole invention the joint influence of whiskey, and O'Reily's ingenuity, but even to these he had not supposed that he should be indebted for such downright falsehoods in his behalf. Mrs. Jamieson, too, seemed firmly to believe all that she had testified. Under these circumstances he did not feel himself called upon to set the matter right at the expense of Virginia's feelings, and the inevitable defeat of the measures in which he was that very morning deeply engaged. How the Irishman was to manage his part of the narrative when called upon, as he certainly would be, and that so speedily that no time would be allowed to exchange a word with his master, Bacon could not divine. He knew right well that O'Reily was gifted with a strong tendency to the most outrageous and even ridiculous exaggeration, and that he would carry through whatever he should undertake to say, with wonderful shrewdness and imperturbable confidence; but how he was to make his story agree with that which he had put into the mouth of Mrs. Jamieson, and at the same time explain the wound upon his own face, and the contusion upon his head, without being guilty of some direct and palpable falsehood, was more than his master could imagine. At length Brian O'Reily was called to state what he knew touching the death of the fisherman. The first question propounded by the officer was, "Well, O'Reily, tell the jury how, and when you came to the house of the deceased."

"Oh! thin, and I'm bothered to know whether I got there by land or wather, and faix, I'm after b'leiven it was naither uv them."

"How then did you get there, if you went neither by land nor water?"

"An by the vestments, may be I wouldn't be far wrang, if I said it was the crathur that took me there, seein I can't deny it iny way, your haner."

"You saw no one strike or maltreat the deceased."

"It would be but ill manners in me to be conthradictin your haner."

"You are sure you did not strike him yourself."

"As sure as two tin-pinnies—Divil burn the man that Brian O'Reily ever ill used when he was down—much less when he was dead, your haner." (crossing himself.)

"How then came that cut upon the corner of your mouth?"

"Oh! murther, and is it these your haner's axing after?" and he ingeniously placed his finger upon a smaller wound made by his bottle on the previous night. "Yes, O'Reily, we wish you to state how you came by those wounds."

"Oh! but I'm bowld to show your haner, seein its you that axed me—sure here's the wapon that killt me all out!" and as he spoke, he pulled out his broken necked bottle and handed it to his catechist.

"I see it has blood upon it, O'Reily, and this may explain the cut on your mouth, but how came that contusion on your temple?"

"Be dad but I run aginst a good big shelaleigh, an it broke me head so it did—sorra much head I had left at that same recknin, for the crather."

"You ran against a club, O'Reily? Was it growin in the ground or was it in the hands of an enemy?"

"It might be growin, your haner, or it might be in the hands of the great inimy himself, for all that Brian O'Reily knows—sure your haner isn't very particular in examinin the tixture of the timber that knocks you down. It might be a door-post—or may be the gate of the foort—as the thimber grows as thick here as paraties, and this gate was always too small for me when I had a dhrap of the whiskey."

"You ran against the gate-post, or the facings of Jamieson's door, then?"

"By the five crasses, an I've done that same many's the time—barrin always that it would be ill manners in me to conthradict your haner if I hadn't."

"You saw nothing then of the treacherous and thieving savages on the night of Jamieson's murder?"

"Oh then but I'm puzzled now intirely. By the holy father, I saw a power of sights on that same night. The whiskey was clane too strong for me. I saw all sorts of yellor nagres and men widout shadows, and flamin counthenances, and the fire sparklin from the very eyes of me, by the same token. Divil a word of a lie's in that iny way."

"But you saw no person strike or maltreat this man who lies dead here?"

"Divil the one, your haner! Brian O'Reily's the boy that wouldn't see foul-play to man nor baste. I never saw Jamie, till I saw him stretched all out as you see him there."

"You do not know then but that you may have encountered the murderers in your own drunken travels?"

"Faix and you may say that, your haner, widout a word of a lie in it; it bothers me intirely to tell what I did see. And, by the five crasses, if it wasn't for the wapon you've got in your hand—and poor Jamie that I brought here on my back—and this thump upon my head, I should, say it was all a dhrame clane out."

"Well, you may go, O'Reily. I believe you know little of what happened to yourself or any one else last night."

"An that's thrue for you iny way; many thanks to your haner for your kindness and civility," said O'Reily, as he left the crowd, slily tipping a wink of triumph to his master.

Bacon certainly began to breathe more freely towards the conclusion, as having edged in with the crowd, he heard O'Reily's ingenious parries of the official's thrusts. But his trials were not yet over, for scarcely had he followed his attendant with his eye out of the crowd, before Mr. Fairfax stepped up to the officer and whispered something in his ear. In a few moments after a deputy was seen leading Wyanokee into the market-place—a look of the most profound dejection, still visible through her fright, at being brought into the presence of such a multitude.

She testified, that two of the Indians slain were her nearest kinsmen. That the one with his head severed from the body, was old King Fisher; and, upon examination, the blue feathers of his patronymic bird were found still sticking in the matted tuft of hair upon his crown. She farther stated that he was her father's only brother, and that another of the slain was his son—the only two remaining male relatives she had in the world. That all these savages were of the Chickahominy tribe; and that there were not more than two hundred warriors, left of all that, brave and powerful nation which had once thronged the banks of the Chickahominy river. And here the little Indian maiden seemed almost suffocated with overpowering emotions, as the memory of former days came gushing over her heart. No tear relieved her swelling emotions, but ever and anon she cast her eyes over the mangled bodies of her kinsmen, and once or twice

turned with looks more rapid and of darker meaning towards Bacon. The general expression of her countenance; however, was one of profound and overwhelming sadness. Her soul seemed fully capable of realizing the melancholy destiny which awaited all the nations of the aborigines then inhabiting the country, from the sea board to the blue mountains,<sup>[2]</sup> and whose fiat was fast bearing her race from the loved places which had known them so long. It was doubtless in her mind a poor compensation for the destruction of her native tribe and their contemporaries, that she herself had been reclaimed from the happy ignorance of savage, to the more painful knowledge of civilized life.

She was asked if she knew of the visit of these unfortunate men on the preceding night. Her eye furtively ran over the eager faces gathered around, until it fell upon that of Bacon, when a momentary flash of some internal impulse illumined her countenance. It might be vengeance, or the hatred of unrequited passion—but let the cause be what it might, it glimmered with a demoniacal fire but for an instant, and then, like the expiring taper in the socket after its last flash, sunk for ever. The sadness of past and coming years seemed concentrated in the despair of are moment. She waived her hand and shook her head in silence, thus indicating, that she could say no more—that human endurance had been stretched to its utmost verge. Walking deliberately out of the crowd until she came to the trunkless head of the last of the Chickahominy chiefs, she bent over the mutilated remains for a moment in unutterable sorrow, and then throwing her eyes to heaven, dark in despair, she stooped to pluck one of the blue feathers from the scalp, and then with sad and lingering steps, proceeded to her home.

All were impressed with involuntary respect for the bereaved maiden, and even the hardened officer suffered her to depart without having finished his examination. Sufficient, however, had been gleaned for the jury to bring in a verdict of murder by the hands of some of the Chickahominy tribe of savages. This tribe of Indians inhabited a small town called Orapacks, on the banks of the river which gave its name to the nation. They formed a part of the grand confederation which had first been united under Powhatan, and afterwards his successor, Opechancanough; the latter of whom so unfortunately fell, while a prisoner at Jamestown, by the hands of a dastardly soldier, who took his life in revenge for some petty wrong, real or imaginary. The depredation related in the foregoing pages, and the unfortunate result to so many of its perpetrators, was the first interruption to the general peace which Sir William Berkley had been enabled to secure for the colony, after various sanguinary massacres and conflicts, with the numerous tribes composing the empire of Virginia, as it was sometimes called, and reaching from the Peninsula to the present seat of Richmond.

It may be well, perhaps, to state that a process had been despatched, for form's sake, to summon the Recluse, but it was returned as similar messages had always been before—he was *non est inventus*.

The dead bodies were now removed,—that of Jamieson to the more consecrated ground around the church, and those of the Indians to a sort of Potter's-field or general burying ground, such as every city has possessed from the time of Judas Iscariot to the present day.

The necessary and justifiable sacrifice of some half a dozen savages was, at that time, too common a circumstance in Jamestown, long to affect the gayeties-of-the day. Accordingly the afternoon found the daughters and wives of the hardy citizens gayly tripping it over the green common, to which we have already introduced the reader, inspired by the music of two sable musicians, who rattled and scraped defiance to all untoward interruptions whatsoever. The town was full of strangers from the neighbouring plantations, together with many members of the House of Burgesses from surrounding counties, who had arrived in preparation for the meeting of that body, summoned to be held on the third succeeding day. Many of these dignified personages had collected on the green, to witness the enjoyment of the humbler citizens and their wives and daughters.

A merry set of joyful lads and lasses were whirling through the giddy dance; when all at once a savage yell abruptly struck upon the ear; the music ceased, the youths stood still in the circle, while some of the maidens fled toward the public square, and others sought the protection of their fathers, husbands, or lovers. Consternation was visible in the boldest countenances. The transactions of the morning had unstrung the nerves of the females, and urged the sterner sex to thoughts of war, which had lain dormant since the general peace and the death of Opechancanough. But soon a jingle of little bells was heard, and the next moment the multitude burst into a loud laugh, and simultaneously cast their eyes up to a tall tree which overhung the green, and upon which was seen a painted savage, descending with great agility, he soon leaped into the middle of the area, where the dance had been in progress, and commenced shuffling away at a most indefatigable rate, the fiddlers striking at the same moment into the humour of this strange visiter, and he himself dexterously rattling a number of little bones which he held between his fingers—the bells all the while continuing to jingle, and producing the strangest effect upon the ear. His face was painted in the ordinary warrior guise, his head shaved close to the cranium, save a lock upon the crown, to which hung a tuft of scarlet feathers—his person was grotesquely ornamented with beads, bells and buttons in great profusion, interspersed with hundreds of red feathers, from which he took his name. He was called Red Feather Jack, and was remarkably fond of the music and all the ordinary diversions of the whites. In this respect he was the most remarkable Indian of his day—that race having been peculiar for the haughty and dignified contempt with which they looked upon the amusements of their civilized neighbours. He was known to be as desperate in battle as he was light hearted and merry at the sports of the white man, and had never been known guilty of any kind of treachery, and was a universal

favourite at Jamestown among all the young people of both sexes. It may be readily imagined, therefore, that a shout of "Red Feather Jack," which was instantly raised by the assembled throng, brought no slight accession to their numbers. The amusement thus afforded was kept up, intermingled with dances of their own, to which Jack beat time with his loudest bells, until the hour had arrived for the commencement of the more imposing and aristocratic ceremonies and amusements at the gubernatorial mansion.

Red Feather Jack was believed by many to be an admirer of Wyanokee's, though of a different tribe. He had once, on an occasion nearly similar to the one just related, offered to lead her to the dance, but the more refined maiden looked upon him with ineffable scorn and contempt, produced as much, doubtless, by his undignified and unnational habits, as by what she considered his inferior rank and understanding. After the cessation of the various sports upon the green—in the warehouse, and throughout the town, Jack was taken to the Berkley Arms, where his merry performances were kept up until a late hour of the night, to the great amusement of the loungers and the disappointed youths who had vainly aspired to a participation in the celebration of the Cavaliers.

There was one peculiar circumstance attending this day's celebration which became generally the subject of after remark. Not a sign of festivity or rejoicing was visible at the Cross Keys. Its master sat a solitary spectator in his own door, apparently regarding the passing levities with sovereign contempt. This of course did not escape without many comments from the more jovial landlord of "the Arms." It was likewise remarkable that none of the Independents were visible on this general holyday, and this was the more singular as many of the humbler followers of the late Lord Protector had been sold into temporary bondage, and of course might be supposed eager to enjoy one day's cessation from labour, even if they did not care to join the humbler citizens in their demonstrations of loyalty.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

As the sun went down upon the boisterous revellers in the ancient city, and closed the festivities of the day among the plebeians, the aristocracy of the vice-regal court began to roll along the streets in their carriages, and surround the door of the stout old knight who represented the person of his royal master in the colony. The members of the Council and of the house of Burgesses, with their wives and daughters, and all other citizens and sojourners of distinction were among the number. Now came the crash of Carriages—swearing of footmen—cracking of whips rattling of wheels—clattering of steps, and the pompous announcement of the man in office, as each party was marshalled into the long suite of apartments brilliantly lighted for the occasion. At the head of the largest room stood Sir William and Lady Berkley. The old knight was dressed in a blue velvet doublet, which being sashed below the belt or waistband, protruded out all round so as to show the yellow silk linings of the aforesaid garment, fringing and ornamenting the waist. His breeches were of pink satin, and were cut in what was called at that day<sup>[3]</sup> "the petticoats;" they were tied to the large mouthed silk hose with gay ribands, and the lining of the breeches being longer than the garment itself, formed a sort of ornament for the overhanging hose; immediately over this row of knotted ribands ornamenting the knee, his breeches hung in ample folds. The sleeves of his doublet reached nearly to the elbow; and from the end of these the shirt was so fashioned as to bulge out in large flowing plaits to his ruffled wrists. His stockings were of white silk, and shoes ornamented with a profusion of ribands, knotted and bound into the shape of flowers. On one shoulder hung a short mantle, reaching to the haunches and falling in rich folds over one side of his person. Lady Berkley appeared for the first time without her farthingale, but still retained its contemporary, the French hood. In place of the starched ruff, she wore the graceful and flowing collar, falling in folds and terminated in rich pointed lace round the upper half of the bust; she wore a stomacher indeed, but greatly modified from the long strait jacket fashion of the preceding reign.

A slight degree of pomp and formality characterized the profound inclination of the knight's magisterial person, as some guest of distinction was from time to time announced, while his lady performed her part of the ceremony in exact accordance with the stately habits of her lord, but softened by a native blandness of manner and sweetness of disposition. She was a lady in the most refined and polished acceptation of the term. They were both just sufficiently advanced in years to add the dignity, of age to that resulting from their station, and command, respect from those who moved within their sphere. The ladies began now to re-appear, after the momentary retouch of the toilet, and arrange themselves round the apartment apparently appropriated to the dance, from a band of musicians stationed some six feet above the floor in a temporary orchestra. The first touch upon the string of the leader's kit was magical—the chords of every young female heart in the room vibrated in unison. No letting down of one string and raising of another was required to bring them to concert pitch; like the blooded charger in the field, in whose veins, the first clang of the trumpet sends the vital stream glistening to the very eye-balls, their gayly decorated persons were at once glowing with animation; their eyes sparkling and their bosoms heaving with impatience, joy, and anticipated triumph. But when the bow of an evident master was drawn over the strings of his rusty cremona in a long single sweep, every heart palpitated in eagerness. The eyes of the gentlemen wandered over the multitude of youthful and lovely faces beaming with a delighted expression, and all were keenly alive to the coming pleasures of the

dance. But there was a precedence in the arrangement of the first set which, we must by no means neglect. Virginia Fairfax, by right of birth and consanguinity to the governor, invariably assumed her aunt's place at the head of the set. The blooming Hebe issued forth from the impenetrable ranks of her compeers with the blushing grace and beauty of a nymph—her hand was slightly extended as though its owner were conscious that scores of the opposite ranks would have perilled life and fortune for its possession. She was clad in simple white; not a colour marring the chaste and perfect purity of her attire, save the transparent shadow of a crimson tint which rose and fell in vivid flashes over her complexion with the rapidity of thought. Near her stood a youth, his finely formed person set off to the best advantage by the gay and tasteful fashion of his time, and his dark hazel eye, brilliant with the momentary fire of excitement. Instinctively he moved forward to receive the outstretched and now trembling little hand, but scarcely had he gained it before a competitor appeared upon the field, of not less personal and far more aristocratic pretension. "With your leave, sir," said Frank Beverly, with a profound inclination of his finely dressed person, as he took the hand which Bacon, in the abstraction of the moment, was about to usurp. The latter retired in the most undisguised mortification; his rival moving to the head of the set with all the grace and ease of self-possession, rank, and consciousness of right in the present instance.

Sir William himself bent his dignity to enjoy this scene, the most evident satisfaction beaming upon his countenance as he cast an intelligent glance toward his lady.

Our heroine had been too finely schooled in the etiquette and manners of the ball-room, to allow the most penetrating observer any means of ascertaining whether the incident just related was as pleasing to her as to her partner. Bacon's mortification was not long visible, for with a desperate sort of boldness, quite foreign to his general demeanour, he crossed the room and approached a young lady whose beauty shone conspicuous amid all the gay throng by which she was surrounded. Harriet Harrison was the daughter of one of the proudest and most wealthy families in the colony. They moved in the front ranks of those who radiated around the fashionable orbit of which the Governor and his family were the principal luminaries, and were esteemed by them as among their most honoured friends and supporters. Harriet was the intimate friend of Virginia Fairfax, and, after her mother, the most esteemed repository of her confidence. Though an idea of rivalry in any shape or form had never entered their young and guileless hearts, the youthful Cavaliers who floated upon the same fashionable tide, had frequently placed them in this attitude in their private discussions of the various personal and mental attractions of the maidens, each in her turn proving the reigning favourite, as their respective admirers happened to possess the supremacy over the minds of their companions. She was near the same age with Virginia, and undoubtedly possessed attractions of the most captivating quality, both in mind and person, yet they were finely contrasted with those of her friend. Harriet's complexion was brunette—her hair dark and shining as the raven's plumage—her eye black, keen and sparkling, her finely pencilled brows beautifully overshadowing the native archness of her countenance, and her mouth always expressive of amiable feelings, just sufficiently characterized perhaps by a dash of innocent humour and coquetry; or rather that coquetry which is the result of archness and humour as distinguished from premeditated design. Her figure was slight but finely proportioned. As Bacon approached this laughing little belle, his boldness visibly diminished beneath her sparkling eye, and his petition for her hand was uttered with the most courtly and deferential humility. The brunette cast a significant glance toward her friend at the head of the set, and then with promptitude accepted the offered partner, her intelligent and sparkling countenance turning towards Charles Dudley, who stood near, with a speaking archness, which conveyed as plainly as it could have been in words, her perfect understanding of the byplay which was going on at the expense of his friend. The set being completed, the music now struck up its enlivening notes, and the various contending passions and emotions of those engaged were soon lost for the time in the giddy whirl of excitement which succeeded. Every countenance was clad in joy and hilarity—Bacon himself seeming to forget, in the secret pleasure created by the occasional touch of Virginia's hand, that he himself was not the honoured partner. Nor was the exhilarating effect of the dance confined to those who partook in the exercise—the young enjoyed it present, the old by retrospection. The latter lived over again the gay and brilliant dreams of their own youth, and were what they beheld. The music perhaps touched upon some long forgotten associations of other days and other friends, when and with whom they had mingled in the merry dance under circumstances like the present. These hallowed and blessed associations were not unmixed with melancholy, but it was of the softest and most soothing kind; the tide of feeling flowed over the heart to the cadences of the music, rising and swelling like the waves of the subsiding storm, and irresistibly inviting to mental calm and repose. The elder matrons sat under its influence—their eyes half closed in a sort of pleasing abstraction—while a gentle and subdued smile of mixed emotions played upon their lips. They lived again in the persons of their gay and happy daughters, and with no more selfish wish than to see their offspring following quietly in their own footsteps.

The formality which had somewhat characterized the opening ceremonies was entirely banished—it could not live in the atmosphere of music and the dance. Sir William and his compeers in dignity seemed early to be sensible of this, for no sooner had the motion of "hands round" commenced, than he collected his forces, and retreated to the card room, where, from the excitement of the game and wine, they endeavoured to compensate themselves for their want of the more sentimental retrospects of their ladies.

Conversation, which till now had flagged under the withering influence of etiquette, burst forth in all the vivacity of unrestrained and unsophisticated nature. The eyes of Harriet Harrison sparkled



like gems, as she and Virginia laughed and chatted together, when they occasionally met in the figures of the dance. But with all Virginia's hilarity, an acute observer might have perceived a shade more than once passing over the sunshine of her countenance; whether owing to some vague presentiment of coming evil—to better defined apprehensions from those events which had so lately passed under her eyes—to the mysterious injunctions of the Recluse, or to some not altogether satisfactory arrangements of the dance, we shall leave the sagacity of the reader to determine. Certain it is, however, that she underwent no little badinage from her lively friend and confidant.

A certain emphatic declination in the notes of the leader, which all the initiated will understand, warned those in possession of the floor, that there is an order of rotation in happiness on these joyful occasions, a cadence, any thing but musical to those happily and mutually suited in partners, while to those not so fortunately coupled, it was a joyful relief. Each gentleman led his partner to her seat, which she had scarcely taken, perhaps, if one of the favoured few, before new applications for the honour of her hand were laid at her feet. Bacon had no sooner escorted Harriet to her place, than turning to her friend he again put in his claim in more formal parlance than his former instinctive aspirations, but again he was doomed to disappointment; Philip Ludwell on this occasion, with a smirking smile upon his countenance, claiming a prior engagement. Bacon scowled upon him with mingled scorn and rage, as he turned upon his heel and besought the honour of the first hand within his reach. But if he was disappointed, his friend Dudley seemed more fortunate, for at the same moment that the former led out his partner, he encountered the latter escorting the pretty Harriet—and certainly no one in the room claimed a larger portion of his sympathy. But he was struck with the change in the countenance of the lively brunette in the very short time which had elapsed between the two sets. During the first, there was a free, untrammelled, mischievous expression in her countenance, which was now merged in one of partial embarrassment. The guileless and confiding air with which she had looked into the face of her former partner, was now exchanged for one of consciousness, as if the lively little belle expected retributive justice from her friends for her own previous badinage. The unpractised Dudley interpreted these appearances any thing but favourably to his own ardent hopes.

Bacon was more deeply studied in the workings of the "human face divine," especially when feeling no personal interest in their meaning, and he therefore amused himself in his ungrateful situation, by watching the changes of his friend's arch little mistress. He doubtless considered it a beautiful and interesting development of character, to see this lively little romp—so lately overflowing with vivacity and animal spirits—all at once transformed into the sensitive, sedate, and downcast maiden. He was certainly not less amused to perceive that these two interesting young personages were unconsciously playing at cross purposes. First the gentleman became cold and moody at the reserve exhibited by his mistress, which did undoubtedly exist, but from which his jealous anxiety made him draw a most erroneous conclusion; while she, on the other hand, resented this apparently ungrateful return for a partiality which her own consciousness induced her to believe was perceptible to its object; indeed this very fear of his knowledge was perhaps the moving impulse of her own wayward conduct. The resentment occasioned by his apparent coldness, and assumed indifference, produced a corresponding feeling in her bosom, and thus they mutually acted and reacted upon each other, departing farther and farther from a mutual understanding at every renewed attempt, until at the close of the set, Dudley retired, as he imagined, irreconcilably offended, folding his arms upon his breast, and looking the very picture of love in despair. While in this mood Bacon approached him, and tapped him on the shoulder, saying, "Hah, Charles, would'st drown thyself? Thou dost not set thy life at a pin's fee I'll warrant me. Why, what would'st thou have, man? Thou would'st not have her forward and pert enough to run unbidden into thy arms?"

"Run into my arms, forsooth! I think she was nearer running into thine own."

"Tut man, does thy knowledge of the sex extend no farther? Dost not know thou art quarrelling with the light of thine own eyes? Art thou not yet acquainted with the windings and apparent inconsistencies of the female heart? I say apparent, because when the *primum mobile* is once understood, all these little perversities of lovers' quarrels are beautifully consistent, and always traceable to the one great original cause. Once gain an insight of this leading motive, and you will admire where you now condemn—you will attribute to maidenly modesty and proper reserve, what you now censure as perverse and whimsical."

"I understand you not, Sir Professor."

"No, because you are interested in the matter. You cannot truly place the small end of the telescope to your eye, and see yourself at the other. You cannot stand, for instance, as I stand, and see yourself as I see you. But study the subject a little before you give way to the identical petulant humours with which you would quarrel in your mistress."

"And how long is it, pray, Sir Sage, since you took the beam from your own eye. If mine deceived me not, I saw you but a little while since swelling with all the offended dignity of majesty itself—merely because some more fortunate swain had previously secured the hand of the Governor's fair niece."

"You are as far wrong in my affairs, Charles, as you were just now in your own. You seem peculiarly predisposed to-night, to see only the surface of things. Suppose that some half a dozen of those butterflies who are now congregating round Lady Berkley, were to form a plot by which you were to be deprived of the hand of that lady whom you most desired to lead to the dance?"

Nay, more, suppose that you considered it all important to your interests that you should possess the hand on this particular night, and that you should be thwarted by such a contrivance of *sub vice-royalty*! What would you do? Would you content yourself with spending your rage upon your own lips between your teeth?"

"No, by heavens, I would tweak the nose of a small sprig of royalty itself."

"What, under the circumstances and responsibilities that environ us to-night?"

"No! not to-night certainly; there is no hurry in the business—his nasal organ will be as tangible a week hence as now, I suppose; but who is it that has done this deed? I see you have many rivals."

"Frank Beverly, to be sure."

"I supposed as much."

"You see," continued Bacon, "that I have now removed the mote from my own eye, and that you did in my case exactly what you did in your own—you looked only at the surface. But really, Charles, between ourselves, I begin to entertain some fears that they will at last affect Virginia with their own aristocratic notions and pretensions, for the absence of which we have so often praised her. I have seen a strange unusual something stealing over her countenance whenever I have approached her of late, which I do not like. She evidently struggles with it herself, but it has obtained the mastery in every instance, so far. Think you they will succeed at last?"

"I know not, my friend! but step with me into the entry—a word in your ear." The parties stepped just behind the casings to the door of the room in which they had been dancing, so as to occupy a small entry-way between the two largest apartments of the mansion, and there Dudley continued in an under tone.—

"Do you think they will dare *the deed* to-night?"

"As sure as there is truth in that strange old man—and he has never yet deceived me!"

"Tis well! and are all things prepared for their reception?"

"They are! As for myself, never did such occasion come more opportunely. I will raise a bloody monument to perpetuate the events of this night upon more than one memory in yonder gay assembly! And since the thought strikes me, Dudley, tis pity I disturbed the savage moroseness which was just stealing over you; however I shall retain a *quantum sufficit* for us both!"

At that moment they were about to return to the party which they had left, when Dudley elevating his finger, said, "Hist!"—and Bacon heard his own name pronounced, just on the other side of the partition against which they were leaning. The voice was Ludwells. "Can you tell me Beverly," said he, "the reason why Bacon does not wear the love lock!"

"Yes, I can, nature stamped him for a Roundhead and Crop-ear at his birth. Have you not observed how obstinately his curling locks are matted to his head? I'll warrant me if the truth could be known, his father was as pestilent a Rumper as ever sung a psalm on horseback."

Bacon heard no more; he was seized with the most ungovernable rage, and the utmost endeavours and remonstrances of his friend could scarcely prevent him from bursting in upon the speakers. In his endeavours to effect this object he forced his person partly in front of the doorway, just sufficiently to perceive that Virginia sat near, for whom, he doubted not these observations were intended. Again he became nearly unmanageable, until Dudley said to him in a harsh tone. "Rash man, would you sacrifice the whole colony for the purpose of chastising a piece of unmannerly insolence upon the spur of the moment, when you can as well do it to-morrow? Nay, it is the more manly course of the two."

Bacon by a powerful effort seemed to master his feelings, and compressing his lips, and folding his arms so as entirely to deceive his companion, he marched deliberately into the room, as if he intended to cross to the opposite side. But when not more than three paces from the door, he wheeled suddenly round and addressed Beverly. "This is no place for a personal reencounter, Sir Slanderer, and I will no farther break through the rules of good breeding than to hurl defiance in your teeth, and even this much I would not do, only that the defiance may go abroad with the calumny;" and with these words he flung his glove in the face of him to whom they were addressed. Beverly was taken entirely by surprise; and for some moments did not seem to realize the extent of the insult, and the greater personal indignity which had been offered to him. He was not long, however, in comprehending the nature of the case, and deliberately stooping to pick up the glove he answered, "This, as you have better said than acted, is no place to quarrel, but I accept your gage, and dearly shall it be redeemed on your part."

During this short but pertinent dialogue, Virginia screamed and ran to the protection of her father and uncle, followed by the other ladies in that part of the room. A crowd instantly collected round each of the parties to hear their statements of the case. But Sir William, always prompt and energetic, ordered the orchestra to strike up and the dance to be resumed, which had ceased for the purpose of affording refreshment. "A mere boy's quarrel," said the old Knight with smiling visage, and the dance was resumed, as if nothing unusual had occurred.

General joy and hilarity were soon restored, for though the serenity and happiness of several important personages of our narrative might have been disturbed, there were still plenty of those left who were both light of heart and nimble of foot. The dance was again going round, wine

circulating, wit sparkling, and merry faces and loud voices in all quarters, when a sudden explosion like the discharge of a broadside from a line of battle ship, seemed to shake the very foundations of the earth; windows rattled and fell—plastering came tumbling down—and ladies screamed and leaped from the casements, while others were borne off fainting to their friends. Bacon seized Virginia and Harriet, one under each arm, and bore them to a carriage, while Mr. Fairfax and Governor Berkley forced their ladies into the same vehicle, ordering the driver to speed for his life to the residence of the former. A bright red light in the midst of a dark column of smoke was now seen to ascend from behind the Governor's house. The powder magazine had been fired by the Cromwellians who were now in open revolt against the government. The schemes which they had been so long meditating, and which Bacon so truly anticipated, had now arrived at the crisis—the struggle was commenced which was to test whether a few scores of misguided but brave zealots were to triumph over the constituted authorities of the land, as they had before done in England.

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## CHAPTER IX.

The night was dark and lowering, and masses of heavy clouds enveloped the city, a bright red column of fire ever and anon shot fitfully up from the smouldering ruins of the magazine, tipping the clouds with a crimson tinge, and illuminating the city to the light of noonday, and again suddenly giving place to volumes of thick sulphureous smoke which involved the surrounding objects in tenfold darkness. Drums were heard beating to arms—trumpets sounding the charge—fifes piercing the air—bells ringing the alarm—muskets and petronels discharged in quick succession, swords clashing, women shrieking, and men were seen running hither and thither in all the tumult of popular commotion. Bacon had no sooner lifted his frightened protégées into the carriage, than rushing into the back court, he found Dudley at the head of their youthful corps already desperately engaged with the Roundheads. He immediately threw himself into the thickest of the fight. With all their desperate valour, however, the two young officers were quickly sensible that they had entirely miscalculated the number and appointments of their enemies. In vain they endeavoured to repulse the hardy veterans who forced their way to the doors and windows of the gubernatorial mansion. The assailants moved to their work in a solid phalanx, that veteran soldier Worley, conspicuous at their head, and literally hewing down all opposition. One line after another of the valiant and high born youths fell before the murderous weapons of the insurgents. In vain did Bacon and Dudley, and Beverly and Ludwell, all now united in a common cause, enact prodigies of valour; their impetuous lunges fell powerless upon the iron frames of their opponents. Crowds of citizens now rushed against the insurgents some armed with swords, others with scythe blades, others again with bludgeons, and the rest with such means of destruction as they could seize in the street as they hurried to the contest. The accession of strength to the cause of the government was as yet of little avail, Bacon and his followers being driven to the walls, while the insurgents were protected on each side by a high wooden fence or barricade. Tables, chairs and bedsteads were hurled upon the heads of the besiegers, and the lower windows were thronged with eager citizens throwing their hastily seized weapons upon the heads of the foe in a vain effort to come within reach. The Cromwellians were now likewise receiving momentary reinforcements of those who leapt the high fences, and filled up the vacancies in the rear, as the front ranks fell in the desperate encounter with the youths and citizens. To whom the victory would fall could not long prove doubtful, situated as they now were; this Sir William Berkley and his kinsman Fairfax had no doubt perceived early in the engagement, for a shout from a multitude without the enclosure, in the midst of which might be heard the voice of Brian O'Reily, now announced the presence of the Governor. The welcome sound was speedily and cheerily answered by the sinking youths within, who took courage at the approach of succour, and fought with renewed spirit. The wooden barricade, was now seen to heave and shake, with every motion and creak of which O'Reily shouted in chorus, until at length the whole yielded and fell with aloud crash. A rush of citizens quickly filled up the breach, and poured their blows into the flank of the Roundheads, who now changing their front charged upon their new assailants at the head of whom were the Governor and Gideon Fairfax. The two old Cavaliers laid about them in a style worthy of their best and most chivalrous days, and the citizens as stoutly supported them although but poorly armed and equipped for such a rencounter. By this change of front the gallant little corps which had so long maintained its ground, was now in some measure relieved, and no longer subject to the murderous strokes of the iron-handed Cromwellians. By the order of Bacon they now poured their fire into the flank of the enemy, and by this double annoyance to their phalanx, would doubtless have speedily terminated the conflict, but the friends of the Insurgents without, taking example by the manœuvre of the governor and his party, now broke down the barricade on the other side, and rushed in their turn to the scene of conflict. As this new reinforcement were pushing through the court to join their friends, in storming the first breach, a loud explosion from Sir William's quarter was heard, followed by the groans and shrieks of a whole phalanx of the old and new assailants, in whose ranks a perfect lane was cut by this discharge of grape shot through the very centre of their column. A rush was now instantly made for the possession of the cannon, and as the citizens poured through the governor's house and the Roundheads through the new breach in the party-wall, a deadly scuffle ensued, which became more and more ferocious and sanguinary as each party received fresh accessions from their friends without. And though the Cavaliers and their supporters outnumbered their enemies, the latter had decidedly the advantage in equipment, strength and discipline; more especially in the hand-to-hand mode of warfare which

now became necessary from the numbers crowded into so small a space. But there was another advantage which they possessed—they had but one commander, the veteran Worley, while the Cavaliers and citizens of the town were at one time commanded by Bacon, and at another by Sir William Berkley.

Bacon perceiving the effect of this circumstance, singled out and attacked the opposite leader in person, determined, if he lost his life in the unequal conflict, to make the attempt at least to place the two parties on a more equal footing. But Worley quickly detected his aim, and being a not less expert swordsman than his antagonist, took advantage of an impetuous thrust, and quickly brought him to the grapple of close quarters. One excelled in strength, and the other in activity, but notwithstanding the latter, superior powers of endurance would soon have ended the duel unfavourably for our hero, had not a blow from behind brought his powerful enemy to the ground. Before Bacon discovered O'Reily, he was well convinced that the bludgeon which had interfered so opportunely in his behalf, was wielded by no tyro at the weapon. However, he lost but few seconds, either upon his assailant or deliverer, but quickly directed his attention to matters of more absorbing importance in the direction of cannon. Meantime O'Reily seized the opportunity afforded by the engrossing nature of the conflict, in the quarter just mentioned, and stooping down he took one of Worley's feet under each arm, using his legs as shafts, and dragged him off to a horse stall hard by, where having deposited the insensible veteran upon the straw, he turned the key and consigned it to his pouch.

The battle now consisted almost entirely of numerous desperate individual conflicts, each citizen as he arrived singling out some hated Roundhead neighbour, and he in his turn as anxious to vent the party and personal hatred which had been so long festering within his bosom. Sir William Berkley perceiving that their veteran foes had a decided advantage in the position now occupied by the parties respectively, quickly devised a scheme, in concert with Mr. Fairfax, by which, while the Governor kept the enemy engaged over the cannon, the latter should take a score of sturdy citizens, and rushing in, regardless of consequences, drag this sole apparent cause of contention into the public square, and thus change the scene of action to a more open position, where the superior bodily strength of the insurgents could no longer avail them. The measure was executed with great spirit and promptitude, and succeeded beyond their most sanguine expectations; for no sooner had the citizens commenced dragging the piece at a brisk trot, than both parties tumultuously pressed round its wheels, and thus unconsciously were brought into a fair field of action. Bacon, as soon as he saw the design of the movement, wheeled his hardy youths through the Governor's house, and formed a line at the critical moment when the confused combatants arrived fighting over the gun: thus affording a rallying point for the friends of order and the government. The governmental troops immediately formed upon the line already partly established by Bacon and his corps, and thus the gun was at length brought to bear for a time upon the opposing ranks. The light which had hitherto fitfully gleamed upon the strife, was now sinking after long intervals, and emitting that unsteady and wavering flame which announces rapidly approaching extinction. A few rounds of musketry and one or two discharges from the small fieldpiece, and the arena of conflict was shrouded in impenetrable darkness, save from the momentary glare which preceded the explosions. The Cromwellians, locking their column more compactly together, rushed in a solid body upon the newly formed line of the citizens. So sudden and so impetuous was this movement, and so skilfully executed, that the brave but ill disciplined combatants, against whom it was directed, gave way before the solid phalanx of the enemy, leaving the long disputed fieldpiece surrounded by the Insurgents. They immediately turned its muzzle upon its late owners, and were about charging it with the usual silence and promptitude of their movements, when a bright light from a burning torch was seen forcing its way almost undisputed through their ranks. The Cromwellians stood aside for its passage with an irresolute sort of tardiness, produced by a doubt whether the bearer were a friend or an enemy. But they were not left long in suspense, for he had no sooner arrived at this point, now forming the line between the contending parties, than he sprang upon the carriage of the gun, holding his torch aloft, so as to shed a glaring light upon the assembled multitude of both parties, who stood now for a moment of truce, in wonder at the strange and gigantic figure before them.

"Hold!" said he in a loud authoritative voice, and waving his hand with a commanding gesture over the ranks of the Roundheads who crowded round him. "Where is your commander, Worley?"

"He is slain," answered twenty voices.

"His blood be upon his own head. Where is he who commandeth in his stead?"

"Here am I," said a short black visaged thick-set man. "Here am I, Ananias Proudfit, whom the Lord hath commissioned this night to take away the wicked from the land, and to root out the Amalekite, and the Jebusite, and the Perizzite, and the Hittite, and the Girgashite and the Amorite. And are not this council and this wicked Governor justly comparable to the five Kings who took shelter in the cave of Makkeda, who were"—

"Peace, brawler, peace," thundered the gigantic umpire, "and cease to pervert the word of God to thy murderous and unholy purposes. Take warning by the fate of thy predecessor. Thou would'st not listen to a more safe and peaceable admonition, administered in humility and good faith. Now I tell thee that if thou art still deaf, this good sword shall cleave thy hardened skull," and he drew his formidable weapon and brandished it over the torch. "Hah! sayest thou so," said the enraged Proudfit, aiming a deadly blow at the gigantic figure towering above him, but which the stranger struck aside with the ease of a wary and practised swordsman, and in the next moment as he had

promised, drove his ponderous weapon into the skull of his assailant. Then hurling his torch into the advancing throng of the Independents, he brandished the huge glittering blade in fearful circles around the besieged gun, and quickly cleared a space for its more dexterous and effectual employment.

The fight was now renewed in all quarters, but evidently to greater disadvantage on the part of the Insurgents, than they yet had to contend with. The loss of their commander a second time, even in the ordinary course of warfare, would doubtless have disheartened them, but the circumstances under which the last had fallen—the superstitious reverence in which they were accustomed to hold the Recluse—all contributed to damp their ardour, to say nothing of the bloody barricade he had already piled around his person. They were now, too, in a comparatively open field, where the greater numbers of their enemies could avail much, and where no opportunity was afforded for the fatal grapple which had so well served the rebels in the earlier stages of the conflict. They were assailed from all points of the square at the same moment, while the Recluse, in the very heart of their ranks, was literally hewing them down like weeds and cumberers of the ground. No quarter was asked or given—they had staked their all upon the success of their enterprise, and seemed determined, long after all hope of success in their first project must have failed, to leave a bloody monument to their foolhardy courage, if not to their wisdom and fore-thought. Nathaniel Bacon, exhausted by the loss of blood from wounds received in the desperate repulse of the insurgents during the early part of the engagement, and feeling his tremendous responsibility for his inadequate preparations, no longer so onerous or so urgent upon himself, fell upon the field, and was borne to the house of his early friend and patron.

With the powerful aid of the Recluse, and the accumulating reinforcements from the loyal citizens of the town, the remainder of the gallant but misguided zealots were soon either cut down, captured, or put to flight. The slain of the Cavalier party were laid out in the State House, while those of the opposite faction were deposited in the tobacco warehouse, so lately the scene of youthful revels.

The wounded were removed to the houses of their friends and relations throughout the city, and in a short time as profound silence reigned along its deserted streets as if no one had arisen to disturb its peace. Not an individual could be found who had seen the Recluse after the termination of the struggle. The slain were carefully examined, but no such huge proportions as his lay stretched in death, among the gory trophies of his prowess.

The veteran soldiers, so many of whom had fallen, while others were confined within the jail of the colony, were a remnant of Cromwell's soldiers who had been sent from the parent country, on account of their restless and dangerous propensities, some of them had been sold into temporary bondage, while others established themselves in business or planting on their own account. They had formed the desperate resolution of rising upon the governor and his guests while seated over their wine, supposing that, in the promiscuous massacre which they had intended to perpetrate, all the councillors, and leading men of the colony would be swept away, and themselves thereby enabled to revolutionize the government.

The Recluse had doubtless been vainly urged to join their desperate faction, and it would appear that they had either depended upon their threats of vengeance as a sufficient warrant for his fidelity, or trusted to his supposed predilection for their cause, and hatred against the authorities then at the head of colonial affairs. Nor does it appear that he did openly and boldly betray them. Bacon had by some means or other of his own, pryed so far into the secret of the incipient rebellion as to learn who were the prominent leaders—by the suggestion of the Recluse, obtained through the agency of Virginia, he had found access to the ear of one Berkenhead, an influential man among them, who, influenced by gold and liberal promises, betrayed so much of the conspirators' designs as enabled Bacon to adopt the preparations of which we have just seen the result. And though they were of themselves totally inadequate, yet they served the purpose of keeping the murderers at bay, until time was afforded for the intervention of the citizens, and thus had preserved the lives of the Governor and his Council, together with those of many members of the House of Burgesses. The Assembly, which convened three days afterward, unanimously voted three thousand weight of tobacco to the traitor Berkenhead, and passed sundry pious resolutions of thanks to the Almighty for their deliverance, besides setting the day apart as one of thanksgiving for ever after.

The ancient city presented a strange and desolate appearance on the succeeding morning, in the neighbourhood of the public square. Houses were deserted by their tenants, windows shattered, palings pulled down, the ground stained with blood; guns, petronels, swords, hats, and missiles of various descriptions lay scattered about in strange confusion.

At length the drowsy citizens were awakened to the importance of the day. A court of inquiry was assembled for the purpose of investigating the conspiracy which had so nearly proved fatal to the existing order of things on the previous night. The prisoners were brought from the jail to the Court House in irons, and all the witnesses supposed to know any thing of the matter, were in readiness. Nathaniel Bacon was the first called, but Mr. Fairfax came forward and stated that his wounds were so much more dangerous than had previously been supposed, that the surgeon strictly enjoined quiet and repose, and recommended if possible to postpone taking his deposition for the present. As the testimony was ample and satisfactory without his attendance, the examination of course proceeded. Berkenhead's deposition was essentially what we have already more succinctly stated in explanation of the insurrection, and most of the other witnesses testified only to what the reader has already seen or surmised. There was one witness, however,

whose testimony was so novel and amusing, amidst the general scene of confusion and bloodshed, that we must by no means neglect it. Brian O'Reily was called in his turn to give evidence on behalf of the crown on a charge of treason against the prisoners at the bar.

"Well, O'Reily," said the examining officer, "please to tell the court what you know of the treasonable practices of any of the prisoners at the bar."

"Be the twelve Apostles and St. Patrick into the bargain, I caught one iv them in the very act."

"What act did you see, O'Reily, and which of these men was the perpetrator?"

"Faix it was just trason itself I caught him at; sure if I hadn't brought his head acquainted wid my shelaleigh, he'd iv murdered one of the king's officers iny way—young master Bacon."

"Well, tell us which of these men it was, and any thing you know concerning the getting up of this rebellion."

"The man's not there at all at all—he's at another bar, and has been this ten hours gone."

"He's at the bar of God, you mean?"

"I mane no sich thing, axing your honour's pardon for conthradictin you. Here's the key that's turned an 'im; besides, didn't I slape by the door all night wid nobody for company but a small dhrop iv whiskey, and didn't I spake to him this morning through the key hole, and didn't he coax and palaver wid me to let him out, and didn't he come over me wid his wife and nine childre, one at the breast, barrin that I knew it was a d—d lie at that same recknin, savin your presence, an didn't he fret about bein cooped up in sich a place all night wid nothin to ate an the same, to dhrink, barrin the hay that was in the rack, an didn't I answer him from the contints iv the book, sayin that many a betther man than him had been born and brought up in a manger, (crossing himself) an didn't he call me all sorts iv hathen names; indeed an he did—the best iv them was cut-throat and horse-thaif, only they were in the Habrew language, an didn't I tell him he was a Judaite, an a wolf in sheep's clothin, an that he hated the very name iv Bacon. And may be he didn't call me a dam'd papist? An didn't I tell him he'd live to see his own funeral iny way? an didn't he answer me all about popes and bulls and papists? Oh! get away wid your blarney, says I, you're safe now as the Governor's old bull wid the short tail and the shambles on two of his legs, only I tould him he'd perhaps be likein the darbies on his hands instead of his trotters."

"And who was this, Brian, that you held this long discourse with through a key hole? You're giving us another of your drunken dreams I fear?"

"Divil a word iv a lie's in it, your haner, hav'nt I just come from the stable door, and didn't I set ould growler, the bull dog to watch by him till I came back—sure he cant come over him wid his blarney about the wife and the nine childer—O be gorra I'm so tender hearted, it was a clane temptation to me."

"Who was it had the nine children?"

"Auld Nick fly away wid the nine he's got iv them; didn't I tell your haner it was all blarney to move the tinder feelings of Brian O'Reily?"

"Who was it then, you were talking to through the key hole?"

"An 'is it his name your haner's axing after all this time? couldn't you just say so at wanst, an not throw me out wid the story all thegither? It's the Divil's own aid-the-camp I'm thinkin. It's the man that makes swords all the time he's makin horse shoes, they call him Worley I'm thinkin."

"Worley! is it possible? have you seen him this morning?"

"Be the contints iv the book but I saw him not an hour gone, through the key hole; he was stanin up to hay like the Governor's horse, but his appetite seemed to uv left him intirely."

"Can you show the officers where he is?"

"I can do that same, I'm bould to say; didn't I tell your haner it's the key I had was turned an im?"

"And what is it the key of, O'Reily?"

"Faix it's the key to the Governor's stable." (This answer produced a loud laugh from the spectators.) "Divel a word o lie's in it."

"Well, O'Reily, the officers are waiting on you; only prove to us that this is not another of your drunken reveries, and it shall turn out better for you than you now expect. Since it has been ascertained that this man Worley was not to be found among the slain, the Governor has issued his proclamation, offering two hundred pounds for his apprehension, dead or alive."

"Oh!" said O'Reily, as he was going out of the door, "but I'm afeard you'll find him rather in a state iv thribulation, I did some killen an im myself: Oh wasn't that a beauty iv a shelaleigh? Only to think of two hundred pounds; faix if I get it but I'll have it set in brass."

The officers in attendance, with Brian at their head, soon emerged from the Governor's stable amidst the shouts and cheers of the multitude. The unfortunate Roundhead commander was brought into courts suffering severely from thirst, and the effects of the contusion, produced by the violence of O'Reily's blow.

We will not detain the reader over revolting portions of the trial either now or hereafter; suffice it to say, therefore, in brief, that O'Reily received the interest of two hundred pounds ever afterwards for his capture of the Rebel Chief. Four of the ringleaders at the second, and final trial were condemned and speedily executed, and the others recommended to mercy. Thus was terminated this sanguinary conflict, the last convulsive throes of the Independent faction in the British dominions of North America.

As our tale is no farther directly connected with this ill-advised and hopeless insurrection, we proceed in the next chapter with the direct thread of our narrative, the principal personages of which were so directly concerned in the bloody affair just related, that we could not pass it over with any kind of regard to historical accuracy.

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## CHAPTER X.

During the whole of the day succeeding the insurrection, our hero lay in the most precarious and dangerous state; and the violent inflammatory action produced by several large sabre wounds so much unsettled his reason, that the surgeon was compelled still farther to deplete his already exhausted frame. Towards night his mind recovered its powers, but his strength was still gone, and he lay upon his couch in all the helplessness of infantile impotency; and toward evening, exhausted by the previous night of turmoil and strife, succeeded by a day of feverish restlessness, he at length fell asleep.

There was one never-wearying eye that watched the fitful slumbers of the invalid. Conscious, perhaps, that Bacon could never be more to her than a friend and protector, Wyandottah delighted in rendering him those quiet, but constant and indispensable services which his situation required. Not a change of his ever-varying countenance, as the workings of a diseased and excited imagination, were from time to time portrayed upon his pale and already attenuated features, escaped her, while her own beautiful and expressive countenance, vividly displayed, in rapid and corresponding changes, her sympathy with the sleeping sufferer. If any one approached the door, her keen glance immediately arrested the intruder, her finger upon her lip, and a frown upon her brow, in her powerful and national pantomimic token of silence. If the eye of the sleeper opened for an instant in bewildered amazement at the difference between the real scene before him, and the one from which in sleeping fancy he had just escaped, her wild and imaginative susceptibilities were instantly on the alert.

The mind of the aboriginal, even when partially cultivated, is overcome with superstitious reverence and awe, in the presence of one under the excitement of a diseased imagination. Such had been the state of feeling with Wyandottah during the whole of Bacon's mental hallucinations throughout the day, and now as she watched at his bed-side, during his uneasy slumbers, her keen perceptions were tremendously alive to each successive demonstration. There was one member of the family, however, who entered and departed from the room unchallenged—Virginia! At this moment she entered—her own tender sympathies wrought upon by all the late harassing events; although differing in their developments and cause in some respects, they were in no wise inferior in degree to those of her protégée. She moved with noiseless step and suppressed respiration until she stood over the couch of the wounded youth. Long and feelingly she gazed upon the sharp and pallid features; there was naught of passion in that gaze—it was pure and heavenly in its origin, as in its motive. Her moistened eye, with a movement almost peculiar to the sick room, or the funeral chamber, turned slowly upon her attendant. No melting and sympathizing tear softened the brilliant and penetrating eye which met her gaze; there was excitement, deep excitement, but not the mellowed emotion of regulated sympathy; in Wyandottah, the imagination controlled the heart—in Virginia, the heart subdued and softened the imagination.

There was something touchingly beautiful in the moral development of these two young and innocent hearts. There was a mutual instinctive understanding of each, with regard to the position of the other, in relation to the wounded youth before them; yet it had never been admitted even to their own consciousness, because they had never analyzed their own feelings, and circumstances as yet had never openly betrayed them to each other. As they mutually exchanged glances, something like an electric thrill passed chillily through their veins, but it was only for an instant; the reasoning faculties of the mind examined it not—they were not in a situation to examine it—imagination controlled the whole mental organization of the one, and the tenderest and purest emotions of the heart that of the other. Virginia came to relieve the faithful and indefatigable Indian maiden, and as the only practicable means, sent her under some pretext to her mother. She now occupied a seat near the foot of the couch, in full view of the sleeper's countenance, faintly illuminated by the subdued rays of a shaded lamp. She had watched the varying and magnetic vibration of muscle and nerve for nearly an hour, when the eyes of the sleeping youth slowly and wildly opened upon her in a bewildered stare, and at length he spoke.

"The senses are not the only vehicles for communicating passing events to the mind," said he, his voice already hollow and sepulchral from the previous excitement of the brain. Virginia understood him not, but supposed that his mind was again wandering, but it was not so; his mental perceptions were preternaturally clear, as they sometimes are after painful cerebral excitements.

She made him no answer, hoping that he would again close his eyes to repose. But he continued, "How else can we gain knowledge of things which have transpired when all the senses are shut up in profound slumber? Just now I slept deeply, but not soothingly, and I thought I was on the brink of destruction, from which none but you could save me; and that Wyanokee persisted in attempting the rescue, and the more she struggled the more irremediable became my difficulties. At length you appeared upon the scene, leaning upon your mother's arm; and she carried away Wyanokee while you redeemed me from destruction. This is indeed no farther true than that you have taken the place of your attendant, and that your mild sympathizing countenance is far more genial to my present weakened state, than her wild and startling glances. But does it not seem as if my mental perceptions had caught a glimpse of passing events without the intervention of the animal senses?"

Virginia put her finger upon her lip and shook her head, to remind her charge that strict silence was enjoined. For this there were other motives acting upon her perturbed feelings besides the injunction of the surgeon, had they been wanting.

The invalid closed his eyes, and in a short time seemed to sleep more calmly and soundly than he had yet done. It being the portion of the night through which Virginia had insisted upon watching, she moved quietly to a couch by the window looking upon the river, and the blue hills beyond, and threw herself upon it and gazed out at the enchanting scene. Her own flower garden lay beneath the window, stretching away towards the river, and ornamented midway with a tasteful little summer-house designed by herself, and decorated by the hands of the ingenious youth who now lay so helpless before her. The air was balmy and serene; and redolent of the richest perfumes of fruits and flowers just bursting into maturity with the advancing summer. Millions of stars twinkled in the high cerulean arch of heaven, and were reflected back from the broad expanse of waters beneath, with an enchanting brilliancy. The murmuring waters of the Powhatan rippled along the sandy shore with a melancholy monotony, indescribably soothing to her harassed and troubled mind. The various noises of the busy world around were one by one sinking into silence. Occasionally the profound stillness which succeeded, disturbed by the distant bark of a watch-dog, or the more rural cackling of geese, faded away in the distance so imperceptibly as to leave the mind at a loss to know whether they were real sounds, or those associations with the scene which the imagination often conjures up to bewilder us on such occasions. Her eyes were half closed for a moment under these soothing and seducing influences, and the next, quickly opened to catch the fiery track of some darting meteor as it winged its way through the starry heavens, or to follow the humbler lights borne through the air by myriads of fire flies which brilliantly floated upon the transparent atmosphere. A wild and startling note from some beast of prey, as it roamed through the trackless and unsubdued forests beyond the river, occasionally struck upon her ear, and ever and anon she turned her eyes toward her sleeping charge, and all the painful and harassing feelings of the last few days returned. It was like awaking from a delicious dream, to the stern reality of some pressing and constantly obtrusive misfortune. Her previous life had been tranquil and unruffled; until now her spirits buoyant and elastic. Suddenly the scene had changed, and all the unmarked and unrecorded pleasures of her youthful years were lost in the cares and troubles of the present. She imagined herself the most irremediably wretched being in existence. So new was unhappiness to her, that the slight cloud which now hung between her and the happiness she had enjoyed seemed fearfully dark and lowering.

But again the soothing influences of the scene without imperceptibly stole upon her senses, and she fell into a slumber. Her imagination, now uncontrolled by the sterner qualities of mind, mingled the images retained from the stirring events of the last few days in the most fantastic forms. She saw her mother enter the garden with a slow and solemn step, clad in the habiliments of the grave.

Her form was aerial and graceful, and her features supernaturally beautiful and glorious. Presently this figure was met by another of colossal proportions, approaching the summer house from the opposite end of the garden; his step was grand and majestic, and his countenance stern and warlike. He was clad in complete armour, and his mailed heel as it struck the gravel, sent the blood cold to her heart, and at once convinced her of the reality of the scene. As the figures met they paused and seemed to hold communion for a time, and then pursued their way together; but when they returned to view, the relations of the parties were changed, the colossal figure was using the most violent gesticulation, to which his companion seemed to bow her head in meekness and submission, but not in conviction. At this the other suddenly sprang forward, seized his victim, and was about to leap the garden walls when an attempt to scream dispelled the illusion. Virginia opened her eyes and glanced around the room to assure herself of the reality of the scene before her. The wounded youth still slept soundly, and the lamp still threw its flickering shadows on the wall. By a slower and more cautious movement of the eyes she next examined the garden without; all was still and quiet as the grave, and gazing long and abstractedly upon the little arbour she again gave way to the exhaustion of her physical powers, and again the same figures rose upon her fancy. Now all doubt of their reality was discarded from the very circumstance of the former's having proved a delusion. She knew the other was a dream, but this she felt was truth, and she even went so far as to reason in her mind upon the strange coincidence of the dream, and the present real scene. The gigantic figure was now clad in the gray garb of the Recluse, his limbs manacled with chains, while her mother knelt apart in the attitude of deep and unutterable wo. A crowd was gathered round as if to witness a public execution; soldiers and citizens, knights and nobles mingled in the confused throng. The criminal was kneeling upon his coffin, the cap was drawn over his face, and the fatal word was given! She



awoke with the sound of firearms still ringing in her ears, and the piercing shrieks of the female figure thrilling through her veins.

It may be readily imagined that her startled perceptions were by no means tranquillized on perceiving, as she opened her eyes, the shadows of moving figures upon the wall before her. In order to see from whom these reflections came she must turn her head and look in the direction of the opposite wall, but for her life she dared not move! Terror chained her to the couch. At length the shadows moved towards the door! By a desperate effort she turned her head in that direction, and to her amazement beheld her mother dressed in white, exactly as she had seen her in her dream, slowly and steadily leaving the apartment. She clasped her hand to her forehead and endeavoured to recall her bewildered senses. The confused images of her slumbering and waking perceptions were so inextricably mingled together that for a time she was utterly at a loss to know whether the whole was real or a dream. Certainly the actors were the same, and the impressions continuous. She had not long lain in this bewilderment when she heard the door leading into the garden, just beneath her window, softly opened, and her mother in a few moments walked down the avenue in the very direction she had before seen her take.

Her eyes were intently riveted upon the movements of her parent, until they were hid from her view by the intervening trees and shrubbery.

But she removed them not—they were still fixed upon the spot where she had last seen her, until her white robes emerged here and there from the foliage, when her eyes instinctively followed her, straining her already weakened organs to catch the slightest change of position, and seemingly desirous to penetrate the sombre shadows of the night, whenever the figure upon which she gazed was lost to view. At length the door again softly opened beneath her window; and she saw the figure no more. But a very few moments elapsed, however, before another appeared upon the scene, of far more gigantic proportions and questionable business at that place and hour. It was the same figure which she had before seen associated with the one which had just departed; and now that she really saw them in flesh and blood, she was more than ever at a loss to know which and how many of her visions of the night were real and which illusory.

The one now before her eyes was clad in his usual, half puritanical, half military tunic, and as usual he was fully armed, but the weapons hung quietly by his side; his arms were folded upon his breast, and his whole carriage and demeanour was subdued, sad, and melancholy. He stood leaning against the vine-clad column of the arbour, with his eyes intently fixed upon the spot where the pre-occupant of the scene had disappeared. His chest heaved with emotion, which ever and anon found vent in laboured respirations of unspeakable misery.

At this moment a fierce watch-dog sprung at the intruder with savage ferocity, and to one less accustomed to danger in all its shapes, would doubtless have proved a formidable foe; but in an instant a heavy blow from his iron sheathed sabre laid the animal struggling at his feet. He stood leaning upon his weapon for an instant, and then moved slowly away until he came near the river, when he laid his hand upon the palisade running along the foot of the garden, and leapt upon the beach like a youth of twenty. In a short time Virginia saw his boat upon the water, his gigantic form rising and bending to his work with desperate and reckless efforts, the frail bark gliding over the smooth waters, "like a thing of life," until it faded away in the distance to a mere speck.

Her eye followed the receding object as it became more and more indistinct, until a mere undefined point was left upon the retina, her own voluntary powers sinking more deeply in repose from the intentness with which she pursued the single object.

How long she slept she knew not, but when she awoke the horizontal rays of the rising sun were beaming through the parted curtains, and the misty drapery from the river was rolling over the hills, and pouring through the intervening valleys in thousands of fantastic forms, weaving, here a rich festoon round the summit of one blue hill, and there spreading out a curtain of mellow tints before another.

The cool and invigorating morning breeze from the river, joined to the effects of her last refreshing and uninterrupted sleep, completely dispelled the shadowy illusions of the night, and she arose comparatively cheerful and happy. She was frightened when she cast her eyes upon the couch of the sufferer and found him awake, to think how much and how long she had neglected him. There was one indefatigable and untiring nurse watching by the bed-side, however! She had stolen in unperceived during the night, and now sat upon an humble seat at the foot of the couch; her eye as brilliant as if it was not subject to the ordinary fatigues of humanity. The invalid too had slept soundly, and awakened this morning refreshed and invigorated, and with all his inflammatory symptoms much abated.

With all these cheering influences around her, Virginia's countenance would have been soon clad in her wonted smiles, had it not been for an unbidden scene which every now and then was conjured up before her imagination, in which those near and dear to her were principal actors. But these, painful and inexplicable as they seemed to her, were far from being well defined in her own mind. For her life, she could not separate the real evidences of her drowsy senses from the vivid images of her imagination. She was firmly impressed, however, with the belief, that some parts of them were true and real transactions! She firmly believed that she had seen her mother and the Recluse during the night—not together certainly, but near the same spot and in quick succession; and she as firmly believed that she had seen the latter disable the watch-dog, mount over the palisade, and hurry away in his boat. So much was indeed true; her mother had actually visited the wounded youth during the night, and she had actually walked in the garden, and the

Recluse was actually there, but no meeting took place, except in the imagination of the worn-out maiden.

She entered the breakfast room with these various impressions, real and imaginary, curiously mingled and confused, and bearing upon her own countenance an expression of embarrassment not less surprising to her mother, who was the first person she encountered. Twenty times she was on the point of asking her mother whether she had walked in the garden during the night, but as often a strange embarrassment came over her, resulting partly from what she thought she had seen, and partly from words dropped by the Recluse in her hearing—the whole confused, unarranged and undigested—the latter perhaps being entirely unrecognised by her consciousness, but still operating imperceptibly upon her conduct. She was not a little astonished, therefore, when her mother came directly to the point occupying her own thoughts at the moment, saying, as she approached her, and affectionately smoothed down the clustering ringlets upon her brow. "You slept upon your post last night, my dear daughter? Nay—no excuses—there needs none. You wanted rest, little less than he whom you watched."

"I did not sleep so soundly as you imagine, my dear mother; I saw you, methought, either sleeping or waking, and to speak truly, I scarcely know which state I was in;" and as she spoke she cast a searching glance at her mother, but her countenance was calm and unruffled as she replied, "You must have been sleeping, my dear Virginia, I stooped over you and kissed your cheek as you slept."

"And did you not walk in the garden?"

"Yes I did! is it possible you saw me and spoke not?"

"I did see you, dear mother, but I was afraid to speak."

"Afraid to speak! Oh! you were afraid of waking Nathaniel?"

"No! no! I was frightened at the appearance of your companion in the garden."

"My companion in the garden! my poor child, you must indeed have dreamed; I had no companion in the garden."

Mr. Fairfax coming in at this moment, Virginia hastily took her chair at the head of the table, and busily commenced her duties at the table, her thoughts all the while occupied upon any thing else.

"What a strange being is that Recluse," said Mr. Fairfax, with apparent *non chalance*, "have you ever seen him, my dear?" addressing his wife.

Virginia dropped the plate she was in the act of handing to her father and was seized with, to her parents, the most unaccountable embarrassment. She endeavoured to make some excuse in order, as she supposed, to hide her mother's inevitable confusion. But the latter calmly replied, "No, my dear, I have never seen him. I have always had some curiosity to behold him, but now that he has proved himself such a public benefactor, I shall not be satisfied till the wish is gratified. Nathaniel had before excited us much by his account of him, but now I suppose the whole city will be eager to pay him their respects."

Virginia stared at her mother during this speech in the most undisguised astonishment, until she saw the calm serenity of her countenance—the expression of truth and sincerity, which had never deceived her, so strongly portrayed there, when she was again lost in bewilderment, which lasted throughout the meal. Her parents, however, were too much engaged with their own subject of discourse to observe her unusual abstraction, and the meal therefore and the dialogue came to a close without any farther development pertaining to our narrative.

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## CHAPTER XI.

"The eager pack from couples freed,  
Dash through the bush, the briar, the brake,  
While answering hound, and horn, and steed,  
The mountain echoes startling wake."  
*The Wild Huntsman.*

A few days after the events recorded in the last chapter, the denizens of the ancient city were roused betimes by the sounds of the hunter's horn, the echoing chorus of the eager hounds, and the neighing of the fiery steeds, as they were led forth to the gallant pastime of the chase. The river and overhanging hills were enveloped in an impenetrable veil of mist, and the dew settled in a snowy cloud, upon the hair and castors of the Cavaliers as they issued from their doors, rubbing their eyes and preparing to mount the mettled coursers which pawed the earth and blew thick volumes of smoke from their expanded nostrils. These preparations for the enlivening sports of the field were not confined to a small number of the civic youth, or to the keener sportsmen among their elders—all the gentry of the town and colony, with few exceptions, were assembled on the occasion.

Sir William Berkley with his numerous guests, Gideon Fairfax, with his fellows of the Council, the members of the House of Burgesses, now principally occupying the hotel of the "Berkley Arms," Frank Beverly, Philip Ludwell, Charles Dudley, with the Harrisons, the Powells, &c. all now came curvetting into the public square, dressed in their gay hunting jerkens and neat foraging caps, some with bugles swinging from their shoulders, and others with firearms suspended at their backs.

A stately gray-headed old negro, known by the cognomen of Congo, was in command of some half score of more youthful footmen of his own colour, in the livery of the Governor, each of whom held the leashes of a pair of hounds.

These, from time to time as old Congo wound a skilful blast upon his bugle, opened a deafening chorus, which echoed through the surrounding forests, and awakened from their slumbers the drowsy citizens of the town. Many a damsel peeped from her lattice to catch a glimpse of the gay Cavaliers as they wheeled into the place of rendezvous in parties of tens and twenties, all noisy and boisterous; some with the anticipation of the promised sports, and others from the more artificial stimulus of a morning julep. The sound of Congo's bugle had reverberated through the silent streets in signal blasts to the grooms of the gentry at a much earlier hour of the morning, so that many of the high-born damsels inhabiting the purlieu of this little court, were also on the alert. Among these our heroine, awakened by the echoing chorus of the "hunter's horn," was already dressed and smiling from her window, like one of her own sweet flowers, upon the gay young Cavaliers, as they passed in review before her.

In an adjoining window was another inhabitant of the same mansion, roused by the same cheering notes, but he smiled not upon the joyous throng as they gathered around the spot occupied by Congo and his canine favourites, nor yet upon those of the gay youths who rode up and touched their beavers respectfully to the smiling maiden as they singly or in pairs cantered away over the bridge in pursuit of their day's sport. It was Bacon! his head bandaged and his countenance pale and wan from his late illness and loss of blood.

Nevertheless he was dressed, and as eager for the sport as any youth among them, but exhausted nature negatived his feeble efforts and longing aspirations, and he had seated himself at the window in sullen disappointment. This latter feeling was in nowise subdued by the sight of Frank Beverly, already recovered from his slight wounds, dressed in a scarlet jerken and hunting cap, a bugle over his shoulder, and mounted upon a noble animal apparently as eager to display his fine proportions as his master. The thundering clatter of the chargers' heels as this numerous cavalcade now passed in long succession over the bridge before the gazing citizens, thus untimely awakened from their slumbers, at length began to die away in silence, broken at intervals by the measured tramp of an occasional party of the more staid, older and less eager Cavaliers, pursuing the main body at a pace more suited to their age; or by the gallop of some slumbering sluggard hastening to overtake his more punctual comrades of the chase. Now and then a note from the bugle of some overjoyous youth, as he entered the forest, brought a frown upon the brow of old Congo, whose look was turned in silent appeal against these irregular proceedings, to his master, who rode apart in earnest conversation with Mr. Fairfax. While our sportsmen are thus joyously moving on their way to the appointed spot, we will pursue the thread of the dialogue between the two dignitaries just alluded to, as it had reference to the leading personages of our story.

"Nay, treat not my apprehensions lightly, Fairfax; is not that youth who leans so disconsolately out of your window this morning, a proper knight to catch the errant fancies of a girl of sixteen?" said Sir William.

"He is indeed a right well-favoured boy," replied Mr. Fairfax, "and one calculated to win his way to a colder heart than that of a maiden near his own age. Was he not the means of your own preservation, Sir William, from the knives of yonder murderous fanatics cooped up in the jail of the city?"

"Ay!" said his companion, drily, "I grant him to be all that you say he is, but does not that enforce more powerfully what I have been saying? Ought you not under such circumstances, to acquaint him with the necessity of his finding another house than your's for his home, where your daughter is constantly before his eyes, and what is more important, where he is constantly before her's, not only with the attractions of his own well-favoured person, but in the interesting character of her father's and her uncle's preserver?"

"If the poor youth had ever presumed upon his position in my family, to make advances to my daughter, then indeed there might be some propriety in the course you recommend, Sir William. But I have observed him closely since our last conversation on this subject, and I am satisfied that there is nothing more than fraternal affection between them."

"It is very difficult, Fairfax, for the parties themselves to draw an exact line, where the one kind of affection ends, and the other begins; the gradation from mere brotherly regard to love is so very imperceptible, that the very persons in whom it takes place are often unconscious of it, until accident or warning from others forces it upon their apprehension."

"But where is the necessity of examining into these fine distinctions now, Sir William? Where is the point of the matter?"

"To that it was my purpose to come presently, but you are always so impetuous and sanguine, if you will permit me to say so, that I have found it difficult to discuss this matter in your presence,

with all the coolness and deliberation which ought to attend the negotiation of an alliance between the kinsman of his majesty's representative in the Colony, and the daughter of his nearest relative—the heiress probably of both their fortunes."

"But has not the match between Virginia and Frank been a settled matter for years?"

"Ay, truly, Fairfax, and I am rejoiced that you remember it; but was it not also agreed, for wise purposes, that the parties themselves should know nothing of the contract until Frank became of age?"

"True, and what then?"

"That time has been passed some months."

"Indeed!"

"Ay, and what is more important to the happiness of the young pair, Frank himself has moved in the business without any prompting from me. This, you know, was what we desired, and the very end for which the matter was kept from their knowledge."

"He has then proposed himself to Virginia, and she has doubtless accepted him! All right, all right, Sir William. I always told you it would turn out just in this way. Every thing turns out for the best. You see the advantage of leaving the young people to themselves."

"Yes, yes, it has all turned out very happily in your sanguine imagination; but you run away with the matter without hearing me out."

"Did you not say it was all settled? I certainly understood you so!"

"No, I said nothing like it. I said that my young kinsman had moved in the business without my prompting; and I intended to say, if you had permitted me, that he had authorized me, this day, to make a formal tender of his hand and fortune to your daughter, through you; which I now do."

"Well, why did you not say so at first, Sir William, and there could have been no trouble about the matter. Instead of that, you read me a long lecture about the danger of harbouring handsome young fellows in my house generally, concluding in particular, with a recapitulation of the various debts of gratitude due from me and my family, and yourself, to poor Bacon. But as far as I am concerned, I give my hearty consent to the proposed union, and you may so assure Frank from me, and tell him that he has nothing more to do, but to appear as every way worthy in the eyes of Virginia as he does in mine."

"There, you see, you are coming in your own immethodical and precipitate way, to the very point with which I set out. I was merely hazarding a few observations upon the various prepossessing qualities of your protégée, and expressing some fears of the intercourse subsisting between him and your daughter, with a view to put you on your guard at once. This was not done with a view to read you a lecture, as you are pleased to say, but from the best grounded apprehensions that things were not proceeding well for our scheme."

"Is there any ground for the fears you mention?"

"There is, Fairfax! Lady Berkley has often of late mentioned her apprehensions to me, that there is a growing and mutual attachment between your ward and your daughter. Frank has observed the same thing, and indeed the very proposals I have just had the honour of making to you, have probably resulted from a desire on his part to bring the matter to an eclaircissement at once."

"I will speak to Virginia and her mother on the subject, and my word for it, my daughter will show you that she knows what is due to her birth and standing in society. But as to turning Nathaniel out of my house! I could as soon turn Virginia herself out. Poor boy, he has a farm of his own, it is true, but my house has always been a home to him, and it always shall be, as long as he continues worthy, and I continue the head of it."

"Ay, that farm! There was another ill-advised piece of generosity; not content with bringing up a foundling like your own son, you must purchase him a farm and stock it."

"Indeed, Governor, you give me credit for much more generosity than I have exercised. I purchased him no farm, or if I did, it was merely as his agent and guardian. He furnished the means himself."

"That was very strange! Very strange indeed, that a youth without occupation, and without any visible fortune, should purchase and stock one of the most valuable plantations in the colony."

As they arrived at this point in their discourse, they had ascended to the top of one of the highest hills within many miles of the city. Here they found the sportsmen who had preceded them, closely grouped together, and all talking at once, while Old Cong, (as he was familiarly called by the youths,) was engaged in slipping the leashes. One pair after another of the fleet animals snuffed the air for a moment, and then bounded down the slope of the hill, carrying their noses close to the earth, and eagerly questing backward and forward through the shrubbery; sometimes retracing their steps to the very point from which they started.

At length one of the foremost of the pack opened a shrill note as he ran, indicative to the uninitiated, only of eagerness and impatience in the pursuit of the game, but Old Congo's experienced eye instantly brightened up, as with head erect, he uttered a sharp shrill whoop, and

mounting his fleet courser, he shot down the hill with the fleetness of the wind, making the woods echo with his merry *hip halloo*, as he cheered them on. By this time the pack were following the leader in the devious trail on which he was now warm; the whole chorus sometimes opening in joyous and eager concert as they came upon the scent, just from the impress of sly Reynard's feet, and then again relapsing into silence. These intervals in the cheerful cry announced the doubt which as yet existed, whether the trail upon which they had struck was any thing more than the devious windings made by the game on emerging from his den, for the purpose, as the negroes stoutly affirmed, of throwing his pursuers out. It seemed indeed as if such had been the intention of the cunning animal, for a plan of the intricate mazes which the pack were threading, if laid down upon paper, would very much resemble a complicated problem in Euclid, or the track of a ship upon a voyage of discovery in unknown seas. Meanwhile Old Congo was in the thickest of them; now cursing one refractory member, and again cheering a favourite. The Cavaliers stood in groups—one foot in the stirrup and a hand on the pommel of the saddle, or smoothing down the curling mane of their impatient chargers. At length the problem was solved, and the hounds were seen coursing in a circle round the brow of the hill, a continuous yelp from the leader, and an answering chorus from the pack, announcing to the waiting gentry, that the game was up. They instantly mounted, and were presently flying over the uneven ground at a speed and with a reckless, yet skilful horsemanship, which bade defiance to all the perils of the chase. Here one lost his cap by the limb of a tree; there another measured his length upon the ground by the stumble of his charger; the main party speeding apace, regardless of all, save the fox and his pursuers.

The chase, like misfortune, is a wonderful leveller of distinctions. Foremost in the field were the proud Sir William and the keener Fairfax; one upon either side of Congo, whooping and yelling in unison, and all distinctions forgotten for the moment, but the speed and bottom of their coursers; the countenances of the three alike expressive of concentrated eagerness in the sport. To a spectator on the summit of the hill, the scene was not wanting in picturesque and striking features. The sun was just peeping over the blue hills, and lifting the vapours from the valleys beneath, in all the variegated and beauteous tints of the rainbow, as they arose in majestic masses and encircled the summits of the cliffs. The cool and invigorating breeze of a young summer morn, as it was wafted through the romantic dales and glens, came loaded with the richest sweets of forest and of flower. And when the music of the hounds was softened in the distance to a faint harmonious swell upon the air, the feathered tribes, luxuriant in beauty, warbled forth their richest strains of nature's melody as they hopped from twig to twig, flashing their brilliant colours in dazzling contrast to the pendant dew-drops glittering in the sunbeams. On the other hand the rays fell in broad sheets of light upon the tranquil waters of the noble Powhatan, as seen through the deep green foliage of the woodland vista. The city too was dimly visible in the distance, its towering columns of smoke shooting high up towards heaven through the clear calm air, and expanding into fleecy waves as they were lost or scattered in the higher regions of the atmosphere. These morning glories of a southern sunrise were, however, lost upon our sportsmen, who now came sweeping round the base of the hill from the opposite side, the horses covered with foam, and riders making the welkin ring again with their shouts of gladness and excitement. The dignity of station and of birth, affairs of state, and all other considerations foreign to the business of the time, were utterly forgotten and abandoned, while their late proud possessors vied with the youngest and the humblest in seizing the pleasures of the chase. The horses seemed in the distance as if their bodies were moving through the air, a foot and a half nearer the ground than they were wont, their legs nearly invisible; while their riders bent over their necks as if impatient even of this headlong speed.

Hitherto the hounds as usual, when in pursuit of the fox, had moved in the figure of a rude circle, never departing to any great distance from the point whence they had started, but moving round and round the hill; and there was every appearance that the chase would be thus continued until the game was either fairly run down, or had gained the shelter of his hole.

In the present instance, however, an unexpected reprieve was granted to the hard pressed animal. The dogs, as they came round the brow of the hill for the third or fourth time, struck off abruptly from their regular circuit; the foremost chargers were reined up and in a short time the whole cavalcade was brought to a stand at the point where the dogs had quitted the track.

The cause of this interruption to the sport was readily understood by the experienced Cavaliers. A buck had crossed between the dogs and the fox, and the former, contrary to their usual discipline and stanchness, broke off to follow the newest scent. Many were the imprecations hurled at the head of Old Congo and his deputies for this misconduct of their charge, the consequence, as was affirmed, of their having been set upon the trail of a buck on the previous Sabbath. It was now, however, too late to remedy the evil, as Congo's bugle itself was not sufficient to recall the eager pack.

Firearms were immediately unslung from the shoulders of such as bore them, and Mr. Fairfax, as the keenest sportsman, leading the way, nearly half of the youths were quickly seen following him up the opposite hill. Sir William Berkley and such of the company as had already been worn out, retraced their steps to the picturesque point from which they had set out, and which has already been described.

Here some of the footmen, retained for the purpose, speedily constructed a rude table under an umbrageous tree, upon which was laid out a tempting display of cold viands, wines and strong waters. Horses were now tied to the surrounding trees, and their riders threw themselves upon the sward to repose their wearied limbs, and regale their longing eyes upon the good things

which only awaited the return of their comrades. This delay seemed likely, however, to prove rather tedious to the longing appetites of the former, who had not as yet broken their fast.

Full two hours had elapsed, and yet no token came of hounds or huntsmen. The patience even of the formal and ceremonious Sir William began to flag, and he forthwith ordered the bugles to sound a recall from the highest spot in the neighbourhood. In vain the reverberating blasts reëchoed from hill to hill, and from river to cliff; in vain they, paused to listen for the music of the hounds or an answering signal from the keener sportsmen. After repeated trials the patience of the Governor gave way, and having set apart a share of the provision for their comrades, they fell upon the tempting display with knife and dagger. Cups of horn, and silver flagons were speedily produced, and in a short time their absent compeers were almost forgotten in the general destruction of cold capons, tongue and ham.

Towards the conclusion of the repast, the absent sportsmen began to drop in singly and at intervals. The bridles of their foaming horses were thrown to the grooms, and they fell upon the wine and fowls like famished soldiers, after a long day's march. Then came a panting hound, crouching beneath the legs of a horse, with his tongue hanging from his mouth; then another, and another, until they had all obeyed the summons of the bugle.

None of the huntsmen who had returned as yet, had been in at the death; but it was supposed that Mr. Fairfax, the only one now missing, had been more fortunate, as the hounds that came in last were covered with blood. He was momentarily expected, but they listened in vain for the sound of his horn. Old Congo was despatched over the hills to summon him with his bugle, but he likewise returned without any tidings of the absent Cavalier, and without having heard any answering notes to those of his own horn. Hours were spent in waiting for him, at first occupied by the younger Cavaliers in various games and athletic sports, but as the day waned apace, and still no news of him arrived, uneasiness began to engross the minds of his associates.

By the orders of the Governor, the whole Cavalcade spread themselves, and scoured the forests for miles in the direction he had been seen to take, but no answer was returned to their shouts and bugles, and no token of his presence and safety was discovered. Occasionally two parties were brought together by a supposed answer from his bugle, but it was found to be only the reply of one scouring party to another.

After a long and fruitless search, they resolved to hasten to the city, in hopes that he had reached his home by some other route, and in case this supposition should prove fallacious it was resolved that the whole male population should be called out to the search. The distance was accomplished with a speed and recklessness quite equal to that with which they had performed it in the morning, but with feelings very different. A general and gloomy silence pervaded their ranks. Gideon Fairfax was one of the most universally popular Cavaliers in the Colony; he was generous, hospitable, and sincere, with his equals, and humane and affable to his inferiors. His own slaves idolized him, and would have readily perilled life and limb in defence either of his person or his reputation.

When, the cavalcade arrived at the bridge, their painful suspense and anxiety were little relieved by perceiving an immense crowd assembled round the house of Mr. Fairfax. That some accident must have befallen him they had too good reason now to apprehend, else what could have drawn the multitude together? The arrival of a successful huntsman, was an affair of too frequent occurrence at Jamestown to excite the present visible commotion. The returning and anxious Cavaliers were soon met by the eager throng, who pressed around them in crowds, each party demanding of the other news respecting their absent fellow-citizen.

The assemblage of the crowd around the house was soon explained by the appearance of his favourite charger, upon which he had set out in the morning, so full of health, vigour and animation. He was held in the midst of the assemblage, his head-gear broken, the saddle bloody, and his sides dripping with mud and water, as if he had just crossed through the river. In this condition he had presented himself at the stable door where he was usually kept, without his rider, and this was all they knew in the city concerning the fate of the missing horseman. This was enough to excite the most distracting fears in the minds of his own family, and the worst apprehensions, in those of his immediate friends and more humble admirers.

Horses and men were speedily volunteered for the purpose of scouring the whole forest in the direction of the chase. Many of the Cavaliers barely dismounted from one horse to mount another; and in a very few minutes, hundreds of citizens, some on horseback and others on foot, had assembled. While they were thus speedily collecting their forces, a scream from some washerwomen on the bank of the river, quickly drew the crowd in that direction. Men, women and children rushed to the spot with feelings of anxiety and alarm, wrought to the highest pitch. They were not left long in doubt, for a boat was just nearing the shore, in which were two men rowing, while another supported upon his lap the head of the still living but wounded Cavalier.

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## CHAPTER XII.

Mr. Fairfax was borne to his own dwelling upon a litter, amidst the universal regrets and lamentations of the people. The condition of his own immediate family may be more easily

imagined than described. The most heart-rending shrieks pierced the air when it was announced to the female part of it that the amiable and generous head of their house had been basely shot,—by whom he knew not, nor could he form a conjecture. The deed was perpetrated a few moments after he had himself shot the buck. He immediately fell from his horse and was for a time perfectly unconscious of his condition. When he revived he found his horse gone and himself so weakened from loss of blood that he was unable to stand. His only resource was his trumpet, upon which he made repeated efforts to summon his companions, but even the sound of his horn was so feeble that it could not have been heard more than a few rods from the spot. While he was in this helpless condition he chanced to discover three men fishing at the base of the river bank, whom he attempted to summon to his aid, but the sound of the water prevented them from hearing him. With great difficulty and suffering he was at length enabled to crawl down the hill to such a distance that he might be heard, and was thence borne to the city in their boat, as the reader has already been informed.

The surgeon, after examining his wound, pronounced it to be of the most alarming character, and assured Bacon, apart from the family that he had little hopes for the life of his patron, who after the exhaustion of his painful journey and the succeeding intense pain caused by the probing of his wounds had fallen into a deep sleep.

Sometime during the morning which has been described in the preceding chapter, and while the hunting party were yet enjoying themselves undisturbed by any untoward accident, Bacon had invited Virginia to accompany him in his first stroll through the garden since his illness. She complied with more alacrity than had been usual with her of late, hoping that the refreshing sweets of a summer morning and the cheering sight of birds and flowers, would dispel the gloomy misanthropy which had settled upon his countenance since his disappointment at not being able to join the chase.

After a silent promenade through the shady walks, they seated themselves in the little summer house already mentioned, and Bacon thus broke the embarrassing silence.

"Virginia, the current of events seems to be hurrying us on to a painful crisis! It is impossible for me to shut my eyes to such of them at least, as relate more particularly to myself. My position in the society in which I now move, is daily becoming more painful to me. I am constantly subjected to the impertinence of those who imagine that they have, or perhaps really have, some reason to complain of the protection and countenance afforded to me by your noble father."

"Trust then, Nathaniel, to his and our continued confidence and esteem, and less to the morbid sensibility which disturbs you, and all will soon be well again."

"Not so, Virginia. If we were in a little community by ourselves, I could indeed give my whole mind and soul to such enjoyments as the society of your family has already afforded to me, forgetting all the world besides, and never listening for a moment to ambitious hopes and aspiring thoughts. But in this proud and aristocratic circle, I must soon be either more or less than I am at present."

"Why must you be more or less than you are, Nathaniel?" said Virginia, with unaffected and bewitching *naivete*.

"Is it possible, Virginia, that you do not see the reason why? Have you witnessed the fierce struggles contending at my heart and never formed a surmise as to the real cause?"

"Except the morbid sensitiveness to which I have already alluded, and its very insufficient cause, I declare that I know of none."

"Is it possible. Good Heavens! and must I at last break through the restraints which I had imposed upon myself? Must I trample upon the generous hospitality of the father to lay my heart open before his daughter?" Her countenance underwent an instantaneous change, and while he continued, her eyes fell beneath his ardent gaze, and her head sank upon her bosom in confusion.

"I will indeed trust to the flattering delusion which hope whispers in my ear, that perhaps your father himself knows enough of me and of my origin to absolve me from these restraints. It must be so, Virginia—else he had never trusted a heart, young and susceptible like mine, to the constant influence of beauty like yours," and he took her unresisting hand, "joined with such perfect innocence and such childlike simplicity as never till this moment to be conscious of its power. Oh, Virginia, I would fain believe, that he foresaw and approved of the result which he could not but anticipate. What he approves will his daughter's voice confirm?—No answer! Will you not vouchsafe one little word to keep my sinking hopes alive!—You are offended; your countenance speaks the language which your tongue is unaccustomed to utter!"

"What should I say?" answered Virginia; "would you have me promise a return of love whose indulgence is dependent on contingency? Is it kind, is it proper to urge me upon this subject under existing circumstances?"

"By heavens, Virginia, there shall be no contingency of my making! I have crossed the Rubicon, and you shall have the knowledge as you have had possession of my whole soul from the days of our infancy. 'Tis yours, Virginia, wholly yours; soul, mind and heart, all yours. Mould them as you will, reject me if you must, they are still yours. I swear never to profane the shrine of this first and only love by offering them up on any other. They are offered now, because my destiny so wills it. We are the creatures of circumstances. I have vainly struggled against the overwhelming

tide which has borne me to this point. I am goaded onward by insult—beset with menaces, and torn by the storms of such a passion as never man before encountered. Can you, dear Virginia, vouchsafe to me some measure of relief from these distracting emotions? Say that you would have been mine under other circumstances! Say that you will never wed that proud and imperious Beverly! Say any thing, Virginia, which shall calm the tumults of my bosom, and feed my hopes for the future." While he thus spoke, the blushing maiden was evidently labouring under emotions little less powerful than his own. Her previous air of offended feminine dignity was fast melting into sympathy, with the impassioned feelings of the excited youth. She felt for his peculiar griefs and cares, and shared his warmer sentiments. The youth perceived the softening mood, and continued.

"Speak, I pray you, Virginia, I am in your hands. Speak me into existence, or banish me from your presence!"

"I do not know, Nathaniel," said Virginia, after many attempts to give utterance to her thoughts, "whether it is proper at all times to speak the truth, but I will not deceive you now. There does indeed seem to be a peculiar concurrence of circumstances around us, and more perhaps than you are yourself aware of. I did not intend to deceive you, or lead you astray; when I told you a few moments since that I knew nothing of any other struggle than that arising from your own excited feelings, I spoke the truth, but perhaps not the entire truth;" and as she spoke, a lovely blush suffused her neck and downcast face; "I knew of other struggles indeed, but not your's, Nathaniel."

"Were they yours, Virginia, and of the same nature? say they were, and heaven bless for ever the tongue that utters it."

"That you have to ask, does more honour to my discretion, than I have ascribed to it myself of late. I have had painful fears that I should have little to tell on an occasion like the present, should it ever come, with my father's approbation. And if I have now overstepped the bounds of that proviso, it was in the hope of calming your troubled spirits, and preventing a catastrophe upon which I have looked with dreadful anticipation, since the night of the insurrection."

"And will you indeed be mine?"

"I will, Nathaniel, whenever you gain my father's approbation; but without it, never."

At this moment the garden gate was heard to creak upon its hinges, (most unmusically to Bacon's ears,) and Harriet Harrison came tripping over beds and flowers, all out of breath, her cheeks glowing with the heightened colour of exercise, and her eyes sparkling with mischief just ready to explode.

"Oh, Virginia! Virginia! such news!" was her first exclamation; "But shall I tell it before Mr. Bacon?"

"Yes, if it is of the usual kind."

"Well, upon your own head be the consequences. I have accidentally overheard such a secret! You must know that your Aunt Berkley has been at our house this morning, and I overheard her tell my mother that there was to be a great wedding immediately, and that I was to be one of the brides-maids. What! no tell-tale guilty blush? Well, who do you think is to be the bride-groom, and who the bride?"

"Indeed, Harriet, I cannot even guess."

"The blissful man, then is Beverly—but can you name his bride?"

"I should not go far hence for an answer, if you had not announced your nomination for a secondary office."

"O fie, fie, Virginia, I did not think you could play the hypocrite so well. I will tell you who it is then, but you must not breathe it even to the winds, nor you, Mr. Bacon. It is a sly arch little damsel, about your age and figure; by name Virginia Fairfax!" And with, these words, she burst into a loud laugh, pointing to her companion with her finger, and then tripped away again towards the gate without waiting to see the effect of her communication; but stopping with the gate in her hand, she cried—"But remember, Virginia, Charles Dudley is not to stand up with me; we don't speak now." And then she flew away, her hat hanging by the riband round her neck, and her raven ringlets flying loose around her temples. Virginia sat as one without life or motion, her face deadly pale, and her eye preternaturally clear and glassy, but without a tear. Her respiration was hurried and oppressed, and her countenance expressive of high and noble resolves in the midst of the keenest mental suffering. She knew whence her aunt obtained her information, and in its communication to others in the confidence of the Governor, before she had been consulted, she saw the tyrannical determination of that arbitrary old man to consummate this hated union without the least regard to her wishes or her feelings.

As these convictions flashed upon her mind, they called up firm and resolute determinations, even in her gentle bosom! she was stung into resistance by the tyrannical and high handed measures of her uncle, and resolved to resist upon the threshold. Bacon's physical frame was not so steady, or his nerves in his present mood so well strung by high resolves of independent action. He too saw by whom the blow was aimed, and upon whose head it would principally fall, and he trembled for the consequences to his gentle companion. He did not know the strength of



her independent mind, and the endurance and fortitude with which she would carry her purposes into execution. He knew her to be gentle and kind and superlatively lovely, but as yet she had endured no trials,—her courage and fortitude had been put to no test. The very amiable qualities which had won his affections, served only to increase his doubts as to her capacity to resist and endure what he too plainly saw awaited her. He had yet to learn that these are almost always found united in the female bosom with a signal power of steady and calm resistance to oppression. To this resolution had Virginia arrived, when his more turbulent and masculine emotions burst from his tongue as he seized her hand, "Swear to me, Virginia, before high Heaven, that you will never marry this proud heir of wealth, and worldly honours."

"Upon one Condition."

"Name it! if it is possible, it is done!"

"That you from this moment give up all idea of a meeting with Frank Beverly, which I know has only thus long been delayed by your wounds and illness." He dropped her hand and writhed upon his seat in agony—the cold perspiration bursting from his pale forehead, as he covered it with his hands. But presently standing up he exclaimed, "Great God! and can you ask this of me, Virginia? Is my honour of so little value to you, that you can ask me to betray it? You heard the insult! You saw the dagger aimed in the dark! Ay, and saw it strike upon a bare and wounded nerve! Shall I not resist? Is an assassin to thrust the point of his steel into the very apple of my eye, and meet with no resistance? Instinct itself would strike back the cowardly blow. Another might forego the measure of his revenge for an ordinary insult, but placed as I am, an elevated mark for impertinence and malignity to shoot at, with nothing but my single arm to defend me; no line of noble and heroic ancestors to support my pretensions, and my rank in the community; no living relations to give the lie to his calumnies! Standing alone amidst a host of powerful enemies, shall I be stricken down by a cowardly maligner, and never turn to strike one blow for my good name, my mother's honour, my father's memory, and my own standing in society? No, no, Virginia; you cannot, you will not, require me to promise this. One evidence I must and will give to the calumniator, that I come of no churl's blood."

"But, Nathaniel, did you not resent and thus return his injury upon the spot?"

"Ay, truly, I did hurl defiance in the craven's teeth, but that only throws the demand for satisfaction upon his shoulders, so that when it is made, I may at once atone for his, and take ample reparation for my own deep wrongs."

"Promise me, then, that you will but act with Frank henceforth on the defensive? Remember he is my kinsman."

"I do promise; and now promise me in your turn never to marry this kinsman, unless I give my consent, or you should be absolved from your obligation by my death, or some other irremediable barrier."

"I promise, Nathaniel."

Scarcely had the words issued from her lips, when the clanking of stirrups and clattering of a horse's hoofs at full speed, were heard outside the garden wall.

Into what a state of consternation and dismay the family was thrown by the appearance of the bloody and panting charger at his stable door without his master, the reader may already have imagined.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

It was the hour of midnight; the softened rays of a shaded lamp threw a flickering and uncertain light upon the paraphernalia of the sick chamber, as our hero sat a solitary watcher at the side of the wounded Cavalier. The long and apparently profound sleep into which the invalid had fallen, completely deceived the females of the family, so that they were more easily persuaded by Nathaniel to leave the charge, during the first half of the night, to his sole care. He had for a long time sat a sad and silent beholder of the unconscious sleeper, watching with breathless eagerness every change of muscle, as some sharp and inward pain vibrated in horrible contortions upon the countenance of the wounded Cavalier. In one of these he started suddenly up in the bed, his eyes glaring wildly upon his unrecognised attendant in utter amazement. First looking into his face and then to the bandages around his own person, he fell back on his couch—a grim and frightful smile of remembrance and recognition playing for a moment upon his features, as he placed his cold hand within that of Bacon, which had been softly laid upon his breast to soothe his startled perceptions.

"Nathaniel," said he, his voice already hollow and thrilling, "My hour is come! It is useless to disguise it. I feel and know it to be so, whatever the surgeon may pretend. You need not place your finger upon your lip; I owe to you a duty which I must perform while yet I may. You have often importuned me, and sometimes impatiently, which I did not enough, perhaps, consider to be natural to your situation, but you must forgive me—you have often importuned me upon the subject of your origin. If I had possessed any full or satisfactory knowledge on the subject, you may be sure I would not long have detained it from you. Indeed, I was little less anxious than

yourself to place you upon an equal footing in every respect with your associates." Here a smile of inward satisfaction beamed upon his auditor's countenance, unobserved, however, by the speaker, as he continued: "There were some reasons too, connected with the history of my own family, which prevented me from divulging what little I did know of your's. If I have erred, for this too you must forgive me. The wrong shall now be repaired. You have now been a member of my household for fifteen or sixteen years.

"One cold and rainy day our sympathies were excited, by seeing an athletic young Irishman in the street, near our door, carrying upon his back a well dressed boy, apparently six or seven years of age. The child was crying most piteously with cold and hunger. We called in the Irishman, and after furnishing him and his little charge with food, inquired whose child it was, and whither he was taking it. He answered, in his own expressive language, that he did not know to whom the child belonged, nor whither he was taking it. That it had been a fellow passenger with him across the ocean, until they were shipwrecked at the mouth of the river, outside of the Capes. That a woman who had two boys near the same age, either of her own, or under her protection, he did not know which, had most earnestly prayed him to take one of them upon his back, as he was preparing to swim to the beach. He did so, and succeeded in landing with his charge in perfect safety. What became of the woman and the other child he never knew, as shortly after the waves broke over the vessel, and she went to pieces. Many of the passengers and crew, however, had been saved and were scattered about through the neighbouring plantations, driven to seek employment by the urgency of their immediate wants. Whether the woman and the child were among the number he could not learn, as those who were saved had necessarily landed at distant points upon the shore. He brought the child to Jamestown in hopes that it would be recognised, and if not, that some humane person would take charge of it. His hopes had thus far proved fruitless, as to the first expectation, but we undertook cheerfully the latter task, and likewise gave employment to the kind-hearted Hibernian. I caused it to be made as generally known through the Colony, as our limited means of communication would permit, that such a child was in our possession, particularly describing his person and clothes, but all in vain. I also caused search to be made for the woman with the other child, through the southern plantations, but no tidings of them were ever heard, and we naturally concluded that they had gone down with the vessel.

"Some months after the little stranger had been thus domiciliated among us, I one day received an anonymous letter, which stated that the writer knew who were the parents of the child, but for important reasons of a political nature, he could not then divulge their names or history. He stated so many circumstances connected with the shipwreck, and described so exactly the child, that we were compelled to believe him. This letter was followed by others at various intervals, from that time to the present, often enclosing drafts for large sums to be drawn for in England, for the benefit of the child. I need scarcely tell you that the child was yourself—and your preserver, Brian O'Reily. The name by which you are called is the nearest that we could come to that by which, both yourself and Brian stated, you were known on board the vessel. The money enclosed for your benefit, has been suffered to accumulate until the late purchase of the plantation at the falls, of which you are now in possession. Around your neck, at the time of your arrival, was a small trinket, enclosing the hair of two individuals, curiously interwoven, and on its outside were some initials corresponding with your own name, and the date of a marriage. This, together with the letters I have mentioned, you will find in the left hand drawer of the secretary which stands in the corner of my library. After opening the outside door, you will perceive the key hanging beside the drawer. These letters were never shown, nor the contents mentioned to my wife, for a reason which I am now about to explain to you, if my strength will permit, and which will also unfold to you the cause of my reluctance to communicate with you on this subject.

"When I first saw Emily in England, she was a young and beautiful widow. Early in life a mutual attachment was formed between her and the son of a neighbouring gentleman, in rather more humble circumstances than the father of my Emily. In consequence of this disparity in the fortunes and standing of the two families, their attachment was kept a profound secret between themselves, until the youth having joined the army of the Commonwealth, they eloped. This was their last and only resort, because her father was as determined a Loyalist as his was indefatigable in the cause of the Independents and Roundheads. For two whole years she followed the perilous fortunes of her husband, now become a distinguished officer, during which time she gave birth to a son. For a season she resided with her infant at a retired farm-house, in a distant part of the country from the scene of strife; but her husband becoming impatient of her absence, directed her to procure a nurse for her boy and again partake of his hazardous fortunes. Her child was accordingly left in the charge of the nurse, and she set out to join her husband. On the eve of meeting him, as she supposed, she was met by the news of a desperate engagement, in which the party opposed to her husband had been victorious, and very shortly afterward, she was herself, with her attendants, overtaken in the highway, and captured by a party commanded by one of her own brothers. He immediately sent her under a strong escort to her father's house, not however before she had time to learn from some of the prisoners taken in the engagement, the heart-rending news of the death of her husband. She gained these sad tidings from one of his comrades, who saw him receive the wound and fall at his side.

"She found her father so exasperated against her that she dared not even mention to him or her brothers the existence of her child, lest they should take some desperate means to separate them for ever. For a time, therefore, she contented herself with such clandestine communications with her nurse as the perilous nature of the times permitted. At length, the sum of her afflictions was consummated by the death of her infant, the account of which was brought to her by the nurse in

person.

"When I first saw her, these many and severe misfortunes had been somewhat softened down in the lapse of years. She was still a melancholy being, however, but I belonging to her father's party, and being of a gay and volatile turn of mind, and much pleased with her beauty and amiable temperament, offered to bring her out to America as my wife, whither the success of the Protector's arms was then driving so many of the Nobles and Cavaliers of England, and where I already had a sister married to the then late, and now present Governor of Virginia. After candidly stating all the foregoing circumstances, she agreed to accept my hand. And we were accordingly married and sailed for the Capes of Virginia. You will perceive, upon a perusal of the anonymous letters, that the writer displays a most intimate knowledge of all the foregoing particulars of our family history. The design, as you will doubtless perceive, was to operate upon our superstitious feelings, by this mysterious display of knowledge, in matters so carefully guarded from the world. This was not at all necessary, because we had already adopted, and treated you as one of our own family. Nevertheless he partially succeeded with me. I confess to you that it has always appeared to me one of the strangest circumstances that ever came under my knowledge, that any living person should be acquainted with the facts contained in those letters. I have made the most strenuous and unceasing efforts to discover their author, by means of the European drafts, but all to no purpose. You will now readily comprehend the reason, why I did not communicate with Emily on this subject. It would only have been opening old wounds afresh, and would probably have excited her more sensitive feelings to a painful state of anxiety and suspense. The same reasons which influenced my conduct in this respect, will doubtless operate upon your own judgment when I am gone. In the same drawer is a will, by which you will perceive, when it is properly authenticated, that I have left to you, in conjunction with others, the most sacred of all human trusts. You will find yourself associated in the management of my affairs, with persons whom I knew at the time to be uncongenial with you in your general feelings, but upon this one subject you will all be influenced by one desire. Governor Berkley and Mr. Harrison will never thwart you in the active management, which I have left principally in trust to you.

"I have now rapidly sketched what you will better understand from the papers themselves, and I have finished none too soon, as I am admonished by the return of these cutting pains."

After another agonizing paroxysm, he fell again into one of those death-like slumbers, which often fill up the intervals of suffering after a mortal wound.

When Bacon perceived that he slept profoundly, he at once gave way to the restless anxiety to see the papers, by which he was consumed. Eagerly, but softly, he sought the library, opened the doors of the high old fashioned black walnut secretary, with its Lion's claws for feet, and his grisly beard and shining teeth, conspicuous from every brass ornament with which it was adorned.<sup>[4]</sup>

He returned to his post and opened the package of papers with a trembling anxiety, and intense interest, similar to what one might be supposed to feel who was about to unseal the book of fate.

He had no sooner cast his eye upon the handwriting, than the package fell from his grasp in the most evident disappointment. Until this moment he had indulged a vague undefined hope that from a single glance at the characters, he should at once possess a clue to unravel the whole mystery. His mind had instantly settled upon one peculiar and remarkable individual in the Colony, as the only one likely to possess such knowledge, and from the interest which that person had always manifested in his fate, he had almost persuaded himself that he would prove to be the writer. With his handwriting and the peculiarly dignified and stately character of his language, he had long been familiar. The first few lines over which his eye glanced rapidly and eagerly, convinced him of his error; neither the characters nor the language were his. Nevertheless they possessed sufficient interest, after the momentary disappointment had passed away, to induce him to grasp them again and once more commence their perusal. In this occupation he was soon so completely absorbed as to be unconscious of the time which elapsed, the situation and circumstances in which he was placed as regarded himself, as well as the wounded Cavalier, who lay in the same apartment. In unfolding one of the papers he came upon the gold trinket mentioned by his benefactor. Here again was a new subject of intense interest. "This," said he to himself, "was worn by my mother and was placed around my neck at our last parting." Here was a fragment of her tresses precisely similar in character and colour to his own, interwoven with the darker shades of those of his father. Here too was the date of their marriage and the initials of their names agreeing sufficiently well with his own supposed age. These were all subjects of earnest contemplation to the excited imagination of a youth rendered morbidly sensitive on the subject of his birth and parentage, by many painful occurrences with his aristocratic young associates, and still more by recent developments with the idol of his affections. The trinket was laid down and the manuscript resumed, of whose contents as much as is important to our narrative has already been communicated to the reader. The characters in which it was written, were successively compared in his mind to those of every person in the Colony who handled the pen. In that day it was not hard to remember who they were from their great number, chirography having been an art with which the Cavaliers were less familiar than with the use of the small and broad sword. Not a scribe in the country wrote in characters similar to the one he held in his hand, so far as he could recollect. He thought they resembled those of Governor Berkley more than of any other, yet that sturdy old knight had invariably frowned so much on his attempts to assume the place and standing in society to which his education and intelligence entitled him, that he could not believe him concerned in benefiting him, even as an agent.

The Recluse was the only individual upon whom his mind could rest as the probable author, notwithstanding the variance of the writing. Yet against this conclusion there were many powerful arguments. The first that suggested itself to his mind was the money. Could he command such large sums? And if he could, was it possible with his known habits and peculiarities, not to mention his occasional aberration, to arrange complicated pecuniary affairs in Europe? Then again, if he was the writer, why were these communications continued after he had himself arrived at years of discretion? Every reason seemed to favour the idea that he himself would have been chosen as the depository of these communications, had the Recluse been the man, especially when he reflected that he was at that very time possessed of more of his confidence than any other person in the Colony. The papers were perused and re-perused, and the locket turned over and over listlessly in his fingers, while a shade of deep sadness and disappointment settled upon his countenance.

From this unpleasing reverie he was suddenly aroused by the groans of the wounded sufferer, who now awoke in the greatest agony. When Bacon came to his bed-side a melancholy change was visible in his countenance. He was making his last struggle with the grim monster. He was however enabled to express a desire that his family should be called, but when they arrived, he could not give utterance to his ideas. He took first the hand of his wife, and next that of his daughter, and successively resigned them into those of his young executor. This, under the existing circumstances of the moment, attracted no particular attention, but was the subject of many an after-thought and remark. A few convulsive struggles followed, and then the generous and noble spirit of the Cavalier deserted its prison house.

We will not attempt to describe the heart-rending scene which ensued. Suffice it to say, that after a decent and respectful delay, (far more than is allowed in our day,) the much loved and much lamented Mr. Fairfax was borne to the grave, amidst the lamentations and regrets of the whole assembled gentry of the Colony. The long line of mournful pageantry moved in slow and melancholy steps to the sound of a solemn dirge through the streets of the ancient city, and after the usual sad, but appropriate rites of the established church, the corpse was deposited in the burying ground, which to this day preserves the crumbling ruins of many monuments of the ancient Cavaliers.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

It was some weeks after the funeral of Gideon Fairfax, that Bacon, attracted by the genial warmth of a summer day, sauntered out for the first time, in company with his friend Dudley, to seek the usual *rendezvous* of the young Cavaliers. Scarcely were they seated in the Tap of the "Arms," before Philip Ludwell hastily entered, touched his castor formally to Bacon and Dudley, and handed to the former a note, fastened with a silken cord, and sealed with the arms of the House of Berkley. Bacon cut the cord and read the note, without changing countenance, and then handed it to Dudley, who had no sooner perused its contents, than they both arose, retired to a private room, and called for pen, ink and paper. The latter soon returned with an answer, sealed in like manner, and handed it to Ludwell, who again formally bowing retired. The first ran thus:

Jamestown, June —, 16—.  
To Nathaniel Bacon, Esq.

SIR—I seize the first moment of your appearance in public, restored to health, to demand the satisfaction due for the grievous insult put upon me, on the night of the Anniversary Celebration, in presence of the assembled gentry of the Colony. All proper arrangements will be made by my friend Ludwell, who will also await your answer. I have the honour to be your most obedient servant,

FRANCIS BEVERLY.

Bacon's answer was no less courteous and explicit.

Berkley Arms, June —, 16—.  
To Francis Beverly, Esq.

SIR—Your note by the hands of Mr. Ludwell was this moment received. Your challenge is accepted. To-morrow morning at sunrise I will meet you. The length of my weapon will be furnished by my friend Dudley, who will convey this to Mr. Ludwell, as well as make all other arrangements on my behalf. I have the honour to be, yours, &c.

NATHANIEL BACON.

The following morning at sunrise, two parties of Cavaliers landed from their boats at a secluded inlet, on the southern extremity of Hog Island, immediately opposite the city, but screened from view by the depth of the overshadowing forest. A surgeon with his assistant soon followed.

The two parties exchanged formal but courtly salutations, and immediately proceeded to the business of their meeting. A level grass-plot, firm under the pressure of the foot, and sufficiently cleared for the purpose, had long been set apart as the battle ground on similar occasions, and

was now easily found.

When all the parties were arrived at this spot, the seconds proceeded to measure the swords in presence of their principals. This of course was a mere formality required by the usages of the times, as the length of the weapons was already known and settled between themselves.

The two young Cavaliers about to engage in deadly strife, were perhaps as nearly matched in skill and courage as any that could be found in the Colony. Both were in the daily practice of the foils, as a matter of education no less than of amusement. Both were impetuous by nature, and rash in their actions, and both came upon the field longing for vengeance in requital of wrongs which each supposed he had received at the hands of the other.

Beverly was in the enjoyment of ruddy health, and buoyant animal impulses, but his antagonist was pale, thin, and evidently labouring under depression of spirits, as well as feebleness of body. To a hasty, and superficial observer, this state of the parties would have seemed decidedly unfavourable to the latter; but it is very questionable whether the high health and robust strength of Beverly were not more than counterbalanced by the subdued but steady composure evinced by his antagonist, the result of long confinement and depletion.

With a slight inclination of the head in formal salutation, each advanced a foot and crossed his blade with that of his antagonist. The eyes of each were instantly riveted upon his enemy, with the steady and deadly ferocity of two wild beasts of prey. The pause continued a few moments, as if each were striving to measure the hatred of the other; a few rapid and skilful thrusts and parries were exchanged, and then another interval of suspense and inactivity ensued. The next effort was longer and more fiercely contested, and the intentions of each in this uncomplicated warfare were more readily distinguished. Beverly was at each successive trial becoming more and more ferocious, while his antagonist was as evidently acting on the defensive, if not attempting to disarm him. This now apparent intention of the latter, might be the necessary result of his present comparative debility, of policy—aiming to take advantage of his opponent's impetuosity, or of his promise to Virginia. But from whatever cause it sprung, Dudley thought it a most hazardous experiment to depend upon disarming so skilful a swordsman, and was accordingly under the most lively apprehensions for the fate of his friend. These were not however of long continuance, for at the next onset, Beverly, forgetting himself for a moment, as he impetuously flashed his weapon in deadly and rapid thrusts, cried, "Ha, Sir Bastard, have at your coward's heart." In the next instant Bacon's sword pierced his body—his eyes glared wildly for an instant, his sword fell from his powerless hand, and as Bacon withdrew the weapon, Beverly uttered a groan and fell prostrate upon the earth.

Bacon stood listlessly wiping his sword-blade upon his handkerchief, his eyes abstractedly fixed upon the fallen youth, like one without thought or reason, or rather so deeply buried in thought as to be almost unconscious of the scene before him. His thoughts were upon his promise to Virginia, to act only upon the defensive. This he had interpreted far more literally than the fair girl herself had designed, and it was his intention so to act throughout the struggle, had not his patience and forbearance been overcome by the taunting exclamation of his adversary, just preceding the last fatal onset.

All the circumstances passed rapidly through his mind, until his meditations settled into the most poignant regret; not a little aggravated when Beverly opened his eyes, and held up his hand to Bacon, feebly exclaiming, "Bacon, forgive me; I wronged you both first and last. I see it now when it is too late, but it is never too late to ask forgiveness for an injury." Bacon grasped his hand, and flung himself prostrate at his side in an instant. "Before God, Beverly, it was not my intention, when I came to the field, to do this deed; my whole effort at first was to disarm you. Forgiveness lies with you, not with me. I have done you an irreparable injury, yours was but the result of thoughtless impetuosity, for which I as freely forgive you, as it was hastily and heedlessly offered. May God forgive us both."

The surgeon and his assistant now interfered in the prosecution of their professional duties. While these were in progress, all parties were silent in breathless attention; not a change of the doctor's countenance escaped them. At length he arose, and deliberately wiping and replacing his instruments in their case, walked thoughtfully some paces from the wounded youth.

Bacon dared not follow to ask the fate of his patient, but Dudley, with breathless eagerness pursued his footsteps, and demanded to know in few words his fate. "Life or death, Doctor?" he hastily exclaimed, as if he expected an answer in like short and expressive terms.

"Ours is not one of the exact sciences as to prognostication," said Dr. Roland. "The wound extends from the anterior part of the thorax."

"Don't tell me about the thorax, doctor, tell me whether there is life or death?"

"The pleura and the right lobe of the lungs have been wounded, consequently there will be great inflammation succeeding, both from the pleuretic and pulmonary excitement. These are the unchangeable laws of the animal economy, and will not yield were the son of Charles himself lying before us."

"O damn the animal economy. Can't you say in one word, life or death?"

"No, I cannot, Master Dudley. All I can say at present is, that it is my hope and belief, if properly managed, that he will not die from the hemorrhage, and that his chance of life depends upon his

weathering out the inflammation mentioned."

"There is a reasonable hope then! Thank you, doctor, thank you; may God send that his life be spared." Uttering this fervent ejaculation he joined his companions, who now held a consultation as to the most judicious plan of removing the wounded youth. One proposed that he should remain at a cottage upon the island; but the surgeon decided that he might be removed in a boat to the city as easily as he could be carried to the cottage. He was accordingly extended upon a rude litter, and deposited in the most convenient boat, upon such a bed as they could hastily construct of cloaks and bushes.

They had scarcely emerged from the shrubbery overhanging the margin of the river, when a rustling noise was heard, similar to that made by the flight of a large flock of birds, and in the next instant a shower of Indian arrows fell harmless in the water, succeeded by an astounding yell of twenty or more savages, indistinctly seen through the dense fog rising from the stream. Their light bark canoes, of variegated colours, could scarcely be distinguished as they rode upon the waves like huge aquatic birds. The savage warriors were standing perfectly erect, notwithstanding the motion of the waves and the vigorous exertions of those squaws who officiated at the oar and helm. Bows were already strung in their hands, and they were again in the act of leveling them upon the party, when Bacon, seizing a duck gun from the bottom of the boat, fired into the midst of the foremost canoe. Three huge painted warriors leaped into the water and yelled and struggled for an instant before they sunk to rise no more. Another discharge of arrows, and another shot from Bacon's weapon, with like success, considerably damped the ardour of the pursuit. Bacon and his party had in the mean time urged the boat containing Beverly and the surgeon far ahead and out of reach of their missiles, while they protected their retreat. Having suffered the enemy to come within striking distance, he was now enabled to see that they were Chickahominies, and readily comprehended their motives. He was himself the object of their pursuit. They had watched his movements for the purpose of avenging the death of their chief and his followers. So prompt and efficient, however, was the defence of the party sought, that after a few harmless flights of arrows, and a few returns from the firearms of the white party, they hastily retreated, and in a short time their canoes were only seen like distant specks on the circumscribed horizon, as they scudded away before the rising volumes of vapour for fear the dawning day should betray them and their hostile attitude to the notice of the citizens.

As Bacon and Dudley stepped upon the shore in front of the palisade, the other party having landed and disappeared before their arrival, they stood to gaze over the water for an instant to ascertain whether any of the savages yet lingered upon the scene. The fog was rapidly rising from the water, so that their line of vision was uninterrupted for some distance over the bay between the islands.

They could just perceive their late enemies doubling the southern point of the island upon which they stood, and were about to retire, supposing all further apprehension from that quarter at an end, when they discovered the dim outlines of some one upon the southern end of the island, making signals with a white handkerchief. They immediately and silently moved along the shore, under cover of the palisade, until they came within such a distance of the object which had attracted their attention, that they could discern who it was themselves, at the same time remaining undiscovered. It was Wyanokee! Her appearance at this early hour and solitary place, and her equivocal employment, produced the greatest astonishment and mortification in the mind of Bacon. Until this moment he would have pledged his life for her truth and fidelity. Ever since the encounter with the Indians, he had been wondering in his own mind, how they had pursued him so exactly to the secret place of their rendezvous. Now he recollected that Wyanokee had passed through the gallery of the State House on the preceding evening, where Dudley and himself were practising. She might have overheard some of their conversation. Her presence at such a place had excited a momentary surprise at the time, but it all passed over, under the usual idea that Wyanokee was every where. She often glided about like a spirit, yet no one knew whither she was going, or the purpose of her movements. "Can it be possible," said Bacon to himself, "that Wyanokee has been treacherous?"

All these corroborating circumstances, together with her present attitude, answered in the affirmative. Notwithstanding the strong conviction of this unwelcome fact which now settled on his mind, he could not believe her deliberately bent on his destruction. He had seen her exhibit many noble traits of character in trying situations. Besides, she was somewhat under his protection, and we are always inclined to love those whom we have served. She was also Virginia's pupil, and the latter was proud of her as such, and he himself had felt a sort of complacency at the progress of the maiden under her tuition. His imagination had often dwelt upon her imaginary perfections, as so many reflected beauties from Virginia's guileless heart and cultivated mind. No, he could not believe her thus meanly treacherous. Some native impulse must have been roused, some secret spring of her long hidden and dormant nature, must have been touched. Her savage ideas of patriotism had fired her to revenge the death of her nation's chief.

Notwithstanding these palliating suggestions which rose in his mind on the doubtful attitude in which he had detected her, his reflections were by no means pleasing, as he locked his arm in Dudley's, and retired from the shore. Every thing seemed to him to conspire against his happiness. First, there was the old and ever present cause of solicitude in relation to his own origin, the doubtful nature of which had been the remote cause of the unhappy rencounter of the morning. Then there was the new attitude in which he was placed towards Virginia, by the death of her father, together with the tantalizing, partial revelations of the anonymous letters and gold

locket, which that event had thrown into his possession, with the thousand surmises, half formed hopes, and resolutions resulting from them. Upon the whole, however, he could not but feel, in the midst of these various depressing circumstances, that his chance for success in an application for the hand of Virginia was greater with the widowed lady of the murdered Fairfax than it would have been were he alive. He knew the high position in which he stood in that lady's favour. He knew her contempt for worldly show, pomp and circumstance—he had always known it, but now he knew something of the cause in the revelations of her own history. He knew that she had boldly indulged the first predilections of her own young heart at the expense of her father's and her brother's favour; and his hopes were strong, that when he should present himself before her in something of a like attitude, as an applicant for the hand of her fair daughter, her own recollections would rise up before her in his favour. That there would be difficulties to surmount, and prejudices to subdue, he knew full well. That Sir William Berkley would exert his power to the utmost, to prevent such a consummation he also knew; but the consent of Mrs. Fairfax once gained, he resolved to brave the opposition if he could not subdue the prejudices of the Governor.

The unhappy business of the morning would in all probability hasten the contending elements to a crisis. The Governor would soon know of the meeting and its result; he would in all probability inquire into the cause of the quarrel, and his shrewd insight into the motives of human action would very soon discover that there were hidden impulses operating, which caused the insult to be given, and kindred ones in the opposite party which rendered the offence so much the more heinous and unpardonable. In short, he would discover that there was a lady at the bottom of the whole affair; and that this lady was his own fair niece; and that the two gentlemen who had just contended in deadly strife, were rivals for the possession of her favour. Such being the process of reasoning in the Governor's mind, Bacon knew him too well to suppose that he would delay the matter long before he endeavoured to bring it to a conclusion. Indeed he believed (and the reader knows how truly) that his excellency already saw the advantages of the connexion as vividly as his nephew apprehended the sterling qualities of the lady. Such being the case, the result of the morning's meeting, if it did not prove fatal to his rival's life, would in all probability precipitate the matter at once to an issue. The Governor would no sooner ascertain that Beverly was out of danger than he would take the business in his own hands, and how he would manage it, and what means he would take to accomplish his ends, Bacon's personal experience in other matters fully taught him. He resolved therefore to be beforehand with him, to present his own claims first, to attempt to conciliate the lady of his late patron, before her ear had been poisoned by the violent abuse which he knew would be heaped upon him, as well as by contempt for his origin. But could he imbrue his hand in the blood of his rival and then present it for acceptance? Could he precipitate his claims before the family in their present melancholy state?

These were the subjects of his reflection, as the two youths entered the gates of the city,—and here another difficulty arose; if he should immediately present himself before the family, the news of the meeting having preceded him, even without broaching the subject before alluded to, would not the feelings excited in the mind of Virginia and her mother be unfavourable to his claims? Then again, should he leave rumour with her hundred tongues to explain to the maiden the reasons which had induced him to accept the challenge from her kinsman, would not his cause be still more prejudiced? Finally, therefore, after taking all these things into consideration, he came to the conclusion that it was best to wait some favourable news from his wounded rival before presenting himself, or in case of the worst result, to absent himself from the city altogether for a time.

Accordingly the youths bent their footsteps to Dudley's lodgings, there to await intelligence concerning Beverly. It is hardly necessary to remind the reader that duelling in that day, so far from being considered criminal, was the sole test to which all differences between gentlemen were submitted. The influence of the custom has been handed down, variously modified by the circumstances of the times, from one generation to another, until it has reached our own.

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## CHAPTER XV.

For more than a week Frank Beverly lay in the most precarious state, and more than once during that period his friends were summoned to his bed-side, expecting every moment to be his last. Bacon, torn and racked with suspense, moved about the house of his late patron like one distracted. He had already made his peace with Virginia, by explaining to her the unequivocal and unconditional demand for satisfaction made upon him by Beverly, as well as the unjustifiable taunt upon the field, by which he had been driven from his defensive attitude. But even her society failed in its usual attractions, while Beverly remained in danger. Doctor Roland, with all his technical formality, was as indefatigable in his attentions as he was oracular and mysterious in his announcements from hour to hour, and day to day, concerning the state of his patient. These, reported to his master from the lips of Brien O'Reily, would form no unamusing subject for the reader, were not our attention called to the more important personages and graver incidents of our narrative.

As Bacon had surmised, Sir William Berkley was not long in understanding the real cause of the quarrel; he had himself heard partial reports of the affront and its cause on the night of its occurrence. As Bacon had also expected, he seemed to await the fate of his young kinsman, before he took any farther steps towards promoting the alliance between him and Virginia. This

however did not prevent him from giving way to the most ungovernable rage at Frank's condescension in meeting an adventurer, "the son of no one knew whom."

At length the invalid was unequivocally pronounced to be out of danger, by Dr. Roland himself. The Governor had no sooner received the information, than he despatched a footman with his most respectful compliments to Mrs. Fairfax, and requested the pleasure of an hour's conversation with her, on the most important business; in answer to which, a message was returned to the Governor, that she would be pleased to see him, at any moment which might suit his convenience. That time soon arrived, and the formal old gentleman, after many apologies for the untimely intrusion upon the privacy of her sorrows, and condolence for their cause, thus introduced the subject to which he solicited her attention.

"It was perhaps not known to you, Madam, that your late lamented husband and myself had long since formed a prospective arrangement, by which we hoped to dispose of our fortunes in such a manner as to add honour and dignity to our families, at the same time that we should preserve them united, and confer happiness upon our nearest relatives and presumptive heirs. His will, as I understand, has not yet been authenticated, but doubtless when it is so you will find that he has provided for the fulfilment of this design."

"I do not fully comprehend your Excellency."

"I mean, madam, that we contemplated uniting in marriage, your fair daughter and my young kinsman, Beverly; by this means I will be enabled to entail my fortune on their male descendants, which will meet all my desires concerning my niece, at the same time that it will be doing no injustice to my young relative."

"The plan seems ingeniously contrived, Sir William, to prevent future heart-burnings concerning the disposal of your estate; but were the young people to know nothing of the arrangement?"

"The knowledge of it was kept from them, at the suggestion of your late lamented husband, in order that they might imbibe no prejudices against the scheme as they grew up, but rather be thrown into each other's way, as the time for its consummation approached, and thus perhaps discover its propriety themselves. This has in part proved true, for on the very day of the unfortunate accident which deprived your house of its inestimable head, I had the honour to lay Frank's proposals before him."

"Sir William—I do not know my daughter's sentiments on the subject,—the fulfilment of the scheme will depend entirely on her feelings."

"With due deference, madam, would it not be more politic to treat the matter as already, and long since settled, between her father and myself, and sacredly sealed by his death?"

"I must be plain and candid with your Excellency—I have no desire to use policy in the affair; if my daughter gives her free and hearty consent, you have mine; but if the match is repugnant to her feelings we will drop the subject, with many thanks to your Excellency for your kind purposes, and to Mr. Beverly for the intended honour."

Virginia was now called in; but while the servant performed that duty, Sir William replied, "I am exceedingly mortified, madam, that you seem to place the fulfilment of this long-treasured scheme upon a contingency so light."

"Do you then consider a young lady's being permitted to have a voice in choosing her partner for life, a light contingency, Sir William?"

"I think, madam, that her parents are more capable of making a selection which will confer honour upon them and her, than she can possibly be. Our best families would soon arrive at a very plebeian level, were every female descendant to be permitted to indulge her love-sick fancies, instead of consulting the interest and honour of her house. But it may be that this discussion is useless in the present instance. Here, madam, comes your daughter, who will decide."

Virginia entered, pale and trembling with alarm and vague presentiments of evil; her hands were crossed upon her breast, and her eyes downcast. After making a reverential courtesy to the Governor, she instinctively stood before him, awaiting his commands as one upon trial. However harsh the Governor's opinions to the mother, policy dictated a very different course toward the daughter; he accordingly led her to a seat beside himself, and with the most bland and courteous manner, thus addressed her,

"I come, my niece, as an ambassador from poor Frank, with full powers to ask of your mother this fair hand in marriage; and I must take the same opportunity to declare the happiness it would give Lady Berkley and myself, to receive you into our mansion as the wife of our kinsman, and the daughter of our affections."

The mildness and the unusual condescension of her formal uncle completely threw Virginia from the stately and unequivocal answer which she had meditated when first summoned; for it will be recollected that she had already had an intimation of his intentions. She could do no less than feel grateful for his own undoubted affection, and she felt it extremely difficult properly to express this feeling, connected as it must be with the overthrow of his dearest hopes. After the most painful embarrassment, she was enabled to answer: "To you, my dear uncle, I have always felt grateful for the more than paternal affection which you have shown to me, and I must feel not



less so for the motives which prompted you to undertake the present mission; but with all my affection for yourself and desire to please you, and all my gratitude to Mr. Beverly for the honour which he intended me, I must beg leave to decline his offer."

"Wherefore must you decline it, Virginia?" asked Sir William, with the most evident chagrin and surprise.

"Simply because I cannot reciprocate the affection which I am informed Mr. Beverly entertains for me."

"You have never made the trial, niece; you have not taken five minutes to consider the importance of the proposition which I have had the honour to lay before you. Reconsider your hasty answer; take time to form a mature opinion of the many advantages which the connexion holds out. See Frank himself when he recovers, and my word for it, he will make as many love-sick speeches as would woo a lady from Charles' court."

"It is not necessary, my dear uncle; I have long meditated upon the subject, having by accident heard of the proposed union before you were pleased to communicate it in person."

"What is your objection to Frank? It is certainly no satisfactory answer, to say you cannot reciprocate his affection, when you have never yet given him an opportunity to plead his cause in person. He is unquestionably as well favoured a youth in regard to personal attributes, as any in the Colony, and I flatter myself as well born and of as bright expectations?"

"I have no objections to urge, Sir William; Mr. Beverly is undoubtedly all that you say he is, but he never can be more to me than he is at present; for this determination I have many reasons satisfactory to my own sense of propriety, but which it is neither necessary nor proper for me to urge. One I will however give you, with the hope of for ever setting the question at rest. My affections are already engaged!"

Had a thunderbolt hurled the old Cavalier from his seat, he could not have been more astounded. Mrs. Fairfax was scarcely less so. Sir William glanced from her countenance to that of her daughter, as if he expected the former to overwhelm her daughter with reproaches, his own anger all the while displaying itself in the contortions of his inflamed and glowing countenance. But seeing her astonishment subsiding into complacency instead of anger, his own broke forth—

"What! bestow your affections unasked? and upon whom pray!"

"I have not bestowed them unasked, Sir."

"Has any gentleman asked and obtained permission of you, to address your daughter?" he inquired, turning to Mrs. Fairfax.

"None, Sir."

"Who then is the favoured swain? Who has dared to interfere in this matter unauthorized by the consent of your only surviving parent or myself?"

"For him I have neither the right nor the will to speak. At the proper time he will doubtless do it for himself," said Virginia, as she arose with offended dignity to leave the room.

"Hear me yet a moment," cried Sir William, with the most ill disguised efforts to appear calm. "If the person, who has thus intruded into your family, is of proper birth, connexions, and expectations, and his suit should meet with your mother's approbation, I of course have no right to interfere. But remember, should you attempt to form an alliance with an individual who would disgrace my family, to which you are nearly connected, I will, if there be none other to perform the office, with mine own hands tear him from the very foot of the altar, and mete to him such a reward as his temerity demands."

At this moment the door opened, and Nathaniel Bacon entered, with an expression of unalloyed delight upon his countenance. He had just heard the joyful tidings from the medical attendant of his rival. He met Virginia face to face, just within the sweep of the door, and perceiving no other object at the moment, attempted gayly to seize her hand, but no corresponding movement being perceptible, he paused to examine her countenance, at the same time glancing at the offended visiter, whose scowling eyes were fixed upon him. Virginia's countenance was like a mirror to reflect her feelings, and had there been no intelligible expression upon the face of the Governor, Bacon would readily have comprehended the attitude of the various parties. These observations, however, were the work of an instant, for Sir William no sooner perceived his presence, than he sprung to his feet, his brow growing darker every moment. He had entirely misinterpreted Bacon's appearance at that critical juncture. His suspicions had all along pointed to him, and he now imagined that his presence was the result of preconcerted design. "To what motive, Sir," he cried, "am I indebted for this intrusion? Have you come to congratulate me upon the recovery of my young kinsman, of whom your murderous hand had well nigh deprived me?"

Bacon wheeled partly upon his heel, as if endeavouring to force himself out of the room, without answering the choleric old Cavalier, but seeing Virginia turn her head and cast an indignant glance at the offender, his own hard schooled feelings broke forth also. "To no particular motive, Sir, are you indebted for this visit: it was the result of the purest accident. I knew not that your Excellency was in the house, and came into this room in the ordinary free and unchallenged mode of intercourse, to which the inmates of this most hospitable and generous family are

accustomed."

"Ay, Sir Stripling, and unless I am grossly deceived, your intercourse has not gone unchallenged for nothing."

"To what is your Excellency pleased to allude."

"Have you not studiously endeavoured to undermine the most important family arrangements of those who cherished and protected your infancy? Have you not stung the bosom that warmed you into existence? Have you not been callous to the claims of gratitude, due alike to the living and the dead? Have you not attempted to beguile the only daughter of your patron into a disgraceful alliance?"

Bacon resisted the mild and persuasive endeavours of Mrs. Fairfax to lead him from the room, whence Virginia had already departed, while he replied, drawing himself up to an erect and perfectly composed and dignified attitude,

"If your Excellency chooses so far to forget, what is alike due to your station—to yourself, to the present company, and to me, as to permit yourself to ask such questions, you cannot expect me so far to forget myself as to answer them!" and with this reply he left the room.

The Governor, after indulging in the most vehement bursts of passion, and threats of vengeance against Bacon, should he dare to connect himself with his family, and in vain endeavours to extort a promise from Mrs. Fairfax, never to give her consent, left the house in the most towering and ungovernable rage.

He had scarcely crossed the threshold, before Bacon returned to the same room, leading Virginia by the hand, having held a very interesting conversation with her in another apartment. Mrs. Fairfax was sitting apparently absorbed in the most painful reflections. As the youthful pair entered, a slight clearing away of the clouds which had gathered upon her countenance might be perceived. They walked deliberately up to where she sat, and seated themselves one on each side of her: when Bacon thus spoke—

"It was not my intention, dear madam, thus to intrude upon your sorrows, but I may be pardoned for presenting myself as a petitioner at your feet, when another, high in station and dignity, has thought proper to forget those claims. Had he confined himself to the legitimate object of his mission, I had perhaps still forborne, but when he has stepped out of his way rudely to thrust me before you as the disorganizer of your family arrangements, and as the serpent who has stolen into your house in order to poison your brightest hopes and fondest anticipations, I have thought it became me at once to state to you how far I have offended.

"It is true, dear madam, that I have not been insensible to the many charms of your daughter's person and disposition. You have witnessed, I would fain hope, not unobservantly, the dear delights of our first childish intercourse, when our minds and hearts were drawn together by an affection and a congeniality of taste and sentiment which we supposed, if we thought of it at all, was purely fraternal; and then when our minds began to expand, and our affections to assume and to display their real character, and finally when we came thoroughly to understand each other and ourselves, you were not a heedless spectator of these progressive changes and developments; and having seen, I cannot believe that you would have permitted this mutual affection to grow to its present maturity and strength, intending to deny its sanction at the last, when the cure might so easily have been made by nipping the tender flower in the bud. Speak, I pray you madam! Our fate hangs upon your words!"

"I will not pretend to you, my children, that I have not observed the mutual affection which has grown up between you from its earliest dawn. Nor will I disguise from you that it gave me pleasure mingled with much pain. Many long and dreary nights have I lain upon my pillow, anticipating what I then supposed would be the fierce struggles of this moment. I calculated with the usual short sightedness of mortals, that he who will ne'er partake in our councils more, would have been here to decide upon your wishes.

"I supposed that his own family pride would first have been to conquer, then I thought of the fierce resistance which the greater pride of his kinsman, Sir William, would offer—the interview of this morning shows how truly. After all these painful misgivings, however, and the maturest judgment that I could bestow upon the subject, I came to the resolution to suffer what seemed the predestined current of events to run its course. Providence has by a most painful process removed the only obstacle you had to fear, my children, and he, had he been alive, would doubtless have finally given his consent rather than attempt to tear up forcibly by its roots a passion like yours, the growth of years and intimate knowledge of each other. I therefore give you my consent, my children, that you be united in marriage, and the sooner the better, as the first storm upon its announcement once over, all these contending passions which drive you into broils and strife will cease."

As she concluded speaking, Virginia, down whose cheeks the tears had been rapidly coursing each other, sunk upon her knees, in which position she was instantly joined by her now acknowledged and betrothed lover. Mrs. Fairfax placed her hands upon their heads, tears bedimmed her own eyes, and blessed them, and then kissed her daughter as she was about to leave the room. When she was gone, Bacon resumed the subject of their discourse. "O say, dear Madam, how soon will you consent to the completion of our happiness? I address myself to you in the first instance, in order that I may use your name in my appeal to your daughter for an early

day."

"As soon as you can persuade Virginia to consent. I would seriously and earnestly recommend two things with regard to your nuptials, the rest I leave to yourselves, namely, that they take place as privately as possible, for fear of Sir William's violence; and secondly, as soon as possible, in order that you may anticipate the complete recovery of young Mr. Beverly."

"Oh, madam, may Heaven bless your wisdom and benevolence. I am now doubly armed, and will seek your daughter, and I hope soon return with a favourable answer."

Accordingly he flew out of the room, and in a few moments she heard him loudly calling her daughter's name through all the portals of the house, and rapping at every door, but no Virginia was to be found. At length, however, he sallied forth into the garden, when he found her in her summer-house, apparently in profound study of some favourite Author's new publication, perhaps Milton's "Paradise Regained." His arguments fell apparently upon a deaf ear. She continued to read, regardless of his passionate gesticulations and burning words. Her cheeks glowed vividly enough, but she gave no other evidence that she was conscious of his presence. At length he seized her hand, and forcibly but gently led her before her mother, like a culprit, as she doubtless felt herself, for her eyes were downcast, and a crimson blush suffused her neck and temples. Mrs. Fairfax attempted in vain to assume a grave and judicial expression. She succeeded, however, in convincing the young pair that the safety and the peace of many of their family circle depended upon their speedy nuptials. It was doubtless for these reasons alone, that they soon agreed amicably upon an early day, until which time we will leave the imagination of the reader to follow the young pair through flowery beds of roses and tulips, and the more flowery anticipations of "Love's young dream."

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## CHAPTER XVI.

The appointed day at length arrived—it was ushered in by no cheering omens from without or within the mansion of Mrs. Fairfax. No warbling songsters from the feathered tribes perched upon the window of our heroine, or hopped from flower to flower through the garden beneath, to woo her from her slumbers; and the heavens themselves gave lowering and sultry evidence of an approaching storm. In the east it was misty and unsettled; while a long curtain of dark frowning clouds, heavily charged with electric fire, hung in portentous masses along the whole line of the western horizon. The atmosphere was hot and oppressive, the whole aspect of the weather such as invariably casts a damp upon the spirits.

Virginia required no sweet serenade to call her from her slumbers. She was already awake, as indeed she had been through most of the night. A feverish dread of undefined approaching evil, had dimly floated through her excited brain during her waking hours, and yet more shadowy horrors disturbed her partial and unrefreshing sleep. Her morning habiliments were donned earlier than usual, without the assistance of her Indian attendant; yet she marvelled at her unwonted absence. She usually slept in an adjoining apartment, and hither Virginia bent her steps to chide the tardy maiden for her strange neglect on so important an occasion. No little surprise was visible in her countenance, when she found not only the apartment untenanted, but that the bed upon which Wyandottah usually slept, was undisturbed, or that if used at all, it had been slightly disarranged, only as if with a deceptive purpose. She repeated her name throughout the house and garden, but no answer was returned. Her voice soon aroused her mother, who was no less surprised at the circumstances related by her daughter. Together they went to the apartment, and again examined the bed, which had evidently not been slept in. And now other appearances struck them, which had not before attracted their attention. The dress she had worn on the previous day, hung in a closet answering the purposes of a wardrobe, together with the whole of her apparel, the gift of Virginia or her mother. Not an article could be recollected of these, which was not there. They seemed, moreover, to have been studiously arranged so as to attract attention in this particular. On the other hand, every garment of Indian fabric which she had preserved through her captivity, was gone. The moccasins she had worn on the previous day—the Indian beads, wampum, and other ornaments of native origin, were nowhere to be seen.

All the gifts of Bacon and Mr. Fairfax, some of which were of gold and silver, were conspicuously arranged upon a shelf in the same apartment. Many of these she had hitherto constantly worn in her ears, and upon her wrists and ankles.

As they were pursuing their researches Virginia discovered the window of the room in which her attendant had always slept, shut down upon the end of an Indian arrow. She raised the sash and drew in the missile, in the end of which, inserted in a split and bound with a strip of the fibre of a sinew, was the identical blue feather Wyandottah had plucked from the gory locks of the slain King Fisher, the last of the Chickahominy chiefs. The arrow was pointed in the direction of the nation's hunting ground. The language of these symbols Virginia understood but too well; she had too long made Wyandottah a subject of study, as well as of instruction, not to understand that the feather indicated her flight to the dwellings of her tribe. She also thought she saw many collateral indications in the time chosen for her elopement—the arrangements of her English garments, and more especially of the gifts she had received from Bacon. She doubted not in her own mind that the resolution of Wyandottah was in some way connected with the approaching ceremony, but she did not communicate her suspicions to her mother, because they were as yet

not clearly defined in her own thoughts. They received momentary corroboration however, as many circumstances recurred to her mind, which were trivial in themselves, but important in connexion with the present discovery, and which have been from time to time hinted at in the progress of our narrative.

The impression left upon the mind of our Heroine by these incidents produced any thing but the joyous, elastic and happy mood, her young dreams had always anticipated for her wedding day. There were many other subjects of apprehension to mar the pleasures of the time. Governor Berkley had left her mother's house overflowing with wrath, and threatening speedy vengeance against her betrothed.

Few persons ever became indebted to Sir William Berkley in a matter of personal hatred or ill will, who did not sooner or later find him a hard and exacting creditor. With all her love for her uncle she knew his harsh and unyielding nature, and dreaded his power.

The natural apprehensions of a modest, gentle, and tenderly educated maiden on her wedding day, are at all times sufficiently powerful of themselves; but joined to the unfavourable omens and sources of anxiety by which Virginia was surrounded, they were overpowering. Her breakfast remained before her untouched, notwithstanding her mother's endeavours to cheer her drooping spirits.

A short and animated conversation with her lover, as the day began to wane, partially recalled her wonted cheerfulness, but when he was gone she relapsed into her former mood. The aspect of the heavens seemed to her to grow momentarily more portentous. Already the thunder was heard rolling in the west, and black masses of threatening clouds were gradually closing in from every point of the horizon. The wrath of Heaven itself seemed to our heroine gathering over the city. This nervous excitement of mind will not be wondered at when it is remembered that a short time only had intervened since dark and mysterious injunctions had been urged against the marriage, of which the appointed time was now so near at hand; and to this must be added the state of alarm and agitation in which she had since been kept by insurrections, outrages, personal strifes and deadly feuds between her friends; and above all, by the violent and sudden death of her father. In the short space of a few weeks her once tranquil and happy existence had been changed into one of painful trials and vicissitudes. The night was rapidly closing in. There hung the bridal garments, and there stood the tire woman waiting her commands. At this juncture a carriage drove up to the door, steps were let down, the knocker sounded, and in the next moment the gay brides-maid bounded into the room, arrayed for the occasion. Her countenance was radiant with smiles as she entered, but perceiving her friend's sombre mood she walked round her sundry times and then raised her hands and eyes in pretended astonishment, as she exclaimed, "Do I mistake! Was it indeed to your wedding that I was invited? For shame, Virginia! shake off these sickly fancies. Come, rouse yourself, and I will be your tire woman. Our family will soon be here, the carriage has gone back for them. Will that not move you? Then your lawful lord and"—

Here Virginia rose and placed her hand upon the lips of the lively girl, yet with a look which seemed at the same time to intimate no unwillingness to be cajoled or rallied from her present serious humour.

The wedding was to be kept a profound secret from all but the invited guests, and those who were to officiate at the ceremony. The former consisted only of Mr. Harrison's family, and the latter of the clergyman of the Established Church, who officiated at Jamestown—Charles Dudley who was to give away the bride, and Harriet as brides-maid.

The appointed hour of nine at length arrived. Assembled in the parlour below, the various parties awaited the appearance of the bride. Carriages were already at the door; the chapel lighted, and the priest habited in the robes of his sacred office.

Bacon, after sundry movements towards the door at which she was expected to enter, could subdue his impatience no longer, and at once mounted the staircase. He met the two maidens on their way down; Virginia apparently having imbibed some of her friend's spirit and vivacity, which she so much needed. She placed her hand timidly but confidently in that of Bacon as they entered the room. Both she, and her attendant, were robed in virgin white—and certainly never were dresses more appropriate;—they were both young, innocent, beautiful, and intensely interesting, in the position which they now occupied.

Bacon and Dudley were dressed exactly alike, and rather in the costume of the preceding, than of the present reign; the latter not yet having made its way to Jamestown. They wore doublets of scarlet velvet, with large loose sleeves slashed up the front; the collar covered by a falling band of the richest point lace, with a vandyke edging. Their breeches were of white silk, and fringed at the bottom, where they united with their silk stockings, amidst a profusion of ribands and ornaments of lace. Their shoes were ornamented over the buckle straps, with white bridal roses wrought in silk. Hanging gallantly upon one shoulder, they wore the short and graceful blue cloak of the period: not in such a manner, however, as to conceal in any degree the gay appearance of the costume which it completed, but so as to be thrown aside and resumed at a moment's notice. This latter article being light and graceful, and worn more for ornament than use, was always thrown aside for the military buff coat on warlike occasions.

The party, preceded by the priest, entered the waiting vehicles. Just as they were seated according to the order of previous arrangement, a vivid flash of lightning shot athwart the

horizon, succeeded by a crash of thunder loud and fearful, as if the eternal hills themselves had again been shattered into chaos. The females drew themselves into the corners of the carriage, covering their eyes, and the gentlemen were silent, while the God of the Universe, spoke through his thunders.

The drive to the church was as short as it was silent. The priest entered his desk and laid open the sacred volume, while the various parties arranged according to order in a semicircle round the altar, waited upon his words.

The chapel was dimly lighted, except immediately around the parties, in accordance with the strict privacy of the celebration. Mrs. Fairfax was as calm and benignant as was consistent with her usual settled melancholy. Virginia was pale as a marble statue, her head just sufficiently inclined forward to suspend her bridal veil in graceful and flowing folds before her exquisitely formed figure. Harriet's vivacity was subdued to respectful and mute attention. The sound of the clergyman's voice could just be heard at intervals between the awful peals of thunder, while the lurid flashes contrasting with the feeble rays of the lamps, rendered the surrounding gloom more impressive. The words which fell from the lips of the sacred functionary were something like the following:

"Dearly beloved, we are gathered together here in the sight of God, and in the face of this company, to join together this Man and this Woman in holy matrimony; which is an honourable estate instituted of God in the time of man's innocency, signifying unto us the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and his church; which holy estate Christ adorned and beautified with his presence and first miracle that he wrought in Cana of Galilee; and is commended of Saint Paul to be honourable among all men; and therefore is not by any to be enterprised or taken in hand unadvisedly—lightly, or wantonly—to satisfy men's carnal lusts and appetites, like brute beasts that have no understanding; but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in fear of God, duly considering the causes for which matrimony was ordained.

"First, it was ordained for the procreation of children to be brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord, and to the praise of his holy name.

"Secondly, it was ordained for a remedy against sin, and to avoid fornication, that such persons as have not the gift of continency might marry and keep themselves undefiled members of Christ's body.

"Thirdly, it was ordained for the mutual society, help, and comfort that the one ought to have of the other—both in prosperity and adversity.

"Into which holy estate, these two persons present come now to be joined. Therefore if any man can show any just cause, why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him now speak, or else hereafter for ever hold his peace."

A solemn silence prevailed through the dimly lighted aisles, as the usual pause was allowed for the answer. At this juncture, and while the small party around the altar held their breath in mute astonishment and wonder, the door was rudely thrust open, and a gigantic figure strode down the hollow sounding aisle. His heavy footfalls rung upon Virginia's sensitive organs like the funeral knell of departed peace. He walked directly towards the altar, until he stood immediately behind the youthful pair about to plight their faith, his tall figure towering far above their heads.<sup>[5]</sup> Over his face he held a black mask, as he thus spoke, in answer to the general challenge of the priest.

"Well mayest thou say that now or never is the time to speak the just cause which interposes to prevent the consummation of this union. That cause know I. But its revelation, now rendered imperative, will be like unto tearing up with irreverent hands the mysterious secrets of the charnel house beneath our feet. Oh God, why could not this duty have been spared to me!"

His huge frame shuddered with convulsive emotion as he paused and seemed to view from beneath his mask his astounded and breathless auditors. The clergyman seized the opportunity to repeat with solemnity the challenge. "If any man can show any just cause why this youthful pair may not lawfully be joined together, let him now speak, or else hereafter for ever hold his peace!"

"They cannot lawfully be joined together because they are the children of the same mother!"

The silence of death prevailed throughout the chapel. Respiration and reflection itself seemed suspended upon the awful announcement of the Recluse, while he fell back upon one of the seats of the aisle and covered his face with his hands in unutterable anguish.

Mrs. Fairfax had been visibly agitated from the first moment of this startling interruption, by some more dreadful emotion than the surprise and vague alarm of those about her, but now desperation itself nerved her sinking powers, as she stepped a pace forward and uttered in a distinct voice. "It is false! proceed with the ceremony." Harrison and Dudley instinctively felt for their arms, the former exclaiming, "He is mad—staring mad! be it our business to prevent this irreverent interruption!"

But the Recluse immediately sprung upon his feet, throwing his mask upon the floor as he stood full in front of Mrs. Fairfax, and exclaimed, pointing with his index finger to his time-worn countenance; "Look thou upon these long forgotten lineaments, and then upon these (laying his hand upon Bacon's head) and testify before Heaven and earth whether I have not spoken truth! a fearful truth!"

The person appealed to stood for some moments like a statue, her eyes protruding from their sockets, as if a tenant of the grave indeed stood before her—her hand at length slowly rose from her side and wandered through the vacant air as if she would have submitted the spectre to the test of feeling—imperfectly measuring the distance however between her own person and the object sought, it fell again powerless by her side. Her lips moved as if she were in the act of holding a conversation with the being who had addressed her, but no sound issued from them. The pupils of her eyes were painfully distended, and their whole expression wild and bewildered. At length her chest began to heave convulsively, when she made a wild and desperate effort to rush upon the object of her gaze, but fell prostrate on the floor before she had attained half the distance between them. As she fell she cried in the most piteous accents, "Charles! Charles!" and then swooned away.

Charles Dudley, who had till now assisted Bacon in supporting his fainting bride, resigned his charge to Mr. Harrison and ran to Mrs. Fairfax, supposing himself to be the person thus piteously apostrophized. He took the fallen lady in his arms and raised her partly from the floor, but no symptoms of returning animation were visible. While he thus supported her head upon one knee, kneeling upon the other, assisted by the clergyman and friends, and Bacon and Mr. Harrison supporting Virginia, who was in little better condition, a tumultuous crowd rushed in at the door, headed by Sir William Berkley himself, exclaiming to his minions, "Tear him from the altar! tear the upstart from the altar."

But as he ran with his drawn sword towards the pulpit, something in the attitude and expression of the various parties at once arrested his hand and voice.

There is a power of expression in deep and irremediable sorrow which cannot be looked upon without emotion. Boisterous and outrageous as Sir William Berkley had entered the chapel, his fierce nature was instantly subdued by the appearance of his sister-in-law and her daughter. The crowd which followed were instinctively awed into silence by the same powerful and speaking appeals.

When the announcement of the lawful cause which prevented the consummation of the union first fell upon Bacon's ear, his head sank upon his breast, and although he mechanically clasped Virginia round the waist, as he felt her clinging to him, and sinking at his side; he stood stupefied with horror, holding up his lifeless burden, entirely unable to think or act. His habitual and superstitious reverence for every thing uttered by the Recluse, induced him to receive the first impression of his words unchallenged even in his own mind.

By the time that Sir William Berkley and his party arrived, the Recluse had disappeared; every one was so much absorbed by the instant and pressing calls for assistance and sympathy from the suffering females, that the time of his departure was entirely unnoticed.

The Governor had no sooner recovered from his first shock and surprise, than he made his way to one of the young Harrisons to learn the cause of the present appearance of the parties, so different from what he had been taught to expect. Although he did not believe that there was one word of truth in the cause assigned for the interruption of the ceremony, he was well enough satisfied that the parties themselves, and Mrs. Fairfax should believe it. No matter to him what horrors they suffered, he considered it all but a just punishment for their attempted mesalliance. As for Bacon, and his horror-stricken feelings, Sir William did not deign to bestow a thought or word upon them, after the first hasty exclamation with which he had entered the door. By his orders, the female sufferers were placed in a carriage, and removed to his own house. Bacon resigned his charge with a listless apathy, bordering on stupefaction, and to a superficial observer, such would doubtless have been the impression; but his was the deadly deceitful calm which precedes the coming storm. The most horrible of all human sufferings is that where no tear is or can be shed—where no enemy presents himself for vengeance—no hope for the future, all having been perilled and lost upon a single throw. Bacon felt himself thus situated—the cherished hopes of a lifetime were blasted in an instant, not only for the present, but under such circumstances as to cut off all hope for the future. The object of his passion could not henceforth be enshrined in a holy secret worship of the soul, such as is sometimes kept up through a long life of celibacy for the lost one.

No mortified pride arose to his relief! he could not hate—he dared not love the object around which his whole heart and soul were entwined. The very light of his eyes—the sun of his existence—his delights of the present—hopes of the future—all, all were blotted from existence in a moment. The very retrospects of the past were poisoned. Could he bear to dwell upon the enrapturing delights of their young loves, when the object and participator was now discovered to be his own sister? To whichever aspect of the case he turned, he as speedily revolted in horror. It was while these things were tearing and racking his soul, that he appeared to feel externally less than might have been expected. His mind and feelings were precipitately rolled back upon their own resources, and the suddenly dammed up waters of bitterness sought vent at every avenue. Virginia was no sooner taken from him, however, than his perceptions seemed roused at once to the full horror and hopelessness of his fate. Without his castor, and still decked in his gay bridal attire, he burst from the crowd, prostrating the Governor's minions to the right and left, as he felled a passage to the door. His eye had lost its abstracted expression; it was deadly fierce and terrifically wild as he rushed forth into the kindred storm without—no one knew whither.

**END OF VOLUME FIRST.**

- [1] A house very similar to that we have described stands to this day near the Ancient City. Its former objects and uses are entirely unknown.
- [2] The Indians possessed no knowledge of any of the tribes beyond.
- [3] See Holmes.
- [4] Some idea of the rude state of the mechanic arts of the period may be formed by those who have seen the antiquated chair, in which the speaker of the Virginia house of delegates sits to this day. There are many specimens too of ancient furniture still preserved in the older Counties of Virginia.
- [5] The reader will perceive when the proper time comes for disclosing from what authentic annals this character is taken—that we have but described his person, as the grave words of History portrayed him.

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE CAVALIERS OF VIRGINIA, VOL. 1 OF 2  
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