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Author: Winston Churchill

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RICHARD CARVEL

By Winston Churchill

Volume 2.

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CHAPTER VIII

OVER THE WALL

Dorothy treated me ill enough that spring. Since the minx had tasted power at Carvel Hall, there was no accounting for her. On returning to town Dr. Courtenay had begged her mother to allow her at the assemblies, a request which Mrs. Manners most sensibly refused. Mr. Marmaduke had given his consent, I believe, for he was more impatient than Dolly for the days when she would become the toast of the province. But the doctor contrived to see her in spite of difficulties, and Will Fotheringay was forever at her house, and half a dozen other lads. And many gentlemen of fashion like the doctor called ostensibly to visit Mrs. Manners, but in reality to see Miss Dorothy. And my lady knew it. She would be

lingering in the drawing-room in her best bib and tucker, or strolling in the garden as Dr. Courtenay passed, and I got but scant attention indeed. I was but an awkward lad, and an old playmate, with no novelty about me.

"Why, Richard," she would say to me as I rode or walked beside her, or sat at dinner in Prince George Street, "I know every twist and turn of your nature. There is nothing you could do to surprise me. And so, sir, you are very tiresome."

"You once found me useful enough to fetch and carry, and amusing when I walked the Oriole's bowsprit," I replied ruefully.

"Why don't you make me jealous?" says she, stamping her foot. "A score of pretty girls are languishing for a glimpse of you,—Jennie and Bess Fotheringay, and Betty Tayloe, and Heaven knows how many others. They are actually accusing me of keeping you trailing. 'La, girls!' said I, 'if you will but rid me of him for a day, you shall have my lasting gratitude.'"

And she turned to the spinet and began a lively air. But the taunt struck deeper than she had any notion of. That spring arrived out from London on the Belle of the Wye a box of fine clothes my grandfather had commanded for me from his own tailor; and a word from a maid of fifteen did more to make me wear them than any amount of coaxing from Mr. Allen and my Uncle Grafton. My uncle seemed in particular anxious that I should make a good appearance, and reminded me that I should dress as became the heir of the Carvel house. I took counsel with Patty Swain, and then went to see Betty Tayloe, and the Fotheringay girls, and the Dulany girls, near the Governor's. And (fie upon me!) I was not ill-pleased with the brave appearance I made. I would show my mistress how little I cared. But the worst of it was, the baggage seemed to trouble less than I, and had the effrontery to tell me how happy she was I had come out of my shell, and broken loose from her apron-strings.

"Indeed, they would soon begin to think I meant to marry you, Richard," says she at supper one Sunday before a tableful, and laughed with the rest.

"They do not credit you with such good sense, my dear," says her mother, smiling kindly at me.

And Dolly bit her lip, and did not join in that part of the merriment.

I fled to Patty Swain for counsel, nor was it the first time in my life I had done so. Some good women seem to have been put into this selfish world to comfort and advise. After Prince George Street with its gilt and marbles and stately hedged gardens, the low-beamed, vine-covered house in the Duke of Gloucester Street was a home and a rest. In my eyes there was not its equal in Annapolis for beauty within and without. Mr. Swain had bought the dwelling from an aged man with a history, dead some nine years back. Its furniture, for the most part, was of the Restoration, of simple and massive oak blackened by age, which I ever fancied better than the Frenchy baubles of tables and chairs with spindle legs, and cabinets of glass and gold lacquer which were then making their way into the fine mansions of our town. The house was full of twists and turns, and steps up and down, and nooks and passages and queer hiding-places which we children knew, and in parts queer leaded windows of bulging glass set high in the wall, and older than the reign of Hanover. Here was the shrine of cleanliness, whose high-priestess was Patty herself. Her floors were like satin-wood, and her brasses lights in themselves. She had come honestly enough by her gifts, her father having married the daughter of an able townsman of Salem, in the Massachusetts colony, when he had gone north after his first great success in court. Now the poor lady sat in a padded armchair from morning to night, beside the hearth in winter, and under the trees in summer, by reason of a fall she had had. There she knitted all the day long. Her placid face and quiet way come before me as I write.

My friendship with Patty had begun early. One autumn day when I was a little lad of eight or nine, my grandfather and I were driving back from Whitehall in the big coach, when we spied a little maid of six by the Severn's bank, with her apron full of chestnuts. She was trudging bravely through the dead leaves toward the town. Mr. Carvel pulled the cord to stop, and asked her name. "Patty Swain, and it please your honour," the child answered, without fear. "So you are the young barrister's daughter?" says he, smiling at something I did not understand. She nodded. "And how is it you are so far from home, and alone, my little one?" asked Mr. Carvel again. For some time he could get nothing out of her; but at length she explained, with much coaxing, that her big brother Tom had deserted her. My grandfather wished that Tom were his brother, that he might be punished as he deserved. He commanded young Harvey to lift the child into the coach, chestnuts and all, and there she sat primly between us. She was not as pretty as Dorothy, so I thought, but her clear gray eyes and simple ways impressed me by their very honesty, as they did Mr. Carvel. What must he do but drive her home to Green Street, where Mr. Swain then lived in a little cottage. Mr. Carvel himself lifted her out and kissed her, and handed her to her mother at the gate, who was vastly overcome by the circumstance. The good lady had not then received that fall which made her a cripple for life. "And will you not have

my chestnuts, sir, for your kindness?" says little Patty. Whereat my grandfather laughed and kissed her again, for he loved children, and wished to know if she would not be his daughter, and come to live in Marlboro' Street; and told the story of Tom, for fear she would not. He was silent as we drove away, and I knew he was thinking of my own mother at that age.

Not long after this Mr. Swain bought the house in the Duke of Gloucester Street. This, as you know, is back to back with Marlboro. To reach Patty's garden I had but to climb the brick wall at the rear of our grounds, and to make my way along the narrow green lane left there for perhaps a hundred paces of a lad, to come to the gate in the wooden paling. In return I used to hoist Patty over the wall, and we would play at children's games under the fruit trees that skirted it. Some instinct kept her away from the house. I often caught her gazing wistfully at its wings and gables. She was not born to a mansion, so she said.

"But your father is now rich," I objected. I had heard Captain Daniel say so. "He may have a mansion of his own and he chooses. He can better afford it than many who are in debt for the fine show they make." I was but repeating gossip.

"I should like to see the grand company come in, when your grandfather has them to dine," said the girl. "Sometimes we have grand gentlemen come to see father in their coaches, but they talk of nothing but politics. We never have any fine ladies like—like your Aunt Caroline."

I startled her by laughing derisively.

"And I pray you never may, Patty," was all I said.

I never told Dolly of my intimacy with the barrister's little girl over the wall. This was not because I was ashamed of the friendship, but arose from a fear—well-founded enough—that she would make sport of it. At twelve Dolly had notions concerning the walks of life that most other children never dream of. They were derived, of course, from Mr. Marmaduke. But the day of reckoning arrived. Patty and I were romping beside the back wall when suddenly a stiff little figure in a starched frock appeared through the trees in the direction of the house, followed by Master Will Fotheringay in his visiting clothes. I laugh now when I think of that formal meeting between the two little ladies. There was no time to hoist Miss Swain over the wall, or to drive Miss Manners back upon the house. Patty stood blushing as though caught in a guilty act, while she of the Generations came proudly on, Will sniggering behind her.

"Who is this, Richard?" asks Miss Manners, pointing a small forefinger.

"Patty Swain, if you must know!" I cried, and added boylike: "And she is just as good as you or me, and better." I was quite red in the face, and angry because of it. "This is Dorothy Manners, Patty, and Will Fotheringay."

The moment was a pregnant one. But I was resolved to carry the matter out with a bold front. "Will you join us at catch and swing?" I asked.

Will promptly declared that he would join, for Patty was good to look upon. Dolly glanced at her dress, tossed her head, and marched back alone.

"Oh, Richard!" cried Patty; "I shall never forgive myself! I have made you quarrel with—"

"His sweetheart," said Will, wickedly.

"I don't care," said I. Which was not so.

Patty felt no resentment for my miss's haughty conduct, but only a tearful penitence for having been the cause of a strife between us. Will's arguments and mine availed nothing. I must lift her over the wall again, and she went home. When we reached the garden we found Dolly seated beside her mother on my grandfather's bench, from which stronghold our combined tactics were powerless to drag her.

When Dolly was gone, I asked my grandfather in great indignation why Patty did not play with the children I knew, with Dorothy and the Fotheringays. He shook his head dubiously. "When you are older, Richard, you will understand that our social ranks are crossed close. Mr. Swain is an honest and an able man, though he believes in things I do not. I hear he is becoming wealthy. And I have no doubt," the shrewd old gentleman added, "that when Patty grows up she will be going to the assemblies, though it was not so in my time." So liberal was he that he used to laugh at my lifting her across the wall, and in his leisure delight to listen to my accounts of her childish housekeeping. Her life was indeed a contrast to Dorothy's. She had all the solid qualities that my lady lacked in early years. And yet I never wavered in my liking to the more brilliant and wayward of the two. The week before my next

birthday, when Mr. Carvel drew me to him and asked me what I wished for a present that year, as was his custom, I said promptly:

"I should like to have Patty Swain at my party, sir."

"So you shall, my lad," he cried, taking his snuff and eying me with pleasure. "I am glad to see, Richard, that you have none of Mr. Marmaduke's nonsense about you. She is a good girl, i' faith, and more of a lady now than many who call themselves such. And you shall have your present to boot. Hark'ee, Daniel," said he to the captain; "if the child comes to my house, the poll-parrots and follow-me-ups will be wanting her, too."

But the getting her to go was a matter of five days. For Patty was sensitive, like her father, and dreaded a slight. Not so with Master Tom, who must, needs be invited, too. He arrived half an hour ahead of time, arrayed like Solomon, and without his sister! I had to go for Patty, indeed, after the party had begun, and to get the key to the wicket in the wall to take her in that way, so shy was she. My dear grandfather showed her particular attention. And Miss Dolly herself, being in the humour, taught her a minuet.

After that she came to all my birthdays, and lost some of her shyness. And was invited to other great houses, even as Mr. Carvel had predicted. But her chief pleasure seemed ever her duty. Whether or no such characters make them one and the same, who can tell? She became the light of her father's house, and used even to copy out his briefs, at which task I often found her of an evening.

As for Tom, that graceless scamp, I never could stomach him. I wondered then, as I have since, how he was the brother of such a sister. He could scarce bide his time until Mr. Swain should have a coach and a seat in the country with the gentry. "A barrister," quoth he, "is as good as any one else. And if my father came out a redemptioner, and worked his way, so had old Mr. Dulany. Our family at home was the equal of his." All of which was true, and more. He would deride Patty for sewing and baking, vowing that they had servants enough now to do the work twice over. She bore with him with a patience to be marvelled at; and I could never get it through my head why Mr. Swain indulged him, though he was the elder, and his mother's favourite. Tom began to dress early. His open admiration was Dr. Courtenay, his confessed hope to wear five-pound ruffles and gold sword knots. He clung to Will Fotheringay with a tenacity that became proverbial among us boys, and his boasts at King William's School were his father's growing wealth and intimacy with the great men of the province.

As I grew older, I took the cue of political knowledge, as I have said, from Mr. Swain rather than Captain Daniel, who would tell me nothing. I fell into the habit of taking supper in Gloucester Street. The meal was early there. And when the dishes were cleared away, and the barrister's pipe lit, and Patty and her mother had got their sewing, he would talk by the hour on the legality of our resistance to the King, and discuss the march of affairs in England and the other colonies. He found me a ready listener, and took pains to teach me clearly the right and wrong of the situation. 'Twas his religion, even as loyalty to the King was my grandfather's, and he did not think it wrong to spread it. He likewise instilled into me in that way more of history than Mr. Allen had ever taught me, using it to throw light upon this point or that. But I never knew his true power and eloquence until I followed him to the Stadt House.

Patty was grown a girl of fifteen then, glowing with health, and had ample good looks of her own. 'Tis odd enough that I did not fall in love with her when Dolly began to use me so outrageously. But a lad of eighteen is scarce a rational creature. I went and sat before my oracle upon the vine-covered porch under the eaves, and poured out my complaint. She laid down her needlework and laughed.

"You silly boy," said she, "can't you see that she herself has prescribed for you? She was right when she told you to show attention to Jenny. And if you dangle about Miss Dolly now, you are in danger of losing her. She knows it better than you."

I had Jenny to ride the very next day. Result: my lady smiled on me more sweetly than ever when I went to Prince George Street, and vowed Jenny had never looked prettier than when she went past the house. This left my victory in such considerable doubt that I climbed the back wall forthwith in my new top-boots.

"So you looked for her to be angry?" said Patty.

"Most certainly," said I.

"Unreasoning vanity!" she cried, for she knew how to speak plain. "By your confession to me you have done this to please her, for she warned you at the beginning it would please her. And now you complain of it. I believe I know your Dorothy better than you."

And so I got but little comfort out of Patty that time.

CHAPTER IX

UNDER FALSE COLOURS

And now I come to a circumstance in my life I would rather pass over quickly. Had I steered the straight course of my impulse I need never have deceived that dear gentleman whom I loved and honoured above any in this world, and with whom I had always lived and dealt openly. After my grandfather was pronounced to be mending, I went back to Mr. Allen until such time as we should be able to go to the country. Philip no longer shared my studies, his hours having been changed from morning to afternoon. I thought nothing of this, being content with the rector's explanation that my uncle had a task for Philip in the morning, now that Mr. Carvel was better. And I was well content to be rid of Philip's company. But as the days passed I began to mark an absence still stranger. I had my Horace and my Ovid still: but the two hours from eleven to one, which he was wont to give up to history and what he was pleased to call instruction in loyalty, were filled with other matter. Not a word now of politics from Mr. Allen. Not even a comment from him concerning the spirited doings of our Assembly, with which the town was ringing. That body had met but a while before, primed to act on the circular drawn up by Mr. Adams of Massachusetts. The Governor's message had not been so prompt as to forestall them, and I am occupied scarce the time in the writing of this that it took our brave members to adopt the petition to his Majesty and to pass resolutions of support to our sister colony of the North. This being done, and a most tart reply penned to his Excellency, they ended that sitting and passed in procession to the Governor's mansion to deliver it, Mr. Speaker Lloyd at their head, and a vast concourse of cheering people at their heels. Shutters were barred on the Tory houses we passed. And though Mr. Allen spied me in the crowd, he never mentioned the circumstance. More than once I essayed to draw from him an opinion of Mr. Adams's petition, which was deemed a work of great moderation and merit, and got nothing but evasion from my tutor. That he had become suddenly an American in principle I could not believe. At length I made bold to ask him why our discussions were now omitted. He looked up from the new play he was reading on the study lounge, with a glance of dark meaning I could not fathom.

"You are learning more than I can teach you in Gloucester Street, and at the Stadt House," he said.

In truth I was at a loss to understand his attitude until the day in June my grandfather and I went to Carvel Hall.

The old gentleman was weak still, so feeble that he had to be carried to his barge in a chair, a vehicle he had ever held in scorn. But he was cheerful, and his spirit remained the same as of old: but for that spirit I believe he had never again risen from his bed in Marlboro' Street. My uncle and the rector were among those who walked by his side to the dock, and would have gone to the Hall with him had he permitted them. He was kind enough to say that my arm was sufficient to lean on.

What peace there was sitting once again under the rustling trees on the lawn with the green river and the blue bay spread out before us, and Scipio standing by with my grandfather's punch. Mr. Carvel would have me rehearse again all that had passed in town and colony since his illness, which I did with as much moderation as I was able. And as we talked he reached out and took my hand, for I sat near him, and said:

"Richard, I have heard tidings of you that gladden my heart, and they have done more than Dr. Leiden's physic for this old frame of mine. I well knew a Carvel could never go a wrong course, lad, and you least of any."

"Tidings, sir?" I said.

"Ay, tidings," answered Mr. Carvel. Such a note of relief and gladness there was in the words as I had not heard for months from him, and a vague fear came upon me.

"Scipio," he said merrily, "a punch for Mr. Richard." And when the glass was brought my grandfather added: "May it be ever thus!"

I drained the toast, not falling into his humour or comprehending his reference, but dreading that aught I might say would disturb him, held my peace. And yet my apprehension increased. He set down

his glass and continued:

"I had no hope of this yet, Richard, for you were ever slow to change. Your conversion does credit to Mr. Allen as well as to you. In short, sir, the rector gives me an excellent good account of your studies, and adds that the King hath gained another loyal servant, for which I thank God."

I have no words to write of my feelings then. My head swam and my hand trembled on my grandfather's, and I saw dimly the old gentleman's face aglow with joy and pride, and knew not what to say or do. The answer I framed, alas, remained unspoken. From his own lips I had heard how much the news had mended him, and for once I lacked the heart, nay, the courage, to speak the truth. But Mr. Carvel took no heed of my silence, setting it down to another cause.

"And so, my son," he said, "there is no need of sending you to Eton next fall. I am not much longer for this earth, and can ill spare you: and Mr. Allen kindly consents to prepare you for Oxford."

"Mr. Allen consents to that, sir?" I gasped. I think, could I have laid hands on the rector then, I would have thrashed him, cloth and all, within an inch of his life.

And as if to crown my misery Mr. Carvel rose, and bearing heavily on my shoulder led me to the stable where Harvey and one of the black grooms stood in livery to receive us. Harvey held by the bridle a blooded bay hunter, and her like could scarce be found in the colony. As she stood arching her neck and pawing the ground, I all confusion and shame, my grandfather said simply:

"Richard, this is Firefly. I have got her for you from Mr. Randolph, of Virginia, for you are now old enough to have a good mount of your own."

All that night I lay awake, trying to sift some motive for Mr. Allen's deceit. For the life of me I could see no farther than a desire to keep me as his pupil, since he was well paid for his tuition. Still, the game did not seem worth the candle. However, he was safe in his lie. Shrewd rogue that he was, he well knew that I would not risk the attack a disappointment might bring my grandfather.

What troubled me most of all was the fear that Grafton had reaped the advantage of the opportunity the illness gave him, and by his insidious arts had worked himself back into the good graces of his father. You must not draw from this, my dears, that I feared for the inheritance. Praised be God, I never thought of that! But I came by nature to hate and to fear my uncle, as I hated and feared the devil. I saw him with my father's eyes, and with my mother's, and as my grandfather had seen him in the old days when he was strong. Instinct and reason alike made me loathe him. As the months passed, and letters in Grafton's scroll hand came from the Kent estate or from Annapolis, my misgivings were confirmed by odd remarks that dropped from Mr. Carvel's lips. At length arrived the revelation itself.

"I fear, Richard," he had said querulously, "I fear that all these years I have done your uncle an injustice. Dear Elizabeth was wont to plead for him before she died, but I would never listen to her. I was hearty and strong then, and my heart was hard. And a remembrance of many things was fresh in my mind." He paused for breath, as was his habit now. And I said nothing. "But Grafton has striven to wipe out the past. Sickness teaches us that we must condone, and not condemn. He has lived a reputable life, and made the most of the little start I gave him. He has supported his Majesty and my Lord in most trying times. And his Excellency tells me that the coming governor, Eden, will surely reward him with a seat in the Council."

I thought of Governor Sharpe's biting words to Grafton. The Governor knew my uncle well, and I was sure he had never sat at his Council.

"A son is a son, Richard," continued Mr. Carvel. "You will one day find that out. Your uncle has atoned. He hath been faithful during my illness, despite my cold treatment. And he hath convinced me that your welfare is at his heart. I believe he is fond of you, my lad."

No greater sign of breaking health did I need than this, that Mr. Carvel should become blind to Grafton's hypocrisy; forget his attempts to prevent my father's marriage, and to throw doubt upon my mother's birth. The agony it gave me, coming as it did on top of the cruel deception, I shall not dwell upon. And the thought bursting within me remained unspoken.

I saw less of Dorothy then than I had in any summer of my life before. In spite of Mrs. Manners, the chrysalis had burst into the butterfly, and Wilmot House had never been so gay. It must be remembered that there were times when young ladies made their entrance into the world at sixteen, and for a beauty to be unmarried at twenty-two was rare indeed. When I went to Wilmot House to dine, the table would be always full, and Mr. Marmaduke simpering at the head of it, his air of importance doubled by his reflected glory.

"We see nothing of you, my lad," he would say; "you must not let these young gallants get ahead of you. How does your grandfather? I must pay my compliments to-morrow."

Of gallants there were enough, to be sure. Dr. Courtenay, of course, with a nosegay on his coat, striving to catch the beauty's eye. And Mr. Worthington and Mr. Dulany, and Mr. Fitzhugh and Mr. Paca, and I know not how many other young bachelors of birth and means. And Will Fotheringay, who spent some of his time with me at the Hall. Silver and China, with the Manners coat-of-arms, were laid out that had not seen the light for many along day. And there were picnics, and sailing parties, and dances galore, some of which I attended, but heard of more. It seemed to me that my lady was tiring of the doctor's compliments, and had transferred her fickle favour to young Mr. Fitzhugh, who was much more worthy, by the way. As for me, I had troubles enough then, and had become used in some sort to being shelved.

One night in July,—'twas the very day Mr. Carvel had spoken to me of Grafton,—I had ridden over to Wilmot House to supper. I had little heart for going, but good Mrs. Manners herself had made me promise, and I could: not break my word. I must have sat very silent and preoccupied at the table, where all was wit and merriment. And more than once I saw the laughter leave Dorothy's face, and caught her eyes upon; me with such a look as set my beast throbbing. They would not meet my own, but would turn away instantly. I was heavy indeed that night, and did not follow the company into the ballroom, but made my excuses to Mrs. Manners.

The lawn lay bathed in moonlight; and as I picked, my way over it toward the stables for Firefly, I paused to look back at the house aglow, with light, the music of the fiddles and the sound of laughter floating out of the open windows. Even as I gaped a white figure was framed in the doorway, paused a moment on the low stone step, and then came on until it stood beside me.

"Are you not well, Richard?"

"Yes, I am well," I answered. I scarcely knew my own voice.

"Is your grandfather worse?"

"No, Dorothy; he seems better to-day."

She stood seemingly irresolute, her eyes now lifted, now falling before mine. Her slender arms bare, save for the little puff at the shoulders; her simple dress drawn a little above the waist, then falling straight to the white slipper. How real the ecstasy of that moment, and the pain of it!

"Why do you not coarse over, as you used to?" she asked, in a low tone.

"I am very busy," I replied evasively; "Mr. Carvel cannot attend to his affairs." I longed to tell her the whole truth, but the words would not come.

"I hear you are managing the estate all alone," she said.

"There is no one else to do it."

"Richard," she cried, drawing closer; "you are in trouble. I—I have seen it. You are so silent, and—and you seem to have become older. Tell me, is it your Uncle Grafton?"

So astonished was I at the question, and because she had divined so, surely, that I did not answer.

"Is it?" she asked again.

"Yes," I said; "yes, in part."

And then came voices calling from the house. They had missed her.

"I am so sorry, Richard. I shall tell no one."

She laid her hand ever so lightly upon mine and was gone. I stood staring after her until she disappeared in the door. All the way home I marvelled, my thoughts tumultuous, my hopes rising and falling.

But when next I saw her, I thought she had forgotten.

We had little company at the Hall that year, on account of Mr. Carvel. And I had been busy indeed. I sought with all my might to master a business for which I had but little taste, and my grandfather complimented me, before the season was done, upon my management. I was wont to ride that summer at four of a morning to canter beside Mr. Starkie afield, and I came to know the yield of every patch to

a hogshead and the pound price to a farthing. I grew to understand as well as another the methods of curing the leaf. And the wheat pest appearing that year, I had the good fortune to discover some of the clusters in the sheaves, and ground our oyster-shells in time to save the crop. Many a long evening I spent on the wharves with old Stanwix, now toothless and living on his pension, with my eye on the glow of his pipe and my ear bent to his stories of the sea. It was his fancy that the gift of prophecy had come to him with the years; and at times, when his look would wander to the black rigging in the twilight, he would speak strangely enough.

"Faith, Mr. Richard," he would say; "tho' your father was a soldier afore ye, ye were born to the deck of a ship-o'-war. Mark an old man's words, sir."

"Can you see the frigate, Stanwix?" I laughed once, when he had repeated this with more than common solemnity.

His reply rose above the singing of the locusts.

"Ay, sir, that I can. But she's no frigate, sir. Devil knows what she is. She looks like a big merchantman to me, such as I've seed in the Injy trade, with a high poop in the old style. And her piercin's be not like a frigate." He said this with a readiness to startle me, and little enough superstition I had. A light was on his seared face, and his pipe lay neglected on the boards. "Ay, sir, and there be a flag astern of her never yet seed on earth, nor on the waters under the earth. The tide is settin' in, the tide is settin' in."

These were words to set me thinking. And many a time they came back to me when the old man was laid away in the spot reserved for those who sailed the seas for Mr. Carvel.

Every week I drew up a report for my grandfather, and thus I strove by shouldering labour and responsibility to ease my conscience of that load which troubled it. For often, as we walked together through the yellow fields of an evening, it had been on my tongue to confess the lie Mr. Allen had led me into. But the sight of the old man, trembling and tremulous, aged by a single stroke, his childlike trust in my strength and beliefs, and above all his faith in a political creed which he nigh deemed needful for the soul's salvation,—these things still held me back. Was it worth while now, I asked myself, to disturb the peace of that mind?

Thus the summer wore on to early autumn. And one day I was standing booted and spurred in the stables, Harvey putting the bridle upon Firefly, when my boy Hugo comes running in.

"Marse Dick!" he cries, "Marse Satan he come in the pinnace, and young Marse Satan and Missis Satan, and Marse Satan's pastor!"

"What the devil do you mean, Hugo?"

"Young ebony's right, sir," chuckled Harvey; "'tis the devil and his following."

"Do you mean Mr. Grafton, fellow?" I demanded, the unwelcome truth coming over me.

"That he does," remarked Harvey, laconically. "You won't be wanting her now, your honour?"

"Hold my stirrup," I cried, for the news had put me in anger. "Hold my stirrup, sirrah!"

I believe I took Firefly the best of thirty miles that afternoon and brought her back in the half-light, my saddle discoloured with her sweat. I clanked into the hall like a captain of horse. The night was sharp with the first touch of autumn, and a huge backlog lay on the irons. Around it, in a comfortable half-circle sat our guests, Grafton and Mr. Allen and Philip smoking and drinking for a whet against supper, and Mrs. Grafton in my grandfather's chair. There was an easy air of possession about the party of them that they had never before assumed, and the sight made me rattle again, the big door behind me.

"A surprise for you, my dear nephew," Grafton said gayly, "I'll lay a puncheon you did, not, expect us."

Mr. Carvel woke with a start at the sound of the door and said querulously, "Guests, my lord, and I have done my poor best to make them welcome in your absence."

The sense of change in him stung me. How different would his tone have been a year ago!

He tattooed with his cane, which was the sign he generally made when he was ready for bed. Toward night his speech would hurt him. I assisted him up, the stairs, my uncle taking his arm on the other side. And together, with Diomedes help; we undressed him, Grafton talking in low tomes the while:

Since this was, an office I was wont to perform, my temper was now overwhelming me. But I kept my mouth closed. At last he had had the simple meal Dr. Leiden allowed him, his candles were snuffed, and my uncle and I made our way to the hall together: There my aunt and Mr. Allen were at picquet.

"Supper is insupportably late," says she; with a yawn, and rings the hand-bell. "Scipio," she cries, "why are we not served?"

I took a stride forward. But my uncle raised a restraining hand.

"Caroline, remember that this is not our house," says he, reprovingly.

There fell a deep silence; the log cracking; and just then the door swung on its hinges, and Mr. Starkie entered with the great bunch of keys in his hand.

"The buildings are all secure; Mr. Richard," he said.

"Very good, Starkie," I replied. I turned to Scipio, standing by the low-boy, his teeth, going like a castanet.

"You may serve at the usual hour, Scipio," said I.

Supper began stiff as a state banquet. My uncle was conciliatory, with the manners of a Crichton. My aunt, not having come from generations of silver and self-control, flatly in a bad humour. Mr. Allen talked from force of habit, being used to pay in such kind for his meals. But presently the madeira, warmed these two into a better spirit. I felt that I had victory on my side, and was nothing loth to join them at whist, Philip and I against the rector and my aunt, and won something like two pounds apiece from them. Grafton made it a rule never to play.

The next morning, when I returned from my inspection, I found the rector and Philip had decamped with two of our choice horses, and that my uncle and aunt had commanded the barge, and gone to Mr. Lloyd's. I sent for Scipio.

"Fore de Lawd, Marse Richard," he wailed, "'twan't Scipio's fault. Marse Grafton is dry fambly!" This was Scipio's strongest argument. "I jes' can't refuse one of de fambly, Marse Dick; and old Marse he say he too old now for quarrellin'."

I saw that resistance was useless. There was nothing for it but to bide any time. And I busied myself with bills of cargo until I heard the horses on the drive. Mr. Allen and Philip came swaggering in, flushed with the exercise, and calling for punch, and I met them in the hall.

"A word with you, Mr. Allen!" I called out.

"A thousand, Mr. Richard, if you like," he said gayly, "as soon as this thirst of mine be quenched."

I waited while he drained two glasses, when he followed me into the library, closing the door behind him.

"Now, sir," I began, "though by a chance you are my mental and spiritual adviser, I intend speaking plain. For I know you to be one of the greatest rogues in the colony."

I watched him narrowly the while, for I had some notion he might run me through. But I had misjudged him.

"Speak plain, by all means," he replied; "but first let me ask for some tobacco."

He filled the bowl of his pipe, and sat him down by the window. For the moment I was silent with sheer surprise.

"You know I can't call you out," he went on, surrounding himself with clouds of smoke, "a lad of eighteen or so. And even if I could, I doubt whether I should. I like you, Richard," said he. "You are straight-spoken and commanding. In brief, sir, you are the kind of lad I should have been had not fate pushed me into a corner, and made me squirm for life's luxuries. I hate squirming as much as another. This is prime tobacco, Richard."

He had come near disarming me; I was on the edge of a dangerous admiration for this man of the world, and for the life of me, I could not help liking him then. He had a fine presence, was undeniably handsome, and his riding clothes were of the latest London cut.

"Are there not better methods for obtaining what you wish than those you practise?" I asked curiously.

"No doubt," he answered carelessly; "but these are well enough, and shorter. You were about to do me the honour of a communication?"

This brought me to my senses. I had, however, lost much of my heat in the interval.

"I should like to know why you lied to Mr. Carvel about my convictions, Mr. Allen," I said. "I am not of the King's party now, and never shall be. And you know this better than another."

"Those are strong words, Richard, my lad," said he, bringing his eyebrows together.

"They are true words," I retorted. "Why did you lie, I say?"

He said nothing for a while, but his breath came heavily.

"I will pass it, I will pass it," he said at length, "but, by God! it is more than I have had to swallow in all my life before. Look at your grandfather, sir!" he cried; "behold him on the very brink of the grave, and ask me again why I lied to him! His hope of heaven is scarce less sacred to him than his love of the King, and both are so tightly wrapped about his heart that this knowledge of you would break it. Yes, break his heart, I say" (and he got to his legs), "and you would kill him for the sake of a boyish fancy!"

I knew he was acting, as well as though he had climbed upon the table and said it. And yet he had struck the very note of my own fears, and hit upon the one reason why I had not confessed lung ago.

"There is more you might have said, Mr. Allen," I remarked presently; "you have a cause for keeping me under your instruction, and that is behind all."

He gave me a strange look.

"You are too acute by far," said he; "your imagination runs with you. I have said I like you, and I can teach you classics as well as another. Is it not enough to admit that the money I get for your instruction keeps me in champagne?"

"No, it is not enough," I said stoutly.

"Then you must guess again, my lad," he answered with a laugh, and left the room with the easy grace that distinguished him.

There was armed peace the rest of my uncle's visit. They departed on the third day. My Aunt Caroline, when she was not at picquet with Mr. Allen or quarrelling with Mrs. Willis or with Grafton himself, yawned without cessation. She declared in one of her altercations with her lord and master that she would lose her wits were they to remain another day, a threat that did not seem to move Grafton greatly. Philip ever maintained the right to pitch it on the side of his own convenience, and he chose in this instance to come to the rescue of his dear mamma, and turned the scales in her favour. He was pleased to characterize the Hall as insupportable, and vowed that his clothes would be out of fashion before they reached Rousby Hall, their next stopping-place. To do Philip justice, he was more honest a rascal than his father, though I am of the opinion that he had not the brain for great craft. And he had drawn from his mother a love of baubles which kept his mind from scheming. He had little to say to me, and I less to him.

Grafton, as may be supposed, made me distinct advances before his departure, perceiving the unwisdom of antagonizing me unnecessarily. He had the imprudence once to ask of me the facts and figures of the estate; and tho' 'twas skilfully done by contrasting his own crops in Kent, you may be sure I was on my guard, and that he got nothing.

I was near forgetting an incident of their visit which I afterwards had good cause to remember. The morning of my talk with Mr. Allen I went to the stables to see how he had used Cynthia, and found old Harvey wiping her down, and rumbling the while like a crater.

"What think you of the rector as a representative of heaven, Harvey?" I asked.

"Him a representative of heaven!" he snorted; "I've heard tell of rotten boroughs, and I'm thinking Mr. Allen will be standing for one. What be him and Mr. Grafton a-doing here, sir, plotting all kinds o' crime while the old gentleman's nigh on his back?"

"Plotting?" I said, catching at the word.

"Ay, plotting," repeated Harvey, casting his cloth away; "murder and all the crimes in the calendar, I take it. I hear him and Mr. Grafton among the stalls this morning, and when they sees me they look like Knipe, here, caught with a fowl."

"And what were they saying?" I demanded.

"Saying! God only knows their wickedness. I got the words 'Upper Marlboro' and 'South River' and 'next voyage,' and that profligate rector wanted to know as to how 'Griggs was reliable.'"

I thought no more of it at the time, believing it to be some of the small rascalities they were forever at. But that name of Griggs (why, the powers only know) stuck in my mind to turn up again.

CHAPTER X.

THE RED IN THE CARVEL BLOOD

After that, when we went back to Annapolis for the winter, there was no longer any disguise between my tutor and myself. I was not of a mind to feign a situation that did not exist, nor to permit him to do so. I gave him to understand that tho' I went to him for instruction, 'twas through no fault of mine. That I would learn what I pleased and do what pleased me. And the rector, a curse upon him, seemed well content with that; nor could I come at his devil's reason far wanting me, save for the money, as he had declared. There were days when he and I never touched a hook, both being out of humour for study, when he told me yarns of Frederick of Prussia and his giant guard, of Florence and of Venice, and of the court of his Holiness of Rome. For he had drifted about the earth like a log-end in the Atlantic, before his Lordship gave him his present berth. We passed, too, whole mornings at picquet, I learning enough of Horace to quote at the routs we both attended, but a deal more of kings and deuces. And as I may add, that he got no more of my money than did I of his.

The wonder of it was that we never became friends. He was two men, this rector of St. Anne's, half of him as lovable as any I ever encountered. But trust him I never would, always meeting him on the middle ground; and there were times, after his talks with Grafton, when his eyes were like a cat's, and I was conscious of a sinister note in his dealing which put me on my guard.

You will say, my dears, that some change had come over me, that I was no longer the same lad I have been telling you of.

Those days were not these, yet I make no show of hiding or of palliation. Was it Dorothy's conduct that drove me? Not wholly. A wild red was ever in the Carvel blood, in Captain Jack, in Lionel, in the ancestor of King Charles's day, who fought and bled and even gambled for his king. And my grandfather knew this; he warned me, but he paid my debts. And I thank Heaven he felt that my heart was right.

I was grown now, certainly in stature. And having managed one of the largest plantations in the province, I felt the man, as lads are wont after their first responsibilities. I commanded my wine at the Coffee House with the best of the bucks, and was made a member of the South River and Jockey clubs. I wore the clothes that came out to me from London, and vied in fashion with Dr. Courtenay and other macaronies. And I drove a carriage of mine own, the Carvel arms emblazoned thereon, and Hugo in the family livery.

After a deal of thought upon the subject, I decided, for a while at least, to show no political leanings at all. And this was easier of accomplishment than you may believe, for at that time in Maryland Tory and Whig were amiable enough, and the young gentlemen of the first families dressed alike and talked alike at the parties they both attended. The non-importation association had scarce made itself felt in the dress of society. Gentlemen of degree discussed differences amicably over their decanters. And only on such occasions as Mr. Hood's return, and the procession of the Lower House through the streets, and the arrival of the Good Intent, did high words arise among the quality. And it was because class distinctions were so strongly marked that it took so long to bring loyalists and patriots of high rank to the sword's point.

I found time to manage such business affairs of Mr. Carvel's as he could not attend to himself. Grafton and his family dined in Marlboro' Street twice in the week; my uncle's conduct toward me was the very soul of consideration, and he compelled that likewise from his wife and his son. So circumspect was he that he would have fooled one who knew him a whit less than I. He questioned me closely upon my studies, and in my grandfather's presence I was forced to answer. And when the rector came to dine and read to Mr. Carvel, my uncle catechised him so searchingly on my progress that he was pushed to

the last source of his ingenuity for replies. More than once was I tempted to blurt out the whole wretched business, for I well understood there was some deep game between him and Grafton. In my uncle's absence, my aunt never lost a chance for an ill-natured remark upon Patty, whom she had seen that winter at the assemblies and elsewhere. And she deplored the state our people of fashion were coming to, that they allowed young girls without family to attend their balls.

"But we can expect little else, father," she would say to Mr. Carvel nodding in his chair, "when some of our best families openly espouse the pernicious doctrines of republicanism. They are gone half mad over that Wilkes who should have been hung before this. Philip, dear, pour the wine for your grandfather."

Miss Patty had been well received. I took her to her first assembly, where her simple and unassuming ways had made her an instant favourite; and her face, which had the beauty of dignity and repose even so early in life, gained her ample attention. I think she would have gone but little had not her father laughed her out of some of her domesticity. No longer at Sunday night supper in Gloucester Street was the guest seat empty. There was more than one guest seat now, and the honest barrister himself was the most pleased at the change. As I took my accustomed place on the settle cushion,—Patty's first embroidery,—he would cry:

"Heigho, Richard, our little Miss Prim hath become a belle. And I must have another clerk now to copy out my briefs, and a housekeeper soon, i' faith."

Patty would never fail to flush up at the words, and run to perch on her father's knee and put her hand over his mouth.

"How can you, Mr. Swain?" says she; "how can you, when 'tis you and mother, and Richard here, who make me go into the world? You know I would a thousand times rather bake your cakes and clean your silver! But you will not hear of it."

"Fie!" says the barrister. "Listen to her, Richard! And yet she will fly up the stairs to don a fine gown at the first rap of the knocker. Oh, the wench, the wench! Are they not all alike, mother?"

"They have changed none since I was a lass," replies the quiet invalid, with a smile. "And you should know what I was, Henry."

"I know!" cries he; "none better. Well I recall the salmon and white your mother gave you before I came to Salem." He sighed and then laughed at the recollection. "And when this strapping young Singleton comes, Richard, 'twould do you good to be hiding there in that cupboard,—and it would hold you,—and count the seconds until Miss Prim has her skirt in her hand and her foot on the lower step. And yet how innocent is she now before you and me."

Here he would invariably be smothered.

"Percy Singleton!" says Patty, with a fine scorn; "'twill be Mr. Eglinton, the curate, next."

"This I know," says her father, slapping me on the shoulder, "this I know, that you are content to see Richard without primping."

"But I have known Richard since I was six," says she. "Richard is one of the family. There is no need of disguise from him."

I thought, ruefully enough, that it seemed my fate to be one of the family everywhere I went.

And just then, as if in judgment, the gate snapped and the knocker sounded, and Patty leaped down with a blush. "What said I say?" cries the barrister. "I have not seen human nature in court for naught. Run, now," says he, pinching her cheek as she stood hesitating whether to fly or stay; "run and put on the new dress I have bought you. And Richard and I will have a cup of ale in the study."

The visitor chanced to be Will Fotheringay that time. He was not the only one worn out with the mad chase in Prince George Street, and preferred a quiet evening with a quiet beauty to the crowded lists of Miss Manners. Will declared that the other gallants were fools over the rare touch of blue in the black hair: give him Miss Swain's, quoth he, lifting his glass,—hers was; the colour of a new sovereign. Will was not, the only one. But I think Percy Singleton was the best of them all, tho' Patty ridiculed him—every chance she got, and even to his face. So will: the best-hearted and soberest of women play the coquette. Singleton was rather a reserved young Englishman of four and twenty, who owned a large estate in Talbot which he was laying out with great success. Of a Whig family in the old country, he had been drawn to that party in the new, and so, had made Mr. Swain's acquaintance. The next step in his

fortunes was to fall in love with Patty, which was natural enough. Many a night that winter I walked with him from Gloucester Street to the Coffee House, to sit an hour over, a battle. And there Master Tom and Dr. Hamilton, and other gay macaronies would sometimes join us. Singleton had a greater contempt for Tom than I, but bore with him for his sister's sake. For Tom, in addition to his other follies, was become an open loyalist, and never missed his Majesty's health, though he knew no better than my Hugo the question at issue. 'Twas not zeal for King George, however, that made him drunk at one of the assemblies, and forced his sister to leave in the midst of a dance for very shame.

"Oh, Richard, is there not something you can do?" she cried, when, I had got her back in the little parlour in Gloucester Street; "father has argued and, pleaded and threatened in vain. I thought,—I thought perhaps you might help him."

"I think I am not one to preach, or to boast," I replied soberly.

"Yes," said she, looking grave; "I know you are wilder than you used to be; that you play more than you ought, and higher than you ought."

I was silent.

"And I suspect at whose door it lies," said she.

"'Tis in the blood, Patty," I answered.

She glanced at me quickly.

"I know you better than you think," she said. "But Tom has not your excuse. And if he had only your faults I would say nothing. He does not care for those he should, and he is forever in the green-room of the theatre."

I made haste to change the subject, and to give her what comfort I might; for she was sobbing before she finished. And the next day I gave Tom a round talking-to for having so little regard for his sister, the hem of whose skirt he was not worthy to touch. He took it meekly enough, with a barrel of pat excuses to come after. And he asked me to lend him my phaeton, that he might go a-driving with Miss Crane, of the theatrical company, to Round Bay!

Meanwhile I saw Miss Manners more frequently than was good for my peace of mind, and had my turn as her partner at the balls. But I could not bring myself to take third or fourth rank in the army that attended her. I, who had been her playmate, would not become her courtier. Besides, I had not the wit.

Was it strange that Dr. Courtenay should pride himself upon the discovery of a new beauty? And in the Coffee House, and in every drawing-room in town, prophesy for her a career of conquest such as few could boast? She was already launched upon that career. And rumour had it that Mr. Marmaduke was even then considering taking her home to London, where the stage was larger and the triumph greater. Was it surprising that the Gazette should contain a poem with the doctor's well-known earmarks upon it? It set the town a-wagging, and left no room for doubt as to who had inspired it.

"Sweet Pandora, tho' formed of Clay,
Was fairer than the Light of Day.
By Venus learned in Beauty's Arts,
And destined thus to conquer Hearts.
A Goddess of this Town, I ween,
Fair as Pandora, scarce Sixteen,
Is destined, e'en by Jove's Command,
To conquer all of Maryland.
Oh, Bachelors, play have a Care,
For She will all your Hearts ensnare."

So it ran. I think, if dear Mrs. Manners could have had her way, Dolly would have passed that year at a certain young ladies' school in New York. But Mr. Marmaduke's pride in his daughter's beauty got the better of her. The strut in his gait became more marked the day that poem appeared, and he went to the Coffee House both morning and evening, taking snuff to hide his emotions when Miss Manners was spoken of; and he was perceived by many in Church Street arm in arm with Dr. Courtenay himself.

As you may have imagined before now, the doctor's profession was leisure, not medicine. He had known ambition once, it was said, and with reason, for he had studied surgery in Germany for the mere love of the science. After which, making the grand tour in France and Italy, he had taken up that art of being a gentleman in which men became so proficient in my young days. He had learned to speak

French like a Parisian, had hobnobbed with wit and wickedness from Versailles to Rome, and then had come back to Annapolis to set the fashions and to spend the fortune his uncle lately had left him. He was our censor of beauty, and passed judgment upon all young ladies as they stepped into the arena. To be noticed by him meant success; to be honoured in the Gazette was to be crowned at once a reigning belle. The chord of his approval once set a-vibrating, all minor chords sang in harmony. And it was the doctor who raised the first public toast to Miss Manners. Alas! I might have known it would be so!

But Miss Dorothy was not of a nature to remain dependent upon a censor's favour. The minx deported herself like any London belle of experience, as tho' she had known the world from her cradle. She was not to be deceived by the face value of the ladies' praises, nor rebuffed unmercifully by my Aunt Caroline, who had held the sceptre in the absence of a younger aspirant. The first time these ladies clashed, which was not long in coming, my aunt met with a wit as sharp again as her own, and never afterwards essayed an open tilt. The homage of men Dolly took as Caesar received tribute, as a matter of course. The doctor himself rode to the races beside the Manners coach, leaning gallantly over the door. My lady held court in her father's box, received and dismissed, smiled and frowned, with Courtenay as her master of ceremonies. Mr. Dulany was one of the presidents of the Jockey Club that year, and his horse winning the honours he presented her with his colours, scarlet and white, which she graciously wore. The doctor swore he would import a horse the next season on the chance of the privilege. My aunt was furious. I have never mentioned her beauty because I never could see it. 'Twas a coarser type than attracted me. She was then not greatly above six and thirty, appearing young for that age, and she knew the value of lead in judicious quantity. At that meet gentlemen came to her box only to tally of Miss Manners, to marvel that one so young could have the 'bel air', to praise her beauty and adresse, or to remark how well Mr. Durlany's red and white became her. With all of which Mrs. Grafton was fain to agree, and must even excel, until her small stock of patience was exhausted. To add to her chagrin my aunt lost a pretty sum to the rector by Mr. Dulany's horse. I came upon her after the race trying to coax her head-dress, through her coach door, Mr. Allen having tight hold of her hand the while.

"And so he thinks he has found a divinity, does: he?" I overheard her saying: "I, for one, am heartily sick of Dr. Courtenay's motions. Were he, to choose, a wench out of the King's passengers I'd warrant our macaronies to compose odes to her eyebrows." And at that moment perceiving me she added, "Why so disconsolate, my dear nephew? Miss Dolly is the craze now, and will last about as long as another of the doctor's whims. And then you shall have her to yourself."

"A pretty woman is ever the fashion, Aunt Caroline," I said.

"Hoity-toity," returned my aunt, who had by then succeeded in getting her head-gear safe within; "the fashion, yes until a prettier comes along."

"There is small danger of that for the present," I said, smiling: "Surely you can find no fault with this choice!"

"Gadzooks! If I were blind, sir, I think I might!" she cried unguardedly.

"I will not dispute that, Aunt Caroline," I answered.

And as I rode off I heard her giving directions in no mild tone to the coachman through Mr. Allen.

Perchance you did not know, my dears, that Annapolis had the first theatre in all the colonies. And if you care to search through the heap of Maryland Gazettes in the garret, I make no doubt you will come across this announcement for a certain night in the spring of the year 1769:

By Permission of his Excellency, the Governor,
at the New Theatre in Annapolis,
by the American Company of Comedians, on Monday
next, being the 22nd of this Instant, will be performed

ROMEO AND JULIET.

(Romeo by a young Gentleman for his Diversion.)
Likewise the Farce called

MISS IN HER TEENS.

To begin precisely at Seven of the Clock. Tickets
to be had at the Printing Office. Box 10s. Pit 1s 6d.
No Person to be admitted behind the Scenes.

The gentleman to perform Romeo was none other than Dr. Courtenay himself. He had a gentlemanly passion for the stage, as was the fashion in those days, and had organized many private theatricals. The town was in a ferment over the event, boxes being taken a week ahead. The doctor himself writ the epilogue, to be recited by the beautiful Mrs. Hallam, who had inspired him the year before to compose that famous poem beginning:

"Around her see the Graces play,
See Venus' Wanton doves,
And in her Eye's Pellucid Ray
See little Laughing Loves.
Ye gods! 'Tis Cytherea's Face."

You may find that likewise in Mr. Green's newspaper.

The new theatre was finished in West Street that spring, the old one having proven too small for our gay capital. 'Twas then the best in the New World, the censor having pronounced it far above any provincial playhouse he had seen abroad. The scenes were very fine, the boxes carved and gilded in excellent good taste, and both pit and gallery commodious. And we, too, had our "Fops' Alley," where our macaronies ogled the fair and passed from box to box.

For that night of nights when the doctor acted I received an invitation from Dolly to Mr. Marmaduke's box, and to supper afterward in Prince George Street. When I arrived, the playhouse was lit with myriad candles,—to be snuffed save the footlights presently,—and the tiers were all brilliant with the costumes of ladies and gentlemen. Miss Tayloe and Miss Dulany were of our party, with Fitzhugh and Worthington, and Mr. Manners for propriety. The little fop spent his evening, by the way, in a box opposite, where my Aunt Caroline gabbled to him and Mr. Allen during the whole performance. My lady got more looks than any in the house. She always drew admiration; indeed, but there had been much speculation of late whether she favoured Dr. Courtenay or Fitzhugh, and some had it that the doctor's acting would decide between the two.

When Romeo came upon the stage he was received with loud applause. But my lady showed no interest,—not she, while the doctor fervently recited, "Out of her favour, where I am in love." In the first orchard scene, with the boldness of a practised lover, he almost ignored Mrs. Hallam in the balcony. It seemed as though he cast his burning words and languishing glances at my lady in the box, whereupon there was a deal of nudging round about. Miss asked for her smelling salts, and declared the place was stifling. But I think if the doctor had cherished a hope of her affections he lost it when he arrived at the lines, "She speaks, yet she says nothing." At that unhappy moment Miss Dorothy was deep in conversation with Fitzhugh, the audible titter in the audience arousing her. How she reddened when she perceived the faces turned her way!

"What was it, Betty?" she demanded quickly.

But Betty was not spiteful, and would not tell. Fitzhugh himself explained, and to his sorrow, for during the rest of the evening she would have nothing to do with him. Presently she turned to me. Glancing upward to where Patty leaned on the rail between Will Fotheringay and Singleton, she whispered:

"I wonder you can sit here so quiet, Richard. You are showing a deal of self-denial."

"I am happy enough," I answered, surprised.

"I hear you have a rival," says she.

"I know I have a dozen," I answered.

"I saw Percy Singleton walking with her in Mr. Galloway's fields but yesterday," said Dolly, "and as they came out upon the road they looked as guilty as if I had surprised them arm in arm."

Now that she should think I cared for Patty never entered my head. I was thrown all in a heap.

"You need not be so disturbed," whispers my lady. "Singleton has a crooked mouth, and I credit Patty with ample sense to choose between you. I adore her, Richard. I wish I had her sweet ways."

"But," I interrupted, when I was somewhat recovered, "why should you think me in love with Patty? I have never been accused of that before."

"Oh, fie! You deny her?" says Dolly. "I did not think that of you, Richard."

"You should know better," I replied, with some bitterness.

We were talking in low tones, Dolly with her head turned from the stage, whence the doctor was flinging his impassioned speeches in vain. And though the light fell not upon her face, I seemed to feel her looking me through and through.

"You do not care for Patty?" she whispered. And I thought a quiver of earnestness was in her voice. Her face was so close to mine that her breath fanned my cheek.

"No," I said. "Why do you ask me? Have I ever been one to make pretences?"

She turned away.

"But you," I said, bending to her ear, "is it Fitzhugh, Dorothy?"

I heard her laugh softly.

"No," said she, "I thought you might divine, sir."

Was it possible? And yet she had played so much with me that I dared not risk the fire. She had too many accomplished gallants at her feet to think of Richard, who had no novelty and no wit. I sat still, barely conscious of the rising and falling voices beyond the footlights, feeling only her living presence at my side. She spoke not another word until the playhouse servants had relighted the chandeliers, and Dr. Courtenay came in, flushed with triumph, for his mead of praise.

"And how went it, Miss Manners?" says he, very confident.

"Why, you fell over the orchard wall, doctor," retorts my lady. "La! I believe I could have climbed it better myself."

And all he got was a hearty laugh for his pains, Mr. Marmaduke joining in from the back of the box. And the story was at the Coffee House early on the morrow.

CHAPTER XI

A FESTIVAL AND A PARTING

My grandfather and I were seated at table together. It was early June, the birds were singing in the garden, and the sweet odours of the flowers were wafted into the room.

"Richard," says he, when Scipio had poured his claret, "my illness cheated you out of your festival last year. I dare swear you deem yourself too old for birthdays now."

I laughed.

"So it is with lads," said Mr. Carvel; "they will rush into manhood as heedless as you please. Take my counsel, boy, and remain young. Do not cross the bridge before you have to. And I have been thinking that we shall have your fete this year, albeit you are grown, and Miss Dolly is the belle of the province. 'Tis like sunshine into my old heart to see the lads and lasses again, and to hear the merry, merry fiddling. I will have his new Excellency, who seems a good and a kindly man, and Lloyd and Tilghman and Dulany and the rest, with their ladies, to sit with me. And there will be plenty of punch and syllabub and sangaree, I warrant; and tarts and jellies and custards, too, for the misses. Ring for Mrs. Willis, my son."

Willis came with her curtsy to the old gentleman, who gave his order then and there. He never waited for a fancy of this kind to grow cold.

"We shall all be children again, on that day, Mrs. Willis," says he. "And I catch any old people about, they shall be thrust straight in the town stocks, i' faith."

Willis made another curtsy.

"We missed it sorely, last year, please your honour," says she, and departs smiling.

"And you shall have your Patty Swain, Richard," Mr. Carvel continued. "Do you mind how you once

asked the favour of inviting her in the place of a present? Oons! I loved you for that, boy. 'Twas like a Carvel. And I love that lass, Whig or no Whig. 'Pon my soul, I do. She hath demureness and dignity, and suits me better than yon whimsical baggage you are all mad over. I'll have Mr. Swain beside me, too. I'll warrant I'd teach his daughter loyalty in a day, and I had again your years and your spirit!"

I have but to close my eyes, and my fancy takes me back to that birthday festival. Think of it, my dears! Near threescore years are gone since then, when this old man you call grandfather, and some—bless me!—great-grandfather, was a lusty lad like Comyn here. But his hand is steady as he writes these words and his head clear, because he hath not greatly disabused that life which God has given him.

How can I, tho' her face and form are painted on my memory, tell you what fair, pert Miss Dorothy was at that time! Ay, I know what you would say: that Sir Joshua's portrait hangs above, executed but the year after, and hung at the second exhibition of the Royal Academy. As I look upon it now, I say that no whit of its colour is overcharged. And there is likewise Mr. Peale's portrait, done much later. I answer that these great masters have accomplished what poor, human art can do. But Nature hath given us a better picture. "Come hither, Bess! Yes, truly, you have Dolly's hair, with the very gloss upon it. But fashions have changed, my child, and that is not as Dolly wore it." Whereupon Bess goes to the portrait, and presently comes back to give me a start. And then we go hand in hand up the stairs of Calvert House even to the garret, where an old cedar chest is laid away under the eaves. Bess, the minx, well knows it, and takes out a prim little gown with the white fading yellow, and white silk mits without fingers, and white stockings with clocks, and a gauze cap, with wings and streamers, that sits saucily on the black locks; and the lawn-embroidered apron; and such dainty, high-heeled slippers with the pearls still a-glisten upon the buckles. Away she flies to put them on. And then my heart gives a leap to see my Dorothy back again,—back again as she was that June afternoon we went together to my last birthday party, her girlish arms bare to the elbow, and the lace about her slender throat. Yes, Bess hath the very tilt of her chin, the regal grace of that slim figure, and the deep blue eyes.

"Grandfather, dear, you are crushing the gown!"

And so the fire is not yet gone out of this old frame.

Ah, yes, there they are again, those unpaved streets of old Annapolis arched with great trees on either side. And here is Dolly, holding her skirt in one hand and her fan in the other, and I in a brave blue coat, and pumps with gold buttons, and a cocked hat of the newest fashion. I had met her leaning over the gate in Prince George Street. And, what was strange for her, so deep in thought that she jumped when I spoke her name.

"Dorothy, I have come for you to walk to the party, as we used when we were children."

"As we used when we were children!" cried she. And flinging wide the gate, stretched out her hand for me to take. "And you are eighteen years to-day! It seems but last year when we skipped hand in hand to Marlboro' Street with Mammy Lucy behind us. Are you coming, mammy?" she called.

"Yes, mistis, I'se comin'," said a voice from behind the golden-rose bushes, and out stepped Aunt Lucy in a new turban, making a curtsy to me. "La, Marse Richard!" said she, "to think you'se growed to be a fine gemman! 'Taint but t'other day you was kissin' Miss Dolly on de plantation."

"It seems longer than that to me, Aunt Lucy," I answered, laughing at Dolly's blushes.

"You have too good a memory, mammy," said my lady, withdrawing her fingers from mine.

"Bress you, honey! De ole woman doan't forgit some things."

And she fell back to a respectful six paces.

"Those were happy times," said Dorothy. Then the little sigh became a laugh. "I mean to enjoy myself to-day, Richard. But I fear I shall not see as much of you as I used. You are old enough to play the host, now."

"You shall see as much as you will."

"Where have you been of late, sir? In Gloucester Street?"

"'Tis your own fault, Dolly. You are changeable as the sky,—to-day sunny, and to-morrow cold. I am sure of my welcome in Gloucester Street."

She tripped a step as we turned the corner, and came closer to my side.

"You must learn to take me as you find me, dear Richard. To-day I am in a holiday humour."

Some odd note in her tone troubled me, and I glanced at her quickly. She was a constant wonder and puzzle to me. After that night at the theatre my hopes had risen for the hundredth time, but I had gone to Prince George Street on the morrow to meet another rebuff—and Fitzhugh. So I had learned to interpret her by other means than words, and now her mood seemed reckless rather than merry.

"Are you not happy, Dolly?" I asked abruptly.

She laughed. "What a silly question!" she said. "Why do you ask?"

"Because I believe you are not."

In surprise she looked up at me, and then down at the pearls upon her satin slippers.

"I am going with you to your birthday festival, Richard. Could we wish for more? I am as happy as you."

"That may well be, for I might be happier."

Again her eyes met mine, and she hummed an air. So we came to the gate, beside which stood Diomedes and Hugo in the family claret-red. A coach was drawn up, and another behind it, and we went down the leafy walk in the midst of a bevy of guests.

We have no such places nowadays, my dears, as was my grandfather's. The ground between the street and the brick wall in the rear was a great stretch, as ample in acreage as many a small country-place we have in these times. The house was on the high land in front, hedged in by old trees, and thence you descended by stately tiers until you came to the level which held the dancers. Beyond that, and lower still, a lilled pond widened out of the sluggish brook with a cool and rustic spring-house at one end. The spring-house was thatched, with windows looking out upon the water. Long after, when I went to France, I was reminded of the shy beauty of this part of my old home by the secluded pond of the Little Trianon. So was it that King Louis's Versailles had spread its influence a thousand leagues to our youthful continent.

My grandfather sat in his great chair on the sward beside the fiddlers, his old friends gathering around him, as in former years.

"And this is the miss that hath already broken half the bachelor hearts in town!" said he, gayly. "What was my prediction, Miss Dolly, when you stepped your first dance at Carvel Hall?"

"Indeed, you do me wrong, Mr. Carvel!"

"And I were a buck, you would not break mine, I warrant, unless it were tit for tat," said my grandfather; thereby putting me to more confusion than Dolly, who laughed with the rest.

"'Tis well to boast, Mr. Carvel, when we are out of the battle," cried Mr. Lloyd.

Dolly was carried off immediately, as I expected. The doctor and Worthington and Fitzhugh were already there, and waiting. I stood by Mr. Carvel's chair, receiving the guests, and presently came Mr. Swain and Patty.

"Heigho!" called Mr. Carvel, when he saw her; "here is the young lady that hath my old affections. You are right welcome, Mr. Swain. Scipio, another chair! 'Tis not over the wall any more, Miss Patty, with our flowered India silk. But I vow I love you best with your etui."

Patty, too, was carried off, for you may be sure that Will Fotheringay and Singleton were standing on one foot and then the other, waiting for Mr. Carvel to have done. Next arrived my aunt, in a wide calash and a wider hoop, her stays laced so that she limped, and her hair wonderfully and fearfully arranged by her Frenchman. Neither she nor Grafton was slow to shower congratulations upon my grandfather and myself. Mr. Marmaduke went through the ceremony after them. Dorothy's mother drew me aside. As long as I could remember her face had been one that revealed a life's disappointment. But to-day I thought it bore a trace of a deeper anxiety.

"How well I recall this day, eighteen years ago, Richard," she said.

"And how proud your dear mother was that she had given a son to Captain Jack. She had prayed for a son. I hope you will always do your parents credit, my dear boy. They were both dear, dear friends of mine."

My Aunt Caroline's harsher voice interrupted her.

"Gadzooks, ma'am!" she cried, as she approached us, "I have never in my life laid eyes upon such beauty as your daughter's. You will have to take her home, Mrs. Manners, to do her justice. You owe it her, ma'am. Come, nephew, off with you, and head the minuet with Miss Dolly!"

My grandfather was giving the word to the fiddlers. But whether a desire to cross my aunt held me back, or a sense of duty to greet the guests not already come, or a vague intuition of some impending news drawn from Mrs. Manners and Dorothy, I know not. Mr. Fitzhugh was easily persuaded to take my place, and presently I slipped unnoticed into a shaded seat on the side of the upper terrace, whence I could see the changing figures on the green. And I thought of the birthday festivals Dolly and I had spent here, almost since we were of an age to walk. Wet June days, when the broad wings of the house rang with the sound of silver laughter and pattering feet, and echoed with music from the hall; and merry June days, when the laughter rippled among the lilacs, and pansies and poppies and sweet peas were outshone by bright gowns and brighter faces. And then, as if to complete the picture of the past, my eye fell upon our mammies modestly seated behind the group of older people, Aunt Hester and Aunt Lucy, their honest, black faces aglow with such unselfish enjoyment as they alone could feel.

How easily I marked Dorothy among the throng!

Other girls found it hard to compress the spirits of youth within the dignity of a minuet, and thought of the childish romp of former years. Not so my lady. Long afterwards I saw her lead a ball with the first soldier and gentleman of the land, but on that Tuesday she carried herself full as well, so well that his Excellency and the gentlemen about him applauded heartily. As the strains died away and the couples moved off among the privet-lined paths, I went slowly down the terrace. Dorothy had come up to speak to her mother, Dr. Courtenay lingering impatient at her side. And though her colour glowed deeper, and the wind had loosed a wisp of her hair, she took his Excellency's compliments undisturbed. Colonel Sharpe, our former governor, who now made his home in the province, sat beside him.

"Now where a-deuce were you, Richard?" said he. "You have missed as pleasing a sight as comes to a man in a lifetime. Why were you not here to see Miss Manners tread a minuet? My word! Terpsichore herself could scarce have made it go better."

"I saw the dance, sir, from a safe distance," I replied.

"I'll warrant!" said he, laughing, while Dolly shot me a wayward glance from under her long lashes. "I'll warrant your eyes were fast on her from beginning to end. Come, sir, confess!"

His big frame shook with the fun of it, for none in the colony could be jollier than he on holiday occasions: and the group of ladies and gentlemen beside him caught the infection, so that I was sore put to it.

"Will your Excellency confess likewise?" I demanded.

"So I will, Richard, and make patent to all the world that she hath the remains of that shuttlecock, my heart."

Up gets his Excellency (for so we still called him) and makes Dolly a low reverence, kissing the tips of her white fingers. My lady drops a mock curtsy in return.

"Your Excellency can do no less than sue for a dance," drawled Dr. Courtenay.

"And no more, I fear, sir, not being so nimble as I once was. I resign in your favour, doctor," said Colonel Sharpe.

Dr. Courtenay made his bow, his hat tucked under his arm. But he had much to learn of Miss Manners if he thought that even one who had been governor of the province could command her. The music was just begun again, and I making off in the direction of Patty Swain, when I was brought up as suddenly as by a rope. A curl was upon Dorothy's lips.

"The dance belongs to Richard, doctor," she said.

"Egad, Courtenay, there you have a buffer!" cried Colonel Sharpe, as the much-discomfited doctor bowed with a very ill grace; while I, in no small bewilderment, walked off with Dorothy. And a parting shot of the delighted colonel brought the crimson to my face. Like the wind or April weather was my lady, and her ways far beyond such a great simpleton as I.

"So I am ever forced to ask you to dance!" said Dolly.

"What were you about, moping off alone, with a party in your honour, sir?"

"I was watching you, as I told his Excellency."

"Oh, fie!" she cried. "Why don't you assert yourself, Richard? There was a time when you gave me no peace."

"And then you rebuked me for dangling," I retorted.

Up started the music, the fiddlers bending over their bows with flushed faces, having dipped into the cool punch in the interval. Away flung my lady to meet Singleton, while I swung Patty, who squeezed my hand in return. And soon we were in the heat of it,—sober minuet no longer, but romp and riot, the screams of the lasses a-mingle with our own laughter, as we spun them until they were dizzy. My brain was a-whirl as well, and presently I awoke to find Dolly pinching my arm.

"Have you forgotten me, Richard?" she whispered. "My other hand, sir. It is I down the middle."

Down we flew between the laughing lines, Dolly tripping with her head high, and then back under the clasped hands in the midst of a fire of raillery. Then the music stopped. Some strange exhilaration was in Dorothy.

"Do you remember the place where I used to play fairy godmother, and wind the flowers into my hair?" said she.

What need to ask?

"Come!" she commanded decisively.

"With all my heart!" I exclaimed, wondering at this new caprice.

"If we can but slip away unnoticed, they will never find us there," she said. And led the way herself, silent. At length we came to the damp shade where the brook dived under the corner of the wall. I stooped to gather the lilies of the valley, and she wove them into her hair as of old. Suddenly she stopped, the bunch poised in her hand.

"Would you miss me if I went away, Richard?" she asked, in a low voice.

"What do you mean, Dolly?" I cried, my voice failing. "Just that," said she.

"I would miss you, and sorely, tho' you give me trouble enough."

"Soon I shall not be here to trouble you, Richard. Papa has decided that we sail next week, on the Annapolis, for home."

"Home!" I gasped. "England?"

"I am going to make my bow to royalty," replied she, dropping a deep curtsey. "Your Majesty, this is Miss Manners, of the province of Maryland!"

"But next week!" I repeated, with a blank face. "Surely you cannot be ready for the Annapolis!"

"McAndrews has instructions to send our things after," said she. "There! You are the first person I have told. You should feel honoured, sir."

I sat down upon the grass by the brook, and for the moment the sap of life seemed to have left me. Dolly continued to twine the flowers. Through the trees sifted the voices and the music, sounds of happiness far away. When I looked up again, she was gazing into the water.

"Are you glad to go?" I asked.

"Of course," answered the minx, readily. "I shall see the world, and meet people of consequence."

"So you are going to England to meet people of consequence!" I cried bitterly.

"How provincial you are, Richard! What people of consequence have we here? The Governor and the honourable members of his Council, forsooth! There is not a title save his Excellency's in our whole colony, and Virginia is scarce better provided."

"In spite of my feeling I was fain to laugh at this, knowing well that she had culled it all from little Mr.

Marmaduke himself.

"All in good time," said I. "We shall have no lack of noted men presently."

"Mere two-penny heroes," she retorted. "I know your great men, such as Mr. Henry and Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams."

I began pulling up the grass savagely by the roots.

"I'll lay a hundred guineas you have no regrets at leaving any of us, my fine miss!" I cried, getting to my feet. "You would rather be a lady of fashion than have the love of an honest man,—you who have the hearts of too many as it is."

Her eyes lighted, but with mirth. Laughing, she chose a little bunch of the lilies and worked them into my coat.

"Richard, you silly goose!" she said; "I dote upon seeing you in a temper."

I stood between anger and God knows what other feelings, now starting away, now coming back to her. But I always came back.

"You have ever said you would marry an earl, Dolly," I said sadly. "I believe you do not care for any of us one little bit."

She turned away, so that for the moment I could not see her face, then looked at me with exquisite archness over her shoulder. The low tones of her voice were of a richness indescribable. 'Twas seldom she made use of them.

"You will be coming to Oxford, Richard."

"I fear not, Dolly," I replied soberly. "I fear not, now. Mr. Carvel is too feeble for me to leave him."

At that she turned to me, another mood coming like a gust of wind on the Chesapeake.

"Oh, how I wish they were all like you!" she cried, with a stamp of her foot. "Sometimes I despise gallantry. I hate the smooth compliments of your macaronies. I thank Heaven you are big and honest and clumsy and—"

"And what, Dorothy?" I asked, bewildered.

"And stupid," said she. "Now take me back, sir."

We had not gone thirty paces before we heard a hearty bass voice singing:

"'It was a lover and his lass,
With a hey, with a ho, with a hey nonino.'"

And there was Colonel Sharpe, straying along among the privet hedges.

And so the morning of her sailing came, so full of sadness for me. Why not confess, after nigh threescore years, that break of day found me pacing the deserted dock. At my back, across the open space, was the irregular line of quaint, top-heavy shops since passed away, their sightless windows barred by solid shutters of oak. The good ship Annapolis, which was to carry my playmate to broader scenes, lay among the shipping, in the gray roads just quickening with returning light. How my heart ached that morning none shall ever know. But, as the sun shot a burning line across the water, a new salt breeze sprang up and fanned a hope into flame. 'Twas the very breeze that was to blow Dorothy down the bay. Sleepy apprentices took down the shutters, and polished the windows until they shone again; and chipper Mr. Denton Jacques, who did such a thriving business opposite, presently appeared to wish me a bright good morning.

I knew that Captain Waring proposed to sail at ten of the clock; but after breakfasting, I was of two minds whether to see the last of Miss Dorothy, foreseeing a levee in her honour upon the ship. And so it proved. I had scarce set out in a pungy from the dock, when I perceived a dozen boats about the packet; and when I thrust my shoulders through the gangway, there was the company gathered at the mainmast. They made a gay bit of colour,—Dr. Courtenay in a green coat laced with fine Mechlin, Fitzhugh in claret and silk stockings of a Quaker gray, and the other gentlemen as smartly drest. The Dulany girls and the Fotheringay girls, and I know not how many others, were there to see their friend off for home.

In the midst of them was Dorothy, in a crimson silk capuchin, for we had had one of our changes of weather. It was she who spied me as I was drawing down the ladder again.

"It is Richard!" I heard her cry. "He has come at last."

I gripped the rope tightly, sprang to the deck, and faced her as she came out of the group, her lips parted, and the red of her cheeks vying with the hood she wore. I took her hand silently.

"I had given you over, Richard," she said, her eyes looking reproachfully into mine. "Another ten minutes, and I should not have seen you."

Indeed, the topsails were already off the caps, the captain on deck, and the men gathered at the capstan.

"Have you not enough to wish you good-by, Dolly?" I asked.

"There must be a score of them," said my lady, making a face. "But I wish to talk to you."

Mr. Marmaduke, however, had no notion of allowing a gathering in his daughter's honour to be broken up. It had been wickedly said of him, when the news of his coming departure got around, that he feared Dorothy would fall in love with some provincial beau before he could get her within reach of a title. When he observed me talking to her, he hurried away from the friends come to see his wife (he had none himself), and seizing me by the arm implored me to take good care of my dear grandfather, and to write them occasionally of the state of his health, and likewise how I fared.

"I think Dorothy will miss you more than any of them, Richard," said he.
"Will you not, my dear?"

But she was gone. I, too, left him without ceremony, to speak to Mrs. Manners, who was standing apart, looking shoreward. She started when I spoke, and I saw that tears were in her eyes.

"Are you coming back soon, Mrs. Manners?" I asked.

"Oh, Richard! I don't know," she answered, with a little choke in her voice. "I hope it will be no longer than a year, for we are leaving all we hold dear for a very doubtful pleasure."

She bade me write to them, as Mr. Marmaduke had, only she was sincere. Then the mate came, with his hand to his cap, respectfully to inform visitors that the anchor was up and down. Albeit my spirits were low, 'twas no small entertainment to watch the doctor and his rivals at their adieus. Courtenay had at his command an hundred subterfuges to outwit his fellows, and so manoeuvred that he was the last of them over the side. As for me, luckily, I was not worth a thought. But as the doctor leaned over her hand, I vowed in my heart that if Dorothy was to be gained only in such a way I would not stoop to it. And in my heart I doubted it. I heard Dr. Courtenay hint, looking meaningly at her cloak, that some of his flowers would not have appeared amiss there.

"Why, doctor," says my lady aloud, with a side glance at me, "the wisdom of Solomon might not choose out of twenty baskets."

And this was all the thanks he got for near a boat-load of roses! When at length the impatient mate had hurried him off, Dolly turned to me. It was not in me to say more than:

"Good-by, Dorothy. And do not forget your old playmate. He will never forget you."

We stood within the gangway. With a quick movement she threw open her cloak, and pinned to her gown I saw a faded bunch of lilies of the valley.

I had but the time to press her hand. The boatswain's pipe whistled, and the big ship was already sliding in the water as I leaped into my pungy, which Hugo was holding to the ladder. We pulled off to where the others waited.

But the Annapolis sailed away down the bay, and never another glimpse we caught of my lady.

CHAPTER XII

If perchance, my dears, there creeps into this chronicle too much of an old man's heart, I know he will be forgiven. What life ever worth living has been without its tender attachment? Because, forsooth, my hair is white now, does Bess flatter herself I do not know her secret? Or does Comyn believe that these old eyes can see no farther than the spectacles before them? Were it not for the lovers, my son, satins and broadcloths had never been invented. And were it not for the lovers, what joys and sorrows would we lack in our lives!

That was a long summer indeed. And tho' Wilmot House was closed, I often rode over of a morning when the dew was on the grass. It cheered me to smoke a pipe with old McAndrews, Mr. Manners's factor, who loved to talk of Miss Dorothy near as much as I. He had served her grandfather, and people said that had it not been for McAndrews, the Manners fortune had long since been scattered, since Mr. Marmaduke knew nothing of anything that he should. I could not hear from my lady until near the first of October, and so I was fain to be content with memories—memories and hard work. For I had complete charge of the plantation now.

My Uncle Grafton came twice or thrice, but without his family, Aunt Caroline and Philip having declared their independence. My uncle's manner to me was now of studied kindness, and he was at greater pains than before to give me no excuse for offence. I had little to say to him. He spent his visits reading to Mr. Carvel, who sat in his chair all the day long. Mr. Allen came likewise, to perform the same office.

My contempt for the rector was grown more than ever. On my grandfather's account, however, I refrained from quarrelling with him. And, when we were alone, my plain speaking did not seem to anger him, or affect him in any way. Others came, too. Such was the affection Mr. Carvel's friends bore him that they did not desert him when he was no longer the companion he had been in former years. We had more company than the summer before.

In the autumn a strange thing happened. When we had taken my grandfather to the Hall in June, his dotage seemed to settle upon him. He became a trembling old man, at times so peevish that we were obliged to summon with an effort what he had been. He was suspicious and fault-finding with Scipio and the other servants, though they were never so busy for his wants. Mrs. Willis's dainties were often untouched, and he would frequently sit for hours between slumber and waking, or mumble to himself as I read the prints. But about the time of the equinoctial a great gale came out of the south so strongly that the water rose in the river over the boat landing; and the roof was torn from one of the curing-sheds. The next morning dawned clear, and brittle, and blue. To my great surprise, Mr. Carvel sent for me to walk with him about the place, that he might see the damage with his own eyes. A huge walnut had fallen across the drive, and when he came upon it he stopped abruptly.

"Old friend!" he cried, "have you succumbed? After all these years have you dropped from the weight of a blow?" He passed his hand caressingly along the trunk, and scarce ever had I seen him so affected. In truth, for the instant I thought him deranged. He raised his cane above his shoulder and struck the bark so heavily that the silver head sunk deep into the wood. "Look you, Richard," he said, the water coming into his eyes, "look you, the heart of it is gone, lad; and when the heart is rotten 'tis time for us to go. That walnut was a life friend, my son. We have grown together," he continued, turning from me to the giant and brushing his cheeks, "but by God's good will we shall not die so, for my heart is still as young as the days when you were sprouting."

And he walked back to the house more briskly than he had come, refusing, for the first time, my arm. And from that day, I say, he began to mend. The lacing of red came again to his cheeks, and before we went back to town he had walked with me to Master Dingley's tavern on the highroad, and back.

We moved into Marlboro' Street the first part of November. I had seen my lady off for England, wearing my faded flowers, the panniers of the fine gentleman in a neglected pile at her cabin door. But not once had she deigned to write me. It was McAndrews who told me of her safe arrival. In Annapolis rumours were a-flying of conquests she had already made. I found Betty Tayloe had had a letter, filled with the fashion in caps and gowns, and the mention of more than one noble name. All of this being, for unknown reasons, sacred, I was read only part of the postscript, in which I figured: "The London Season was done almost before we arrived," so it ran. "We had but the Opportunity to pay our Humble Respects to their Majesties; and appear at a few Drum-Majors and Garden Fetes. Now we are off to Brighthelmstone, and thence, so Papa says, to Spa and the Continent until the end of January. I am pining for news of Maryland, dearest Betty. Address me in care of Mr. Ripley, Barrister, of Lincoln's Inn, and bid Richard Carvel write me."

"Which does not look as if she were coming back within the year," said Betty, as she poured me a dish of tea.

Alas, no! But I did not write. I tried and failed. And then I tried to forget. I was constant at all the

gayeties, gave every miss in town a share of my attention, rode to hounds once a week at Whitehall or the South River Club with a dozen young beauties. But cantering through the winter mists 'twas Dolly, in her red riding-cloak and white beaver, I saw beside me. None of them had her seat in the saddle, and none of them her light hand on the reins. And tho' they lacked not fire and skill, they had not my lady's dash and daring to follow over field and fallow, stream and searing, and be in at the death with heightened colour, but never a look away.

Then came the first assembly of the year. I got back from Bentley Manor, where I had been a-visiting the Fotheringays, just in time to call for Patty in Gloucester Street.

"Have you heard the news from abroad, Richard?" she asked, as I handed her into my chariot.

"Never a line," I replied.

"Pho!" exclaimed Patty; "you tell me that! Where have you been hiding? Then you shall not have it from me."

I had little trouble, however, in persuading her. For news was a rare luxury in those days, and Patty was plainly uncomfortable until she should have it out.

"I would not give you the vapours to-night for all the world, Richard," she exclaimed. "But if you must,—Dr. Courtenay has had a letter from Mr. Manners, who says that Dolly is to marry his Grace of Chartersea. There now!"

"And I am not greatly disturbed," I answered, with a fine, careless air.

The lanthorn on the chariot was burning bright. And I saw Patty look at me, and laugh.

"Indeed!" says she; "what a sex is that to which you belong. How ready are men to deny us at the first whisper! And I thought you the most constant of all. For my part, I credit not a word of it. 'Tis one of Mr. Marmaduke's lies and vanities."

"And for my part, I think it true as gospel," I cried. "Dolly always held a coronet above her colony, and all her life has dreamed of a duke."

"Nay," answered Patty, more soberly; "nay, you do her wrong. You will discover one day that she is loyal to the core, tho' she has a fop of a father who would serve his Grace's chocolate. We are all apt to talk, my dear, and to say what we do not mean, as you are doing."

"Were I to die to-morrow, I would repeat it," I exclaimed. But I liked Patty the better for what she had said.

"And there is more news, of less import," she continued, as I was silent. "The Thunderer dropped anchor in the roads to-day, and her officers will be at the assembly. And Betty tells me there is a young lord among them,—la! I have clean forgot the string of adjectives she used,—but she would have had me know he was as handsome as Apollo, and so dashing and diverting as to put Courtenay and all our wits to shame. She dined with him at the Governor's."

I barely heard her, tho' I had seen the man-o'-war in the harbour as I sailed in that afternoon.

The assembly hall was filled when we arrived, aglow with candles and a-tremble with music, the powder already flying, and the tables in the recesses at either end surrounded by those at the cards. A lively scene, those dances at the old Stadt House, but one I love best to recall with a presence that endeared it to me. The ladies in flowered aprons and caps and brocades and trains, and the gentlemen in brilliant coats, trimmed with lace and stiffened with buckram. That night, as Patty had predicted, there was a smart sprinkling of uniforms from the Thunderer. One of those officers held my eye. He was as well-formed a lad, or man (for he was both), as it had ever been my lot to see. He was neither tall nor short, but of a good breadth. His fair skin was tanned by the weather, and he wore his own wavy hair powdered, as was just become the fashion, and tied with a ribbon behind.

"Mercy, Richard, that must be his Lordship. Why, his good looks are all Betty claimed for them!" exclaimed Patty. Mr. Lloyd, who was standing by, overheard her, and was vastly amused at her downright way.

"I will fetch him directly, Miss Swain," said he, "as I have done for a dozen ladies before you." And fetch him he did.

"Miss Swain, this is my Lord Comyn," said he. "Your Lordship, one of the boasts of our province."

Patty grew red as the scarlet with which his Lordship's coat was lined. She curtsayed, while he made a profound bow.

"What! Another boast, Mr. Lloyd!" he cried. "Miss Swain is the tenth I have met. But I vow they excel as they proceed."

"Then you must meet no more, my Lord," said Patty, laughing at Mr. Lloyd's predicament.

"Egad, then, I will not," declared Comyn. "I protest I am satisfied."

Then I was presented. He had won me on the instant with his open smile and frank, boyish manner.

"And this is young Mr. Carvel, whom I hear wins every hunt in the colony?" said he.

"I fear you have been misinformed, my Lord," I replied, flashing with pleasure nevertheless.

"Nay, my Lord," Mr. Lloyd struck in; "Richard could ride down the devil himself, and he were a fox. You will see for yourself to-morrow."

"I pray we may not start the devil," said his Lordship; "or I shall be content to let Mr. Carvel run him down."

This Comyn was a man after my own fancy, as, indeed, he took the fancy of every one at the ball. Though a viscount in his own right, he gave himself not half the airs over us provincials as did many of his messmates. Even Mr. Jacques, who was sour as last year's cider over the doings of Parliament, lost his heart, and asked why we were not favoured in America with more of his sort.

By a great mischance Lord Comyn had fallen into the tender clutches of my Aunt Caroline. It seemed she had known his uncle, the Honourable Arthur Comyn, in New York; and now she undertook to be responsible for his Lordship's pleasure at Annapolis, that he might meet only those of the first fashion. Seeing him talking to Patty, my aunt rose abruptly from her loo and made toward us, all paint and powder and patches, her chin in the air, which barely enabled her to look over Miss Swain's head.

"My Lord," she cries, "I will show you our colonial reel, which is about to begin, and I warrant you is gayer than any dance you have at home."

"Your very devoted, Mrs. Carvel," says his Lordship, with a bow, "but Miss Swain has done me the honour."

"O Lud!" cries my aunt, sweeping the room, "I vow I cannot keep pace with the misses nowadays. Is she here?"

"She was but a moment since, ma'am," replied Comyn, instantly, with a mischievous look at me, while poor Patty stood blushing not a yard distant.

There were many who overheard, and who used their fans and their napkins to hide their laughter at the very just snub Mrs. Grafton had received. And I wondered at the readiness with which he had read her character, liking him all the better. But my aunt was not to be disabled by this, —not she. After the dance she got hold of him, keeping him until certain designing ladies with daughters took him away; their names charity forbids me to mention. But in spite of them all he contrived to get Patty for supper, when I took Betty Tayloe, and we were very merry at table together. His Lordship proved more than able to take care of himself, and contrived to send Philip about his business when he pulled up a chair beside us. He drank a health to Miss Swain, and another to Miss Tayloe, and was on the point of filling a third glass to the ladies of Maryland, when he caught himself and brought his hand down on the table.

"Gad's life!" cried he, "but I think she's from Maryland, too!"

"Who?" demanded the young ladies, in a breath.

But I knew.

"Who!" exclaimed Comyn. "Who but Miss Dorothy Manners! Isn't she from Maryland?" And marking our astonished nods, he continued: "Why, she descended upon Mayfair when they were so weary for something to worship, and they went mad over her in a s'ennight. I give you Miss Manners!"

"And you know her!" exclaimed Patty, her voice quivering with excitement.

"Faith!" said his Lordship, laughing. "For a whole month I was her most devoted, as were we all at

Almack's. I stayed until the last minute for a word with her,—which I never got, by the way,—and paid near a guinea a mile for a chaise to Portsmouth as a consequence. Already she has had her choice from a thousand a year up, and I tell you our English ladies are green with envy."

I was stunned, you may be sure. And yet, I might have expected it.

"If your Lordship has left your heart in England," said Betty, with a smile, "I give you warning you must not tell our ladies here of it."

"I care not who knows it, Miss Tayloe," he cried. That fustian, insincerity, was certainly not one of his faults. "I care not who knows it. To pass her chariot is to have your heart stolen, and you must needs run after and beg mercy. But, ladies," he added, his eye twinkling; "having seen the women of your colony, I marvel no longer at Miss Manners's beauty."

He set us all a-laughing.

"I fear you were not born a diplomat, sir," says Patty. "You agree that we are beautiful, yet to hear that one of us is more so is small consolation."

"We men turn as naturally to Miss Manners as plants to the sun, ma'am," he replied impulsively. "Yet none of us dare hope for alliance with so brilliant and distant an object. I make small doubt those are Mr. Carvel's sentiments, and still he seems popular enough with the ladies. How now, sir? How now, Mr. Carvel? You have yet to speak on so tender a subject."

My eyes met Patty's.

"I will be no more politic than you, my Lord," I said boldly, "nor will I make a secret of it that I adore Miss Manners full as much."

"Bravo, Richard!" cries Patty; and "Good!" cries his Lordship, while Betty claps her hands. And then Comyn swung suddenly round in his chair.

"Richard Carvel!" says he. "By the seven chimes I have heard her mention your name. The devil fetch my memory!"

"My name!" I exclaimed, in surprise, and prodigiously upset.

"Yes," he answered, with his hand to his head; "some such thought was in my mind this afternoon when I heard of your riding. Stay! I have it! I was at Ampthill, Ossory's place, just before I left. Some insupportable coxcomb was boasting a marvellous run with the hounds nigh across Hertfordshire, and Miss Manners brought him up with a round turn and a half hitch by relating one of your exploits, Richard Carvel. And take my word on't she got no small applause. She told how you had followed a fox over one of your rough provincial counties, which means three of Hertfordshire, with your arm broken, by Heaven! and how they lifted you off at the death. And, Mr. Carvel," said my Lord, generously, looking at my flushed face, "you must give me your hand for that."

So Dorothy in England had thought of me at least. But what booteth it if she were to marry a duke! My thoughts began to whirl over all Comyn had said of her so that I scarce heard a question Miss Tayloe had put.

"Marry Chartersea! That profligate pig!" Comyn was saying. "She would as soon marry a chairman or a chimneysweep, I'm thinking. Why, Miss Tayloe, Sir Charles Grandison himself would scarce suit her!"

"Good lack!" said Betty, "I think Sir Charles would be the very last for Dorothy."

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